Another Way with Wings

Printers:

Before we get started let's talk about the printer I used to make the wings in this lesson. I have had several Epson printers starting with a C80, C66, C88 and now have an Artisan 50. The best thing about using Epson printers is that they use DuraBrite or Clarian ink. This ink is fade and water proof so you can skip the old Bubble Jet set stuff people used to use to make printer ink more durable. This saves time and money.

The second good feature of Epson printers is that they are a straight feed printer; this means that the paper goes in from the top and straight through the print heads rather than picking up the paper from below, bending it around the print heads and then sending the printed sheet out the front.

All that said you can try any printer you already have! We will be using a stiff material to print on and the printers seem to treat it like paper BUT proceed at your own risk, any printer can jam and run into trouble. I've been willing to take that risk because the Epson's I've used are not that expensive. You have to decide for yourself.

Print one of the wing file pages on plain paper and check to see if there is any banding showing. If so perform required maintenance on your printer such as cleaning the print heads or aligning the print heads.

Material to print on:

Try to get the 1st choice Pellon 806 Stitch-N-Tear if you can, it's the most like paper and also show's the least "pattern" from the manufacturing process. This will make the wings look more natural. Be sure to cut so any visible "grain" lines run with the 11" direction rather than across the sheet.

I've also used regular Pellon which has a definite grain direction. If you must use this rather than the stabilizers on the supply list, be sure to cut your sheets with those grain lines rather than across so the printer doesn't crumple up your sheet.

Fusible Web:

I'll be demonstrating for this class with Wonder Under which has paper backing on only one side, you can use any light weight fusible web you have on hand or can get locally. Try www.joggles.com if you need to order from the web.

The Wing files:

Included with the class are 2 wing files I have prepared for you to use. All that is necessary is to print them out. I'll give some info on preparing your own files later in the class.

Step by step instructions.

1. Start by cutting several 8.5 x 11 inch sheets of the Pellon stitch-n-tear Stabilizer. Do a good, precise cutting job, making sure the sheets have square corners and clean cuts along the edge. I cut a long 8.5" wide strip from the edge of the stabilizer and then cross cut the 11" lengths with my rotary paper cutter. Test the sheets in your printer to be sure they fit nicely. Pick any little bits of loose material off the sheet that might get into your printer.

2. Choose the wing style you like best and select the print icon from the Adobe acrobat reader screen. Download the newest version @ www.adobe.com for free.

3. The dialogue box for your printer will pop up. This is where you should choose the correct paper size and type, I select plain bright white paper, 8.5 X 11". Make sure that you are printing a PICTURE rather than text. On my Epson printer I have to click properties where I find choices for Best photo, Photo, Photo and Text, Text. Just choose Photo or the equivalent on your printer. Make sure everything is set to 100% of size, no scaling and click PRINT.

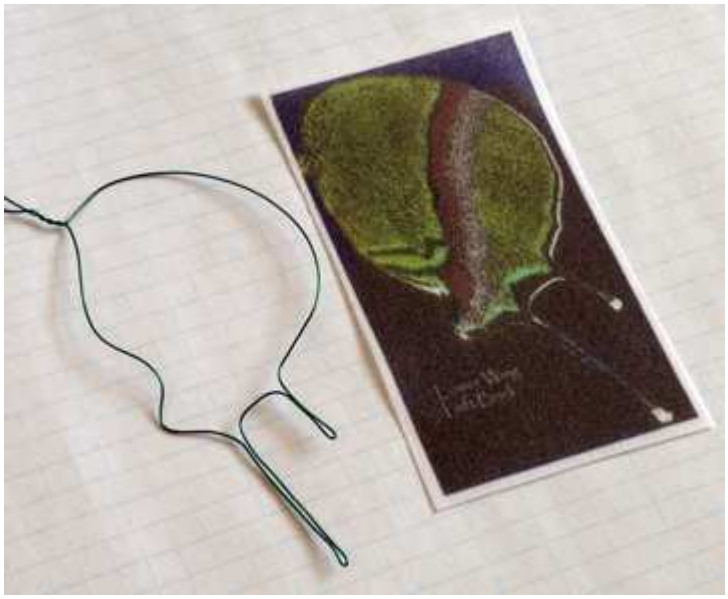
4. Set the sheet aside on a flat surface so the ink can dry for a few minutes.

5. You will notice that there appear to be 2 sets of wings on the sheet and that they are marked front and back, upper and lower, right and left. Cut the wings out leaving as much extra around the edges as possible and definitely leaving the type in place. Match up each section of wing with its mirror image front and back. It's not a bad idea to put the 2 pieces for each wing section in their own envelope so you don't get them mixed up.

6. Choose a wing section to work on and create a wire loop with the ends neatly twisted. Size this loop so it fits just inside the black border of the wing in the colorful area and so that it follows the outline of the wing design. Try to make the wire loop smooth and flat.

