

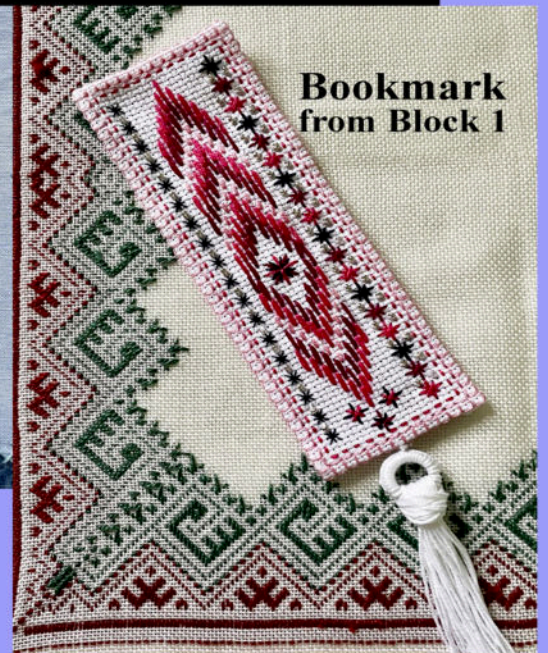


Blackwork Journey Blog

March 2025



**Stitch Along 2025
Block 2**



**Bookmark
from Block 1**



The end of wet and windy February and the coming of Spring!

PR0049 Snowdrops

Snowdrops and crocuses herald the beginning of Spring in my garden and what better way to celebrate than with an embroidery of snowdrops.

Worked in blackwork pulled thread work stitches these delicate flowers can be enjoyed all year long.

The pattern can be found in 'Projects' on the website.

Bent Needles, Leyland, Lancashire - Workshop 'Embroidery into Quilting'



The ladies who took part in my workshop from 'Bent Needles' at Leyland, Lancashire UK

I have recently been asked to work with a number of quilting groups who want to learn embroidery stitches which can be used with their quilting. Whilst I am an embroiderer rather than a quilter, I am happy to explore and teach this aspect of embroidery. I have made quilts for many years but prefer the stitching aspect rather than the patchwork itself.

Whole piece and strip quilts have been made and used in our home for years and many of them have been passed on to the children and grandchildren. They are hardwearing and decorative so the idea of adding embroidery stitches is not new and whilst there is a recognition that embroidery has a part to play, the technical knowledge of embroidery stitches may be limited.

There are certain aspects that differ when considering adding embroidery into quilting which I have outlined briefly below if you are thinking of combining the two techniques.

What can an embroiderer stitch on to a quilt?

The possibilities are endless! Lettering, bands and borders, motifs, pictures and labels are just a few items that can be stitched onto a quilt. 'Slow Stitching for Mindfulness' as shown below, is perfect for quilting.



Recycle, reuse! Go through your stash and see what threads and fabric you already have and can use!



Stitches:

A wide variety of stitches are used on quilts. All the basic embroidery stitches are suitable e.g. chain stitch, running stitch, back stitch, back stitch whipped, blanket stitch, colonial knots and cross stitch are just a few that are commonly used. A Stitch Dictionary and resources such as 'The Royal School of Needlework Stitch Bank' can also be used.

As quilts are hardwearing so the threads being used must be carefully considered e.g. embroidery floss, matt crochet cotton and cotton P erle numbers 8 and 12.

Practice new stitches on a doodle cloth first and don't use long stitches as they often snag!

What are you going to use the embroidered piece for?

Make a small piece of embroidered quilting first before embarking on a major project. Use a thin batting of which there are many different weights and types. Old blanket and flannelette sheeting can also be used.

Stitching for Mindfulness' - On the right is a small quilted and embroidered table centre made from scraps of fabric using simple designs and a variety of embroidery stitches.



Tips for embroidering on quilts:

1. Prewash the fabric if there is a concern about shrinkage. If the fabric is not prewashed the embroidery may become slightly distorted. Calico is a wonderful fabric to embroider and quilt on, especially if you are new to embroidery into quilting, but always buy pre-washed calico.

Does the chosen fabric handle well, or does it crease? Patchwork cottons are suitable but avoid tightly woven cottons. Passing a needle through a tight weave with a thick thread can be very difficult.

2. Needles



Embroidery / Crewel

Embroidery needles have a longer eye than a standard Sharps needle, making them more suitable for threading stranded cotton. Apart from their length, diameter and point profile is akin to that of a Sharps needle.



You will need a selection of crewel needles. These are general purpose sewing needles. They have a sharp point and a long eye which makes them easier to thread when using several strands of cotton. They are used for crochet cotton, cotton a broder, p rle cotton Nos. 8 and 12 and fine metallic thread.

