

Crewel of the Deep

Craft Leftovers

All those yarn strands, just a few yards long are filling up all my little containers and what the heck can you do with those except pitch them in the trash? About a year ago I was introduced to crewel needlework and wouldn't you know it, it's the perfect thing. It's traditionally done with 2 ply wool in about a dk to sport weight, but it's been so fun to play with different textured yarns and see how they make different textured surface. About this same time became interested in the gulf coastal region and borrowed a book from the library about them. Just one of those field guide ones. I'm not sure why but I became obsessed with drawing them. It is from those drawings that I have made these templates. I hope you enjoy seaside creatures and using up yarn bits as much as I do!

Ingredients:

3 yards of each yarn color/type, for these templates I'm using
sport or worsted weight wool

Crewel embroidery needle

5" embroidery hoop

8" x 8" square of muslin



Directions:

Print out the template of your choice, place over embroidery hoop, then place you fabric over that, snap hoop together and tighten. You should be able to see the template through the fabric.

I am not going to attempt to explain stitches here because I really feel it is done so well already in many books and web sites. The basic thing that you should know about working with the paper template is that you must use light weight fabrics so you can see it. And start in the middle with the smallest design element and work your way out. The paper perforates as you stitch into and if you do the border first, for instance, the center of the template will tear away before you want it too.

After you are finished with your needle work, you can simply remove the paper from the back.

I really like hanging mine in little frames that I find in the thrift shop. I use a really simple, fast, easy slacker method of matting.

First you should press your work, from the back side, to work out the kinks that the hoop created.

Cut 2 pieces of Bristol board or card stock to the size of your frame.

Stitch the cloth to the top two corners of the board that you will be using for the back. Mark off where the crewel work lines up on the other board. Cut a window that is 1/2" wider than the work on all sides. You can than stitch the window mat to the backing along the top. Slip it into the frame and you are done!

Now I'm telling you now. This is not the correct way to finish a fine needlework piece. My fiber arts professor would be fainting if she knew what I had suggested. You could stretch it over stretcher bars. Or you could use real mat board and cut a bevelled edge and use archival foam core for the back. There are a lot of "professional" finishing tutorials elsewhere if you would like to do that.

My way is just fast, easy, and on-hand style.

Color and Stitch Directory:

- = Main Color
- = Contrasting Color
- = Contrasting Color 2
- ⦿ = french knot
- < = split stitch
- \\ = satin stitch





