



LEFT Hips of the 'dog rose', detail.

for needlepainting because it can be very fine and has such a gorgeous sheen. Most of the projects in the book can be worked in DMC stranded cotton thread, but if you choose to do this, Victoria suggests enlarging some of the templates slightly to accommodate the thicker thread. The beautifully drawn templates are a hugely valuable embroidery resource which could be used and adapted again and again.

Victoria uses silk floss from DeVere Yarns and Pipers for the projects in the book but, very usefully, she gives a description of the colours alongside the list of proprietary threads, which allows for greater freedom in choosing alternatives and enables the reader to make use of their own stash of threads.

I visited DeVere's website (with

over three hundred gloriously subtle shades of silk and cotton threads I was not going to leave empty-handed!) and thought the following information might make a visit easier for readers unaccustomed to buying silk thread.

DeVere Yarns offer pure silk threads in six different thicknesses that they make themselves. Readers who subscribed to *The Stitcher's Journal* last year may remember that 'pure' silk means it is made



6 thread Loose twist 120D	12 thread Tight twist 240D	18 thread Tight twist 360D	36 thread Tight twist 720D	60 thread Loose twist 1200D	72 thread Loose twist 1440D
Very, very fine	Slightly finer than DMC 1 strand	Slightly finer than DMC 2 strands	DMC 3 strands	DMC 5 strands	DMC 6 strands

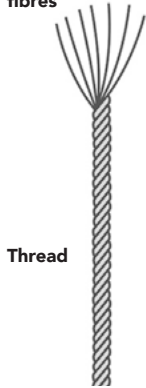
WWW.DEVEREYARNS.CO.UK

from the continuous filament silk as it comes from the silk moth, as opposed to spun silk, where broken remnants are spun together.

The chart above may be helpful. Cotton and silk are very different so the thickness comparisons between the silks and DMC are only guides. I have been experimenting with the 18-thread silks and find them very comfortable to use as an alternative to single strand DMC cotton. Once you know which thickness to use, the website is very easy to shop from. When the thread arrives, each card spool or 'cop' is labelled and numbered, with the first two digits representing the thickness you choose. So Roseate 1865 is no 65 at 18-thread/360 denier thickness. For those who have always wondered as they bought their stockings, the following image and caption explains 'denier'.

I suggest that if you are new to embroidering with silk, you stick to the threads with the tight twist' in either 12 or 18 thread thicknesses. ❖

Individual fibres



Thread

**DENIER** ('denier') or **DEN** (abbreviated D) is a unit of measure for the linear mass density of fibres. In other words, the mass in grams per 9000 metres of the fibre or fabric in question. Let's say we have a strand of silk and 9000 metres of this strand weighs 1 gram. This silk therefore has a denier of 1, or 1d. This means the silk is very light and fine. Any thread or fabric with a denier below 1 is called a microfibre. The higher the denier, the thicker and more durable the fabric.

### NEEDLE-PAINTED PLANTS AND POLLINATORS

by Victoria Matthewson, is published by Search Press on 31 October 2021.

With a foreword written by TV naturalist

Iolo Williams, and a comprehensive design and stitch guide, this gorgeous and informative hardback book will inspire people with some previous experience of embroidery, as well as ambitious beginners. ❖

