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## Embroidered Botanical Pattern Weights with Rebecca Ringquist

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### Chapter 1 - Embroidered Botanical Pattern Weights

#### Overview

(upbeat music) - Perhaps you've been embroidering for a while, and you're wondering what to do next. Well, I designed the Botanical Pattern Weights with just that idea in mind. The sampler is not only a beautiful standalone design, but it also can be transformed into four pattern weights that make an excellent, functional, yet beautiful tool for your next sewing project. Hi, I'm Rebecca Ringquist. I am a Portland-based artist and designer and the owner of Dropcloth Samplers. I'm gonna show you a handful of embroidery stitches to stitch all four of these designs, including French knot, satin stitch, blind stitch, and chain, and I'm gonna also show you one of my favorite hacks to make your embroidery a little bit bigger so that you can fit it into a hoop easier. I hope that if you're a sewist, you'll incorporate these into your toolkit, and if you're not a sewist, but you love embroidery, these would also make for an excellent lavender sachet. (upbeat music continues)

#### Materials

- The materials that you'll need for the Botanical Pattern Weights include the pattern, which you can get at [dropclothsamplers.com](http://dropclothsamplers.com). I'm using this one, but of course, you could design your own little three-by-three-inch squares to make your own patterned weights with. You'll need scissors. I've got fabric shears, and these little embroidery snips. I like using these rubber fingers to protect my finger when I'm embroidering, but you might also use a thimble. I like having a bit of this thread wax. This one's from a collaboration I did with Sew Fine, and it makes it much easier to thread your needles and it also conditions the thread nicely. You'll need needles. These are Straw needles, which are also called Milliners needles, and I like Size 4 or 3. The 3s are bigger, and they're a little easier to thread. These happen to be a Size 4. I'm using Perle Cotton, and I'm using the collection that I have in the shop called the Yo-Yo Thread Collection, and it comes in nine great variegated colors. To assemble the Botanical Pattern Weights, you'll need a backing fabric. I've got a couple different ones here. I think I'm gonna use this striped one, and it could be any woven fabric. You'll need some rice to fill it with. I've got a spoon and a funnel to help out with that. And then this is called Shape-Flex, and it adds a nice body to your embroidery to make the tension a little bit better. It's optional, but I highly recommend it. You'll need an embroidery hoop, and you'll also need a sewing machine.

#### Stitch your design

- In this chapter, I'm going to show you how to stitch this design. But before I do, I want to show you a finished version of the botanical pattern. I designed this project to be a collection of pattern weights. However, it also makes a really great standalone sampler that would look fantastic in a frame. And my friend Melissa stitched this one up so beautiful. I love all this chain stitch and the way she used so many beautiful colors to make this great composition. As you're starting to work on this, you can choose to embroider it all at once as a whole or you can cut the different pattern weights apart, so that you have small sort of on the go projects. If you do that, like I've started to do here, you'll notice that you don't have a lot of wiggle room to get your embroidery in a hoop. So before I begin, I want to show you how I add a little bit of extra fabric to create a larger margin so it fits in my hoop better. Before I start to embroider this and before I cut it, I want to mention that I'm using Shape Flex on the back of this. Shape Flex is a woven fusible that gives your fabric a little

