

Crosscut

Journal of the Wits Woodworking Association



◀ Dowel cutter from Temu for about R300- Uses a drill to spin the rough stock. Makes dowel sizes Ø8/Ø9/Ø10/Ø12/Ø15/Ø16/Ø18/Ø20mm. Similar versions are widely available.

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Next meetings – Woodturners – Monday, 3rd March 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop**
– Decorating turnings using fire/burning – Steven Barrett

Main Club meeting – Wednesday, 12th March 2025 from 18h00 at **Made in Workshop** –
Building a router table from start to finish by Graham Swallow.

News

February Meetings:

3rd February 2025 – Woodturners at MiW - Sharpening and using scrapers for turning – Herman Potgieter explained the basic principles for sharpening and using scrapers on the lathe. He demonstrated how to hold a conventional scraper – ie nose down as shown in the picture on the right. He explained how to form a burr on the edge. Shear scraping was also demonstrated.



12th February 2025 – Main club - Dowel Making.

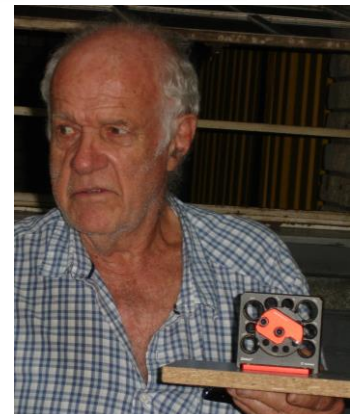
There are many ways to make dowels, short and long. The simplest way to make a dowel was shown first. This is by shaving or planing a square stick as it rests in a groove on a sticking board. A spar gauge can be used to mark out the



facets for an octagon from a square, and planing an octagon. Then these 8 facets are planed to a 16-sided shape and then further to round. Any size can be made, as well as tapered dowels. More information on making a spar gauge is given at the end of the newsletter.

Dowel plates can be had from BPM Toolcraft in both metric and imperial sizes for about R1400-. As was shown, the dowels made depend on the quality of the stock and can be rather rough and not always straight.

Les is showing a stationery dowel cutter that can bought off Temu or Banggood for about R300- This covers a range of sizes, from 8mm to 20mm. An imperial version is also available. The dowel stock is tapered to fit, to start in the largest hole, and driven by an electric drill. The stock can then be driven through smaller holes as required.





Peter Middleton and Graham Swallow showed how to use a round-over cutter in a router to turn square stock into a round dowel. On the left, Peter is holding a round-over router bit.

The picture on the right shows how Graham clamped the stock at each end, before using a trim router with a round-over bit to round over the four corners. With care, a round dowel can be produced, provided the square stock is the correct size to start with.



Graham also showed a jig that can be built using two planer blades to make an arbitrary size of dowel. The dowel stock is driven through the hole with a drill as shown by Graham in the picture on the left.



Reminder - New WWA Account number with **FNB** - **63026931287** – please add this to your beneficiaries list. Please make sure that your payment can be identified by adding your **name**, perhaps cell number and **reason for payment**. Annotations such as “annual subs” or “WWA shirt” without your name are not helpful – Anesh will not be able to trace your payment. Please

note that the **Nedbank account has been closed**.

Check all this with Henry...

Access times for **Made in Workshop for WWA members :**

MiW access control for WWA members – all current paid-up members who have attended a meeting have been issued with a bar code sticker to be used to gain access. Please remember to bring your bar code, so you aren't delayed at the entrance.

MiW times for WWA members are as follows

Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 9AM to 12AM. However please take note of the following: WWA members CANNOT just arrive at **MiW** and use machines unless they have booked them with **MiW**. This refers to the bookable machines such as the panel saw, thickneser/planer, drum sander, spindle moulder as well as CNC machines of any kind. This applies only the woodworking machines. The other machines require the purchase of a membership at the monthly (30 day) rate – which is a good rate anyhow.

Machines such as the bandsaw and the Triton router table need no booking.

Henry also requires that all the major machines may only be used if the WWA member is familiar and fully understands the importance of the correct and safe use of these machines. Speak to Graham regarding training and qualification to use machines.

MiW is a **Maker Space**, which means that members are able access the machines which are included in the list above. Access to the other machines and facilities is subject to additional fees as mentioned above. While **MiW** will provide assistance and training where necessary, members are responsible for providing materials and performing the work themselves. Members need to be skilled and competent to use the facilities to do the work. For example, if you wish to use a CNC machine, you will need to manually program the tool path on the machine or import it from a design tool that generates the tool path for you. There may be a steep learning curve, but that is part of the challenge.

