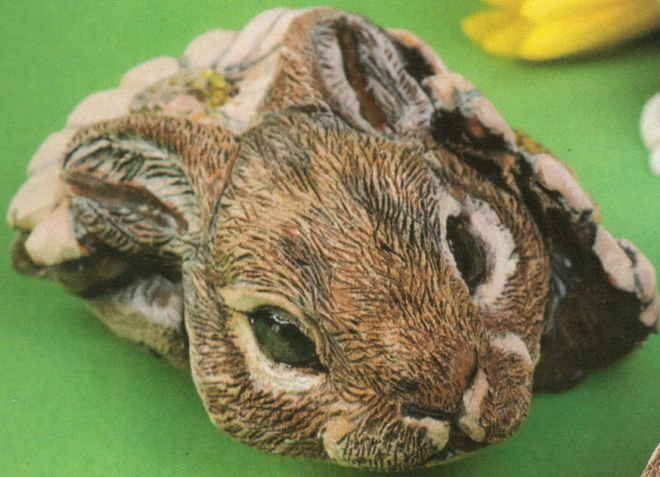


Spring Surprise



Realistic baby bunny is “born” from a (wooden) goose egg

By Desiree Hajny
Step photos by Scott Kreiner

I designed the bunny as a project that students could finish in a short class, but still learn how to create different textures and paint a realistic carving. While I can carve and paint one in about a day, most of my students take a little longer than that.

Getting Started

Rip a goose-sized basswood egg in half. Draw or transfer the pattern onto the blank. Cut away the excess wood around the front with a band saw.



BUNNY: CARVING THE PROJECT



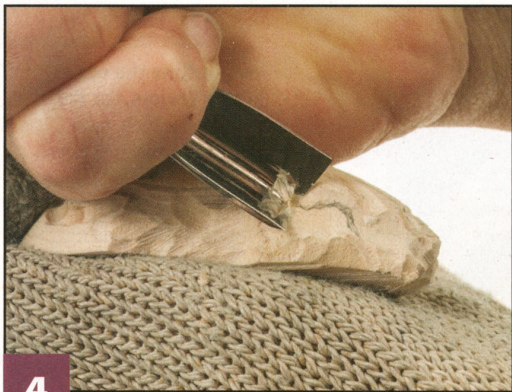
1 Cut along the landmark lines. Use a $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm) V-gouge. Use a $\frac{5}{8}$ " (16mm) #6 gouge to remove the excess wood along the nose and around the centers of the daisies.



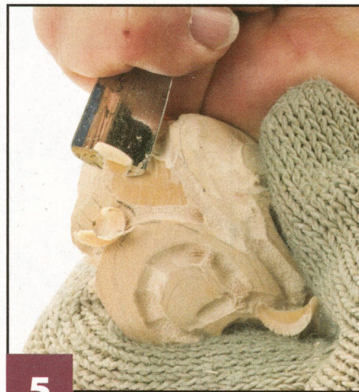
2 Deepen the landmark grooves on the back. Use the V-gouge. Then, use the V-gouge to carve the outline of the nose. Remove wood from the top of the head with the $\frac{5}{8}$ " (16mm) #6 gouge.



3 Mark the hollow areas to remove inside the ears. Use the V-gouge. Remember, the ears are lying flat against the head. Then, use the V-gouge to carve the outline of the brow line.



4 Draw the eyeball. Start with an S curve running from the base of the ear, down around the top of the eyeball, and down the side of the eyeball. Repeat for the other eye. Use the V-gouge to carve along the lines.

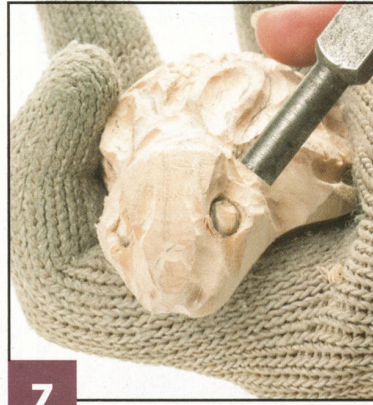


5 Reduce the thickness of the leaf. Use the $\frac{5}{8}$ " (16mm) #6 gouge. Start with the wood around the back flowers for the leaf (since the leaf sits under the flowers). Sketch the edges of the leaf and carve the wedges of wood with the V-gouge.