7. Prepare to iron the first side of the wing by setting your iron on medium with no steam. You'll want a hard surface to iron on. I use a piece of Masonite which has a smooth hard surface and can be gotten at most hardware stores. Avoid working on a soft padded ironing board.

8. Cut a piece of Wonder Under a little bit smaller than the rough cut wing section. If you cut it larger, when you press the wing and wonder under together the fusible will attach to the ironing surface or your iron!



9. Lay the wing Right Side down on the ironing surface, position the wire loop and tape the twisted ends down to the work surface. Place the wonder under on top with the PAPER side UP. Make a final check to be sure the wire loop is correctly positioned.

10. Iron the paper backing of the Wonder Under for about 15 seconds. Let the wing "sandwich" cool a minute and peal off the paper backing. You should be able to see that the fusible web has stuck to the back of the wing covering the wire.

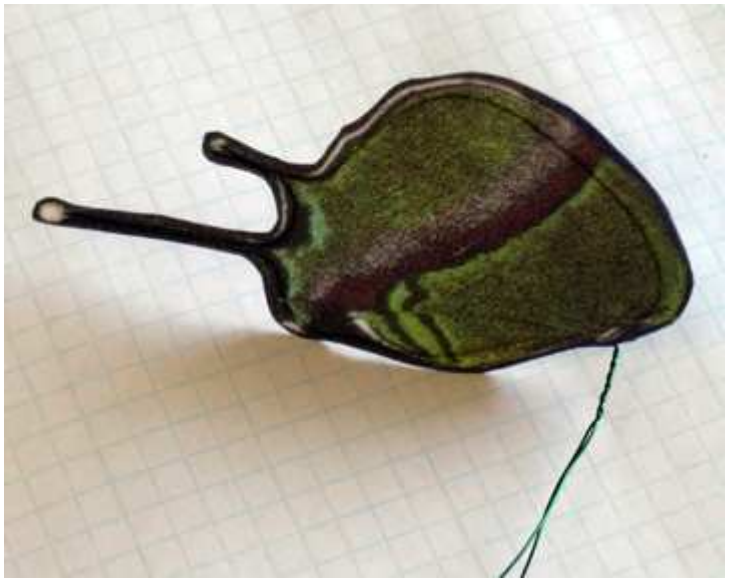
11. I use a little light box for the next step but you can also hold your wing up to a bright window. Place the mirror image back piece of the wing over the fusible web looking carefully to match the black edges of the wing as exactly as you can. Pin through both layers outside the wing.

12. Iron the back side of the wing in place. You can gently use the tip of the iron to make sure the bonding is nice and tight around the wire.

13. Use small sharp scissors to cut out the wing leaving a small black edge all around the colorful area. If the white of the stabilizer is showing on the edges of the wing use a sharpie or other permanent marker to color it black.

14. Continue on to make the other 3 wing sections.

15. If you want to attach the wings to a polymer clay doll like I've done, group the twisted ends of an upper and lower wing section and decide on the size of hole to drill into the doll's back. This should be a snug fit. Bend the twisted ends at right angles to the wing and trim them so they fit into the hole and allow the wing to stand just a little bit away from the body. Glue the wires into the doll with 5 minute epoxy.



16. If you would like to use the wings on another type of doll use the wire tails by sewing them in place.

17. You can use pastel chalk to make the wing colors more intense. Be sure to test whatever you use on the wings on a scrap of stabilizer first to see how it will affect this material. You can also add glitter, metallic paint etc!

Creating your own wing patterns:

I have a wonderful book titled Butterflies and Moths of the World. This book has fantastic huge pictures of these insects displayed on a black background. It's a great reference for designing your own wings. Here are several suggestions

1. Use a book of moths or butterflies
2. Purchase or catch a real butterfly
3. Draw and color your own wings

Once you have a reference to work with use a scanner to get the image into your computer. With the image now in digital form there are two possibilities.

Using Adobe Photoshop or another editing program:

If you are familiar with Photoshop or Photoshop Elements you can create each wing section by first selecting a box around one of the wing sections. Leave some room around the edges. Use the Photoshop tools to create a black edge all around the wing section and remove any unwanted parts of the image like the insect body. Make a reverse image copy of each section. The trickiest part is to keep all the fronts, backs, lefts, rights, uppers and lowers straight.

This is the method I used to create the PDF files I made for your use. I carefully arranged each of the individual sections in a new file so they would all print all at once. If Photoshop or a similar program is not for you then try this method.

Using your scanner:

Print out two copies of the original file you scanned into your computer and then print out to reversed copies of the file. Many printers will let you do this right in your print dialogue box.

Next cut out each wing section, you need to two copies because when you cut out the upper wing section you'll damage the lower section and visa versa. Make sure you label each section as you go.

Now arrange all the sections fronts and backs on a new sheet or sheets of paper and use double stick tape to hold them in place. Use a black marker to color all around the wing sections so you'll have a black edge. Scan your new pasted up wing sheet into the computer and print as usual.