Bookings can be made during office hours of 8h00 to 17h00, weekdays by contacting one of these numbers:

Henry – 083-269 9505; Josh – 083-768 7853; or Trenton – 081-365 6039

Schedule for Regular Events

1. Second Saturday of month at 9h00 at **Made in Workshop** - Herman – all things turning related – 083 631 0501 [hermanpotgieteresq AT gmail.com](mailto:hermanpotgieteresq@gmail.com)
2. **Show & Tell** meetings are held at Hardware Centre every Friday Morning at 09:30. All WWA members welcome. Contact Eugene on 0824953394 or eugene@antlerfin.co.za

This list is subject to change, so please consult your *Crosscut* each month for any updates.

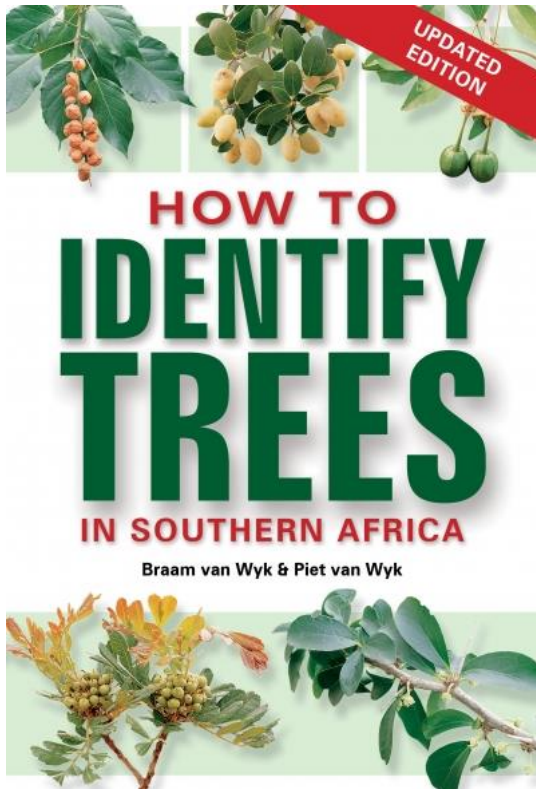


Identifying Wood

Trevor Pope

There was a question at the February 2025 main club meeting about learning how to identify wood. There are some resources that may help with this:

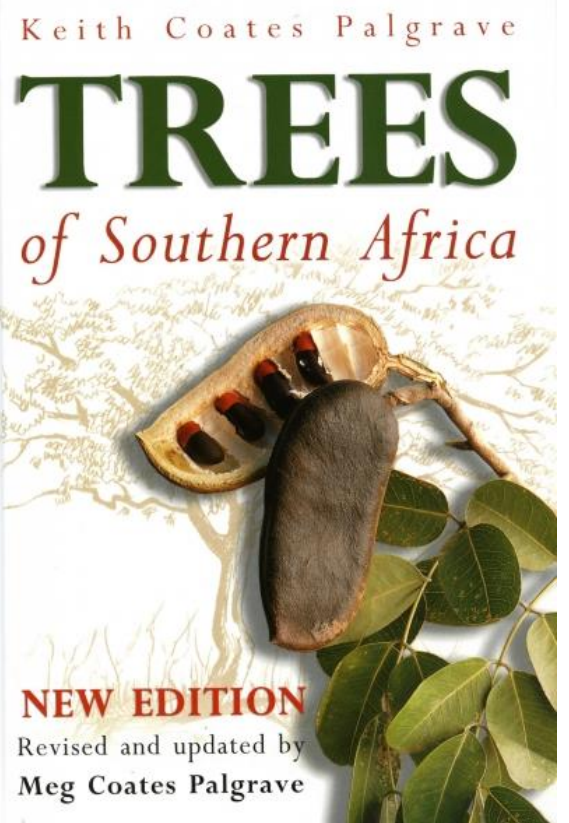
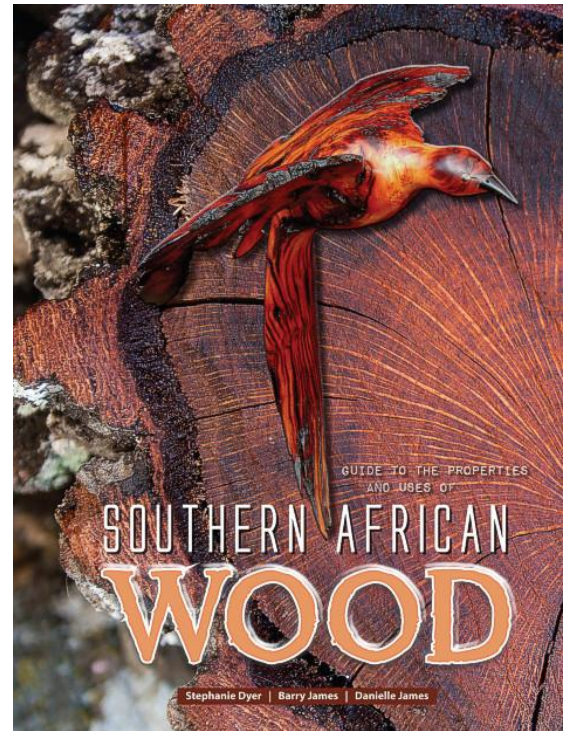
The book “*Guide to the properties and uses of Southern African Woods*” by Stephanie Dyer, Barry James and Danielle James, published by Briza 2016 is a very good resource.



