

PHOTOGRAPHS BY GABOR LACKO, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED

PHOTOGRAPH BY GAN/CANTHONY SALEY



Pierced & coloured eggs

Gabor Lacko and Patricia Spero make a wonderful Easter project and produce two turned eggs: one with piercing and colour and another which is left plain

Gabor and I started making these decorated eggs for a competition about four years ago. We were very interested in the Russian Imperial Easter eggs – which Fabergé made for Tsar Alexander III every Easter – and decided to use them as a base for our designs. However, the Russian eggs are very lavishly decorated in a style which is too elaborate for the wooden eggs, so we tried to simplify the effect and decided to use only piercing and colour to decorate them.

The first egg in this article is coloured with paints then pierced, and the other egg is left un-coloured.

PATRICIA SPERO



About the author: Patricia's background is in music as a classically trained harpist. Her turned, decorative work is enhanced with semi-precious stones, beads, piercing and colour.
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GABOR LACKO



About the author: Gabor Lacko, an electrical engineer, has been turning wood for almost 50 years. He likes thin turning bowls and platters and decorating these, usually with geometric forms. **Email:** gaborlacko@msn.com

Round-nosed scraper

10mm (3/8in) bowl gouge

10mm (3/8in) spindle gouge

2mm (5/64in) parting tool

15mm (9/16in) skew chisel

EGG DIMENSIONS

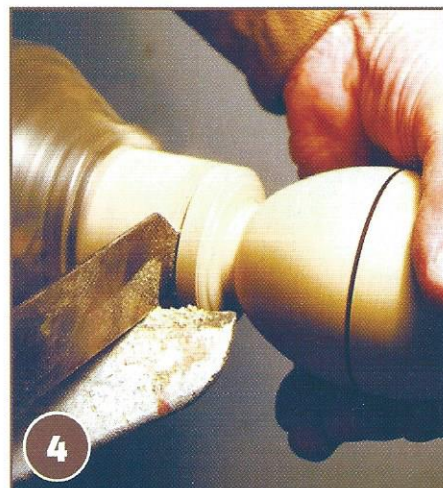
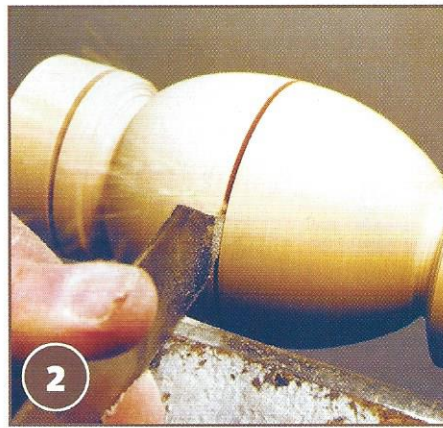
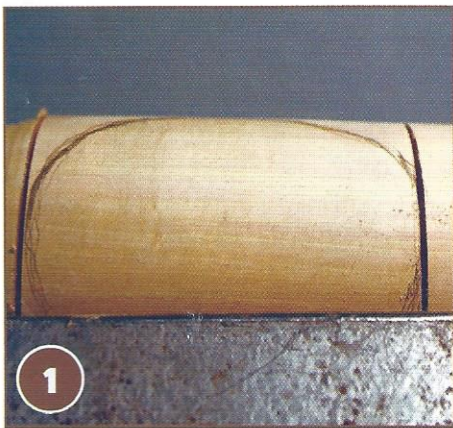
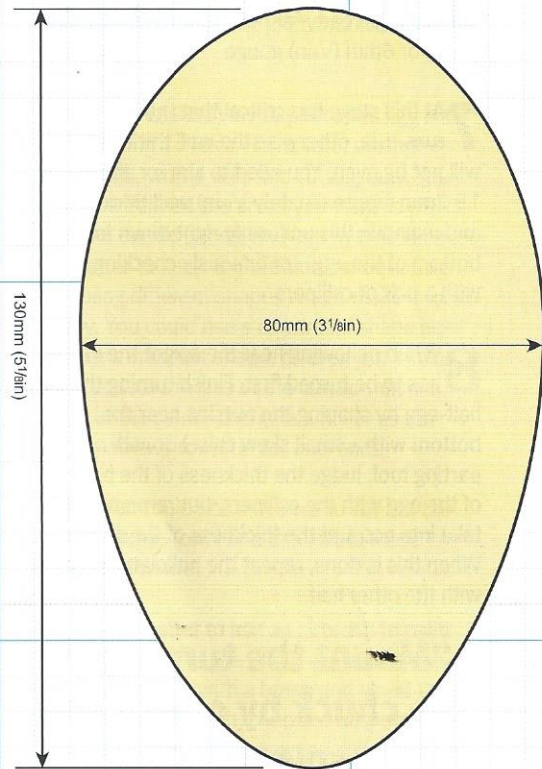
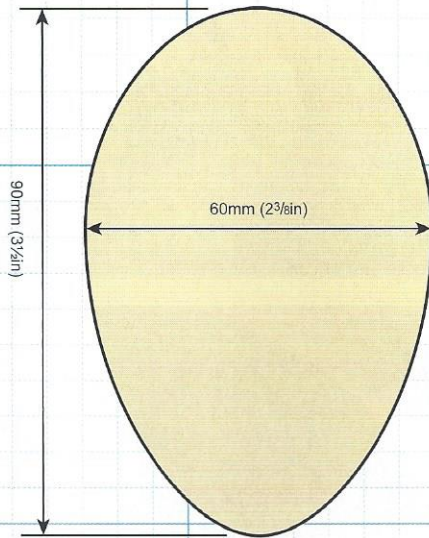
TIME TAKEN & COST

