

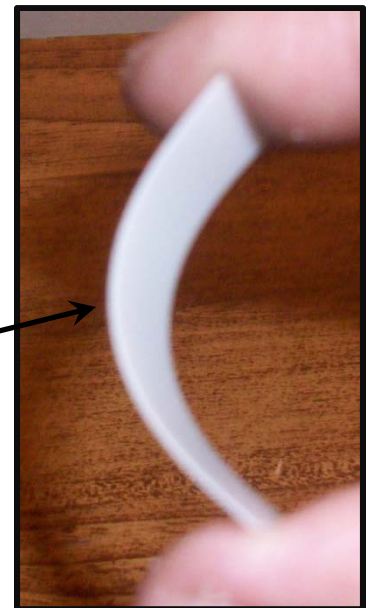
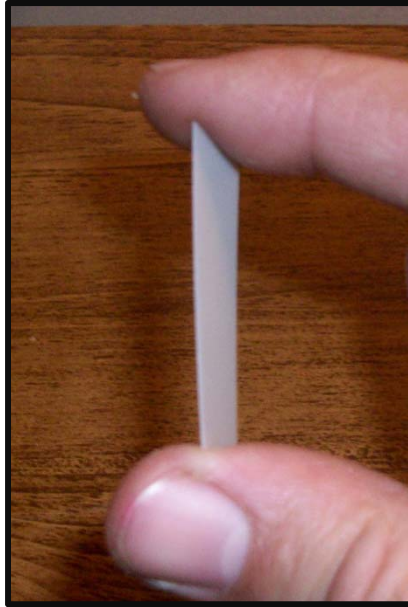
TUNING A DOUBLE REED DUCK CALL

By Corey Ulrich – Ulrich's Custom Calls

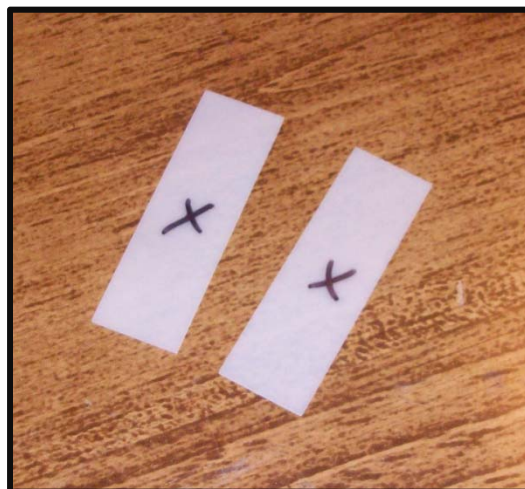
The following is how I tune my double reed duck calls and by no means is the only way to do it. This method is what I found to be the easiest for me to do when tuning a double reed call. You will need the following items, as shown in the image below, to complete the tuning of the call: Duck Barrel and Insert, Scissors, Two Reeds (I use two reeds of the same thickness 0.010), Wedge, Sharpie Marker, Ball Point Pen and Small Block of Soft Wood.



The mylar reeds used for duck calls come from sheets of mylar that are produced in rolls. Since the mylar is in a roll it develops a natural curve and therefore the first step we need to complete is to determine which way the reed curves. Start by taking the reed and placing it between your thumb and index finger as shown in the first image on the right. Then lightly squeeze the reed to determine which way the natural curve is in the reeds, as seen in the second image on the right. Once you have determined the natural curve of both reeds mark the bottom side of the bend with the sharpie marker, as shown in the image below. This is the side that will face down toward the toneboard of the call insert.

