

# The “Recreation” Duck Boat.

By LYNN BOGUE HUNT

**Illustrated by the Author.**

**D**UCK shooting probably has more inconveniences and disagreeable features compared with results than all other bird hunting put together. Rain, snow, ice, cold and wind, all combine against the gunner to make his lot an unhappy one, but no combination of weather and hard luck can make him so completely miserable as a wet, heavy, clumsy, unmanageable boat. And besides the uncomfortableness of a bad boat is always its worst feature, danger; especially around large bodies of water, or along the coast.

Many a good fellow has been sacrificed to Neptune by a leaky, logy, hard-rowing hunting boat, and it is to show how simple and inexpensive a good, safe boat may be and how it will add to the pleasure and profit of duck shooting that the following plans and descriptions are put before you.

A duck boat may be built anywhere. In the barn, in the back yard or in the cellar; only be sure if you work in your cellar that you have a door or some other outlet big enough to escape with your prize when launching day comes around. No preparation is necessary, but if you happen to have a good work bench with a wooden vise and the every-day carpenter tools you no doubt have some experience in wood working, which, with the tools, will help you a lot.

The necessities are a compass, a square, a saw, draw-shave, claw hammer, brace, bit (which will bore a hole for No. 12 screws), a counter sink for same, a block plane, a smooth plane and a half-inch chisel. To this add a screw-driver and a handy chunk of iron for a clinch iron. A flatiron will do if the missus doesn't catch you with it; if she does, get a small sledge hammer or a sash weight or anything else handy.

Now for the lumber. You will need oak for your stems; one piece 38 inches long, 7 inches wide and 3 inches thick will be enough. Get a piece that is sound and grained and clear, and make the dealer swing all his guns and dogs it is thoroughly seasoned "as the stem is twisted so goes the boat." floor timbers should be of oak also. Getting 12 running feet of sound 1-inch by 1 1/4-inch stuff for purpose and add 12 running feet of the same for runners, which go on the bottom after this is finished. Now, about forty feet of 3/4-inch round for fender and 17 feet of 1/2-inch round for coaming finish, complete the list of lumber you will use. The knees should be of ash of the best quality, and 16 running feet 4 inches wide and 1 inch thick are required. The cockpit coaming should be of ash also. Two pieces 6 feet long, 5 inches wide by 1/2 inch thick two 30 inches by 5 inches by 1/2 inch, will be enough. Add to this 2 feet of 2-inch quarter-round, or if you cannot get this in ash use 2-inch square stuff or 2-inch quarter-round oak. Ash is the best possible wood for the deck beams and you will need 16 running feet 4 inches wide by 1 inch thick and 3 feet 5 inches wide by 1 inch wide for deck knees. For the bottom, sides and deck of your duck boat, cedar is the stuff if you are lucky enough to possess it or don't give a hang for expense. Next to this comes clear white pine, of course, and last but not least is cypress, which is a good every-day substitute for the above two and will probably be used nine times out of ten. Three pieces, 15 feet long, 10 inches wide and

$\frac{3}{4}$  inch thick, matched if possible, are required for the bottom. Get two 17-foot pieces 14 inches wide and  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch thick for the sides and two more of the same dimensions for the deck.

For the fasteners get: 1 gross 1-inch No. 12 screws, 1 gross 1½-inch No. 12 screws, 3 dozen 2-inch No. 12 screws, 2 pounds 6-penny wire nails, 1 pound 1¼-inch wire brads, 1 pound 1½-inch wire brads, 1 pound 1-inch wire nails, 2 pounds 1-inch wire brads, 3 boxes 2-ounce tacks.

Now run across the street to the drygoods store for five yards of drilling or the lightest duck, and see the blacksmith about the iron work shown in the diagrams with this article. He will need no further guide than the sketches.

Besides the iron work shown, you will want two 7-foot pieces of  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch half-round for the runners. These pieces should be drilled and counter-sunk every ten or twelve inches for small  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch screws to make them fast to the oak pieces used for runners.