Supply List

Pellon 806 Stitch-N-Tear (my first choice)
Or
Sulky Tear Easy light weight tear away stabilizer (should work but lighter weight)

Fusible Web: like Wonder Under (my choice) or light steam a seam 2. Your choice must have at least one side with a paper backing. Wonder under is not repositionable when reheated, this is a plus. Fusible web seems to have a shelf life so if yours has been around a long time check to see it's working properly.

28 or 30 gauge wire: you can get packages in craft stores in colors to match your wings

Iron and firm surface to iron on like Masonite or wood

Printer: I have an Epson Artisan 50

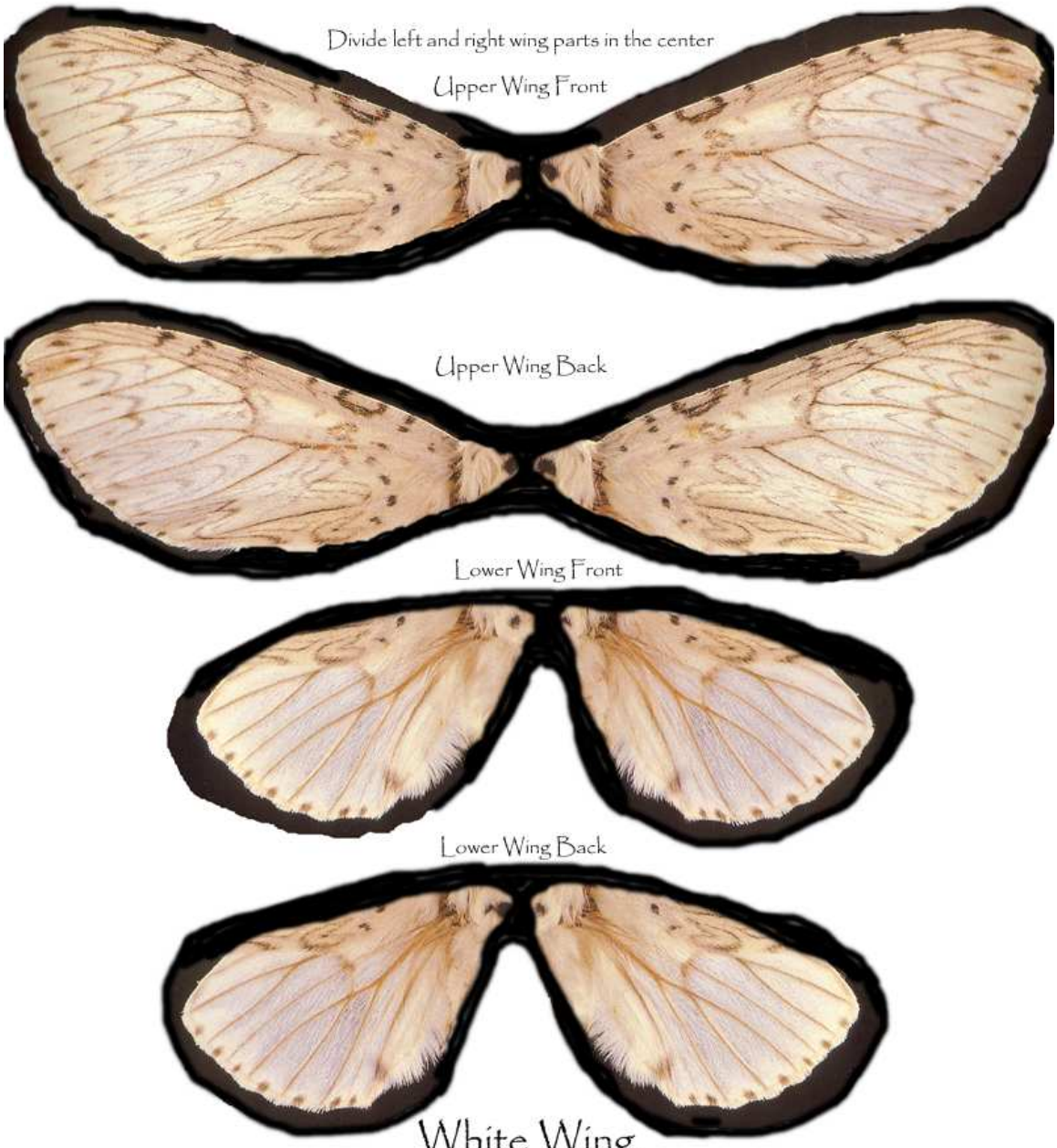
Small sharp scissors, needle nose pliers and wire cutters

Straight pins

Optional: light box, Fiskars rotary paper cutter, scanner to make your own designs, pastels to enhance colors, marking pens to color wing edges

To print this PDF test first with plain paper

Another Way With Wings Luminous Green Wings Copyright Kathryn Walmsley 2007



White Wing