'John James' have a downloadable pdf about the different types of needles used in embroidery and quilting. I have added the link here:

https://www.jjneedles.com/images/needles-guide/Hand_Sewing_Needle_Size_Guide_Type_Length.pdf

You may find this pdf useful!

3. Always choose high quality embroidery floss. Check for colour fastness. Cotton P rle No 8, 12 and matt crochet cottons can also be used. Experiment with threads and thicknesses. Caution - space dyed fabric, space dyed threads or unusual brands may not be colourfast! Please test for colour fastness first.

4. Tracing the design. Use water-soluble pens or an HB pencil. Avoid 'Frixion' pens as the lines may reappear if the fabric gets cold. Embroidery transfer patterns are permanent and do not come out with washing, so if you want to use one, trace the design onto the fabric.



5. Plan which embroidery stitches are to be worked before the batting is added. I usually stitch the heavy textured stitches such as herringbone or wheatear stitch before I tack the wadding to the back.

Be careful when choosing dark coloured floss on light fabrics. The thread can show through on the fabric, so keep the back neat and trim off loose ends.

6. Individual blocks - stitch them up before piecing them into the quilt. It is easy to work part or all the embroidery first. If a mistake is made,

you can easily remove the stitches or start on fresh fabric.

If you are embroidering long strips of fabric or a border, is it easier to stitch those fabrics once they are sewn into the quilt top. When adding the wadding, tack it well using a pale tacking thread. Dark tacking thread will leave traces behind in the fabric when removed.

7. How will you finish your quilted embroidery? Decide before you start the project. If it is to be made into a wall hanging, a sleeve may need to be added to the back of the piece for a pole.

If you are new to the idea of embroidery into quilting, I suggest you start small! Consider whether you enjoy the process before tackling a larger project.



*A central 12-inch square from a small, quilted wall hanging with thirteen different embroidery stitches.
Can you name the stitches?*



EB0026 Little Book of Alphabets is one of the many e-books on the Blackwork Journey website which contains embroidery into quilting ideas and projects.

‘Stitch Along 2025’ - a free embroidery project for the readers of Blackwork Journey and the Facebook groups.

Last month I posted the first part of a twelve-month project online and have already received a number of photographs of the first part.

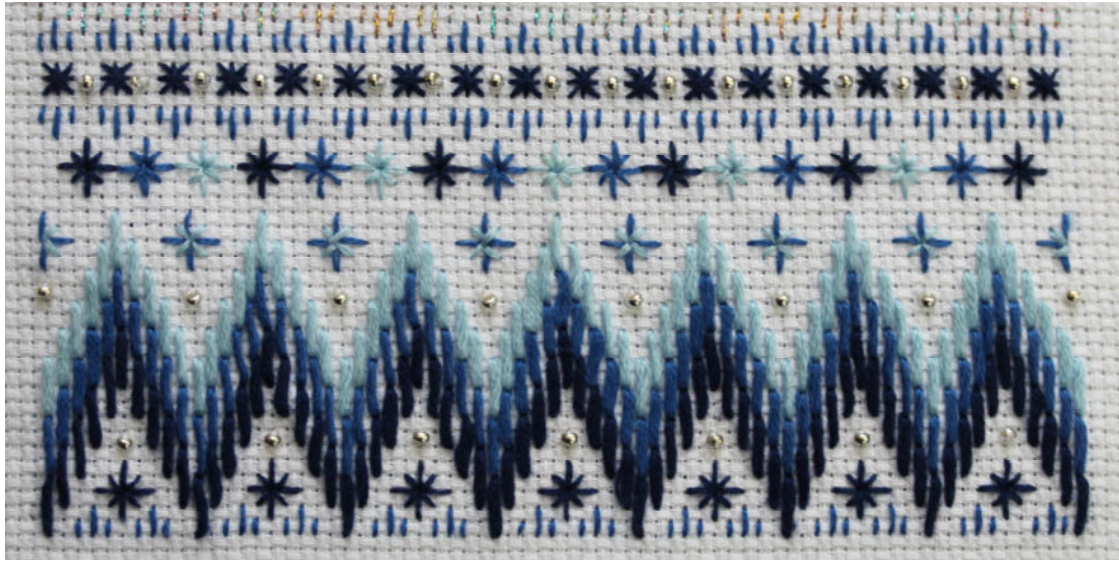


Vicky Cole was the first reader to send me a photograph of the finished block. She has worked the block on Zweigart 25 count Lugana evenweave.

Thank you, Vicky and well done!