more structure. And it's great for things like this that are going to get turned into a project like a pattern weight or an ornament or something like that, because it completely fuses to the back of the cotton fabric. If you'd like to see how it gets ironed onto the fabric, you can check out the step by step in the heart ornament class or the snowflake ornament class. In lieu of working on the whole project at once, I'm going to just focus on the shamrocks. So I'm going to cut it out, and now I'm going to add two strips of fabric to the sides to make for a bigger frame so that it'll fit easier in my hoop. And to do that, I'm going to use the sewing machine here. You don't need to use pins or anything. This is fabric that's going to get cut away and discarded when you're finished with your embroidery and when this thing transforms into a pattern weight, and I'm going to sew it down with about a quarter of an inch seam allowance. (sewing machine grinding) And I'm just going to finger press it. If I were making a garment, I would iron it and be really careful about what I was doing. But I'm not making a garment. I'm just adding a little more wiggle room for my embroidery hoops. So now I'm going to lay another one. It's almost as if I'm making a log cabin square. I'm going to add another one right here, and sew that one in place. And I'm doing it with right sides together, 'cause I want to see this print, but it doesn't matter. That fabric is going to get discarded in the end. Whoop. Don't forget to put your presser foot down. That's a hot tip from me to you. (sewing machine grinding) Okay. There you go. And so now when I put this fabric in the hoop, I've got plenty of room to move the design around and I don't have to worry about the part of the image that I want to stitch getting cut off. So let me show you the difference. So if I tried to put this one in the hoop right now and I wanted to stitch this corner up here, I wouldn't be able to do it. It wouldn't fit. Even if I used a teeny tiny hoop, then part of it would get cut off. So in order to get the whole thing in the hoop, I just added a little bit of extra fabric, and that way, I can get it all in the hoop at once and not have to move my hoop around while I'm embroidering, and everything stays neat and tidy. And when you're done, that'll just get cut off. So it's a great way to use up little scraps that you might have in your sewing basket, and it makes things more convenient and easier for stitching. All right, now that we've got the hoop all set up, I'm going to show you a couple of different stitches. And the first one that I want to show you is the chain stitch. And I'm going to do that in these white areas, the white stripes between the blue. There's a few different ways to do the chain stitch, and if you've seen some of my older videos, you might've seen me doing it a different way. This is my new favorite way. So I'm going to make one tiny little tack mark at the top and I'm going to work from the top down. So I made that tiny little tack mark, and now I'm going to skip ahead about a quarter of an inch, bring my needle back up. And now with my needle, I'm going to go underneath that little tack mark like this, pulling it really gently through that original tack mark spot. And then go back down. And that makes the first link in the chain or the first petal shape. And then the next one attaches to the previous link. And all the links get attached together. I learned this method of the chain stitch from Jenny Hart. And before I learned this way of doing chain stitch, I was never a fan of the chain stitch, 'cause my thread would get all twisted and it never looked very neat and tidy. But this method is, in my opinion, a real game changer. I'm using chain stitch here to fill in the stripes on this clover portion of the sampler. And I also want to call out the way that my friend Melissa used chain stitch to cover the rainbow in this floral area of the design. She just used tons and tons of parallel rows of chain stitch to make this beautiful kind of rainbow effect. And I think it looks so cool. I'm almost out of thread. So now I'm going to just weave my threads back in. So I'm going underneath every one of those stitches until I can't do it anymore and I'm out of thread. And that little bit of weaving the threads in is perfect. If you do that, you don't need a knot, in my opinion. I want to show you a version of this that's more complete. This is all chain stitch. In this

section, I covered the blue stripes in chain stitch and then I outlined every stripe of chain with back stitch on either side of it to give it a little more density or volume. And I'm not demonstrating back stitch in this class. But however, if you'd like to learn the back stitch and any other number of stitches, if you're hungry for learning more embroidery stitches, I really recommend checking out my other embroidery classes here on Creativebug. You can search any of my sampler classes or the daily embroidery challenge. Now I want to show you how to use French knots in a sort of untraditional way. A lot of times, French knots are used to dot an eye or to create the center of a lazy daisy. And those are all great, but I'm going to use them to make these green stripes. I'm going to thread my needle, and to make threading the needle easier, I'm going to use a little bit of this wax. So I just like to press the thread down into the wax and then pull it out a couple of times and that coats the thread, and it makes the thread a little bit stiffer and easier to get through a needle. Also, once I put it through the wax, I kind of press it down so that my thread's not round, but a little flat. And that also makes it easier to thread through the eye of the needle. I've said this before in lots of classes, but if you're having a hard time threading your needle, a good idea is to flip your needle around. The eye of the needle is made with a punching mechanism, and sometimes they can have, especially a cheap needle, can have a really microscopic flare that makes it harder to thread from one side than from the other. So it's a small thing, but sometimes it can make a big difference. Okay, so I threaded my needle. I tied the two ends together to mark that it's two threads thick. If you wanted a smaller French knot, you could just tie a knot at one end. Now I'm going to add some clusters of French knots in this green stripe. I'm bringing my thread up all the way. I have my hoop down on the table. You could do French knots anywhere, but the easiest way to do it is to do your French knots while seated at a table, because then you don't have to hold your hoop. Then that way you have two hands to do the stitch. So I'm holding the thread out at about a 45 degree angle with my left hand since I'm right-handed. And my right hand is going to bring the needle behind the thread, and I'm going to wrap it twice. And now I'm lowering my needle down to the fabric. I'm still holding on with my left hand, and I just poke the needle just barely into the fabric. And then in a separate motion, I'm using my left hand to pull those coils of thread down to the fabric. And now you can kind of take a look at it and decide if you like it or not. If you don't like it, then you can take it out, 'cause you haven't secured it yet. So I'm going to pull it up like this 45 degree angle, wrap it twice, poke the needle in just a little bit, pull the thread down to meet the fabric. And now I'm going to pull the needle through, and that's what secures the French knot. I'm going to make a few more to make a little row of them. One, two, pull the thread down to meet the fabric. I like to make these really close to each other. They make such a nice sort of nubby broccoli-like texture. Fabric, or my thread is caught, there we go. I got a little carried away. I did three wraps. You can do three, but it makes it a little bigger than I want. So, I think two is the perfect amount of wrapping. There we go. I think I'll add more over here. But before I do that, I want to show you another instance of French knots that are cool for this design. And that is these. So you can see it in this tulip section. The circles in the background got filled in with lazy daisies in this example, but in this one that my friend Sonya stitched, these were filled in with French knots, and she used back stitch to outline the circles and then filled them in with French knots. I think those look really cool. I want to highlight one more stitch and that's the satin stitch. Satin stitch is a great way to get an overall effect and to fill something in. And my friend Melissa filled in these clovers with the satin stitch. She used embroidery floss. And here, I am going to use the pearl cotton. And you can see here I've already used back stitch to highlight some of the sort of veins in the clover. And now I'm going to fill in the back area with parallel lines of satin stitch. And parallel lines of satin stitch are also just parallel lines of back

