

Amy's

needlework supplies & classes

APRIL 2013

what's inside this month

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Spring in Memphis always raises its head gradually. In March we had our usual bouncing back and forth from 30 something degrees to 70 something. We had gray drizzly skies which would break up into sun-lit blue, only to return to cloudy with a threat of It seems hard to believe that four short weeks ago I drove thru big puffy snowflakes to go to the Franklin, TN show, and now I'm looking at budding leaves on the trees and spring flowers dotted here and there.

How do the birds know when to change their song? There are birds everywhere! Robins are busy pulling up worms. Cardinals offer a flash of color as they flit through the sparsely-leaved branches of trees. Blue Jays make a fun jar lid squeal sound as they plot their bully techniques to get all the food. The Mockingbirds and Doves don't seem to be around yet, but they will add their songs and coos to the medley soon. All of this avian activity spurs me on to shake off my lazy winter coat and join in the sheer joy of spring.

We want to share just a few of our bird, birdhouse, and flower items with you in this newsletter.... some are spring/summer-related, some have a slightly more sinister season in mind. Even my new guide features springtime visitors....

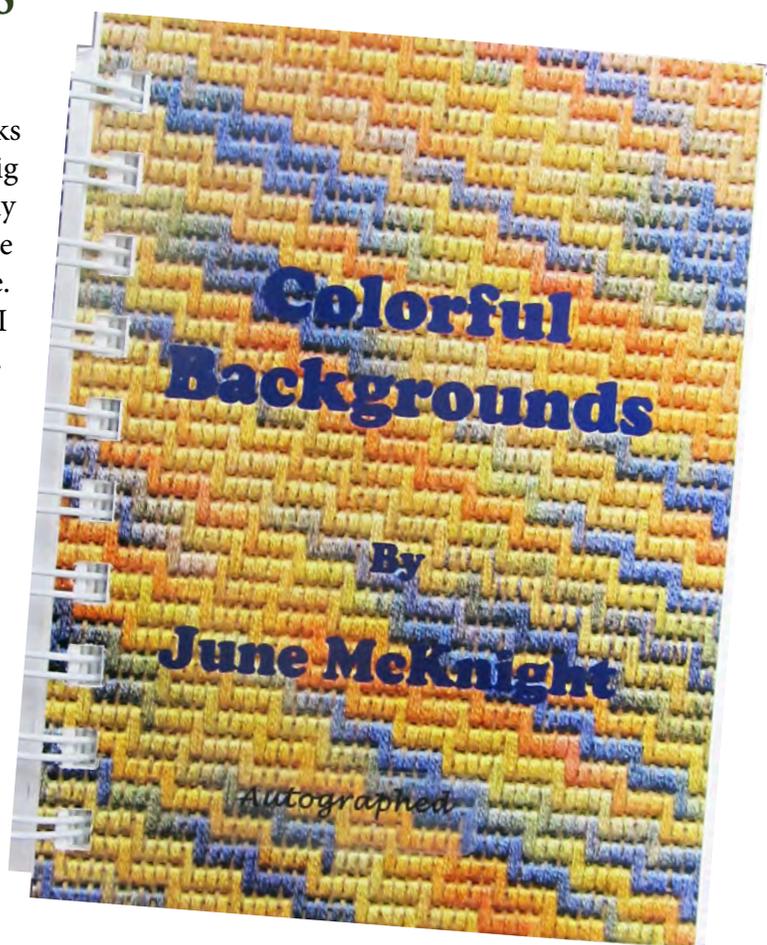


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COLORFUL BACKGROUNDS BY JUNE MCKNIGHT

The size and shape of this series of books remind me of the series of Little Big Books, which were children's books of my father's era. Every time I pick one up, the good memories put a smile on my face. That smile spreads even wider when I crack open the cover and begin to study. The title is very appropriate as the book is full of color and creative ideas.

This is June McKnight's 18th book! She has broken the book into two sections, one on solid coverage and the second section is on open canvas ideas. She has good advice on pages 3-5 to get the ball rolling on working backgrounds, then she follows with advice and tips written for each stitch diagram (even numbered pages) and thread suggestions under the color photo of each stitched sample (odd numbered pages).



