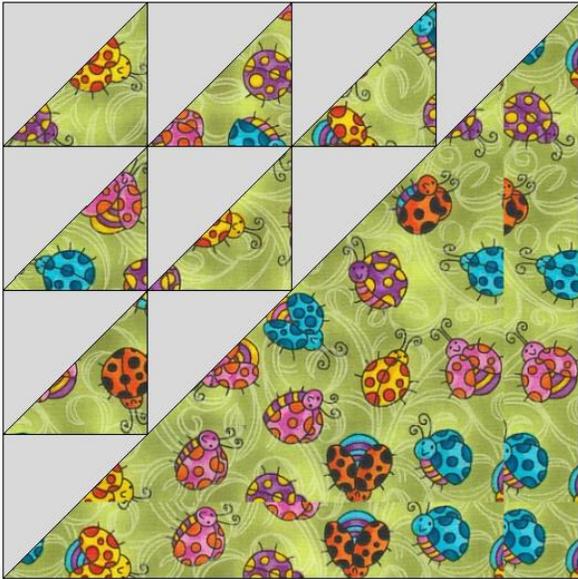


Birds in the Air Variation

8 inches finished ($8\frac{1}{2}$ end to end)



The Birds in the Air block has been documented since the late 1920s. It was first diagrammed by Ruth Finley in her book "Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women who Made Them" in 1929. It has also been called Flock of Geese, Flight of Swallows, Flying Birds, even White Cloud. Usually there is one bird, or three, but we need an 8 inch block, so we will put a larger flock up there.

Actually, I don't know if there are 6 birds, or 10? In the Close to Home quilt, there are definitely 10 birds in the blue sky, but we are going to use the grey fabric for birds and a kid's print for the larger triangle to show off the fabric.

Cutting:

Light grey solid

1 - 4 by 11 inch rectangle

2 - $2\frac{3}{4}$ inch squares cut in half diagonally (or 3 triangles cut from a $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch strip with a Half Square or Easy Angle Triangle Ruler).

Bright Kid's Print

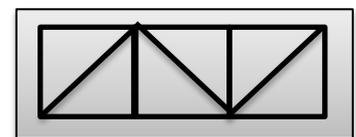
1 - 9 inch square cut diagonally (you only need one half) - or a half square cut from an $8\frac{1}{2}$ inch strip using a Half Square or Easy Angle triangle Ruler.

1 - 4 by 11 inch rectangle

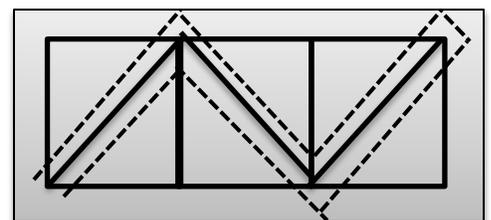
For this block you need 6 half square triangle patches - so we are going to use Mary Ellen Hopkins method for sewing these. Normally you would use this for a large number of squares, but it works for this.

Since you need 6 blocks, you need 3 squares, so on the gray rectangle, draw 3 - $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch squares in a row ---

Draw diagonal lines in the squares as shown.

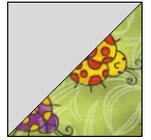


Now, starting at the lower left corner, sew $\frac{1}{4}$ inch on one side of the diagonal lines (start outside the square). When you get to the other corner of the square, pivot and sew down the next diagonal, etc. When you get to the far end, sew to $\frac{1}{4}$ on the other side of the line, and come back to the beginning.

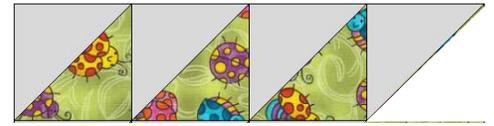


My 'sewing' lines aren't too good - I'm sure you can do much better at keeping them evenly on either side of the line. You can see why we don't cut the squares to the final size - you need extra to turn around!

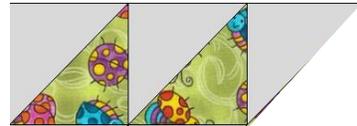
Now, cut on ALL the lines, and press the seams to the print. You should have 6 half-square triangles! Square them up to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches.



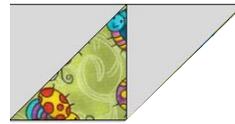
Sew three squares together, and add a grey triangle.



Sew two squares together, and add another grey triangle



Sew a grey triangle to the remaining half square triangle.



Sew the strips together, careful not to stretch the bias edges of the triangles.
Sew the final grey triangle to the bottom strip.



Now all you need to do is sew the large triangle in place. It will be a bit bigger than the half you have sewn, so sew it on (careful with that diagonal), and square up the block to $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

For the 'Close to Home' quilt, I made four of the blocks in different shades. Sew the four together lengthwise to make a column, then add a $4\frac{1}{2}$ inch strip on the right this time. Sew the reverse Attic Window block to the top of the strip - and wait for next month's block to finish this strip!

This block can be used for many quilts - you can do some really interesting things with blocks with strong diagonal lines! Try making some blocks and playing with the shapes they make.

