

# Michael's

Made by you™



A Fanciful Feather • Project for  
Indigenous Peoples Day

*John Bead*  
ESTABLISHED 1954

## Materials:

### John Bead Czech Seed Beads

Czech glass seed beads 10/0 blue (turquoise),SKU 10416638

Czech seed beads 10/0 black, SKU 10416630

Czech seed beads 10/0 white, SKU 10416647

Czech seed beads 8/0 black, SKU 10549076

Czech seed beads 8/0 white, SKU 10549096

Czech seed bead bugles (size 3 6-7mm) white, SKU 10627336

Basic felt (black), SKU 10572107

Clear Plastic (Creatology), SKU 10378153

Bead landing barrettes, SKU 10443074

Recollections double-sided tape, SKU 10177962

Scotch Double Sided Clear tape, SKU 10180794

Fireline variety pack, SKU 10627279

Turquoise Dyed Howlite Heishi Beads, 8mm x 3mm stone, SKU 10173642

Recollections multi-surface glue stick, SKU 10176577

Charles Craft® Gold Standard® 14 Count Fiddler's Aida Cloth, SKU 10357701

## Tools:

Short beading needles size 10, SKU D572464S

Black ultra fine point sharpie marker, SKU 10338068

Scissors, SKU 10405225

Thread Scissors, SKU 10591717

Beading Mat, SKU 10348546

## From around the house:

Sheet of white craft/sketching paper

Small office clip (bulldog)

## Techniques:

Two needle bead embroidery

Single needle bead embroidery

One bead fret edging

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Designed and created by Indigenous artist Naomi Smith

From time immemorial Feathers have had an esteemed place in Indigenous life. Feathers are used in a variety of ways and are widely used as a decorative embellishment on many objects. Feathers are also one of the most satisfying elements to recreate in beads, if you know how.

This project carefully guides you through the steps required to create a beautiful feather hair barrette. Using simple stitches, time honoured techniques and different types of beads it's possible to create the perfect feather you'll be proud to wear.

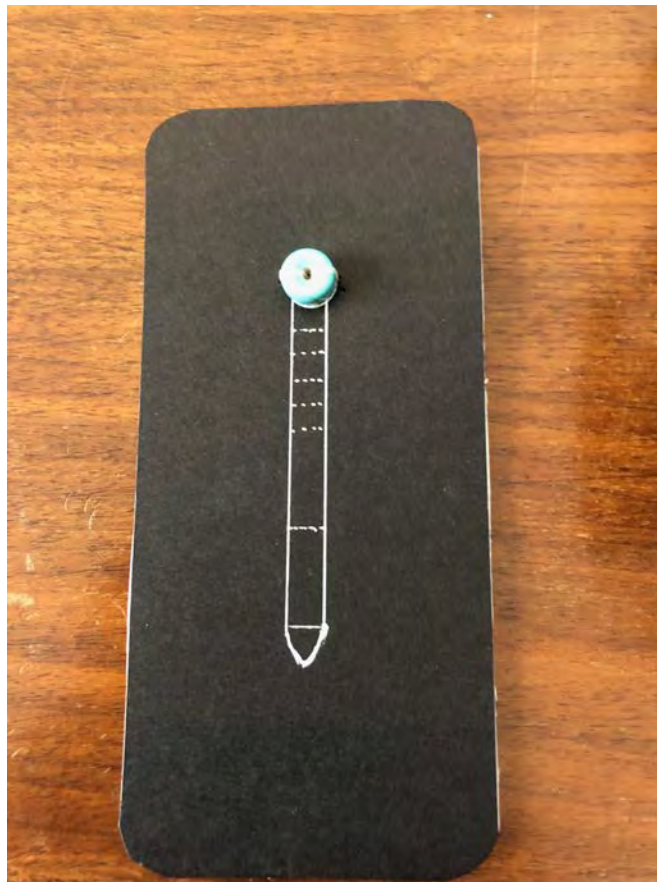
Luckily for us, everything you will need for this project can be found at Michaels.