The pages hold great representations for combining metallic with cottons, silks or blends. I LOVE the examples of overdyed threads...they may not be the perfect choice for a "background" in some of the examples, but I see them as a big bonus anyway because you can see what they look like when they are stitched. Having said that, I totally love the "forest" look on pages 43 & 49 for a background, not to mention the stitch on page 45 for a floor or pathway. The simple idea of incorporating a color/texture thread change on every other row (page 23) is a genius variation on a simple Diagonal Mosaic.

In the "open" section, I love Open Airplane on page 129. This is a great variation on Medieval Mosaic, and it gives a super look for a background. Quilt Diamond on page 143 is fun and needs to find a home on one of my canvases as well.

COST: \$52⁰⁰

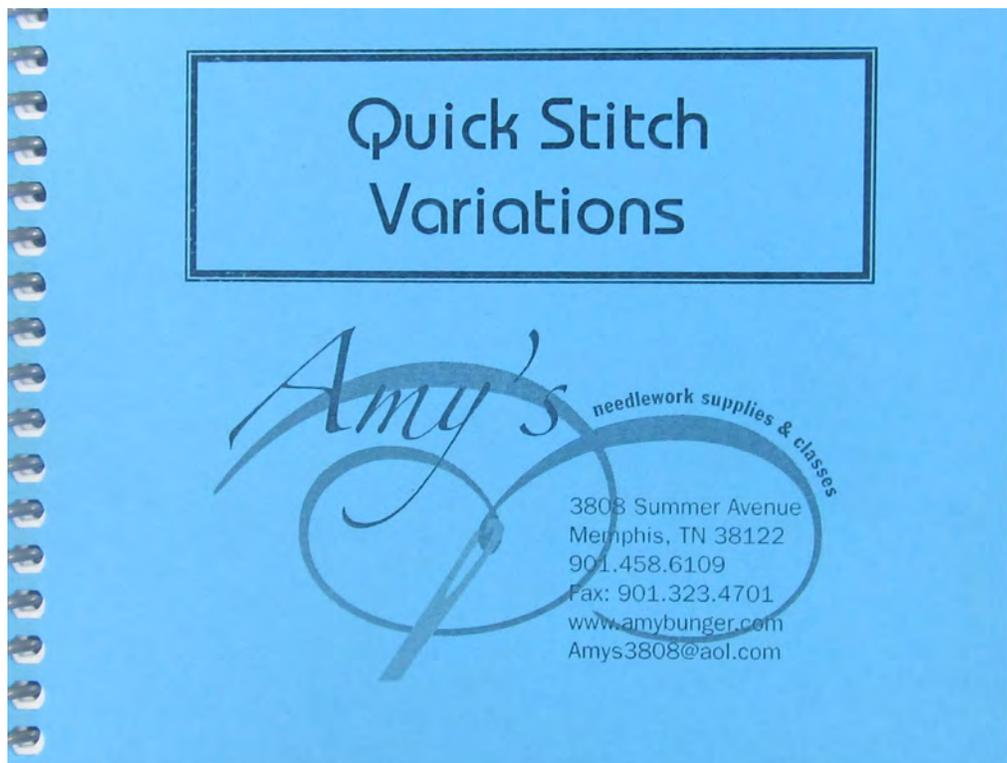
QUICK STITCH VARIATIONS

BY CUSTOM HOUSE OF NEEDLE ARTS & FINGER STEP DESIGNS

There was little fanfare about this book at market, but I am so glad that I didn't pass it up. Sometimes the brightest jewel can be passed by when it sits quietly among other beautiful items and waits for you to come and find it. This little book packs a powerful punch – and even suits a pauper's pocketbook. This is the third book in the Quick Stitch Series. Each book is a convenient companion for your stitching bag because of its small size and light weight. You can't go wrong with adding this little gem to your needlepoint library.

Last weekend during Rent Amy Days, I took a high dive right into this book to select stitches to use on several canvases in class. There are 48 “winner” stitches in it. One of my favorite pages is inside the back cover listing the Table of Contents. I chuckled when I read the list...from Small Changes to Oops (I laughed out loud here), to The Kitchen Sink (my favorites of course).....PERFECT.