So now you have the makings of a good duck boat complete.

Some readers of this article will have part and others nearly all of these materials on hand in some form or other, and to those the cost will be labor alone. But even if you have to buy every ounce of the raw materials, the cost ought not to run over ten or twelve dollars for a first-class boat. Oars will come outside of this and should be bought ready made unless you have plenty of time and skill at your disposal.

And now to work.

Lay an 8-foot by 18-inch piece of wrapping paper on the floor and mark a perfectly straight line from end to end near one side. Then at one end cross this at right angles with another straight line. Divide these lines into feet and inches, and mark the paper into 2-inch squares as indicated in Fig. 1. Now, following the diagram exactly, draw the curve representing the outline of one quarter of the bottom of the boat you are to build.

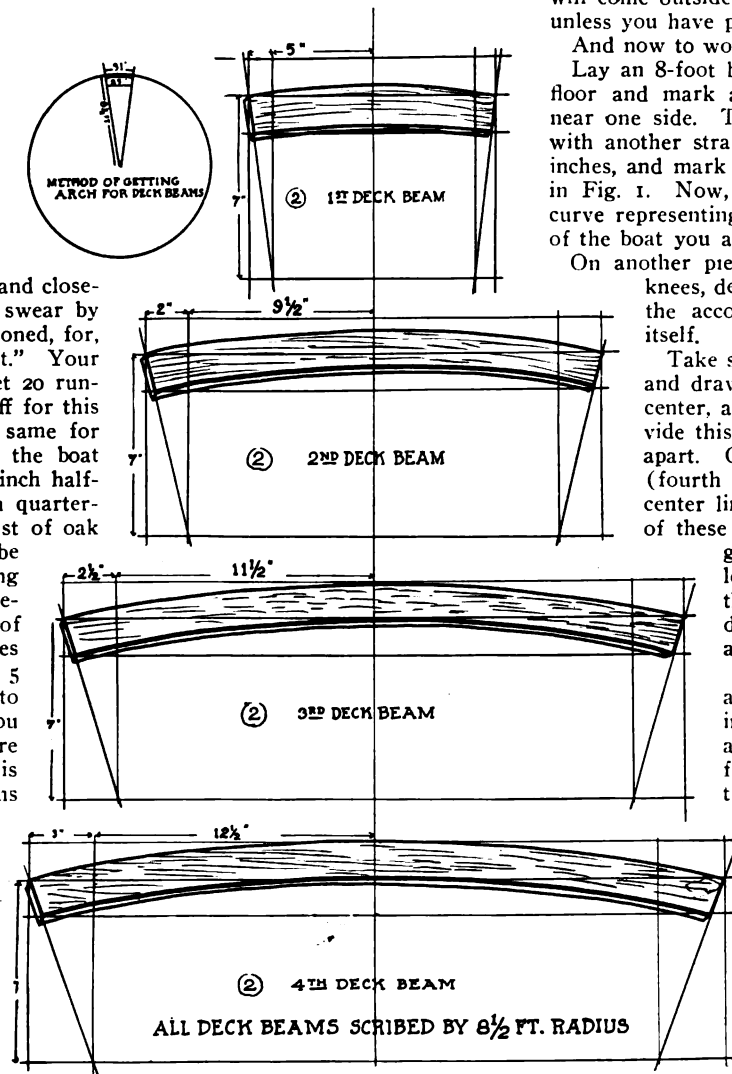
On another piece of paper lay out the patterns for the knees, deck knees and stems exactly as indicated in the accompanying diagram, which fully explains itself.

Take still another piece of paper, 3 feet by 5 feet, and draw on it a straight line lengthwise down the center, and beginning 2 inches from the bottom divide this paper into 7-inch sections, about 5 inches apart. On the bottom line of the lowest section (fourth deck beam) erect lines parallel with the center line and each  $12\frac{1}{2}$  inches from it. Outside of these still, erect two more lines, as in the diagram,  $15\frac{1}{2}$  inches from the center line. Follow this same process with the remaining three sections, using the measurements indicated in the diagrams for third, second and first deck beams.

