

## Rushing Around by John Steel and Chris Holt

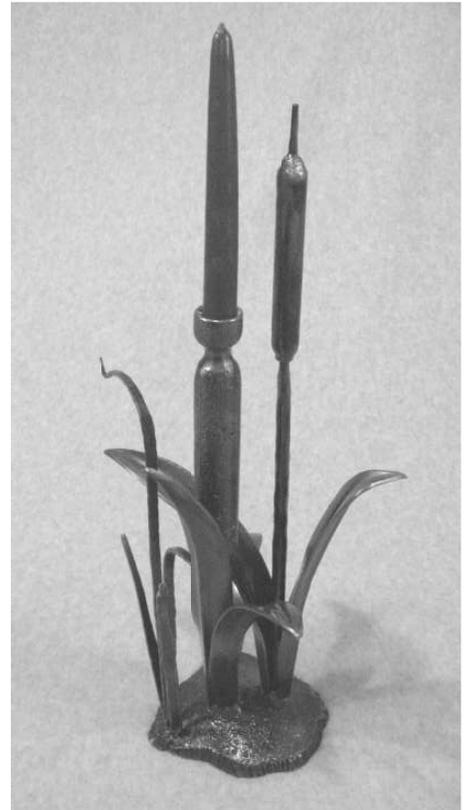
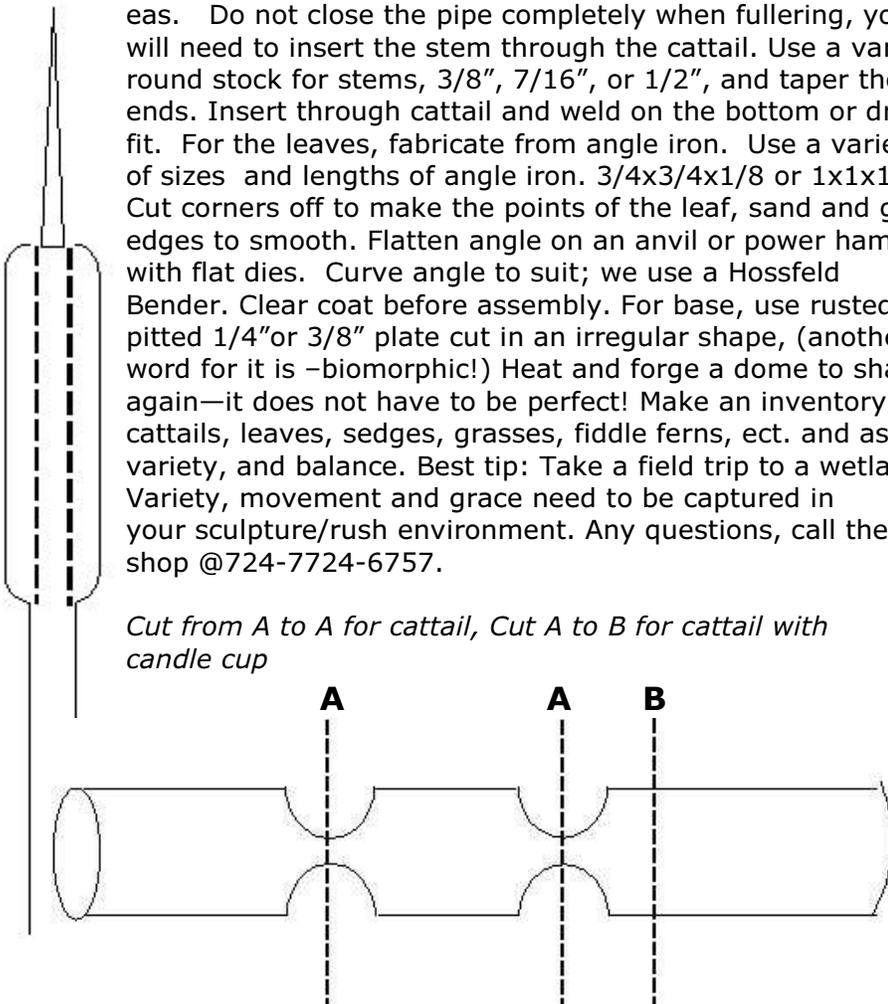
We have been developing a series of a contemporary interpretation of a rush light. It all "stemmed" from a large project we recently completed based on water plants and a wetland environment. We have not made two alike. Your design can vary according to the plan and plants you make.

It is best to have a full inventory of plants and parts so that assembly and design can be made at one time. Trying to make each piece and placing it slows down the creative process. It is important for the all over design to look fresh and graceful.

Start with the least graceful pipe you have on hand. Sixty year old pipe left outside may be just PERFECT for cattails. You will be thrilled with the results and glad you did not take it to the scrap yard. Do not use galvanized pipe; dangerous fumes will emit when heated in a forge or torch. Seamless pipe is best because sometimes the weld will fail when forging the cattail ends. Make several of the cattail "hotdogs" from a 3' piece of pipe. Do not formally measure them, approximate the size ranging from 4-7 inches. This will help you develop your "eye" for proportion. Be sure to plug one end of the pipe to keep the whole pipe from getting hot and also do not quench. The hot pipe will turn the water to steam and result in a nasty burn. Also, quenching will harden the pipe in the fullered areas.

Do not close the pipe completely when fullering, you will need to insert the stem through the cattail. Use a variety round stock for stems, 3/8", 7/16", or 1/2", and taper the ends. Insert through cattail and weld on the bottom or drive fit. For the leaves, fabricate from angle iron. Use a variety of sizes and lengths of angle iron. 3/4x3/4x1/8 or 1x1x1/8. Cut corners off to make the points of the leaf, sand and grind edges to smooth. Flatten angle on an anvil or power hammer with flat dies. Curve angle to suit; we use a Hossfeld Bender. Clear coat before assembly. For base, use rusted or pitted 1/4" or 3/8" plate cut in an irregular shape, (another word for it is -biomorphic!) Heat and forge a dome to shape, again—it does not have to be perfect! Make an inventory of cattails, leaves, sedges, grasses, fiddle ferns, ect. and assemble. Keep in mind proportion, variety, and balance. Best tip: Take a field trip to a wetlands and observe the water plants. Variety, movement and grace need to be captured in your sculpture/rush environment. Any questions, call the shop @724-7724-6757.

*Cut from A to A for cattail, Cut A to B for cattail with candle cup*



*Make an inventory of parts.*