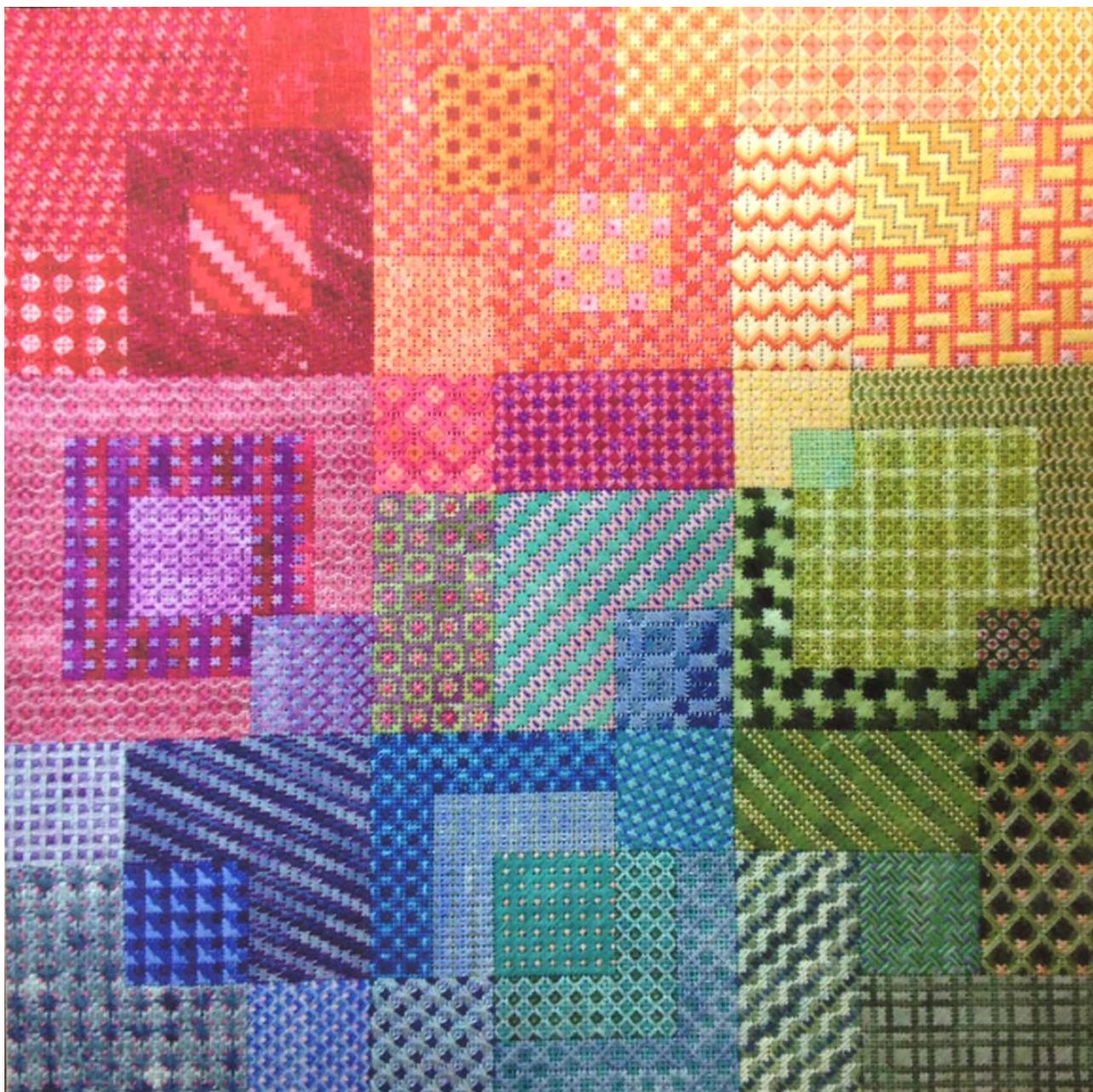
My favorite pages are 2d, 6a, 10, 14, 27, 28, 30, 36, 37, 41, 46 and 47...maybe I should have said ALL OF THEM!