Time taken: 2 hours and 40 mins (including piercing, colouring and varnishing) **Cost:** £2 per egg

WHAT IS AN EGG SHAPE?

Obviously it is the shape of an egg. Strictly speaking there is no such defined geometrical form as an egg shape. If you have a look at a box of hen's eggs straight from the supermarket, you will find no two identical eggs.

The nearest geometrical form is the ellipsoid which is obtained by an ellipse rotated around one of its axes. The ellipsoid is symmetrical around two axes; the egg shape has only got one axis of symmetry, because the two ends are different. There are numerous geometrical and mathematical approaches of drawing an egg. These are all very complicated approximations. I just draw an 'egg shape' and if it looks right and pleasing, that will do



1 Turn a cylinder of a relatively straight grained wood. You can use sycamore, maple or anything similar. The diameter of the cylinder should be approximately the diameter of the egg you want to turn. The egg turned in this article measures 90 x 60mm (3 1/2 x 2 3/8 in). Rough out the cylinder, and draw the shape of the egg onto the wood

2 The egg you draw has to be slightly elongated – altogether by 6mm (1/4 in) – because when you cut it in two halves, it will be shorter by the thickness of the parting tool, and when you glue it together again, you will lose the amount of the overlapping lip at the joint. You have to leave enough timber at either end of the egg to form the spigots. Start turning the egg between centres, with a gouge or with a skew chisel – whichever you are more confident with – and turn a spigot at either end of the egg. Turn the whole piece and both sides of the egg to a diameter that suits your chuck. Using a thin parting tool, mark out where the two spigots will be turned off and mark out where the joint will be

3 Transfer the work into a chuck and part it off at the spigot nearest the chuck

4 Holding it, by this spigot in the chuck, part it off at the other spigot

SKILLS & PROJECTS

Turned eggs

5 Mount the turning in the chuck by one of the spigots, and cut the egg into two halves

6 When this is done, the half-egg left in the chuck is ready for hollowing. Use a 10mm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) or 6mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) gouge

7 At this stage it is critical that the half-egg runs true, otherwise the wall thickness will not be even. You need to aim for about 1.5-2mm (approximately $\frac{1}{16}$ in) wall thickness and maintain this uniformly right down to the bottom of the egg, continuously checking it with a pair of callipers