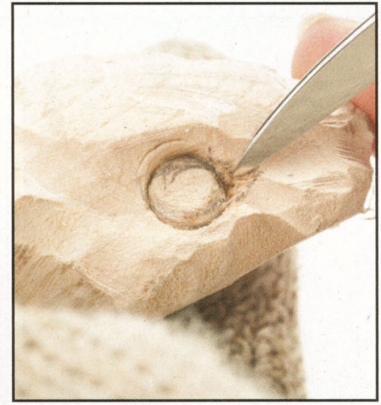
6

Draw the lines dividing the petals and the outlines of the ears. Carve along the lines with a 1/4" (6mm) V-tool. Mark the area to remove on the chin. Then, use the 5/8" (16mm) #6 gouge to undercut the chin.

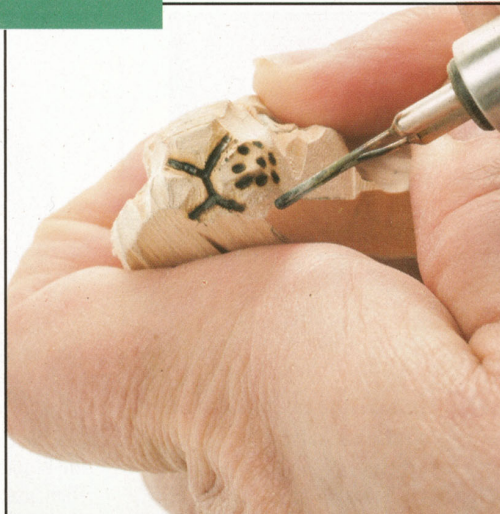


7

Make the eyeballs. Use a 3/32" (7mm)-diameter round eye punch to press in the eyeballs. Mark the teardrop shape in the corner of each eye, and remove the wood with the tip of a detail knife.



BUNNY: BURNING THE TEXTURE



8

Burn the outlines of the ears. Use a woodburner with a writing nib. Then, burnish and smooth the insides of the ears to make them smooth and give the illusion of depth. Outline the cleft in the nose. Then, burn the visible parts of the mouth. Add the whisker dots.



9

Outline the edges of the flowers. Use the writing nib. Then, burn along the grooves between the petals. Use the writing nib to stipple (dot) the centers of the flowers. Then, burn the veins of the leaves.



10

Outline the eyes. Use a small skewer nib. Lean the tip of the nib toward the eyeball to start burnishing it. Use the side of the nib to burnish the rest of the eye. Burn a light eyelid above the eyeball. Repeat for the other eye.



11

Outline the white areas. Refer to the hair flow diagram on page 27 and use the small skewer nib. Add the hair texture using a stab-and-pull motion. Make lines of texture around the outlines of the white areas.



12

Burn the remaining hair texture. Refer to the hair flow diagram on page 27. Use the small skewer nib. Make short strokes on the tip of the nose, and let the texture get progressively longer as you move back toward the ears and down on the face. Fill in the entire visible fur.



13

Finish burnishing and undercutting the details. Use the small skewer nib. Use the same nib to undercut the areas where the petals hang over the leaves and the bunny. Then, burnish the areas where the leaf overhangs.

BUNNY: PAINTING THE BUNNY



14

Paint the dull white parts. Thin dull white paint (I use vanilla ice cream) with water to the consistency of milk. Use a liner brush to paint the unburned white areas on the face. Then, paint the petals the same color.



15

Paint the rabbit brown. Apply thinned nutmeg brown with a medium round brush.



16

Paint the centers of the daisies and the leaves. Use slightly thinned bright yellow and a medium round brush to paint the daisies' centers. Then, mix bright yellow with a little black enamel with a touch of vanilla ice cream to create a green for the leaves.



17

Dry-brush the white parts of the carving. Pick up a little titanium white on a small flat brush and scrub most of the paint off on a paper towel. Lightly brush across just the high spots of the white areas on the face, the eyes, and the petals. I think of it as lightly brushing an eyelash off of a child's face.