Blackwork Journey Blog, March 2025

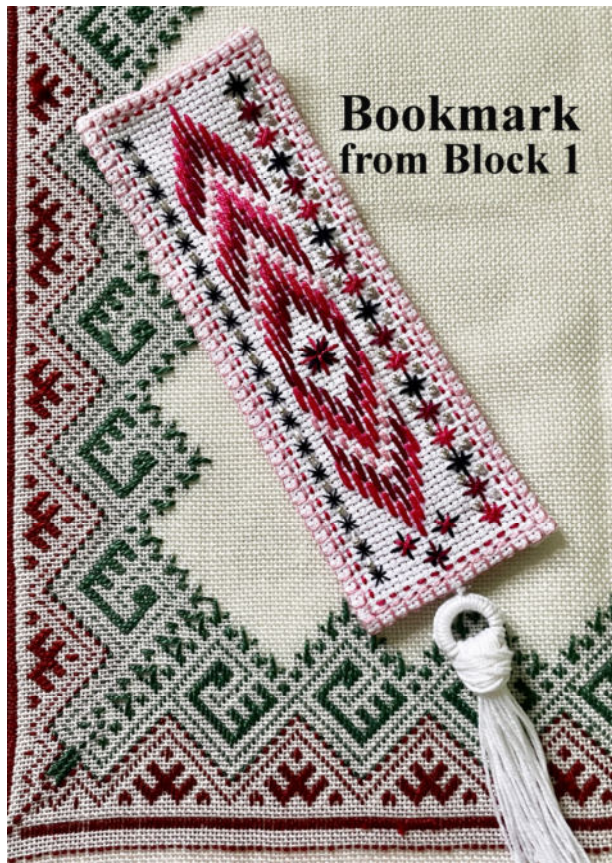
I know that many of you like the idea of working a twelve-month project but do not have the time, so during the twelve months I am adding some small projects which are based on the Block of the Month. For example, in January (Block 1) I featured Florentine embroidery and various textured stitches, so I decided to create a bookmark based on these stitches as shown in 'Bookmark' below.



Block of the Month 1 embroidered

Bookmark based on stitches from Block 1

Note: The chart has been added to the end of the Blog.



Fabric: Zeigart 28 count evenweave or 14 count Aida, 6 x 8 inches.

Stitches:

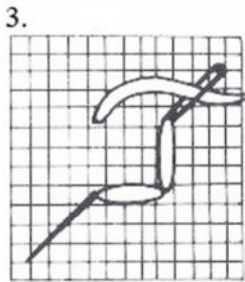
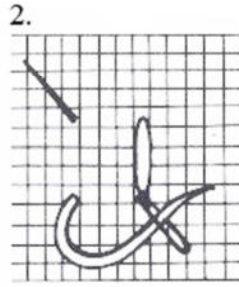
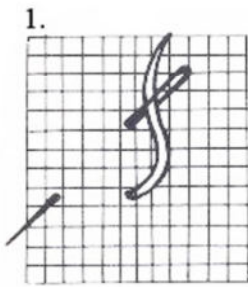
1. Florentine stitch.
2. Star stitch.
3. Leviathan stitch
4. Triple cross
5. Four-sided stitch

Four-sided stitch has been used to create the border. It is a pulled work stitch, easy to create and very practical for edgings and filler patterns.

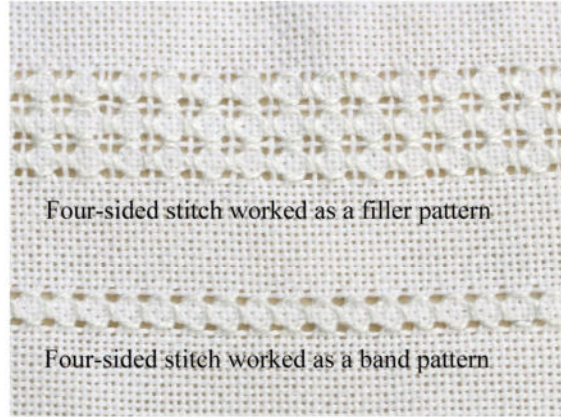
If you are using different types of threads in your projects, understanding how this stitch changes can be helpful.

Four-sided stitch

One of the stitches I use frequently for borders and filler patterns is four-sided stitch.



**Four-sided stitch
Worked in 3 stages
over four threads.**



Four-sided stitch worked as a filler pattern

Four-sided stitch worked as a band pattern

This consists of 3 straight stitches, to form the end, the middle and the top of the 'square'. Work from right to left over 4 threads. Always put the needle in at one corner and come out at the opposite one. Follow diagrams 1-3.

If the stitch is used to fill a large area turn the work at the end of each row. Pull each stitch medium tight to create a small hole. This depends on the fabric being used.

