

FOX, A DOUBLE PADDLE CANOE

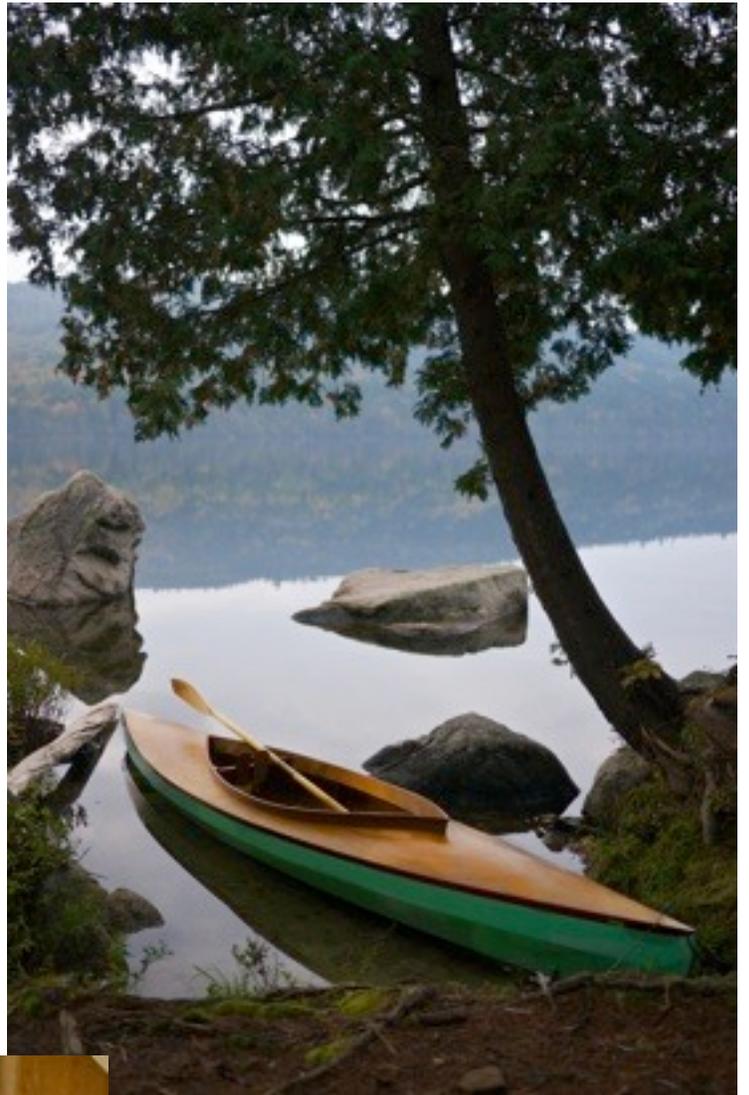


My design process for boats is often somewhat drawn out. It generally takes me several incarnations of a design before I'm happy with the final version. Fox was no exception. From the time I established the design goals until I felt I had achieved the results I envisioned, more than two years had passed. Along the way four prototype versions and nearly 20 student built boats hit the water. The first version, finished in the late summer of 2009 paddled just as I'd hoped. Though it was an attractive boat, excessive freeboard and a flatish sheer somewhat marred her looks.

