WOODTURNERS
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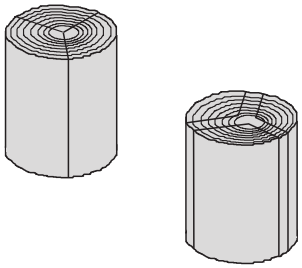
TURNING TOMORROW'S TREASURES

TRIANGULAR SEED POD

A Project Demonstrated by Robbie Graham

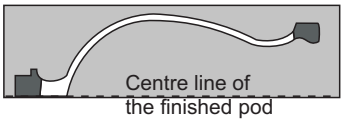
This project makes the three carpels of a dehiscent dry fruit. You will need to add a stem of your choice and seeds within the dry fruit (pod). No sizes are specified here - you may make a pod of any size.



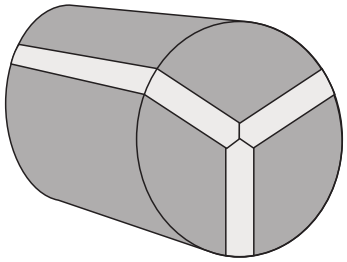
Cut a log to the length you require and then cut it lengthways into exactly 120° segments. If the pith of the log is not central and straight, and thus able to be cut away in later stages of the project, try cutting three 120° segments away from the pith, or find another log.

Dress the sawn faces so that all faces meet perfectly.

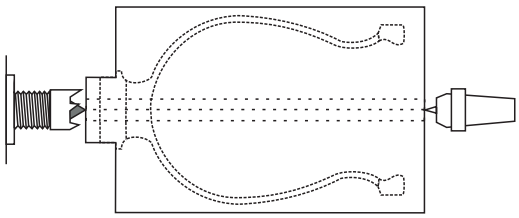
Cut three pieces of waste wood, each of the same thickness, to about the length and width of the dressed side of each 120° segment. The project will be easier if this waste wood is a similar cutting quality to the wood chosen for the pod. The thicker these waste pieces are the more triangular the finished project will be. Dress two narrow faces at a 120° angle on one edge of each piece of waste wood so that they will fit together as shown in the assembled drawing below.



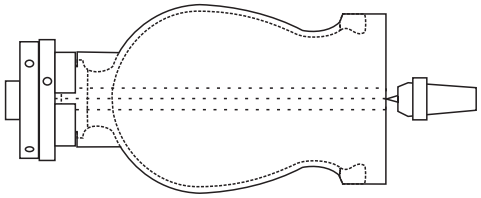
On both dressed faces of each 120° segment draw the inside and outside lines of the vessel you plan to cut, including the chuck bite and the waste area at the top of the pod. Keep a record of the distances between the top and bottom of the drawing and the ends of the wood.



Apply glue to the faces to be joined but put no glue on the area that is to be the finished pod - the white part in the drawing above. It is very important that these faces of the finished pod do not stick to the waste wood.
Assemble the block and clamp lightly.



Mark the centres accurately. Mount the wood between centres. Turn the block to round. Turn a spigot to fit your best chuck for turning hollow forms.



Remount in a chuck. Keep the tailstock up for greater security. Turn the outside. You may leave the narrow part near the base thicker for security now and reduce it later. Sand the outside to your desired finish.

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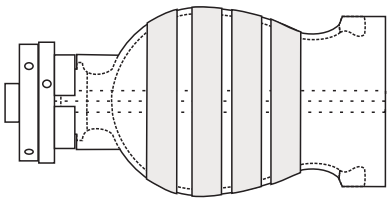
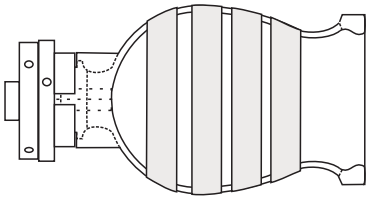
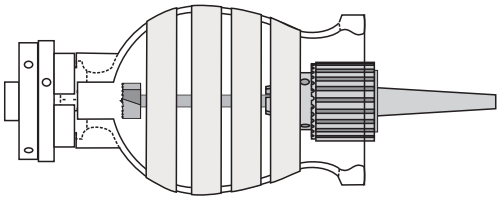


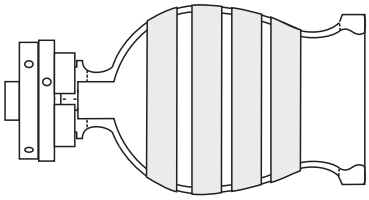
Prepare for hollowing by taping the outside of the vessel. Remember there is glue at the ends and in the core of the vessel but none holding the edges of the planned seed pod carpels. Leave some gaps between the tape to allow for measuring the thickness of the vessel.



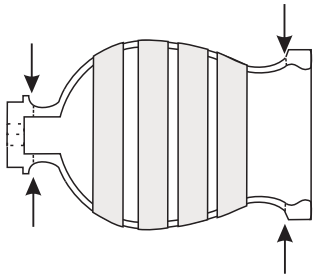
Hollow the inside. Sand the inside to your desired finish. Note that the outer, well-glued, ring remains in place.



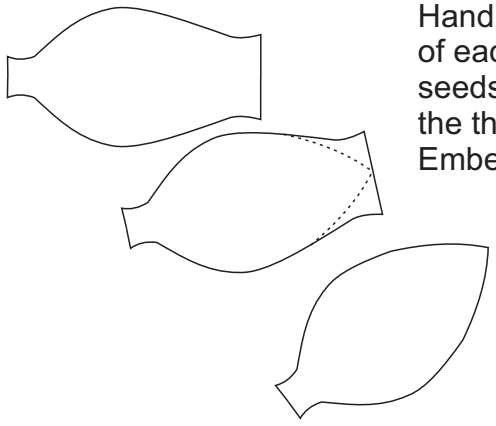
The next steps will depend on your choice of addition of seed or seeds within the pod and stem attached to the foot of the pod. To do both it may be best to drill a hole into the foot of the pod while it is still on the lathe. This hole should be larger than the waste wood and should take out several millimetres of the ends of the pod wood.
You may choose to skip this step and make the stem fitting and addition of any seeds totally by hand later.



If you chose to leave the base of the pod thick earlier in the project, thin it down now. Sand this area to the finish of your choice.



Take the wood out of the chuck and carefully saw off the foot and the waste rim as shown by the arrow in the drawing to the left. Remove the binding tape. The three pod carpels should fall free from the waste wood.



Hand shape the tip of each carpel. Embellish the inside of each carpel if you wish. Make places to attach any seeds inside the pod and then attach the seeds. Glue the three carpels together. Make and fit a stem. Embellish the outside as desired.