



"Nestled" (15-1/4" x 11-3/4") by Susan Brubaker Knapp

Nestled

By **SUSAN BRUBAKER KNAPP**

MATERIALS

- cotton batiks fabrics: 17" x 14" mottled green (background), plus small amounts of dark brown and black (branches), assorted browns and tans (nest), and blue (eggs)
- interfacing/stabilizer, such as Pellon 910 polyester sew-in interfacing or Heavy Weight Shaping Aid, 18" x 15"
- fusible adhesive with two paper sides (I use Lite Steam-a-Seam 2)
- 100% cotton batting, 17" x 14"
- backing fabric, 17" x 14"
- Medium-weight upholstery vinyl, 17" x 14"
- fabric for facing or binding
- 40-, 50- or 60-weight cotton threads for thread sketching and quilting: brown, tan, blue, white, green (I used Aurifil Cotton Mako 40 and 50)
- Quilting pins
- Light box (or brightly lit window)
- Sewing machine with free-motion quilting foot, able to drop feed dogs
- Fine tip permanent marker
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Mechanical white chalk quilting marking pencils (I like the ones by Sewline and Bohin)

DIRECTIONS

- Cut green background 17" x 14".
- Cut one piece of interfacing 18" x 15".
- Cut one piece of backing fabric 17" x 14".
- Print out the line drawing and tape it together along the dotted lines.
- Tape the line drawing to flat surface.
- **Make the positioning overlay:** Tape upholstery vinyl on top, and trace all the lines on the drawing, using the permanent marker. Trace the outline of the piece, and beyond this line, use a ruler to draw a 1/4" seam allowance. Write the word "TOP" at the top right corner. (This helps you to determine which side is right side up.)
- Tape the line drawing, right side down, on the light box.
- Determine which paper side has the fusible adhesive stuck to it. This is the side you will trace on.
- Position fusible adhesive on top of one of the branch section marked A) and trace the branch. Remember to extend the branch lines out into the seam allowance, and well under the nest.
- Cut out the branch piece, leaving about 1/8" around the traced lines.
- Peel off the piece of paper without the adhesive on it (this should be the paper without the traced lines on it).
- Position the fusible adhesive on the wrong side of the desired fabric, sticky side down. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to fuse the adhesive to the back of the fabric. Cut out the piece on the lines, remembering not to cut off the seam allowance.



- Tape the green background fabric to a flat surface.
- Use the chalk marking pencil to draw the perimeter lines.
- Center the positioning overlay on top of the background fabric and tape it down along the top edge only, so you can lift it to position the fabric pieces.
- Position the branch on top of the background fabric and under the positioning overlay.
- Continue in this manner, placing branches B and C.
- **Build the nest:** For the center of the nest, trace a base that generally follows the edge of the center of the nest (before the scraggly bits of grass that hang over) onto the fusible web and fuse it to the wrong side of the dark brown fabric. Position it under the overlay.
- To create the scraggly bits, cut semi-circles from fusible adhesive, and fuse them to the wrong side of several light brown/tan fabrics. Using scissors or a rotary cutter, slice curved strips from these pieces. There is no need to be precise. Vary widths for greater realism.
- Once you have about 50 curved strips, begin to place them around the outside of the nest shape, using the overlay to position pieces in roughly the same places indicated. (It would be very tedious, if not impossible, to follow the positioning overlay placement exactly.)
- Weave strips over and under, cutting and adding more strips until you are pleased with how the nest looks.
- The fine strands at the middle of the nest are done with thread only; use a chalk marker to indicate general placement before you thread sketch.
- Trace the eggs and fuse the fusible adhesive to the back of the blue fabric. Position the eggs under the positioning overlay.
- When you are pleased with your arrangement, fuse all the pieces down to the background fabric.
- Use a white chalking marking pencil to mark guidelines for lichens on branches, and for scraggly bits at the nest center.
- Place this on top of the interfacing/stabilizer, and pin.
- Thread sketch the piece, adding details to the nest, lichens, bark, shadows on tree branches, and shadows and highlights on eggs. Refer to the inspiration photo (above) while stitching. Trim top to 17 x 14".
- Place the quilt top on top of batting and backing fabric and pin. Quilt around some of the nest pieces, eggs, and branches. Quilt the background heavily so it will appear to recede.
- Finish your piece with a facing or a traditional quilt binding. Make sure to add a label on the back.



Susan Brubaker Knapp is a fiber artist, quilt pattern designer and teacher. She is the author of *Point, Click, Quilt! Turn Your Photos into Fabulous Fabric Art* (C&T Publishing, 2011) and *Appliqué Petal Party* (C&T Publishing, 2009). She has two *Quilting Arts* DVDs on free-motion stitching and thread sketching, and wrote a series of articles for *Quilting Arts* magazine on thread sketching in 2010. Learn more at www.bluemoonriver.com



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