Next, take a 9-foot piece of stovepipe wire and twist into it at one end two loops, 2 inches apart, which will let the point of a pencil through, and at the other a loop for a 6-penny nail. When finished the extreme loops in this wire should be  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet apart.

Now go back to the paper pattern on the floor and continue its center line a number of feet, marking on the floor.

The wire represents the radius of a circle of which your deck beams are arcs of various lengths. Nail the end with one loop in it fast to the floor on the pencil line and slip a pencil point through the end loop on the other end of the wire. Now move the paper up and down the center line on the line on the floor, so that the circle line the

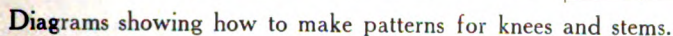


### How to make patterns for the deck beams.

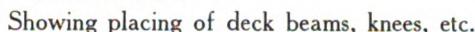




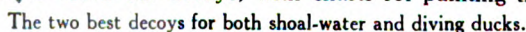
Lay your three bottom boards side by side upon the floor and if they are matched put them together with good white lead, and fasten all together with temporary cross pieces of pine or anything else handy. When this is done, turn the bottom over and mark a line down the exact center from end to end. Then take the bottom pattern you will have made from the bottom plan (Fig. 1) and laying its long straight edge along the center line on the board so that the point reaches the end of the boat, drive in brads



By studying the ground plan and cross sections of the boat presented, you will find the correct positions of deck beams, deck knees, floor timbers, stems and cockpit coaming. The plan is drawn to scale and is exact. Thus, you will note the first floor timber is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet from the other end of the boat; second floor timber is 3 feet, etc. The first knee is on a line 2 feet from the end; the second on a line 3 feet 4 inches; the third 4 feet 6 inches from the



Try this same pattern to the other side of the boat and if no difference  
(Continued on page 87.)





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### The Recreation Duck Boat.

(Continued from page 67.)

appears mark out the other side plank from the first side pattern. If any difference appears, however, it is better to make a separate pattern for the other side.

Saw out the side planks, leaving the pencil line to dress away, and fasten them to the knees, floor timbers and stems, using two screws in each knee, one in each floor timber and five in each end at the stem. Now two nails in addition to the two screws in each knee and nails through the sides into the bottom planks about 1½ inches apart for entire length. Drive the nails only after punching holes with the awl and send nails into the bottom horizontally.

Next, the deck beams and deck knees go in as indicated in the diagrams. Make the beams and deck knees fast to the knees with 2-inch screws as indicated.

Dress the top and bottom edges of the side planks until they are flush with the ends of the knees and with the bottom of the boat.

You are now ready to put in the cockpit coaming. You have ash for this purpose, 5 inches wide and ½ inch thick. Dress off the upper and lower edges of these pieces until they are half round. Cut the end pieces so that the ends of them will come exactly in line with the ends of the deck knees when in place against the fourth deck beam. Make these end pieces rise 2¾ inches above the highest point in the deck beams to which they are screwed. Now put the side pieces through the same process and fit them in with their ends against the end pieces of the cockpit coaming and screw them fast to the deck knees, two screws in each knee. On the inside of the joints where the four pieces of ash coaming come together fit the quarter round, as illustrated, and put in 1-inch screws from the outside. Dress off roughness of joints with a wood file.

### THE DECK.

Laying the deck is so simple a process you surely will need no further guide than the illustration. The lumber is ¾-inch stuff of the same quality you put into the sides and is made fast to the deck beams, cockpit coaming, deck knees and side planks with 1-inch wire brads. The lumber can be sawed after fastening, thus saving any pattern. Only, of course, care must be exercised in sawing not to scar the sides, stems, etc. Your boat is now ready for the first coat of paint.