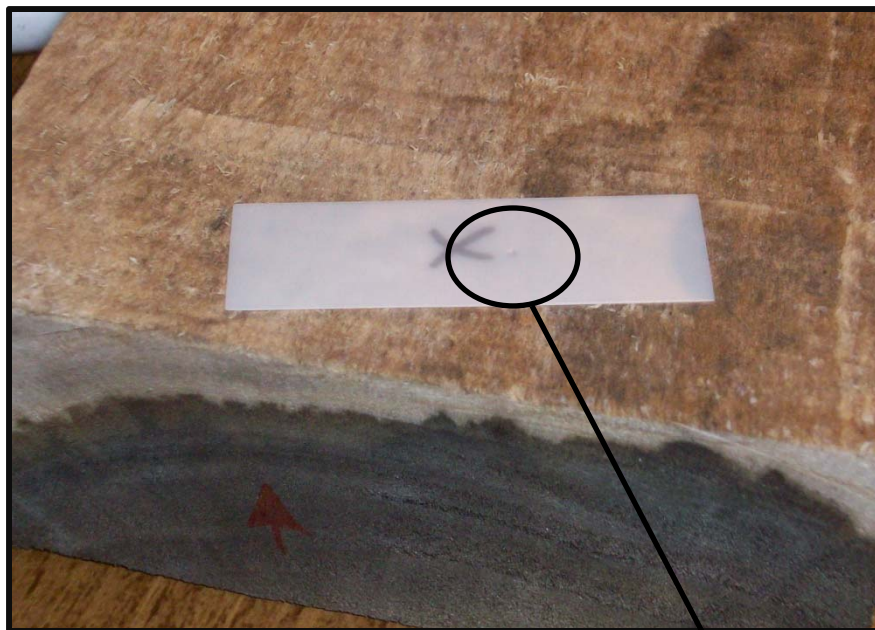


MARK THIS SIDE TO
GO DOWN AGAINST
TONEBOARD





The next step is to make a small dimple in the top reed to help prevent the two reeds from sticking together when the call is operated. To do this, place your top reed with the marked side down on your block of wood. Take a ball point pen and lightly tap the top of the pen to make a small dimple in the reed, see image on the left. Make sure you tap lightly so you do not punch a hole through the reed. I like to put the dimple approximately a third to a half the reed length from the end of the reed. I also like to make the dimple shallow because I use another method to prevent the reeds from sticking which will be shown later in the tutorial. You should now have a small dimple in the reed as shown on the left.

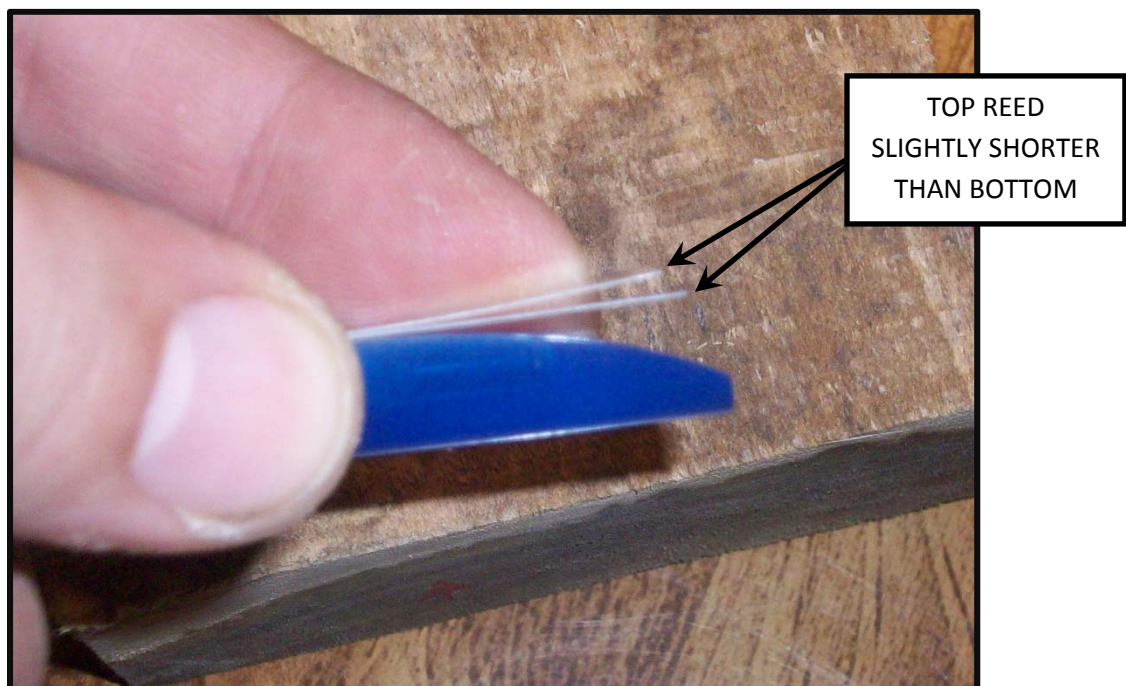


SHALLOW DIMPLE IN TOP REED
APPROXIMATELY HALF TO A THIRD THE REED
LENGTH FROM THE TIP OF THE REED

Now we need to put both reeds in the insert. Take both reeds, with the mark you made earlier facing down toward the toneboard and the dimpled reed on top and put them in the call to the back of the cork notch lining both reeds up evenly with each other. Then push the wedge into the cork notch to hold the reeds in place, as shown below.



