got wood? online @ turningblanks.net

Store Newsletter

September 2011

Announcements

- **Recent Wood Additions**
  Some of the most recent woods we've cut and put up for sale have included: ambrosia sycamore, ash, birch, cherry, cucumbertree, eastern red cedar, hackberry, mulberry, pecan, rainbow poplar, red gum, red oak burl, and silver poplar.
- **Upcoming Woods**
  We will be cutting a variety of woods over the next month. Included in the lineup are mimosa, chinaberry, hickory, red elm, honey locust, additional mulberry, mulberry burl (very limited supply), black walnut, and ambrosia maple. Most of these will take a few weeks to process. We are cutting as quickly as we can to keep up with demand.
- **Kiln Dried Woods**
  As a follow up to last month's newsletter, we wanted to remind everyone that we will not be resume kiln drying operations anytime in the near future due to repeated problems with our vacuum kiln's operation.
- **Other News**
  Last week we picked up a huge 42" diameter mulberry log. We plan to process this within the next few weeks. Before we do, if anyone has specific requests for large blanks, please email us and we'll be glad to fulfill your needs.

Focus on Wood - Mulberry

Flat Sawn Grain

Quartersawn Grain

End Grain

- **General Information:** Mulberry is a close relative of the more commonly known osage orange tree. It is a medium to bright yellowish-brown color or yellow color with bright white sapwood. Mulberry trees are relatively uncommon in most areas of the US, but can grow to sizes of well beyond 6' in diameter in some cases. The wood is somewhat aromatic, and is an excellent choice for turners both amateur and professional alike.
- **Common Names:** Mulberry, red mulberry, moral
- **Density:** 59 lbs/ft^3 - Similar to most hard maples and hickories
- **Hardness:** 1250 lbft - Similar to red and white oak
- **Specific Gravity:** ~0.55
- **Drying:** Dries well, with only a slight tendency to warp, twist or check. Drying should be given slightly more time than other woods, as this wood releases water more slowly.
- **Turning:** Turns very well. Mulberry has a moderately fine grain. Cuts easily when green, despite its hardness. Only slightly more difficult to turn once dry, but with very little dulling effect on tools. Very little tendency to tear out when cutting across end grain.
- **Sanding:** Sands very well. For removing tool marks, 120 grit sandpaper is recommended. Will sand to a very high luster, usually requiring grits no higher than 600 to achieve satisfactory results.
- **Finishing:** Readily accepts most stains and finishes without need for any special pre-treatment of the wood surface. This wood will fade to an orange-brown color with age. To ensure that your turnings stay the much brighter, more vivid yellow color, a hard finish such as lacquer, shellac or polyurethane are recommended instead of oil and/or wax finishes.

Photo of the Month Contest

Black Cherry with Aniline Dye by Dale Gillaspy

Would you like to get some free wood? Each month we give away a $25 to the winner of our photo contest. Everyone is eligible...don't be shy! We love seeing what our wood gets "turned" in to!

Interested in making a submission...or even several? All you need to do is e-mail your photo(s) to us, or upload directly through our Facebook page to be eligible. Please include your name in any emails, and let us know the size and type of wood in each picture that you submit.

Turning Tutorials - Reducing Lathe Vibration, Part 1 of 2

Turning Tutorials - Reducing Lathe Vibration, Part 1 of 2

Problems caused by improper technique:
Most of us, especially those with smaller lathes, have experienced the frustrations caused by vibrations when turning with our wood lathes. There are a wide variety of factors that can cause vibration...here are some tips for reducing the problem. In this first part of our two part series about lathe vibration, we're going to cover problems that are caused by the turner...not the lathe itself.

- **Improper tool sharpening**
  Dull and improperly sharpened tools require more force to be placed on the tool to cut the wood. Using additional force against the wood can cause the piece to vibrate. These vibrations show up as "chatter" marks on the wood's surface. Keep tools properly sharpened at all times!
- **Excessive force used in cutting**
  As a turner, you must learn to let the tool do the cutting for you. While it may be tempting to push one's tool into the wood as quickly as possible, this is not the proper way to turn. As with improperly sharpened tools, the additional force that is placed on a piece will cause vibrations which lead to chatter marks. Using a light touch with enough pressure to keep the tool moving in the proper direction will greatly reduce chatter marks caused by the vibrations that are no longer being created.
- **Improper cutting direction**
  A few months ago we covered proper cutting direction in our newsletter (see our archive for these back issues). Cutting wood in a manner that causes the fibers of the wood to be torn, rather than cut, can cause issues with vibration. As wood fibers are torn away from one another, the wood tends to vibrate slightly, producing a slightly uneven surface. In addition to this, the torn wood fibers create a rough, fuzzy looking surface. This rough surface will cause additional vibrations as well, as the tool will lightly bounce across the rough surface on occasion. If you aren't confident with how to properly cut your wood, I highly suggest looking over our tutorials mentioned above.
- **Improper mounting of turning stock**
  While this may seem self-explanatory, we wanted to touch on two important issues concerning proper mounting. For side grain projects, such as bowls and platters, keeping things as well centered when mounting will, of course, reduce vibration. For spindle projects, proper centering is also important, but the amount of force placed on the wood between the headstock and tailstock also come into play. This is especially noticeable in longer and/or thinner projects. Excessive force coming in from the ends of the wood can actually cause the wood to flex along its length. Use just enough force to keep your wood in place, but not enough to cause the wood to flex.

In next month's issue, we'll explain what problems can be caused by the lathe, and cover the remedies for each of these situations.

Links of Interest

This month we wanted to share a link to a great page that is maintained by the folks at the American Association of Woodturners. Their web site contains an abundance of information, but specifically, we wanted to share their index of wood turning schools. If you are looking to get started, hone your skills as an intermediate level turner, or rub elbows with fellow professionals, then check out this list of wood turning schools.

I believe that is all we have for now, folks! As always...we want to hear your feedback, comments, complaints and concerns...anything to help us make our services better for you. Drop us a line anytime!

Regards,
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