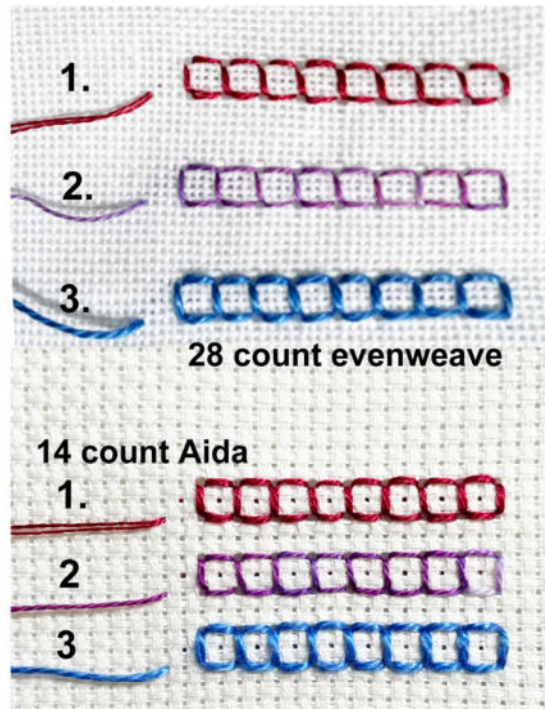
Whilst this stitch is a pulled thread work stitch it can still be worked on Aida fabric but the stitch is not 'pulled'.

Several types of threads can be used to create four-sided stitch but they have a different appearance.

1. DMC floss - 2 strands. This works well on both evenweave and Aida and can be 'pulled' to create a fine band of stitching.

2. Cotton Perle No.12 - this works well on both evenweave and Aida.

3. Cotton Perle No. 8 - this has a much thicker appearance with a slight sheen. It does not 'pull' easily on evenweave or Aida.



If the stitch has been worked correctly there will be a line of cross stitches on the back.

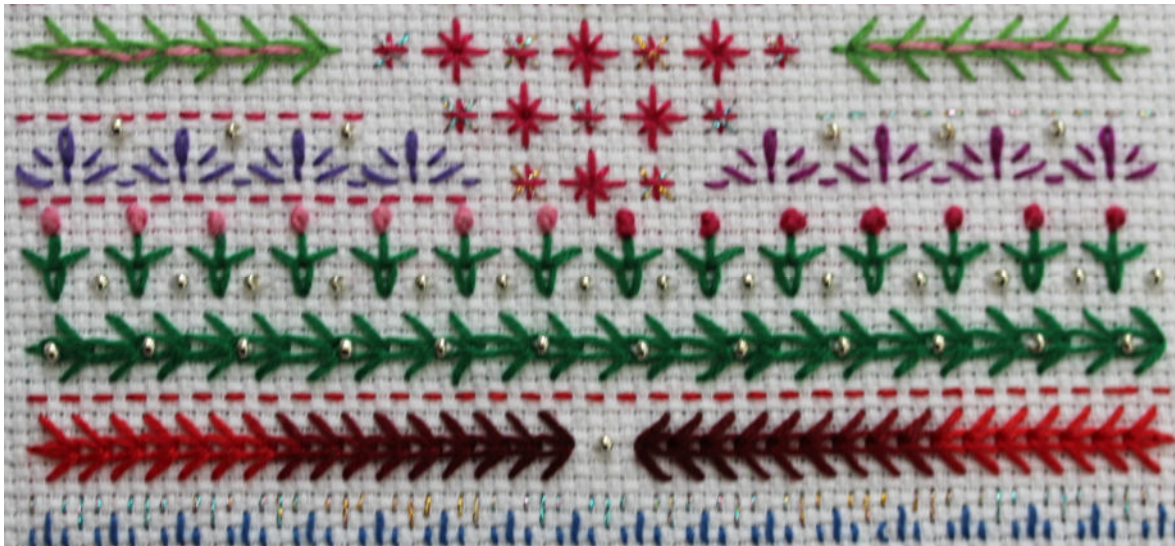
Block 2 and Block 2a Wheatear stitch and variations

There are two blocks which use the same stitches. Block 2a Simple Stitches is less complicated.

Threads: Three shades of purple, plum and pale pink or colours of your choice. Silver metallic thread and beads. Tapestry needle No.24. Small embroidery ring or frame.