18

Dry-brush the rest of the bunny. Use the technique explained in Step 17 but with vanilla ice cream paint. Apply the paint to just barely touch the high points. Then, dry-brush the leaves and the centers of the daisies with the same color.



19

Paint the eyes, nose, and mouth. Use slightly thinned black enamel paint. Work the paint down into the edges of the eyes and tear ducts. The enamel paint has a bit of gloss for realistic eyes. Then, mix a little brown and black, and paint the nose cleft and mouth.



20

Paint the whisker dots. Use a pointed stick and the brown/black mixture. Then, use the stick to add a dot of titanium white to the upper right corner of each eye. Apply a clear spray finish to seal the carving.

materials & tools

MATERIALS:

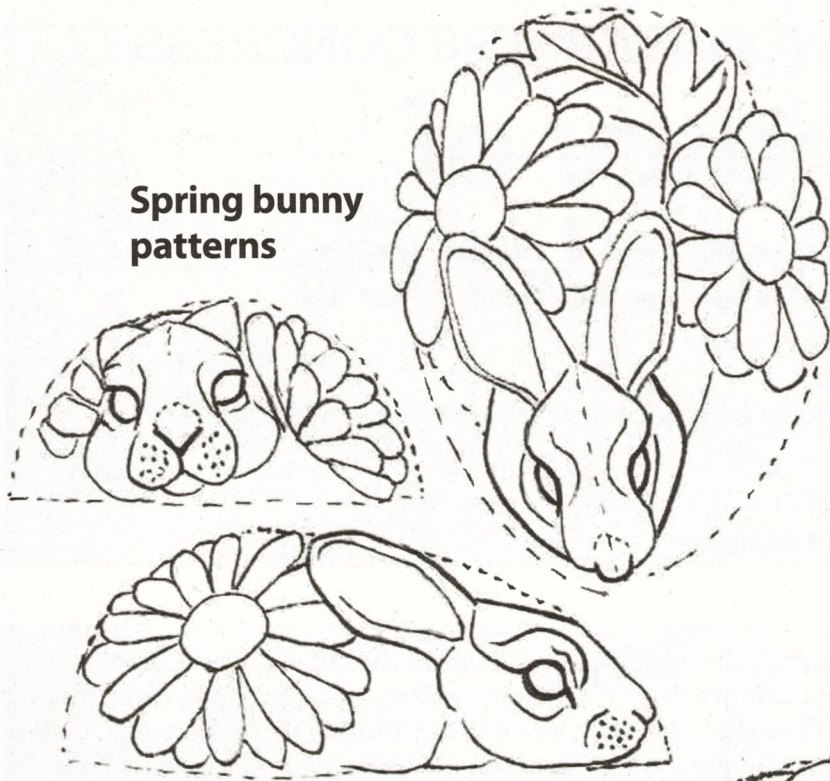
- Basswood egg: goose size, cut in half horizontally
- Acrylic paint, such as Plaid Apple Barrel: vanilla ice cream, titanium white, nutmeg brown, bright yellow; such as Plaid Folk Art: black enamel
- Finish: clear spray

TOOLS:

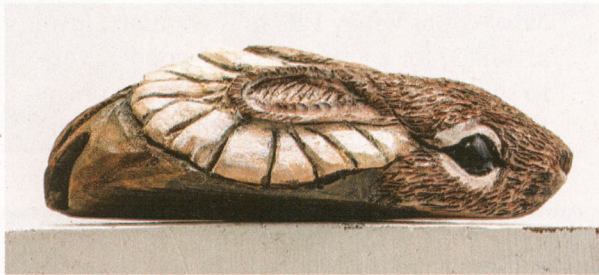
- Band saw
- Detail knife
- V-gouge: $\frac{3}{8}$ " (10mm)
- V-tool: $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6mm)
- #6 gouge: $\frac{5}{8}$ " (16mm)
- Round eye punch: $\frac{7}{32}$ " (7mm) dia.
- Woodburner with nibs: writing nib, small skew nib
- Paintbrushes: small liner, medium round, small flat

The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.

Spring bunny patterns



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Spring bunny hair flow diagram



In addition to being an award-winning carver and instructor, Desiree Hajny was the 2003 Woodcarving Illustrated Woodcarver of the Year. She lives in Blue Hill, Nebr., with her husband, Bernie.