

Re: Feather inlay
Posted by: [Robert Box](#) (---.adt.com)
Date: June 13, 2005 10:22AM

Here's an article.

Kate Davidson

From: "robert meiser" <rmeiser@charter.net>

To: "Kate Davidson" <goose@mind.net>

Sent: Saturday, November 30, 2002 8:36 AM

Subject: Language for Siskiyou Aviary's Seminar section : feather inlays

One of the most effective ways to add a genuinely unique look to your own custom built rod is to personalize it with feather inlays. This is a very simple process, and once you have mastered the basic skills of inlaying a single feather, you will be well on your way to creating your own feather weaves and designs. The following step by step photos and accompanying language should help you master the feather inlay process.

1. Preparing the blank for the inlay is important, as the blank surface may have factory release agents, hand oils, or any variety of contaminants not compatible with epoxies. Thoroughly wipe the blank down with isopropyl alcohol prior to doing any inlays or thread work. No additional preparation is required.

2. For a number of reasons, the choice of feather is also very important. For the sake of

simplicity in explaining the inlay process, I will use a single Jungle Cock Eye feather. They are readily available from most well stocked fly shops in packets of 10 or 12. They will be free of natural oils, and the quality is generally quite good for a reasonable price.

3. I will always use an acrylic based color preservative to set the feathers on the blank prior to epoxy. I prefer to use Guderod 811 color preservative for the following reasons : A. It is crystal clear from the bottle. This allows easy viewing of the feather while placing it on the blank. B. The Guderod can be cut with Isopropyl alcohol to thin it. The thinned C.P. allows full saturation of the feather, and minimizes trapped air within the feather's fibers. (This truly becomes an issue when weaving multiple layers of feathers.) I will generally cut my Guderod with approximately 25% to 30% Iso. This will give it a near water like consistency, perfect for fully penetrating the feather fibers. The Iso. also allows a relatively rapid, but manageable working and curing time for the C.P. The Guderod will be cured and ready to epoxy within 4 hours air drying time at room

temperatures. C. If for some reason, you do not like the look of your feather inlay after curing, you can easily remove it by re-wetting the entire inlay with straight Iso., wipe it clean, and re-do it. No worries !

4. I will completely saturate the feather in the C.P. prior to placing it on the blank. To do this, I will fill the bottom of a Tablespoon size stainless steel measuring spoon with the Guderod. Dip the entire length of the feather in the C.P., and pick it up for placement utilizing a small stiff bristled hobby brush. The feather is placed on the blank to it's approximate final location, and then adjusted to it's final location by nudging it into place with the bristles of the brush. In order to adjust each feather filament into it's proper location, you may have to flood the entire feather, and actually float the fibers into their best location. Once you have the feather placed and arranged exactly where you want it, leave it alone, and set the rod section on a horizontal plane and allow to dry. The C.P. will evaporate, and leave the feather perfectly arranged as placed. To center the feather correctly on the blank, mount the reel. With the reel seated in place, it will automatically locate the blanks center radius.

5. After the inlay is dry, you are ready for your first coat of epoxy coverage. Like the C.P., the epoxy should be applied in such a manner that it will flood the entire inlay.

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a stiff bristled hobby brush. With the rod turning, place the brush bristles against the rod at the top of the inlay, and evenly progress down the inlay. The excess epoxy will accumulate, and occasionally drop from the brush as you progress. Leave just enough epoxy behind to very thinly cover the inlay. 'Hie feather (especially multiple feathers) will generate lots of bubbles in your epoxy. Leaving the first coat of epoxy coverage very thin will minimize this problem, but some will appear never the less. Now is the time to remove them. This can be done by lightly brushing the inlay with the grain as it turns. For this, I will use the same type of hobby brush as mentioned earlier. Watch the inlay for a few minutes, if more bubbles appear, brush it again with the grain.. .Repeat as needed. Allow the epoxy covered inlay to turn and dry for 24 hours, and re-coat as needed. Following coats will not generate nearly as many bubbles. The heavier feather weaves will often require 3 or 4 coats of coverage, a single feather will generally require only 2 coats.

6. The inlay can be placed directly to the blank, or it can be applied to a thread background. I will often background the inlay with an opaque thread

color that will enhance the color scheme of the feathers. The feathers are placed directly onto the thread, and covered with C.P. in the described fashion, making sure that all of the thread is FULLY saturated as well. This may require two coats of C.P. coverage over the entire inlay and thread area. With the Guderod mixture as described, you will need to wait at least 4 hours between coats.

if you follow these recommendations carefully, I absolutely guarantee that you will be on your way to creating your own beautiful feather inlays. I have used this process to inlay literally hundreds of rods.

As with all things within the crafts, practice makes perfect... Practice, Practice, Practice I Experiment with various feathers, and thread combinations. Be creative, and most importantly: Have Fun !!

If you find that you may require moral support, feel free to contact me. I am usually found in my shop building rods, if not... Fm out fishing!

Bob Meiser.. .R.B. Meiser Fly Rods