Block 2



Block 2a Simple Stitches

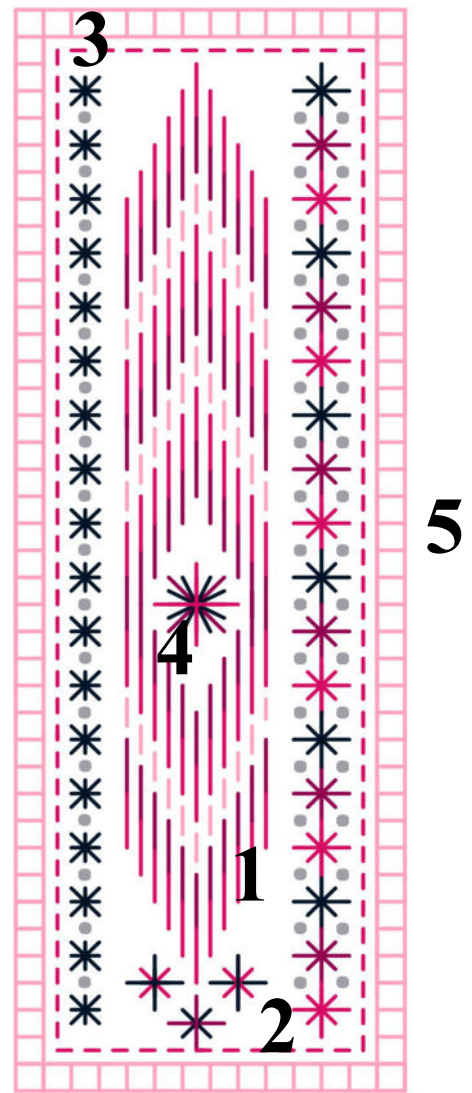
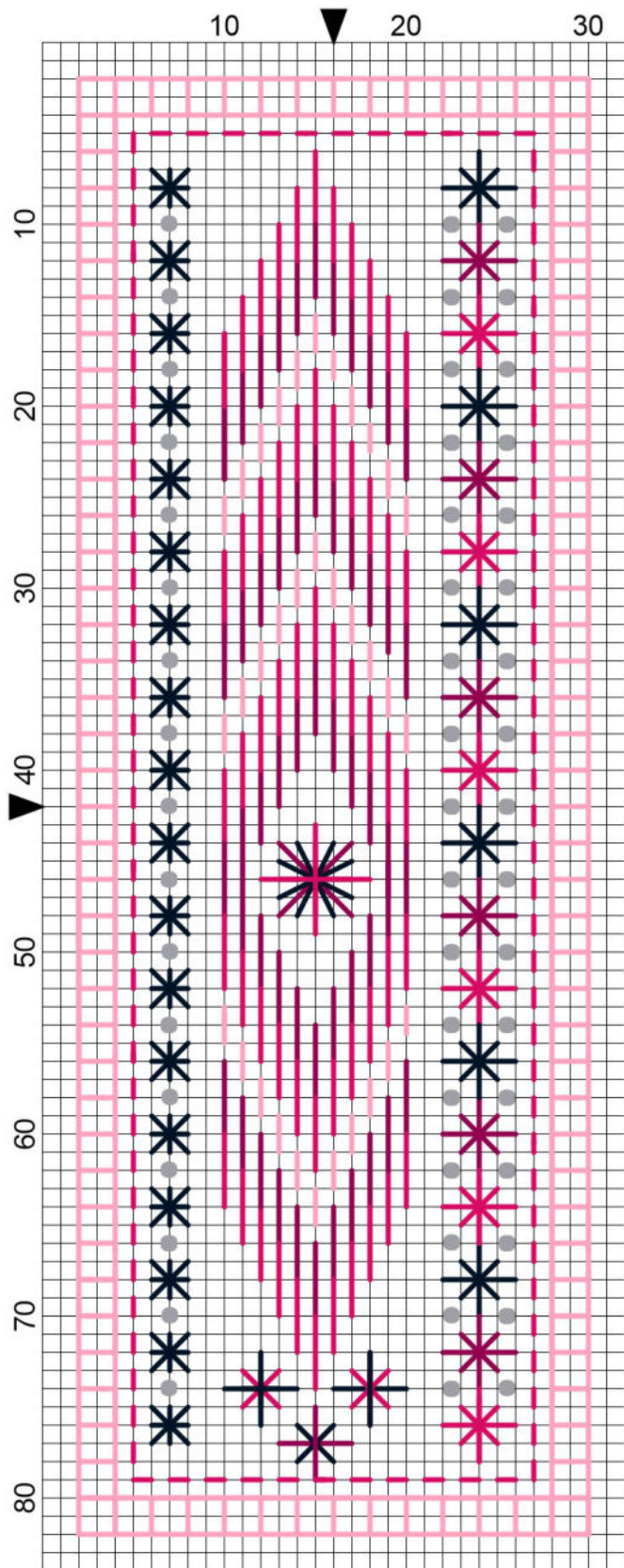
The charts are at the rear of the Blog.