To begin this project a template and foundation will need to be prepared. You will need: A copy of the paper design template (attached), black basic craft felt, glue stick, double-sided tape, a piece of clear plastic sheet, a plain paper.

#### THE FRONT OF FEATHER:

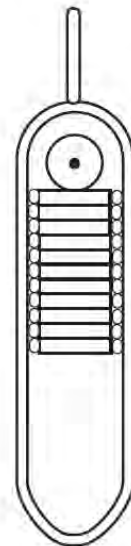
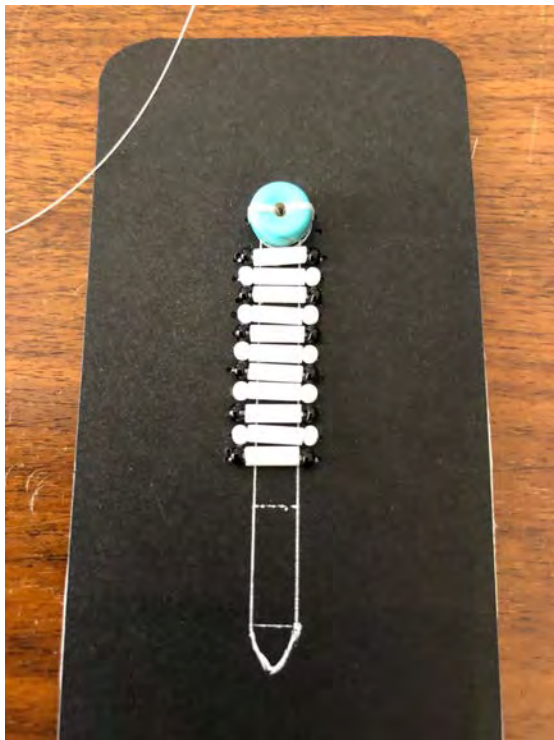
Step 1: Trim out the feather template. Cut out a section of clear plastic 4" by 3". Cut the same size 4" by 3" of the black basic felt and plain white paper. Cover one side of the clear plastic with glue, using the recollections glue stick, and stick a plain piece of paper to the plastic. On the opposite side using strips of Scotch double stick tape cover the plastic with the tape and stick the black felt to the plastic, this will hold the felt better than glue. Once this beading foundation is ready, place a section of Scotch double stick tape on the backside of the feather template. Stick the template onto the black felt part of the foundation being careful to keep the template centered on the 4" by 3" foundation. The feather template will remain on the foundation as a guide for the beaded design. There are three layers to sew through. Hint: By keeping the foundation layers to a minimum and no heavy glues, the project will be easier to create. The foundation needs to be stable enough to support the beadwork.

Step 2: One turquoise 3mm by 8mm stone will need to be sewn onto the feather template where the circle is. Measure a half wing span of (4lb or 6lb) crystal fire line and thread it onto the size 11 short beading needle or sharp needle. The fire line can be used single thickness. Knot one end of the Fireline several times so the knot is large (to avoid having it pull through the foundation while stitching). Pre-poke the centre hole where marked on the template with needle. Remove the needle from the paper side (backside) of the foundation come up through the centre hole with the needle and thread. Slide the stone onto the thread and centre it into the circle on the template. Stitch the stone to the foundation using whip stitches that travel from the centre of the stone to the outside of the stone on the left and right side of the stone. Be sure to keep the thread snug so the stone resists moving around. Hint: a small piece of double stick tape can be used to hold the stone in place while stitching it.