Set all nails and brads and see that all screw heads are sunk below the surface. Give the boat a good priming coat of pure white lead and linseed oil. When this is dry, caulking is in order. Get a ball of caulking cotton, which is a loosely twisted cotton string ½ inch in diameter. Lay this along the seams where the bottom boards join the sides and where they join each other. Work the cotton into the seams with a putty knife or a jack-knife and when inside the surface of the seam gently pound it back about ¼ inch into the joint. (If no caulking cotton is to be had use cotton batting rolled into long thin strips.) Serve the seams about the stems in the same way and cover all well with white lead.


Now take the drilling or canvas you got of the drygoods man and lay it over the whole deck. Cut out the center inside the cockpit and draw it down outside the cockpit coaming. Tack it fast to the deck close to the coaming, leaving an inch or more turned up against the coaming. Draw it tight over the whole deck and tack to the side plank just over the edge, leaving an inch or more hanging down the sides. Be careful that no wrinkles appear, and when all is tight and snug, souse it well with white lead and oil.

Putty up all nail and screw heads. Fill all seams, etc., with putty.

Nail on your ¾-inch half round over the canvas where it turns down on the side planks, having the upper edge of the half round flush with the deck and beveling the ends so that they run to nothing on the stems.

Put your ½-inch quarter round around the coaming to cover the canvas where it turns up against the cockpit. Miter the joints in this quarter round to make a neat job. Set the brads and putty.

Turn your boat over and put on the oak 1-inch by 1¼-inch runners, each 2 inches from the middle plank. These should be 6 feet long and the ends should fasten to the third floor timber. Fasten with 3-inch screws except at the ends, which dress down to run into the bottom, making



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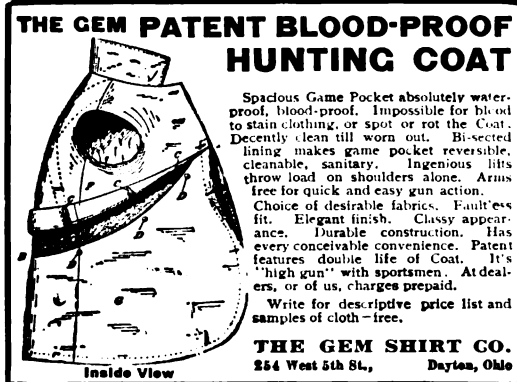
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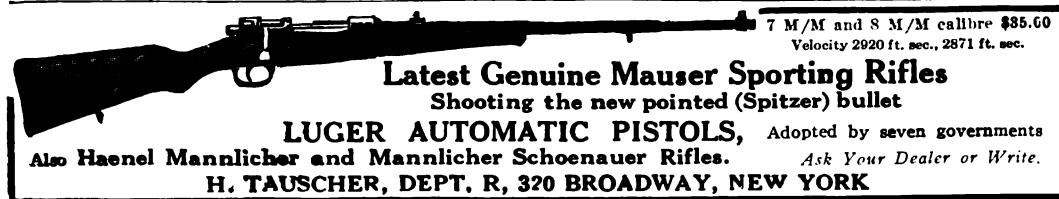
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shorter screws necessary. The runners should be 1 inch wide where they lie against the bottom of the boat and have their sides beveled to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide where the iron goes on. Beginning about a foot from each end, bevel the face of the runner down to nothing where it joins the boat. Put on the iron runners, and while your boat is bottom-side-up screw on the bow and stern irons which the blacksmith has made for you.

Turn your boat over, fasten the tops of the bow and stern irons and trim off the deck canvas where it shows beyond the half and quarter round finishing strips.

The final coat of paint for winter use should be pure white lead and linseed oil. For fall hunting, before ice appears, paint it a leaden gray or a dead grass color.

And when she is dry, break a bottle of champagne over her bow if she is of red cedar and call her "Gwendolin." But if you had to use plain cypress, just hustle into your togs and beat it for duckville.