I hope you have enjoyed the Blog. If you have any queries, please contact:
lizalmond@blackworkjourney.co.uk

Happy stitching,

Liz

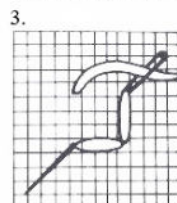
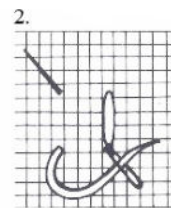
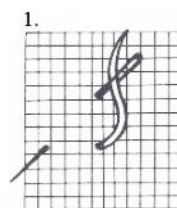
Bookmark 1 based on Block 1



Fabric: Zweigart 28 count evenweave or 14 count Aida, 6 x 8 inches.
Threads: DMC stranded floss, beads (optional).

Stitches:

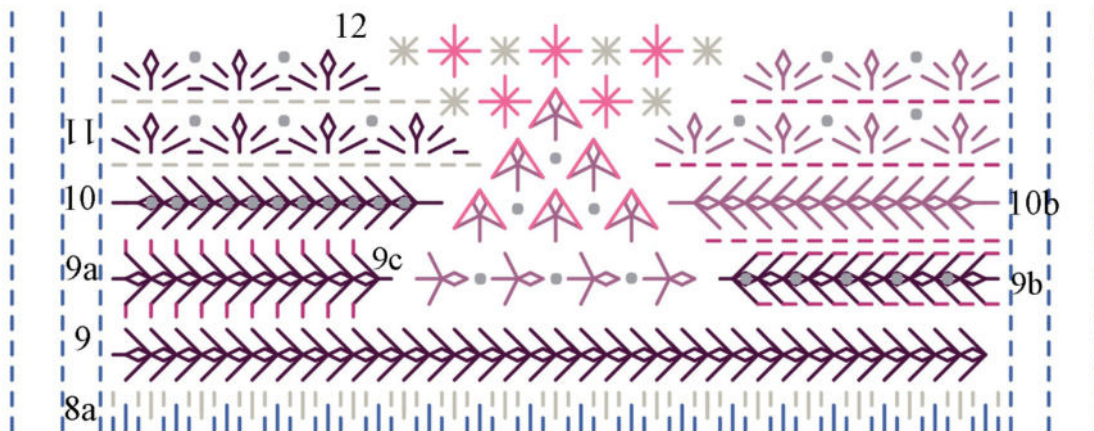
1. Florentine over 4 blocks or 8 threads, 4 strands.
2. Star stitch, 2 strands.
3. Leviathan stitch, 1 strand.
4. Triple cross over 6, 1 strand.
5. Four-sided stitch border, 2 strands or cotton Perle No 12 - 8 threads or 4 blocks (see diagram). Pull medium tight.



Four-sided stitch
 Worked in 3 stages
 over four threads.

Block 2. Wheatear stitch and variations

Threads: Three shades of purple, plum and pale pink or colours of choice. Silver metallic thread and beads.
 Tapestry needle No.24. Small embroidery ring or frame.



Block 2 Numbered



Block 2 Embroidery

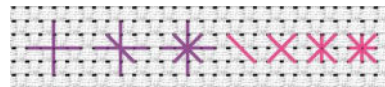
Method: Start from the left-hand corner (**Row 8**). Add the silver straight stitches (**8a**).

Row 9. Wheatear stitch. **Row 9a.** Wheatear with bars **Row 9b.** Wheatear bars and beaded. **Row 9c.**

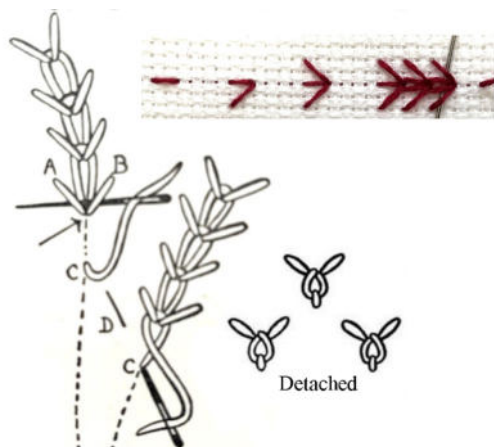
Detached wheatear and decorated. (Follow photo and diagram). **Rows 10 & 10b.** Wheatear beaded and plain. **Row 11.** Lazy daisy stitch and lines.

Row 12. Leviathan stitch and Star stitch, pink and silver.