If you have samples of the actual tree – leaves, bark, flowers, etc. then the book “*How to identify Trees in Southern Africa*” by Braam van Wyk and Piet van Wyk, published by Struik in 2007 has a systematic way to identify trees from their leaves. Its not easy to follow, but quite rigorous.

“*Trees of Southern Africa*”

by Keith Coate Palgrave, Struik 2nd Ed 1997 is the one I have. There seems to be a revised edition shown in the picture. This is the definitive guide to indigenous trees. It describes a systematic, and rather complex system for identifying trees using the leaves. Unfortunately, it doesn't cover exotic trees.



For exotic trees, I recommend “*Guide to Trees Introduced into Southern Africa*” by Hugh Glen and Braam van Wyk, Struik 2016. This also has a systematic way to identify trees from their leaves.

If you want a course focussed on North American trees, Taunton offer a video course “Identifying Wood” by Randy Wilkinson – this is a new offering, so I have no idea how good it is. It uses Bruce Hoadley’s book “*Identifying Wood*” as a text book, so it should have a sound basis.

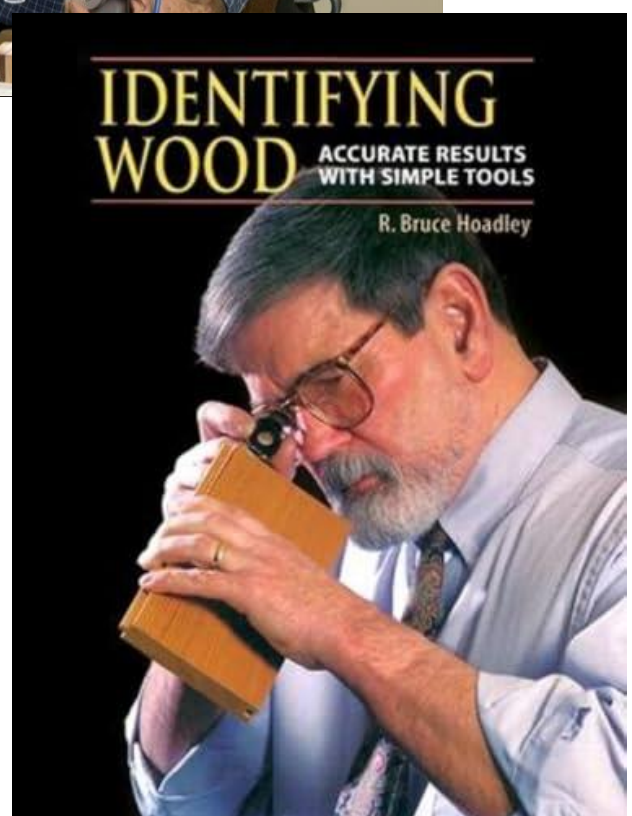


Guide to
TREES
Introduced into Southern Africa



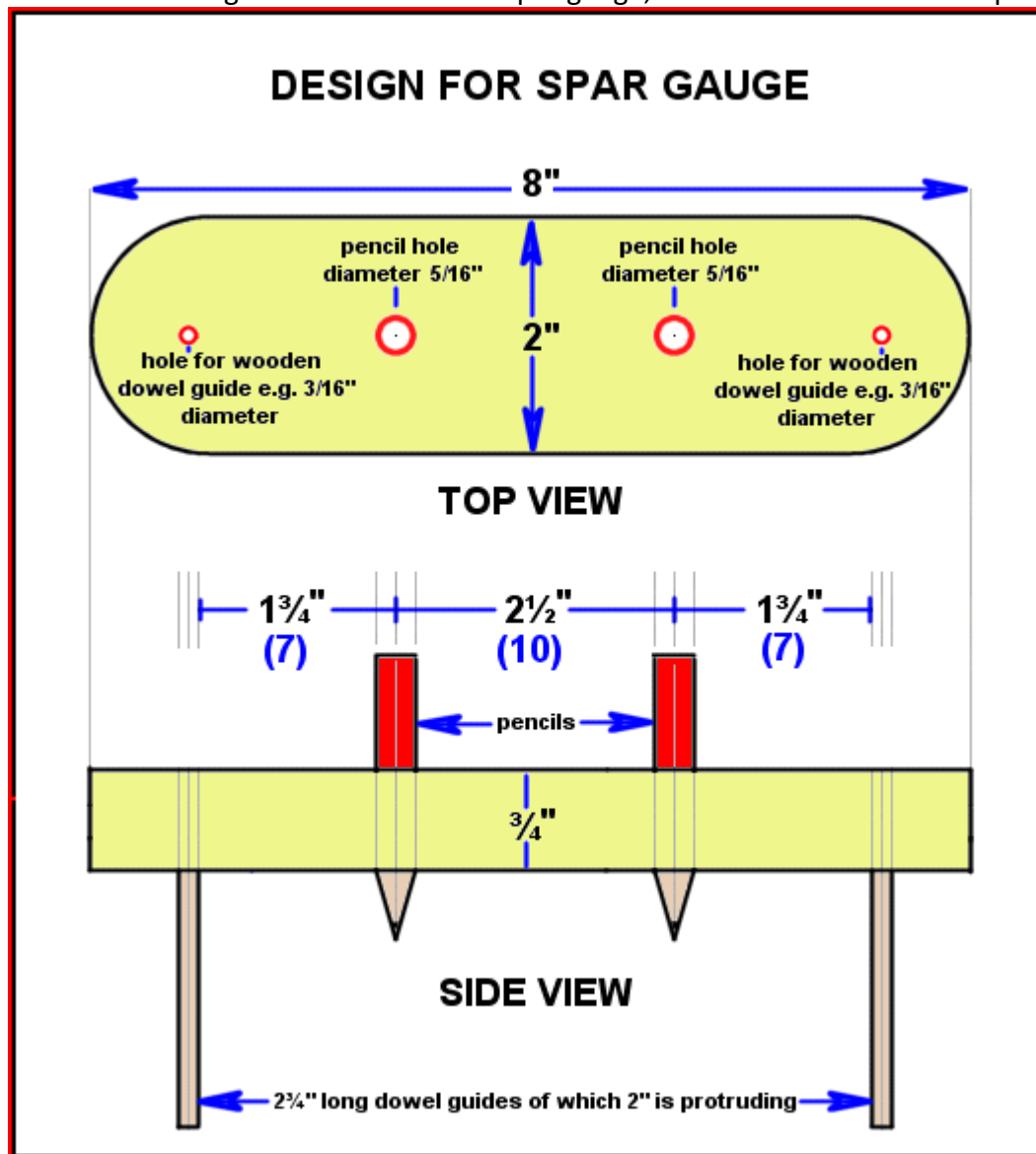
Bruce Hoadley’s book is a classic text for systematically identifying North American woods. Published by the Taunton Press in 1990, this book can be found on the internet archive to be downloaded as a .pdf.

