



# a natural state

**Artist: Tom Boozer**

## **Video 2: Process, Part C: Hollowing**

Boozer: What I'm doing now is actually sawing off what will be known as the bottom board. It's about three-fourths of an inch thick. And you want to always make sure that your bottom board is made from the, the same piece of wood that the bird is made—not so that it'll fit tightly but because of the grain. The continuity of the grain, the swelling, and the contraction of the grain will always be the same if it comes off of the same log.

I start the hollowing process with a...with an old hand brace. And you basically get you a couple of pilot holes started. And you only need four of them because you'll be working with the grain. Get one in the front and one on each side...one near the tail section.

And since we'll be working with the grain, these holes will prevent me from chipping into the sides of the bird. If you'll watch how the pieces come off, they automatically stop at that hole. And then you can just enlarge that hole as you work your way around. And then the side hole obviously serves the same purpose.

Continue along with the hollowing process. From start to finish, the hollowing process, depending on the size of the decoy, can last anywhere from fifteen minutes up to about an hour for a very large decoy, like a goose or a swan.

But once you get the bulk of the wood removed from the block, you can do away with the mallet for a little while and finish it out by hand, because now you're not interested in removing a lot of wood. You're just interested in taking off some small shavings to get a fairly uniform thickness through the...through the body of the decoy.

You leave the sides thicker. You leave the sides thicker because this is your nailing surface and your gluing surface. But as it goes towards the back, the back gets thinner and thinner. That also allows the center of gravity to be at the lower point, which is...you want the birds to be stable in the water and ride well in the water. And you want your weight towards the bottom.