Running stitch - between some of the rows. *Star and Leviathan stitch*



Instructions:



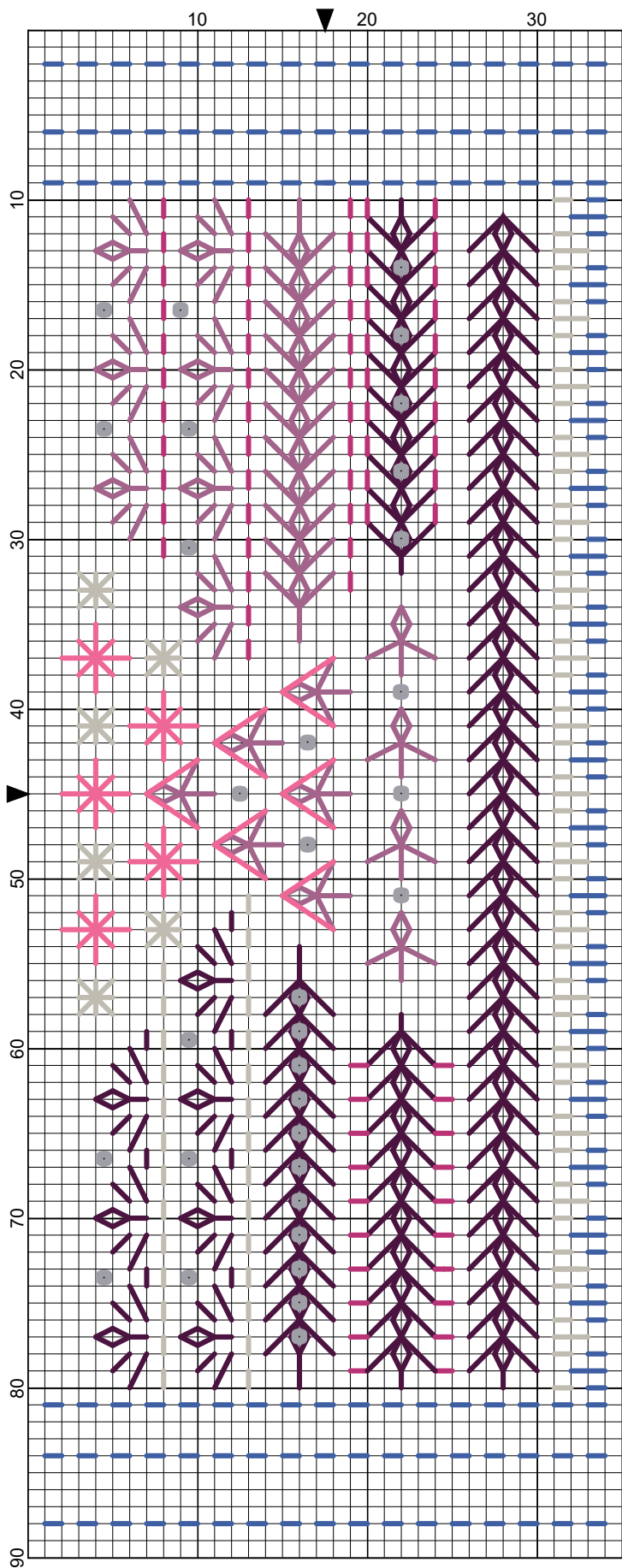
Wheatear stitch – Start with straight stitch over two blocks. Add two ‘ears’ A to centre, B to centre. Bring needle out 2 blocks away at C and slide needle under **all** stitches to create chain. Down at C, out at D and repeat for length required.

Detached and decorated.



