

Colourful Lace and Colour Sources

laces can be multicoloured!

It would appear that the most difficult part of using colour in lace is the inability of most of us to work out the colours. Therefore, I have taken a photo to demonstrate how I used it to make a piece of lace (see back cover).

The way I use colour in lace is to add the colour on the passive pairs and to use a neutral shade on the weaver. This way more colours can be used and a less garish piece of lace made. You will see from the colour strip how many colours I have used to make the small round (below, shown in greyscale). The pricking is my adaption of an old pricking found in a lace dealer's book by Alwynne Crowsen of New Zealand.

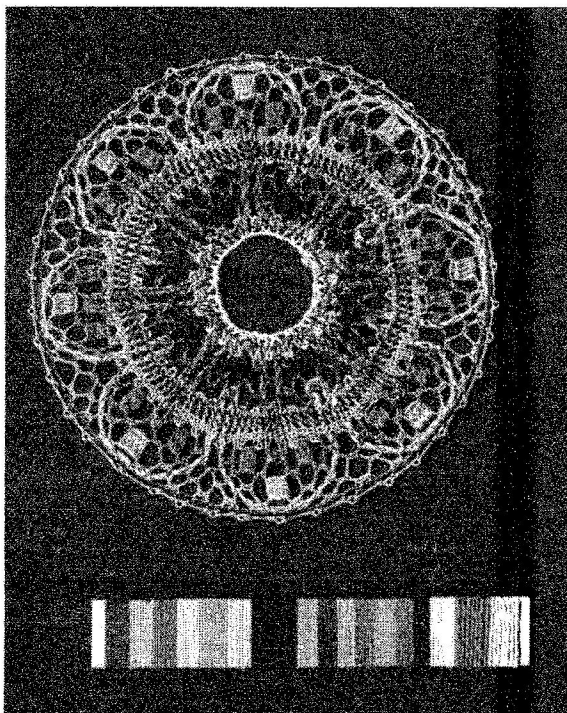
The source photo is also from New Zealand and is what I term an "oops" picture when the camera went off before it should due to a finger error. However the colours are so vivid it makes a very good colour source. The photo was taken at an area just outside Taupo on the North Island called "The Craters of the Moon." It consists of bubbling mud pools and stunted vegetation. The pools blow up, remain active for a while and then expire, only to blow up in another area.

The colours are fascinating and quite unusual because of all the minerals that come up with the boiling mud. Two of the most dominant colours are the pink in the crater and the lime green of the vegetation. As well as the colours of the minerals in the rocks I have used the blue of the sky and the dark green of the conifers in the distance.

The most important thing about this method of using colour is to make quite sure that you know exactly where the passive threads are going. I use coloured pens to mark the route of the passives, not necessarily the colours I am going to use but colours that I can easily follow when working. Remember that whole-stitch (CTC) zig-zags and half-stitch (CT) goes in a diagonal line. This gives you some latitude in making the passives go as you wish.

The colour source does not have to be in bright colours. I have just completed a piece of lace where the colour photo was taken in a game reserve and depicts mushrooms growing in a rhino midden.

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About Jean: I have been making lace for over twenty years starting when my two sons were due to leave school and do their national service. I needed something special to do during those few difficult years. I had 3 lessons from a visiting lace maker and was left to sink or swim with 2 books. Margaret Maidment and Pamela Nottingham. On popular request I started teaching 6 months later and so started a very happy time of my life, learning new skills and making new friends. Lacemaking is one of the few hobbies that requires full attention (we all know what happens when the mind wanders) and so becomes a very pleasant method of leaving all the daily worries behind you for a few hours. There are also so many different areas to experiment with. Lacemaking is only one of my hobbies as I also enjoy embroidery, water colour painting (mainly of flowers) and recently have taken to making teddy bears. At the moment I am planning three projects but am uncertain about which medium to use. I would like to use all three. This is going to take quite a bit of planning but as design is my first love it will be a stimulating challenge. I make teddy bears while I am working out design problems! My collection is increasing rapidly.