

Black Magic Butterfly

A JAPAN THREAD DESIGN BY JANELLE GIESE

Threads & fabric needed

9" x 9" piece of 14-ct Aida in dark purple
1 reel of Kreinik Japan #1 in 002J Gold
1 skein of Kreinik Japan #5 in 002J Gold
1 reel of Kreinik Japan 1/16" Ribbon in 002J Gold
1 skein of Black cotton embroidery floss

Instructions

Each square on the chart represents one fabric thread.

STEP ONE: — Backstitch wing outline using one strand of Kreinik Japan #1 in 002J Gold. Backstitches spanning one-by-two fabric threads were worked in two 1/2 x 1 thread increments to create uniform stitches. (Consistent stitch length will be important later when working Whipped Backstitch.)

STEP TWO: ■ Cross stitch using two strands of black floss (DMC 310 or Anchor 403), keeping cross stitches behind the gold backstitches where wings overlap.

STEP THREE: Form metallic cross stitches using one strand of each thread as listed below:

- ◆ Kreinik Japan #1 in 002J Gold
- 4 Kreinik Japan #5 in 002J Gold
- 3 Japan 1/16" Ribbon in 002J Gold

STEP FOUR: * With one strand of Japan #5 in 002J Gold, work Algerian Eye Stitch (diagram at right) over the top of completed cross stitches as placed on chart: Up at 1, down at center; then up at 2, down at center, etc.

STEP FIVE: — Using two strands of black floss, work Whipped Backstitch (diagram at right) over completed cord backstitches of wing outline: wrap each stitch once. Tension will be tighter than illustrated.

STEP SIX: Following the method and working order shown at right, work all areas of Couching: Bring "Laid Thread" up at right and hold with left thumb while working. Place stitches at regular intervals, bringing "Anchoring Thread" up at 1, down at 2, up at 3, etc. Repeat until all Laid Thread is anchored. Secure ends to back.

— Using one strand of Japan #5 in 002J Gold for the Laid Thread, and one strand of Japan #1 in 002J for the Anchoring Thread, couch these items in order (scrolls are layered):

1. Longest, uppermost scroll on each wing
2. Two smaller scrolls of each wing

3. Antennae
4. Border

— Using two strands of Japan #5 002J Gold for Laid Thread and one strand of Japan #1 002J Gold for Anchoring Thread, couch remaining curly-cue onto each wing over all previous stitching and couching.

STEP SEVEN: With one strand of Japan 1/16" Ribbon in 002J Gold, form body using the Herringbone Stitch as illustrated (diagram at right):

Begin at head, forming two straight stitches. Then work body in Herringbone Stitch, coming up at 1, down at 2, up at 3, down at 4, up at 5, down at 6, up at 7, down at 8, etc. until entire length is worked as shown on chart. Keep the ribbon flat as you stitch. To end, form two straight stitches 1 x 3 threads long.

If you have problems downloading this chart, you can obtain a copy by sending a #10 self-addressed, stamped envelope to: "Web/Black Magic Butterfly," 3106 Timanus Lane, Suite 101, Baltimore, MD 21244 USA. Overseas inquiries: please provide adequate postage.

The story of Japan threads

by Jerry Kreinik & Jacqueline Kreinik

Japan threads have long been admired for the beauty and grace they bring to needlework. From houses of worship to houses of fashion, Japan threads have been incorporated because of their richness, light-reflective nature, symbolism, and history.

Historically, Japan thread embroidery began in China with gold, silver, and copper metalwork. Gold and silver yarns were made by pounding gold and silver stock into extremely thin leaf, which was sliced into very narrow strips and then rolled around a core and twisted into yarn. Sometimes the core around which the slit film was wound was a single hair from a horse's tail, and this was generally sewn in place with another horsehair. Eventually, the horse hair was replaced with silk or linen, resulting in a softer and more flexible yarn. Gold paper or gold-painted paper, which was more economical, was also used, and threads were wrapped in the same way.

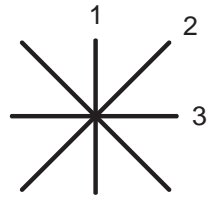
With time, technology changed. Since the gold and silver yarns were very expensive, the gold yarn was modified to a gilt yarn, which was silver with a gold overlay. The Japanese later developed a method of making metal threads by depositing a coating of gold or silver on rice paper, which was then cut into fine strips and wrapped around a thread core. This became known as Japan Gold or Japan Silver. Dampness, however, caused the rice-paper backing to deteriorate. Modern technology has eased the process of making Japan threads, and synthetic backings are now commonly used. It is still recommended that all needlework that includes Japan gold or silver be dry cleaned and not washed in water.

Kreinik offers Japan Gold and Japan Silver in a variety of thread sizes for hand and machine embroidery. Japan #1 is a thin thread that is used for fine stitching, outlining, backstitching, and for couching thicker threads. See the diagram at right for ease in opening the snap-spool mechanism of Japan #1. To keep the thin thread on your needle as you hand stitch, cut the required length of thread and fold about two inches from one end. Insert the loop through the needle's eye and pull the loop over the point of the needle. Tighten the loop at the end of the eye to secure the thread to the needle.