#### HOME MADE DECOYS.

The illustration shows more clearly than could be explained in three pages how to make decoys which would deceive the mother of all ducks. Use cedar lumber if possible, or at least white pine, 7 inches wide, 4 inches thick, cut into 13-inch lengths for mallards and 10-inch length for bluebills. Make your patterns as in the pictures, enlarging by a system of squares as illustrated. Make the heads of 2-inch by 4-inch stuff and have them jig-sawed for the profile pattern. Mark both ground plan and profile plan of the bodies on the blocks of wood cut for that purpose, using cardboard patterns and then roughly saw out your bird. A draw-shave quickly cuts the resulting corners down to the general roundness of the live bird, and then a coarse wood file and finally fine sandpaper make the body of your decoy ready for paint.

The head being sawed, it can be readily trimmed down with a knife and then with wood file and sandpaper soon reduced to the finished article. The necks should flare out at the bottom to fit a corresponding depression on the body. The head should be set to the body in good putty and nailed fast. Any imperfection of fit can be readily trimmed away with a pocket knife and the duck is ready for the priming coat of light gray paint. After the priming coat is dry, putty all nail holes and other roughness and paint according to illustration.

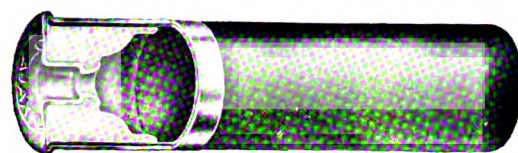
The ballast weight may be made of sheet lead of  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness cut in 2 by 4 strips and made fast to the duck's belly by a screw in each end. With a hammer gently tap the edges and corners out of obtrusiveness.

The illustration shows a decoy anchor which cannot be improved upon. Make some molds of plaster-of-paris poured into a shallow box divided by cigar-box wood partitions 2 inches square and 2 inches deep. When these are set, but not hard, make in each a cone-shaped indentation  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep by holding the point of a jack knife in the center of the surface and moving the handle in circles until you have the cone shape desired. At the bottom of each mold cut a little slot  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long,  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch deep and a 1-16 inch wide. Take 3-inch pieces of copper wire and twist in each a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch loop in the middle; twist the shanks of the wire as shown in the picture.

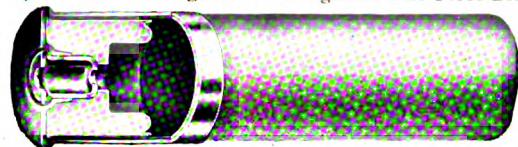
When the molds are absolutely dry, stick the loop in the copper wires down into the slot at the bottom of the molds and pour the molds level full of hot lead.

Put brass screw-eyes into the bottoms of the decoys and fasten on the anchors with about six or eight feet of cord.

In target shooting, the "old hand" will be seen to take the cartridge in one hand and spin the bullet between the thumb and forefinger of the other hand, before inserting it in the chamber of the rifle. This is to distribute the lubricant evenly. Naturally, it does not apply where the so-called greaseless bullets are used. The latter are preferred by the average person, on account of their not collecting dust or grit when carried about the person. However, for careful, fine work, lubricated bullets of the old-fashioned type are preferred. And for that matter, if "greaseless" cartridges are carried in the pocket it is the part of wisdom to spin them before inserting in the rifle anyhow, to remove any dirt.



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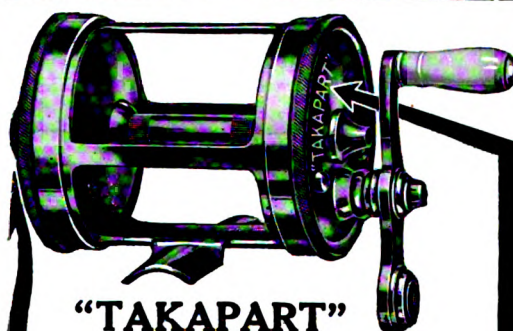
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