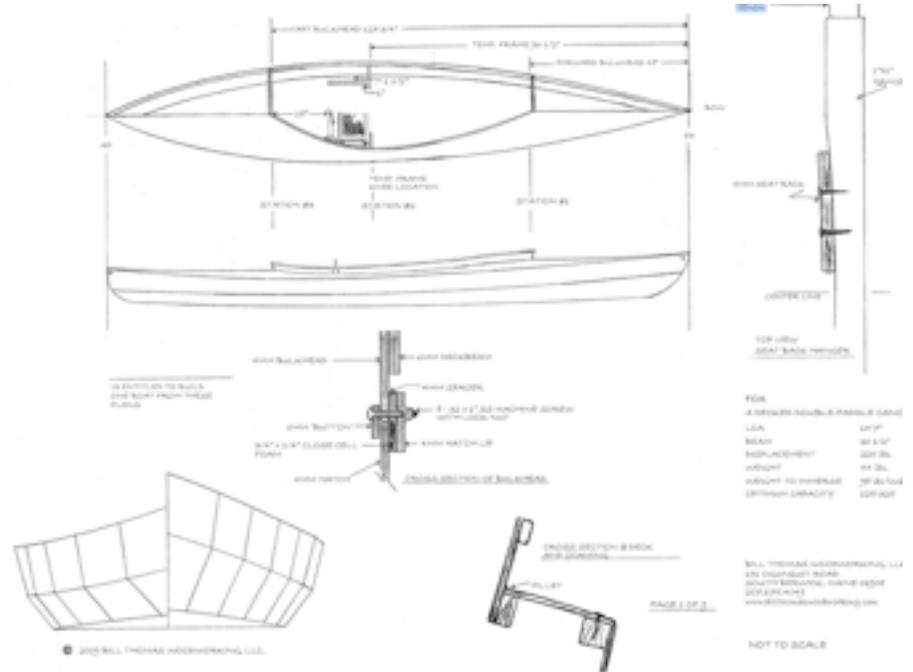


With the questions of performance settled I set about a subtle redesign. The second boat, though quite pretty, drifted too far from my design criteria, namely it proved to be less stable than I would have liked.

Version 3 sported a longer cockpit and just the right shape to the sheer. She also had the stability and handling I was striving for. After a few extended test paddles I tweaked the seat location and fine tuned the coming rim for the 4th and final version. In the summer of 2010, I built 8 Foxes with students at the WoodenBoat School. We worked from my kits and each boat went together perfectly. One could be luck. Eight times is proof that the kits are dead on.



Over the next winter I wrote the building manuals and finished the building plans for both kit and plans builders. The following spring, after assembling more kits with students and several more outings in the final version I was happy enough with the Fox to pronounce her finished and offer the plans and kits for sell.



Fox could be called a kayak but a more accurate label would be Decked Double Paddle Canoe. Decked canoes are seaworthy and quite remarkable voyages have been taken in them. While Fox is a capable boat and able to cover the miles when need my inspiration while drawing this design was the quiet waters and gentle times I recalled from paddling trips on the mountain lakes of my youth.



My Fox design, at 14'7" is longer than most decked canoes and the beam of over 30" adds greatly to the stability and capacity of the boat. At about 44 pounds it can easily be carried on one's shoulder and is stable enough to step into at the waters edge. It is possible to simply walk down to an inviting lake or marsh and slip Fox into the water for an afternoon of casual paddling and exploration.

There's room for a young child or pet forward of the paddler. Fox with her stability and roomy 80" long cockpit is also a great boat for fishing or photography.



Tracking is solid and the bilge panels make it possible to lean the boat and carve gentle turns as you wind up narrow creeks and back waters. Writing in "Small Boats", an annual WoodenBoat Magazine publication, Mike O'Brien said "*Fox appears to have just just the right amount of directional stability. It likes to keep going where we point it, yet it turns easily and predictably.*" Fox's long waterline and fine entry also make it possible to cover the miles, when needed. The ample but not excessively tall freeboard coupled with a moderately high bow and 3" coamings make for a dry ride in chop or swell. Fox is



built stitch & glue with 6oz fiberglass cloth on the bottom and a cambered deck. The 2 bulkheads have hatches for access to the dry storage areas behind them and create positive flotation chambers.

The hull is built with Okoume plywood. The seat back and coaming trim are Mahogany. A caned ash canoe seat is mounted about an inch above the flat bottom. Foot braces aren't needed as it's perfectly comfortable to paddle with the outside of your knees braced against the coaming, or to sit cross legged when the mood strikes.



Working from a kit, building time for Fox is between 80 and 100 hours. Plans builders can add about 20 hours to these numbers.

Because of her traditional good looks and because she's owner built, often as a family project, Fox is destined to become a treasured family heirloom.

