



# a natural state

**Artist: Tom Boozer**

**Video 2: Process, Part E: Painting**

Boozer: Once all the three pieces are put back together, the head and the bottom board, the entire decoy is then sealed with spar varnish. Those of you that are familiar with ships and boats know that spar varnish never hardens. And the entire body and head, the, the joints are all sealed with the spar varnish. It never gets really hard and, and, therefore, remains flexible during all types of hunting conditions. Once this dries, it also makes a very good tooth for the base paint. In other words, it, it serves as a primer and, and a real good sealer.

To establish my, my paint colors, or my color schemes, I work from mounted birds. The paints that I use are just basically house paints that I mix up. The...when I'm doing a lot of birds at one time, I'll actually mix the colors enough to paint, say, a dozen or two dozen, or ever how many I need to make at the time.

This particular decoy I've hunted over for at least fifteen years, maybe a little bit longer. And you can see the paint is, is sort of flat...a little bit dull...but that comes with age.

I'll show you what a freshly painted decoy looks like. This is what's known as the American Shoveler. You can see the, the differences in the sheen of the paint.

Now, obviously with a decoy sitting on the water, you're going to have a reflection of the sunlight from the water, as well as the sunlight reflecting off the bird. So there's a little trick that I use to, to dull the paint the first time I take them out into the field, and that's just to simply submerge them in saltwater overnight. I live on the salt marsh and salt...saltwater is obviously a corrosive agent or an agent that can be used to, to diminish the dull...the shine of the paint, or to dull the paint. And it works real well.

You can see the ballast is on the very bottom. It's put into position so that the decoy will self-right when it's thrown into the water. It's also put there for rough weather or, when you're hunting in rough areas, to keep the, the bird from rocking too much and looking not like a real natural bird on the water.