8 When hollowing near the spigot the inside has to be turned first. Finish turning the half-egg by shaping the outside near the bottom with a small skew chisel or with a parting tool. Judge the thickness of the bottom of the egg with the callipers, but remember to take into account the thickness of the spigot. When this is done, repeat the hollowing process with the other half

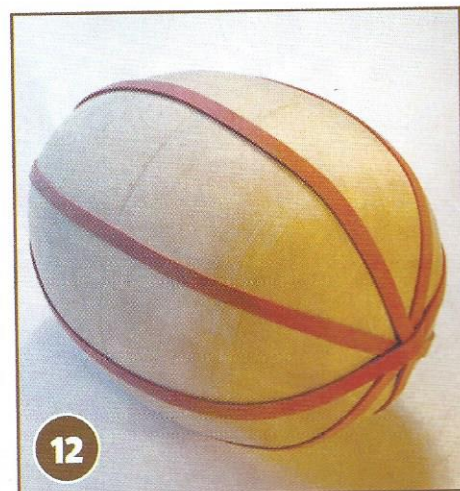
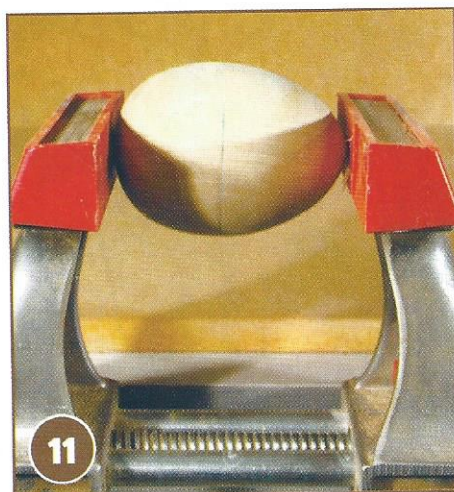
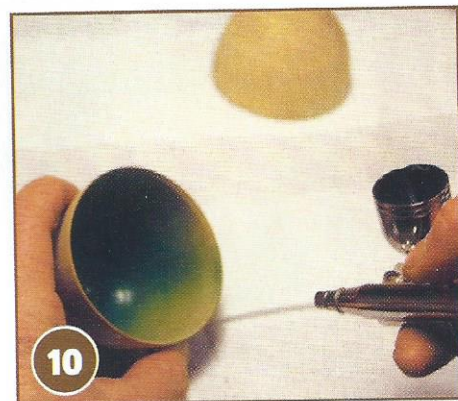
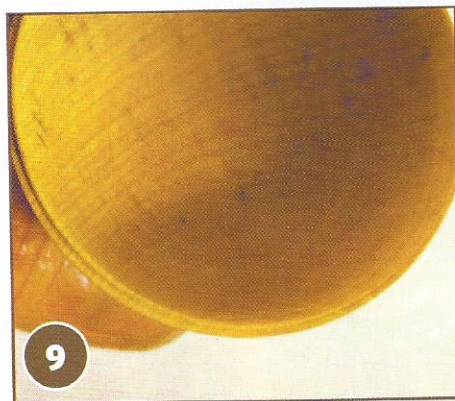
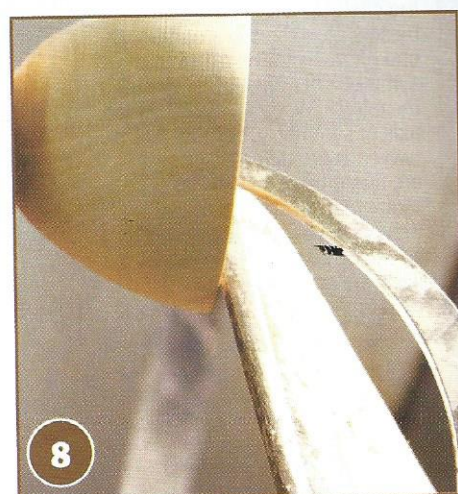
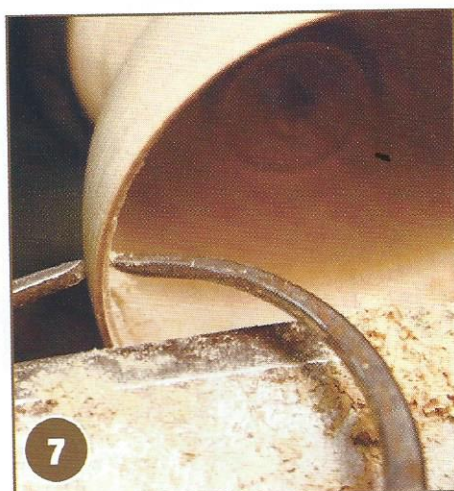
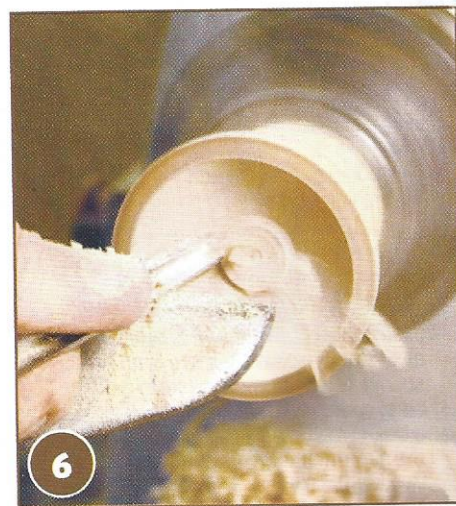
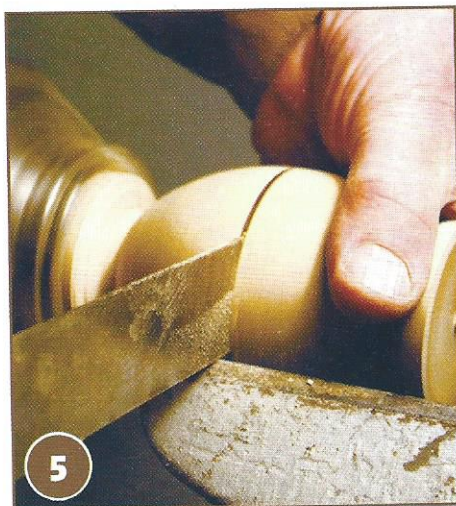
“Mount the turning in the chuck by one of the spigots...”