Japan #5 and #7 are available in skeins, and they should be couched on the surface of a fabric with Japan #1. Japan threads are also available in Kreinik's braids and ribbons. To easily thread your needle with the braids or ribbons, refer to the diagram at right. Cut a small strip of paper and fold in half. Place the fold through the eye of the needle and open the two ends to insert the thread in between. Gently pull the paper through so the thread is brought with it.

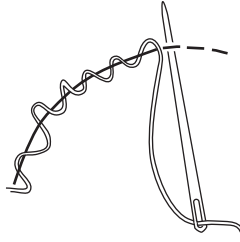
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Step Four



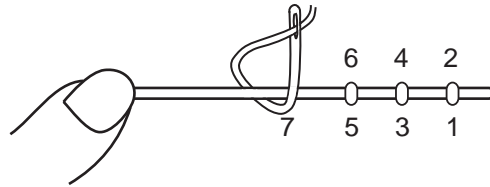
Algerian Eye Stitch

Step Five




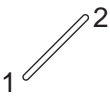
Whipped Backstitch


Step Six





Step Seven

Head: 

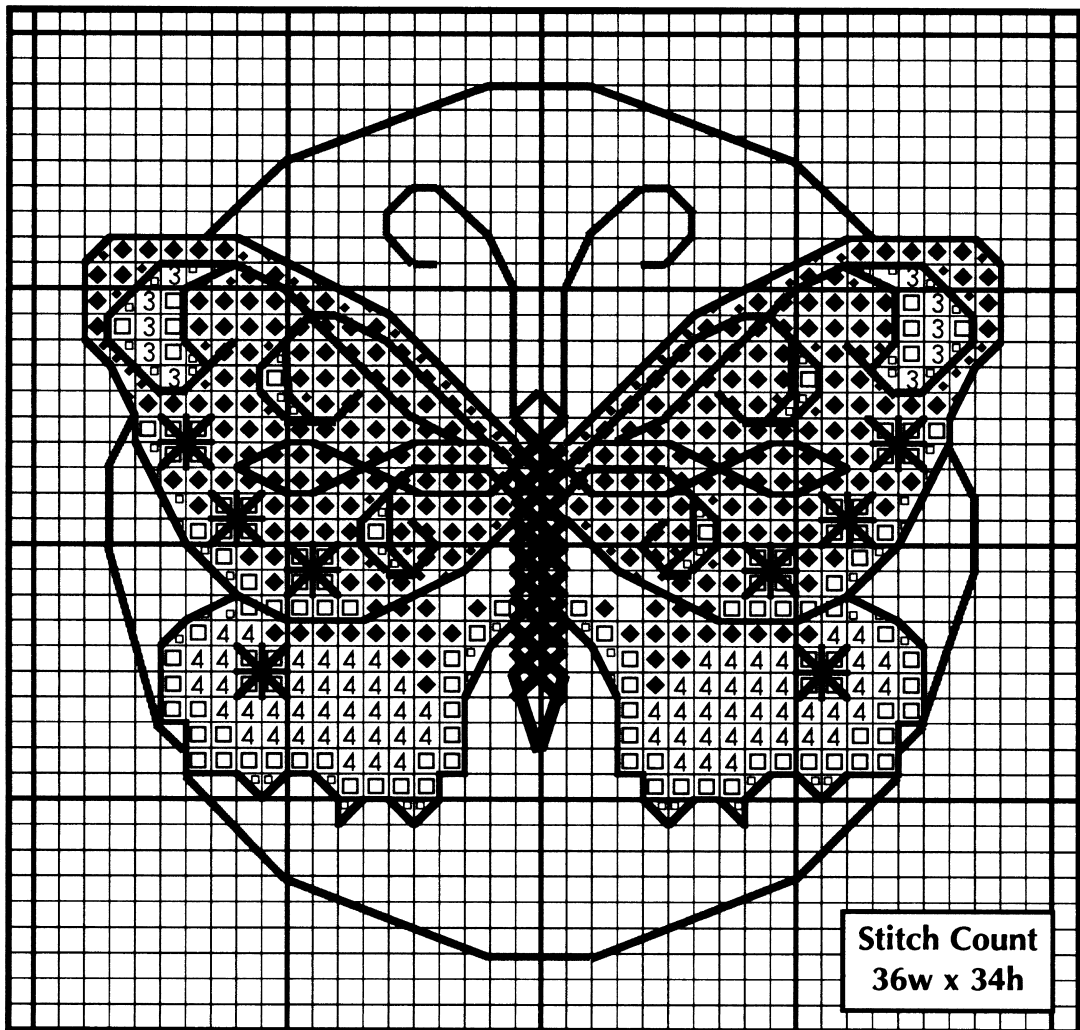
A: 

B: 

C: 

D: 

Herringbone Stitch



Stitch Count
36w x 34h