COST: \$16⁰⁰

QUICK STITCH VARIATIONS SAMPLER

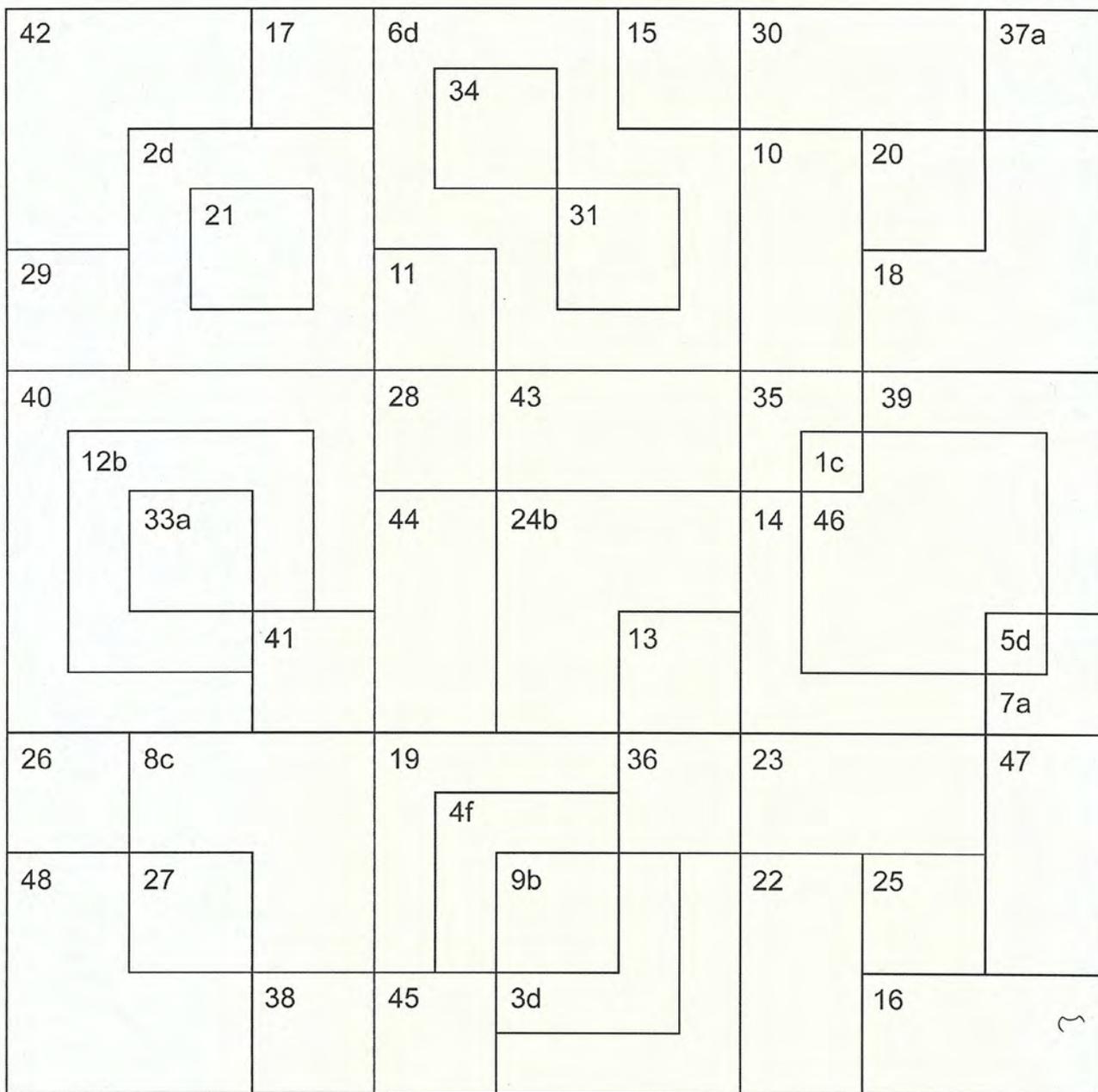
BY CUSTOM HOUSE OF NEEDLE ARTS & FINGER STEP DESIGNS



MAP OF VARIATIONS SAMPLER

BY CUSTOM HOUSE OF NEEDLE ARTS & FINGER STEP DESIGNS

The grid below shows the layout* for a sampler of the 48 stitched variations from the *Quick Stitch Variations* book.



* not actual size

SCISSOR FOBS "MADE WITH LOVE" SERIES

Check out these fabulous new scissor fobs by Merry L. Prints. Each is one of a kind.

COST: \$24⁰⁰



AND JUST A SNEAK PEEK...ALSO FROM MERRY L. PRINTS...

NEW PRODUCT SNEAK-PEEK

“BEADED MEDALLION” SERIES OF FOBS W/MATCHING MAGNETS

This garnet set was a special order for Amy to use while working the Royal Pain in the Tudors project. When we found out there would also be more gem-tone choices, we pounced! The medallion fobs and magnets will be available individually or in matched sets.