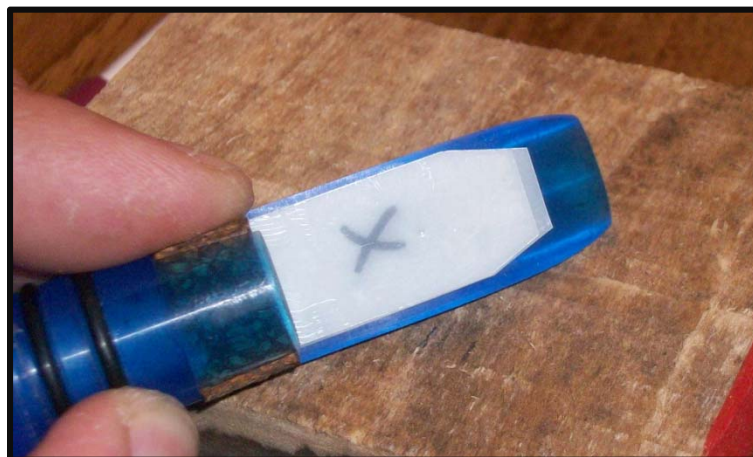
This next step can be skipped if you would like it is more of a personal preference step and depends solely on how you like your calls set up. What I do next is since both reeds are now the same length I like to trim the top reed back so that it is approximately 1/16" shorter than the bottom reed, as shown in the image below.



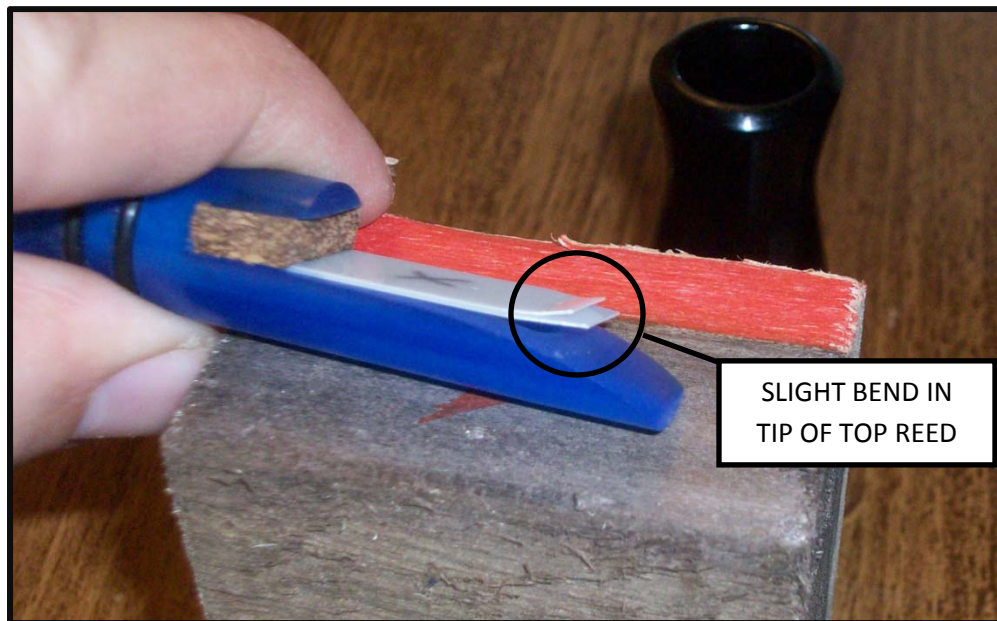
Now it is time to start tuning the call. If you put the call together at this point and blow it you will notice that it is difficult to operate and requires a lot of air. The call requires a lot of air to operate because the reeds are too long. We need to start taking small slivers, as shown in the image on the right, off of the reeds with our scissors to



make the call sound more like a duck and operate with ease. I typically start by taking a small sliver off the bottom reed then blowing on the call. Then I will take a sliver off the top reed and blow the call again. Then I will again take a sliver off the bottom reed and blow the call. I continue to work back and forth taking slivers off the top and bottom reeds till I get reeds the length to where the call sounds how I want it to and is easy to operate. If the reeds are too long the call will continue to require more air to operate and if the reeds are cut too short then the call will squeal out or lock up easier. If you end up taking too much off the reeds you will have to start over with new reeds that is why it is always best to take off small slivers with each cut and test the call often. Once you have the reeds the length you want them then you can either leave them cut straight across the front or put dog ears on them, as shown in the image below. The dog ears can be done at any angle desired and the more you dog ear the reed the more rasp it will add into the call.



The final step that I take is to help prevent the reeds from sticking together. I can't take the credit for this idea as I saw it mentioned by another call maker as a way to prevent sticking in a double reed call for someone that tends to get a lot of saliva in a call while operating it. Through using this method I have found that it does indeed help with preventing sticking where saliva may fill the void created by the dimple between the top and bottom reeds. I have also found that it also adds a little more rasp to the call. I simply take the very tip of the top reed and bend it up slightly so that it stays bend up when you release it. This is shown in the image below.



I hope this helps some people out with tuning a double reed duck call and gets those wings cupped and orange feet in your face. If anyone has any questions feel free to contact me at culrich6@gmail.com or on the THO Forum username – culrich6. HAPPY HUNTING!!