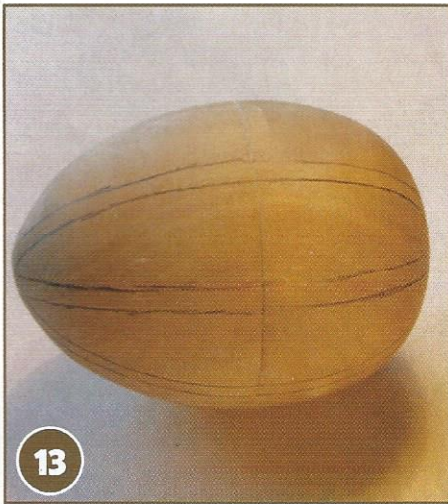
9 Where the two halves of the egg meet you will need to form a lip on both halves – on the inside of one and on the outside of the other – measuring about 3mm ($\frac{1}{8}$ in) long and about 0.55 ($\frac{1}{32}$ in). Make sure that you have a good fit. With one half in the chuck and the other half fitted to it and supported by your hand, sand the two halves together to obtain a nice finish at the joint

10 It is important to paint the inside of the egg with one of the colours that you will use on the outside, before the egg is glued together. It is very difficult to colour the inside of the egg after it has been assembled, and this will ensure that when the egg is pierced, the colour will show through and not the bare wood