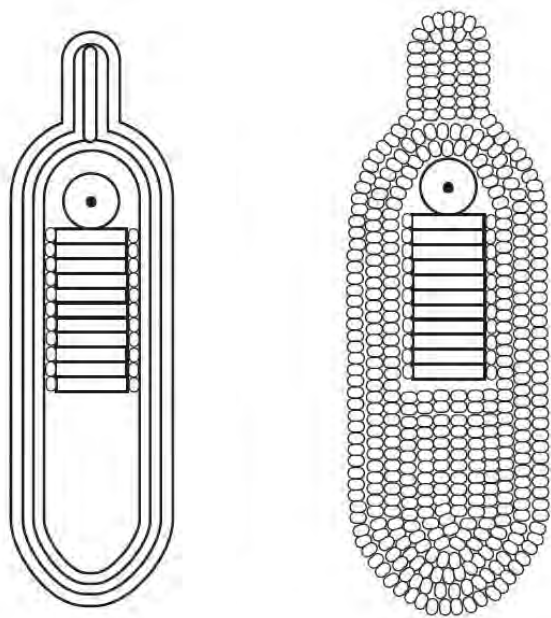




Step 3: Now it's time to sew the horizontal rows of size 10/0 black and white seed beads and the white bugles where marked on the template. Using the crystal fire line and short beading needle knot both ends of the thread together so it's double thickness. There are 11 rows of the centre bugle design. Each row is one black or white seed bead, white bugle and another black or white seed bead. The design alternates between the black and white seeds bead and the bugle colour stays the same. Begin at the top of the feather where the turquoise stone is. Directly underneath the stone secure the first row of bugles starting at the right or left. Come up with needle and thread from back to the front and add the beads, come directly across to other side and bring thread and needle through template to the back. Thread through each row at least twice. There is no need to tie off and cut thread. Thread will be continuous. Once bugle is secured go down to the next area where next row will be and secure the beads using at least two stitches. There will be long sections of thread at the back of the project. This is normal if each row of bugles is not being tied off each time. Continue until 11 rows of bugles have been sewn onto the template. Each row should have enough space that the beads lay flat and are not crowded. Hint: left handed people sew clockwise or left to right and right handed people sew counter clockwise or right to left.



Step 4: Installing rows of beads using double needle appliqué. Learning to use two needles to secure flat rows of beadwork takes getting used to, however once this technique is mastered it will reduce the time required to add flat rows of beading to a project. Two short beading needles are required, the first needle (the feeder) and the second needle (the couching needle) will be used in tandem for this part of the project. The feeder needle will have the double thickness and the couching needle will have single thickness thread. Measure one full wing span of crystal Fireline for the feeder thread and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a wingspan for the couching needle. The feeder needle will be the one that beads are threaded onto and the couching needle secures the beads on the feeder needle to the feather template. The first flat row of beads will surround the turquoise stone and the outside of the rows of bugles (see image) and beyond following the key line on the feather template. This row can be a mix of white and black 10/0 seed beads (see diagram). The placement of the row of white and black 10/0 seed beads is random. Placing the colours in a random method is a great way to make each feather unique. Use two needle appliqué to secure the beads. Beads are secured with the couching thread every two or three beads.



Step 5: Bottom fill of the feather. Using double needle appliqué begin filling the tip of the feather with rows of flat beading following the lines of the feather. Four or five rows will be required to fill in the lower part of the feather. The rows are also a random mix of white and black size 10/0 seed beads. Hint: Typically more black is used than white to represent how a real Eagle feather looks.

Step 6: Installing the quill or stem area of the feather. The top of the feather is where the turquoise stone is. Just above the first row of beading that goes around the stone is where a short straight row of size white 8/0 seed beads and one white size 10/0 seed bead needs to be secured. Use double thickness crystal Fireline. Poke the needle from back of template to the front just about the turquoise stone, thread 5 size 8/0 white seed beads and one 10/0 white seed bead. With one long stitch sew the row to the template, reinforce the first stitch by going through the row of beads at least twice. Tie off the thread at the back by looping through the long stitch twice and trim excess thread.