COST: FOB \$36⁰⁰
MAGNET \$14⁰⁰
SET \$48⁰⁰



THE BIRDS & THE BEES!

COST: FROM \$8⁰⁰ TO \$16⁰⁰



HOW DO I USE THAT?

SUNDANCE SPARKLES

I wanted to try Sundance Sparkles on a canvas the moment Barbara Elmore showed me a few beautiful and clever effects you can create with them. The black bow on Kirk & Hamilton Snail Slime gave me the perfect opportunity. Because this isn't just the same ole' routine of threading the needle and stitching with it, I thought it would be a good idea to take you on a step-by-step tutorial of what I did to get my little black bow. Where better than a newsletter?



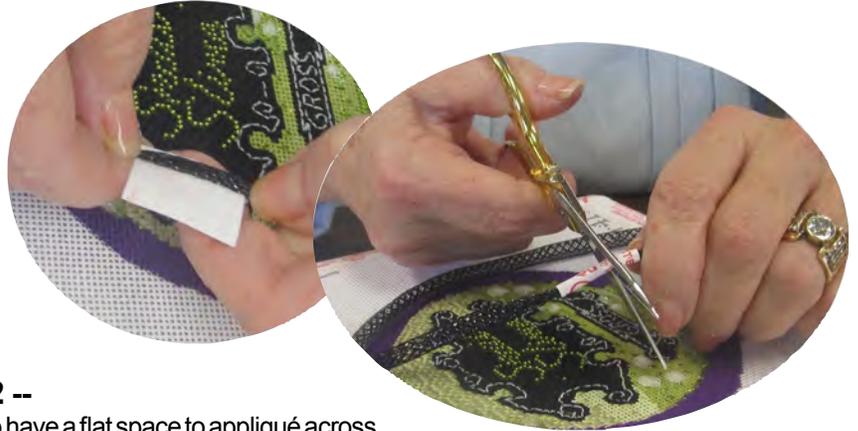
Here are a few tips to know before you use Sparkles:

1. The ends need to be taped to prevent unraveling (unless you want the raveled-end-look for your project).
2. The ends need to be TIGHTLY wrapped with tape to be able to sink the sparkles through the canvas. This taping can be done with any tape, the thinner the better to make the little shoelace-style tip as small as possible.
3. Ironing flattens the Sparkles permanently.
4. Pushing the length of Sparkles together makes it fatter.
5. Pulling the ends of the Sparkles apart makes it thinner.
6. A tool is needed to spread a canvas hole large enough to pass the Sparkles through it.

HOW DO I USE THAT?

STEP #1

First, wrap tape around the Sparkles approximately 15 inches from the end of the tubular mesh. Using utility scissors, cut through the center of the taped space so that both cut ends would be wrapped to prevent unraveling.



STEP #2 --

I wanted to have a flat space to appliqué across the neck of the bottle. In order to accomplish this, measure the width of the bottle neck, then double that length so you can fold the flat area and not have to sink the Sparkles at that point. Measure approximately 5 inches from one cut end and "ironed" twice the width of the bottle neck in the Sparkles using a travel-sized hair straightener.



STEP #3 -

Fold the ironed length in half and place the folded edge on the side of the bottle neck away from the bow. Open the fold and tack inside the fold through the canvas anchoring the fold to the canvas. I used black nylon beading thread doubled in a small sharp needle for all tacking stitches.



STEP #4 -

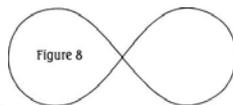
Fold the flattened ribbon back down so that it is double thick and laying flat on the bottle neck. Tack around the edges of the folded sparkles making sure to take a tacking stitch at the corners. Tack across the top and bottom edges, but do not tack across the bow end of the ribbon.



HOW DO I USE THAT?

STEP #5 --

Push the shorter end of the tubular mesh down and out of the way while you use the longer end to fold a figure-eight (8) shape for the loops of the bow.

