

Pattern & Instructions for Lovebirds by Sally and David Nye

This blank is 2-inches x 1/2-inch x 6-inches

All of these cuts can be accomplished with a bench knife.

Work on the pattern from both ends of the blank simultaneously.

To understand these steps more clearly, we recommend watching our videos:

<https://www.fancarversworld.com/carving-techniques/>



We recommend a 6-inch long blank or longer for this pattern. The blueprint is designed for a 6-inch blank. However, if your blank is longer, don't trim it down to 6-inches. Find the center and just work out the measurements to fit the blank.

1. Draw the pattern onto the blank of long-fibered, straight-grained wet wood (I prefer white cedar/American Arbor Vitae/Thuja occidentalis).
2. Round off both ends of the blank. This is the tip of the wing feathers. The rough end must be smooth for a successful riving/splitting action, otherwise the raggedness might cause it to split lengthwise.
3. Cut in the interlock so it is a 5/16-inch C cut ...take out 1/3 on each side so that 1/3 is left for the center. It's important for structural integrity when riving and it will be trimmed down later, after the riving is complete. Both sides need to be aligned ... (I prefer a 8mm Veiner Stubai™ gouge).
4. Mark in a small buffer zone about 1/8-inch. This will serve as a guide to keep the two cuts separate ...the interlock and the hinge. It also creates a crisper design once the feathers are interlocked.
5. Carve in the hinge. This is a long slanted taper beginning at the buffer line and stopping at the hinge line...with a short taper meeting it. In short, it's like a V-cut with a long side and a short side. Cut 1/3 in from each side ... leaving 1/3 for the center (about 1/8-inch is good). Like the interlock, it's important for structural integrity when riving ...don't make the center too narrow. It will be trimmed down later, after the riving is complete. Both sides need to be aligned and the hinge should be a good straight line because it's going to serve as a 'stop-cut' when riving ... (I prefer a 2 1/2 sweep x 25mm Stubai™ gouge).
6. Rive the feathers! Place the blank in a vise with the head of the bird furthest from you. Begin the rive at the head ...we recommend the Flexcut™ 3-inch drawknife. With the knife's blade held perfectly straight-up ...the flat back of the knife facing you ...and the single-bevel is on the other side (out of your view) ...now just push down. Let the knife find the fiber line. You will 'feel' the rive with the wood ...you don't see it. It's like peeling or shaving a piece of wood. It's best to watch our video on riving.

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7. Once the riving is complete, go back into the interlock and the hinge and trim both of them so they are more narrow. Now that the feathers are cut, you can open them and peak down through to the hinge ...check for proper alignment of the interlock as well as the hinge. Corrective cutting can be made at this point. How narrow to make the interlock will depend on the number of feathers you have. If a lot, the interlock will have to be more narrow so

there is room to accommodate the feathers so they fit snugly together ...if fewer, leave the interlock wider. The hinge can be narrowed to the size of a fat toothpick.

8. Plane off the short side of the hinge cut ...the bird body sides. It has to be taken down so the feathers don't butt up against it during the interlocking process.
9. With both ends of the blank completed at this point, it is time to carve the birds and the heart.
10. Cut out the area between the top-of-the-heart and the bird beaks with a scrollsaw. If you don't have access to a scrollsaw, carve it out the best way you can.
11. Next, cut along the bottom of the heart and the bird body with a bandsaw. With this removed, you can more freely carve the bird bodies and shape the heart as you wish.
12. When carving the bird bodies, cut off some feathers right behind the heads so the birds will have a nicely shaped head/body.
13. Now that the birds and the heart are carved, it is time to interlock the feathers. With the bird's beak facing you ... grasp the first feather and move it to one side of the bird's head. Grasp the second feather and move it to the other side of the head. Then grasp the third feather ...move it to the first feather ...and interlock it with the first feather. Continue interlocking alternately to build the two wings. Leave an uneven number of feathers for the tail ...usually 7 or 9. To make a tail, grasp the last feather on the body. That will serve as the anchor feather. Grasp the next feather and interlock it to one side of the anchor feather. Grasp the next feather and interlock it to the other side of the anchor feather. Continue to build the tail by interlocking alternately to the appropriate side. Once completed, finish the other bird.
14. While still wet, adjust the wings and tail so they are aligned with the body.
15. Make two eyehooks with a 1/4-inch needle-nose plier and 25-gauge wire. Thread the eyehooks with a long black thread ...long enough for it to loop around and service both birds for hanging. While the wood is still wet, insert the threaded eyehook behind the bird's heads ...where the wings begin. This will help to secure the feathers and also conceal the eyelet.
16. Your lovebirds are ready to hang-up until they dry.
17. Personalize the heart by woodburning a message for anniversary ...wedding ... or special occasion.
ie: inscribe names on one side of the heart ...date on the other side.
18. Spray the lovebirds with a sealant of your choice. I prefer Rust-oleum Specialty Lacquer. It's fast drying and has a nice subtle shine.

The lovebirds are ready to be displayed in a place of honor ...so they can protect the family and bring health and happiness to the home.

