

PAUL MOORE



Left: Outdoor artisans like Bill Newman take great pride in producing quality work to share the beauty of the outdoors with others.

Below: Some waterfowl hunters in the state take great pride in hand-crafting their own duck calls.

From a few simple carvings, James Heddon turned his hobby into a big business. Hand carved in 1897, the Heddon Frog is now worth more than \$10,000. Photo by B.A.S.S.



OUTDOOR ARTISANS

By Micah Holmes

While many of outdoor-related products are made in mass quantity in high-tech facilities, there is another niche of Oklahomans who are quietly toiling away in their garages, workshops or storefront shops. These outdoor artisans are truly talented and they remind us that hunting and fishing is more than just a sport - it is a way of life. Their crafts are

as varied as their personalities. Painters, call makers, fly tiers and taxidermists are just a few of the individuals that bring a softer touch to a rugged outdoor sport.

Anyone who has ever hunted ducks over hand-carved decoys or called in a big tom turkey with a hand-crafted call will be quick to tell you that these items greatly enrich the outdoor experience.

Many of these craftsmen make extra money through their outdoor-related hobbies, others simply pursue their craft for the joy of the finished product or to give away as special gifts. No matter the reason, our outdoor heritage is better because of them.