Some of the techniques described can be used with the information given in the books above to identify local trees.



Spar Gauge

The first step when converting a square section of wood to round by hand is marking and planing an extra four facets. This is for converting a square section to an octagon. A spar gauge can help you to mark out lines for the octagon. One feature of a spar gauge, is that it can mark out a tapered octagon.



CONSTRUCTION NOTES

A piece of wood (hardwood or softwood) with flat planed faces and measuring about 8" long, 2" wide and 3/4" thick can be used to make the gauge. The holes for the pencils and outer guides are drilled along the centre line of the wood. Note that on the plan, the distances between the pencil and guide holes is from the centre of the pencil holes to the inside faces (NOT THE CENTRE), of the guide holes. The 3/4" thickness of the gauge body is to make it easier to ensure that the guides and pencils are held at 90° to the upper & lower faces of the gauge and to this end the holes should be drilled as vertically and as true as possible.

The two outer guides can be made out of round wooden dowel (available in most hardware shops or from timber merchants). A diameter of 3/16" is suggested but can vary according to what is available. The length can be 2 3/4", the top 3/4" being glued into the corresponding hole in the body of the gauge.

The two pencil holes have a distance between the centre points of 2 1/2" with a suggested diameter of 5/16" which corresponds to the diameter of a typical pencil.