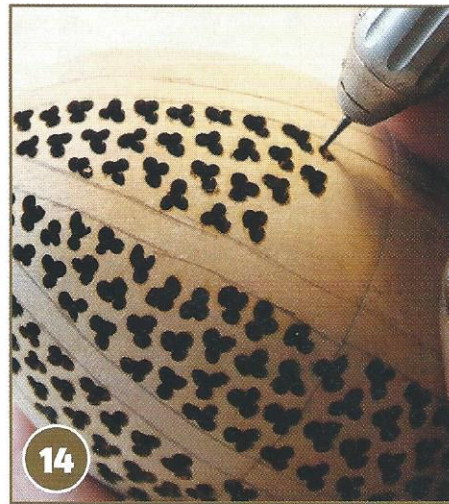
11 Next, glue the egg together with a slow acting glue and clamp it into position until it is set

12 The design chosen for this article requires the egg to be divided into eight sections. There is an easy way to do this by using four elastic bands, fixing them lengthwise along the egg and overlapping them at each end. This will leave eight equal sections. Be very careful to make sure the spacing of the bands is even, otherwise your pattern will not be symmetrical. If you draw with a soft pencil along both edges of each band, when you remove them you will have marked out the areas you want to pierce

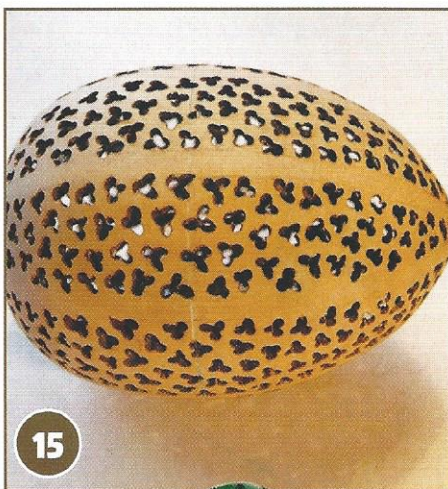




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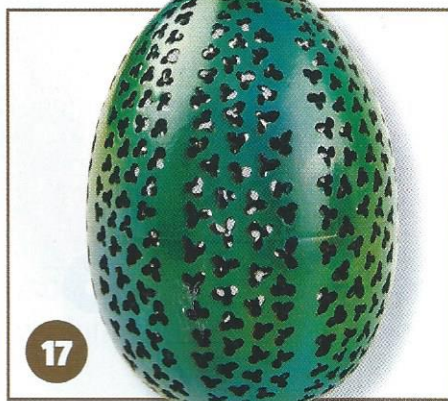
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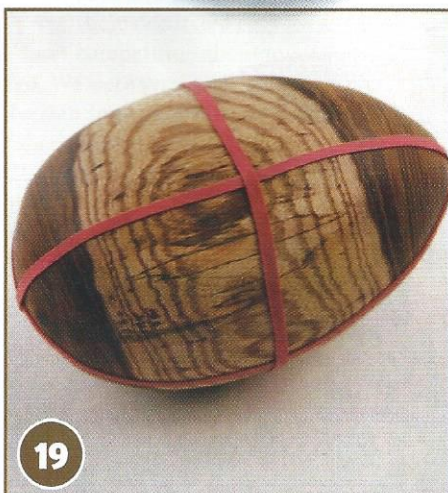
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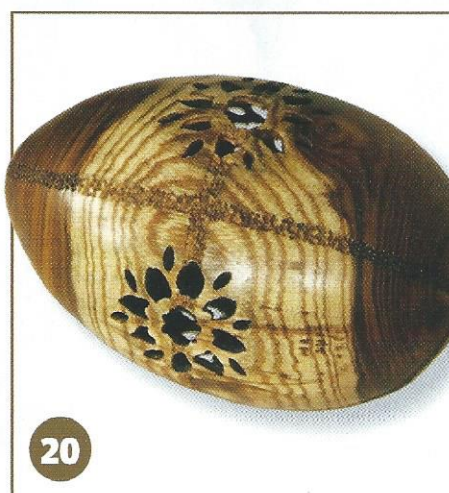
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13 You can of course make different designs by using the bands around the egg, or both lengthwise and around. If the join on your egg is not perfect, it is quite useful to draw a band around the joint, and hide it with a surface design