stitch. They're just laid down right next to each other. So sometimes people ask me like, "Have you ever designed a new stitch or have you ever come up with a new stitch?" And I don't know that I have, but I also think that if you look at 100 embroidery books, you might find a number of different names for the same stitch. The satin stitch is another way of describing parallel stitches that are laid down next to each other to create an all over color. I really love the way these variegated threads look, because they create this sort of mottled effect with just one strand of thread. I've also used satin stitch to fill in these little gumball or jellybean circle shapes. One thing to keep in mind when you're doing the satin stitch is that if you make stitches that are quite long, it'll speed up your process. But if the stitches are too long, when you're done with your embroidery, they'll start to sort of blow in the wind and reveal the background fabric. So it really is better to have shorter stitches even though it takes longer. If you're getting into embroidery hoping to get through it really quickly, you're maybe better off to pick a different activity, because it's quite slow. And part of the beauty of embroidery is that it's slow and quite meditative. So it's better not to try to rush it, in my opinion. All right. I ended up covering up part of the yellow that outlined this to make that first leaf of the clover. And I'll go back and fill in the rest of it with more satin stitch. But first I want to show you a finished version of this. This one's already been turned into a pattern weight, but you can see it's using the same threads. And in in this example, my friend Sonya who stitched this one used yellow to highlight the veins instead of black, but she used black to outline the whole thing, and I think it really pops out better, better than mine did even. So it's worth experimenting with different colors and sort of noticing how the different colors interact with each other. She also did a really nice job with the chain stitch to cover those stripes, including red stripes this way and purple stripes this way. I want to show you some more examples of different ways that you can embroider the botanical pattern weights. I'm going to lay these down next to each other. Here's the one that I stitched and this is the one that my friend Melissa stitched. And then I have a third version that Sonya stitched. Let me lay them all down together. And each one looks quite different. We all used satin stitch to fill in the centers of these circles except for this little instance where Melissa used French knots, and I think that looks quite fun. This is couching. She couched all these threads down in this part of the rainbow with lots of areas of pink thread and then peach, alternating which one she used. I also really love the way that Sonya used French knots in this rainbow area. There's chain stitch and then French knots. I used all back stitch in this one, except for this area where I'm starting to fill it in with French knots. Here's another little area of French knots in the stripes. In this one, she used all different techniques. So there's French knots, Algerian eyes, lots of running stitch or what I would call seed stitch, which is just kind of scattershot running stitch all over the background of this one. Here is Sonya's addition of that one. I like how she used one French knot in the center of each one. It ends up looking really different. It also looks different, 'cause this one's been stitched up. So it sort of shrinks in the stitching process, but the embroidery itself also looks quite different. Here's an example of Melissa's tulips and my tulips. I love that she just used one color of green to outline the leaves and the green ink really shows through and it has this kind of glowing effect, which I quite like. And she used French knots in the background. Before we start to stitch them, I want to point out that in every instance, there's a line of stitching that goes all the way around the edge. And Melissa used couching. I used running stitch in this example. And that's going to provide a line that you can follow when you're stitching the pattern weights together on the sewing machine. So when you're done with your embroidery, make sure that your last step is adding a line of stitching all the way around the square. It could be something as simple as the running stitch or for a decorative pop of color, you could use couching.