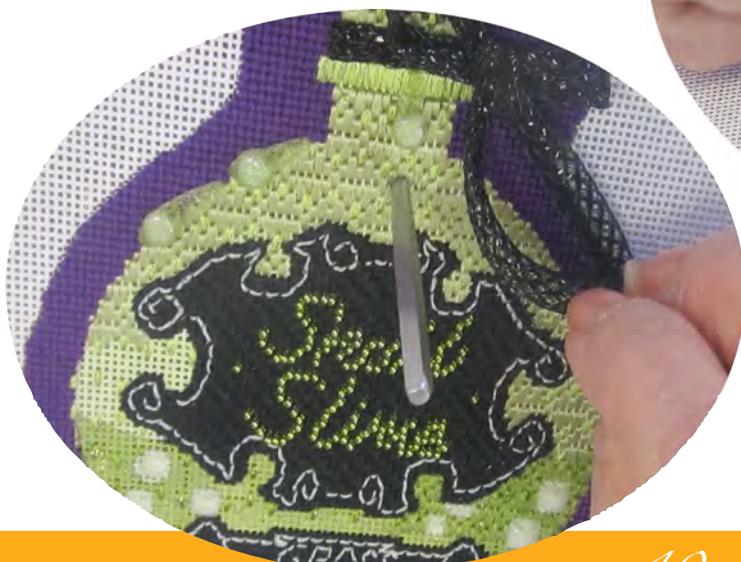


STEP #6 --

Pinch the figure-eight (8) loops at the center "knot" of the bow with one hand, while you wrap the shorter end of the Sparkles around the figure-eight (8) creating a "knot" to the bow.

STEP #7 --

Use your beading thread to pierce through this wrap a few times, as well as on either side of the "knot" wrap (very close to the wrap, not up on the loop) anchoring the loops and the knot to the canvas.



STEP #8 --

Use a stitcher's awl, laying tool or knitting needle to CAREFULLY spread a hole of the canvas (and in this case, your stitching also) large enough to pass the taped end of the Sparkles through the canvas.

HOW DO I USE THAT?

STEP #9 --

If the taped end doesn't push through the hole you may try making a lasso out of a piece of thread, place the tip of the taped end of Sparkles over the hole, lasso the tip with the thread and pop it down through the hole. Tweezers are helpful in pulling the taped end through to the back.



STEP #10 --

If you need to shorten the ends of the taped Sparkles on the back of the canvas, you can re-tape them or just trim them off to a length of 2-3 inches. They will not unravel badly if they are whipped to the back side of the stitching using your beading thread.



HOME STUDY 2013

A JP Needlepoint Design,
which Juli has named...

ROYAL PAIN IN THE TUDORS

A project of patterns to represent the six wives of Henry VIII...a stitching journey of royal proportions.

If you would like to participate in this Home Study, please call us at
901.458.6109



KIT #1:
4TH WIFE,
ANNE OF CLEVES
Group 1 - May
Group 2 - July



KIT #3:
6TH WIFE,
KATHERINE PARR
Group 1 - July
Group 2 - September



KIT #5:
5TH WIFE,
KATHRYN HOWARD
Group 1 - September
Group 2 - November



KIT #2:
1ST WIFE,
CATHERINE OF ARAGON
Group 1 - June
Group 2 - August



KIT #4:
3RD WIFE,
JANE SEYMOUR
Group 1 - August
Group 2 - October



KIT #6:
2ND WIFE,
ANNE BOLEYN
Group 1 - October
Group 2 - December

Design Size: 6" x 21"

Mesh: #18 mesh

of Sessions: Six

Canvas & Kit # 1 Price: \$272.75

Start Date: May- Group 1

July - Group 2

BIRD WATCHING



right to left, top to bottom: Los Purpura Los Gallos Locos from JP Needlepoint; Bird Collage from Patti Mann; Birdhouse Bookmark from J child; Birdhouse 1 from Melissa Prince; Brown Owl from Birds of a Feather; Birdhouses from Susan Roberts; Early Birds from Mindy; Flamingo from Unique NZ Designs; Rooster Rectangle from Patti Mann; Not Your Grandma's Partridge from Machel Somerville; Pink Folk Birds from Maggie; Geese Pillow from j. Child; Caribbean Cruisers from Charlie Harper; Peacock Red Flowers from Maggie; Mockingbird from Birds of a Feather

ODDS & ENDS



UPCOMING EVENTS

LA BELLE JOELLE

April 19 - April 20

MEMPHIS PATCH

April 21 - April 22

**MAILING
TUDOR HOME STUDY
GROUP I - KIT #1**

May 1



We are pleased to announce the *Stitching Witches* Stitch Guide by Amy Bunger will be available in July!