Step 7: Use double needle appliqué to sew the outside rows of flat beading around the entire feather including the stem. First row is a mix of size 10/0 in white, turquoise and black seed beads. Start the row near the top of the feather on one side of the stem (either right or left side). All the beads will be size 10/0. The row will begin with 15 white seed beads, 2 black, 2 white, 2 black, 1 turquoise, 1 black, 1 turquoise, 1 black, 1 turquoise, 1 black, 8 turquoise, then fill in the lower part of the feather with 20 black, then repeat same sequence for going around the other side of the feather. The quantities are approximate, with hand made objects the size will vary and so will the quantity of beads. The row should look uniform where each side of the feather mirrors the other, adjust the bead quantities accordingly. To complete the row use turquoise beads to go around the stem (see above photo). The outer row of the feather is done entirely with black seed beads including the stem. Each row should be tied off and secured at the back of the feather.

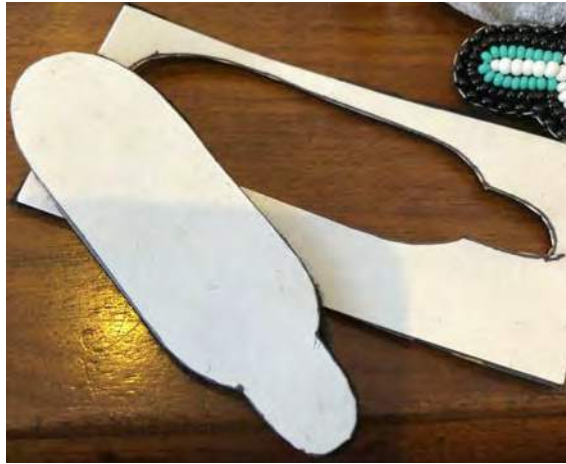
**Step 8:** After completing the outer rows of beads on the feather very carefully trim away the foundation. Be careful not to cut into the stitches that are holding the rows onto the feather. Use the backside to help visually to avoid cutting into threads. Trim right up to the last outer row of beadwork so there is very little felt showing. Hint: Take time to cut this well, it will become the final shape of the feather.



**Step 9:** Preparing the backing for the feather requires a 4" by 3" scrap of Aida cloth (14 or 11 count), same size piece of basic black felt, same size of white paper. Using the glue stick, secure the felt to the Aida cloth and the paper to the other side of the side cloth. One side will show the black felt and the other will have the paper, the Aida cloth is sandwiched in between.



Step 10: With the felt side facing down on work surface, using an ultra fine black sharpie marker, carefully trace around the cut out feather. This will become the backside of the feather. After tracing trim out the feather shape and check that it matches nicely with the beaded feather top. The felt side is the outside of the backing, the paper side will be hidden inside the feather.



Step 11: Attaching the barrette is done easily in two steps. On the back of the barrette place two thin pieces of recollections red double sided tape. This tape acts as a glue to hold the barrette in place while it is being stitched to the black felt backing. Peel off the red plastic from the tape after securing it to the barrette to expose the sticky part of the tape, be careful the tape doesn't peel off with the red plastic. Centre the barrette onto the felt backing, press firmly to stick it on with the tape. Use a double thickness piece of crystal fire line. Using a whip stitch secure the barrette through the 2 holes on either end. Whip stitch at least four times for each end. Hint: Tie off the thread on first hole, then carry it over to the second hold. It will leave a long piece of thread on the back running between the two holes. This adds a bit of strength to the holes and provides a spot to tie off the thread.





Step 12: Join the back of the feather to the front by using a single beaded edge. Use size 8/0 black seed beads to complete the project. Thread needle with a full wingspan of crystal Fireline. It will be used as single thickness. Begin adding the single beaded edge on one of the long sides of the feather, avoiding any tight areas such as at the stem part of the feather. Hide the knot on the inside of the front of the feather then whip stitch the two sides together before adding the single beaded edge. The single beaded edge joins the front of the feather to the back of the feather. Hint: Other stitches can be used too such as the two beaded edge (also known as fret, picot, zipper edge), or any other ornamental edging. A small bulldog clip can be used to hold the barrette front and back together while adding edging.

Project is now complete. We hope you enjoy wearing your beaded feather barrette.

Chi miigwetch (big thank you in annishnabemowen)