### Construct the pattern weight

- And we're gonna turn these into pattern weights now. And first up, get it out of the hoop. Get rid of it. You don't need the hoop anymore. It's a little wrinkly from being in the hoop. If you are the type of person that that's gonna bother, you could iron it. I'm not that type of person. So what I'm gonna do is cut it out, and I'm gonna leave approximately a quarter of an inch seam allowance. I've added these margins, so I'm just gonna take those off. And those just come off very easily. Good job past me using a pretty large stitch. All right, now I'm gonna trim this down to something a little more like a quarter of an inch. And you can see that I'm not measuring, I'm just trimming these down, and that's intentional. These are pattern weights, so they don't need to be an exact size. They'll all be about the same size, but there's seam allowance. It's not super important that you get out a ruler and make these an exacting size. If you're a person who likes to do things in an exacting way, you could get out a rotary cutter and a ruler and cut them out in a more even way, and that's totally fine. Alright, now I'm gonna cut a piece of backing fabric that is approximately the same size. And I'm using this striped fabric. Here we go. And I'm gonna put the pieces of fabric right sides together. They're already right sides together. You could decide that you'd wanna use the back. The back of this stripe is a little more dull than the front, but I like the front 'cause it's nice and peppy. Okay, so now I'm gonna hold these together. The most important thing as you're sewing this together is that you remember to leave a hole where you're gonna insert the rice. I'm gonna start sewing right here on the top about an inch from the right-hand side. So I'm gonna start here. I'm gonna go forward and back to make a nice seam and go all the way down on the right side, down on the bottom, up the left, and then another inch across the top. So there'll be an inch of stitching on the left, an inch on the right, and then a little more than an inch in the center, and that's where I'm gonna add the rice. You can see here how I've outlined the embroidery in a running stitch, and that shows on the front, but it also shows on the back. And I'm gonna have my stitching right up against the edge of that running stitch. I don't wanna stitch over it 'cause I want it to show, but my stitching is gonna be right next to it. In order to get that lined up just perfectly, what I like to do is lower my needle down manually before I start stitching. I'm gonna go forward and reverse. Coming up on the top here, so as I go around this corner, I'm only gonna go a scant inch here and then stop because I wanna leave room to turn it right side out and add my rice. Here we go. Before I turn it right side out, I'm gonna use these snips, or you could also use fabric shears to cut the corners. Before we can add the rice, I'm gonna turn it right side out. So say goodbye to the backside. You'll never see that again. I love this part of the project where the embroidery pops up and it lines up with the backing. I love the way these stripes look with the stripes on the front. It's so fun. This is a Rifle fabric from a few years ago, I think. I'm not sure where it came from. I had a scrap of it in my scrap drawer. So I'm just easing those corners out. You could use a chopstick or the end of a paintbrush to get 'em to pop out if you're having a hard time with just your fingers. Okay, there you go. At this point, I'm going to fill it with rice because I want to use this as a pattern weight. However, maybe you're not a sewer and you wanna turn it into a lavender sachet. That would be lovely. Or you could also fill it with walnut shells and make a lovely pincushion. Today, it's gonna be a pattern weight. So here we have the empty pattern weight. I'm gonna place the funnel inside. I'm gonna fill it with rice. You could also use beans. This is uncooked rice. Don't put cooked rice in here. That would not end well. I'm using the funnel to funnel it in there, and I'm also using the funnel to kind of pack it into the corners. This is a very satisfying part of the project. Think I can fit another half a spoonful. There we go. Now I can set that aside. And the last step is to stitch it shut, and I'm gonna stitch it shut with a blind stitch. I have a needle over here in my pincushion that I've already

threaded, and I'm going to, let's see. I'm gonna start from this side. I'm gonna put my needle in underneath and bring it up to the top. There's a little bit of extra sewing machine thread here. Before I start, I'm gonna cut that off so that it doesn't look bad and get in my way. Okay, now we're going to do the blind stitch to stitch this thing up. I'm gonna get my rubber finger on. So I'm coming up on the white side, and now I'm gonna go over to the stripey side. And you want these little stitches to be pretty close together because you don't want the rice coming out all over your sewing project. Oops. Okay, I've gotten to the end, and this is all sealed shut, so now I'm going to send my needle back to bury those threads. Bury that back there like that. And now I'm gonna send it back the other way to make sure that it's really hidden and not gonna come sneaking out when I use this thing. There we go. And now I can trim it, and it can join this collection of pattern weights that will be so helpful for holding my pattern down as I'm sewing. And these make a great gift for a sewer in your life, but they also would be a great gift just for yourself. And it's nice to have beautiful things while you're making another beautiful thing.