14 The easiest way to pierce the egg is by using a Presto Handpiece, or similar dental drill, with a very fine cutting burr. You will have defined the areas you want to pierce with the elastic bands, and within these spaces it is better to keep to the same cut out design, as mixing different shapes would make it look untidy. You could use a clover leaf shape like mine or a crescent shape, or even just circles, but graduate the size of the cut, so that it is larger in the centre and gets smaller as the space narrows towards the two ends

15 You could use a Dremel to cut out the shapes, but I find that this is more difficult to control

16 It is better to use an airbrush to paint the egg, as the effect will be more even, but you can do it with a brush and wood stains. If you use an airbrush, choose transparent airbrush paints, so that you can still see the grain of the wood. Three colours make a good mix and here the colours are turquoise, green and yellow, but red, orange and yellow is also a good combination, as is purple, blue and turquoise. To paint the turned and decorated egg, hold it on a thin skewer. You will then easily be able to move it around to get a complete cover, and blend the colours. When it is dry, you need to spray it with several coats of glossy varnish

17 The finished coloured and pieced egg should look like this

MAKING THE EGG WITHOUT COLOUR

18 This beautiful laburnum egg uses the same process as for the previous decorated egg. Shape the egg, cut in two and hollow the half eggs

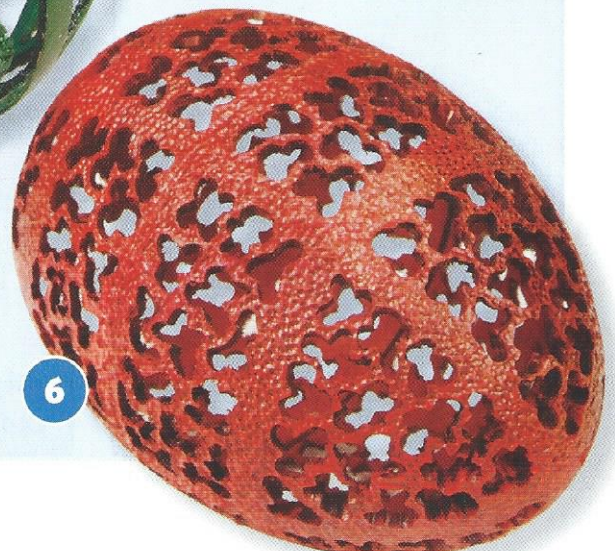
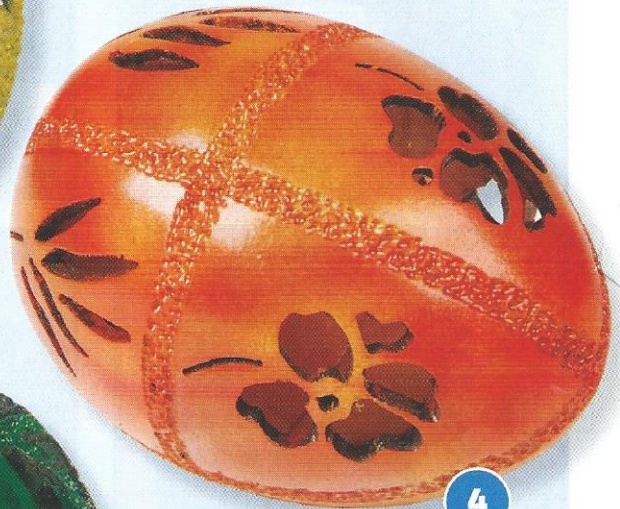
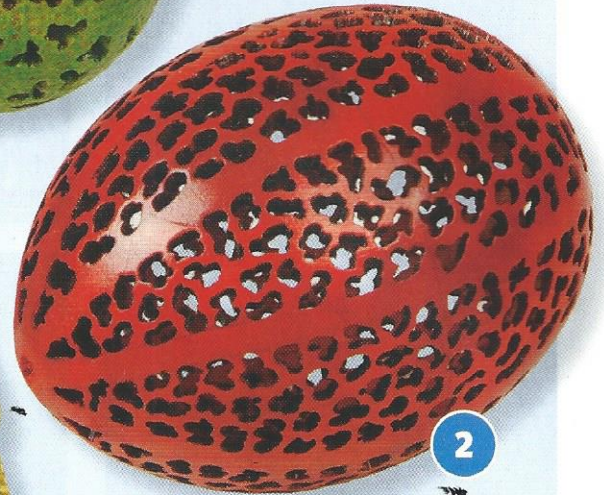
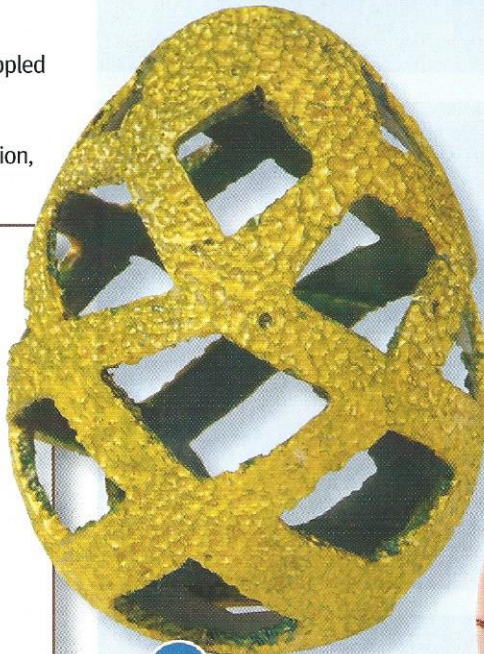
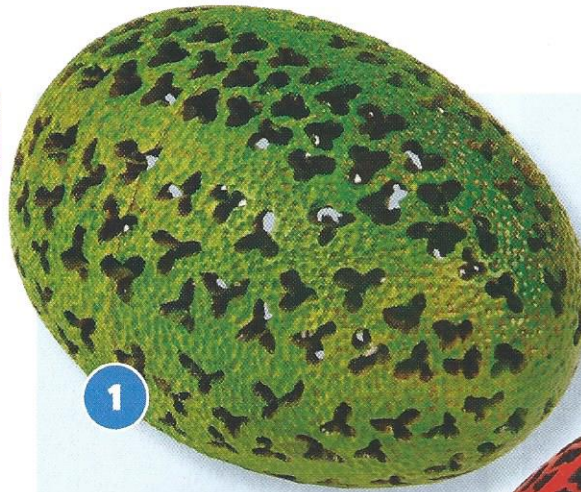
19 Glue the hollowed halves of the egg together and use three elastic bands to divide the egg into eight segments

20 Stipple it with a ball-shaped burr on the dental drill or Dremel, between the lines you have drawn. As the wood itself is very decorative, use only a small design to pierce the egg. The egg needs to be pierced, otherwise apart from the weight, no one will know that the egg is hollow. There are many solid eggs made from different woods, sometimes carved on the outside, but you seldom find a hollow egg. Here is the completed egg

Turned eggs

MORE DESIGN IDEAS FOR TURNED EGGS

- 1 Pierced and stippled egg coloured with green paints
- 2 Egg similar to the one made in the article, but this time coloured with red paint
- 3 Ornate egg, with pierced pattern, which has then been coloured gold
- 4 Egg with pierced decoration, coloured with red paint
- 5 Green egg with ornate pierced and stippled decoration
- 6 Egg with pierced and stippled decoration, coloured with red paint



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