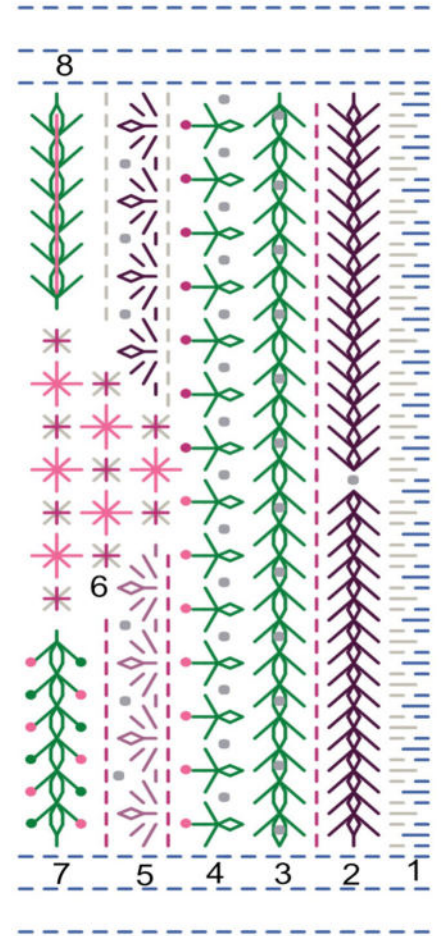
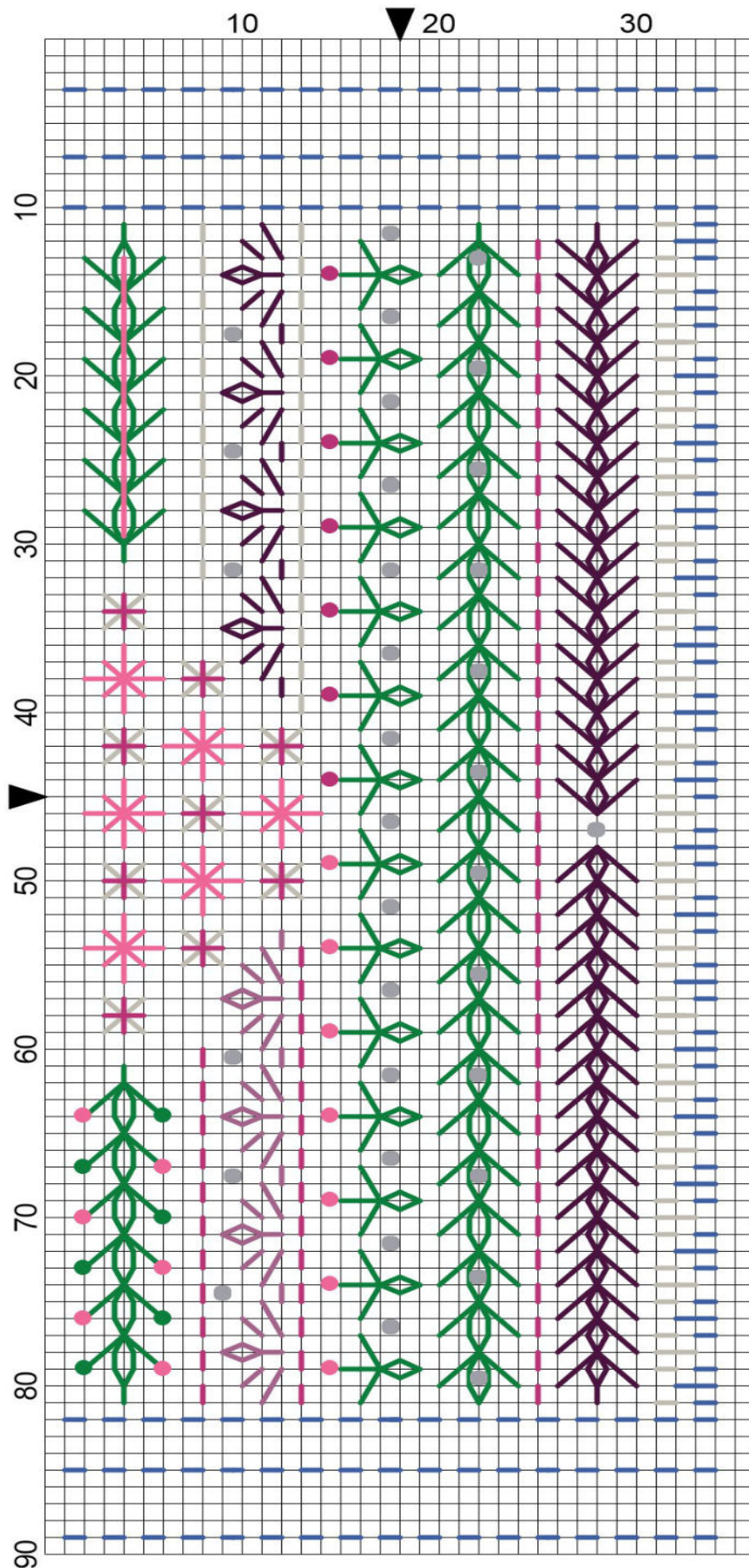
<https://rsnstitchbank.org/stitch/detached-wheatear-stitch>
[Video Tutorial – Mary Corbet Needle n Thread. www.needlenthread.com](https://www.needlenthread.com)

Block 2



- Backstitches:
- DMC-798
 - DMC-550
 - DMC-553
 - DMC-718
 - DLE-E168
 - DMC-603
- Beads:
- MHG-2022

Block 2a Simple Stitches



Row 1. Silver straight stitches into last line of Block 1.

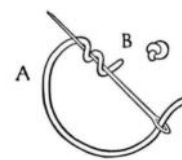
Row 2. Wheatear stitch over 4 x 2 blocks.

Row 3. Wheatear stitch over 3 x 4 blocks beaded.

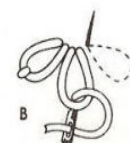
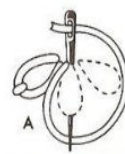
Row 4. Individual Wheatear & Colonial or French knot.

Row 5. Lazy daisy flowers.

Row 6. Leviathan and Star stitch.



French knot



Lazy daisy