

Using dyes—some helpful hints

Problem:

I recently purchased your 'Fantastic Feathers' eBook which I have found a great help. You recommend the use of Jacquard dyes, I have purchased 24 of these from Milliner Warehouse and I'm more than pleased with them. My question is this, do you know if it is possible to buy a **white** dye to mix with the colours to make them a paler tone? I know that the colours intensify when heated with vinegar, but I don't mean intensity I mean shade/tone. I have enquired at Milliner Warehouse and they do not have a white dye, can you help? *JW*

Solution:

We understand what you mean! Although there is no white dye available, there is one which will do what you need - it's called 'Ecrú' and is a pale, almost non-colour. Adding it to other dyes will dilute the colour and give you a paler tone.

How much to use is a matter for experiment, but do as the eBook suggests and put a tiny amount of your chosen dye plus the same of Ecrú into a plastic cup, then add boiling water from the kettle. Dip in the feather you want to dye and swish it around for a few moments. Take it out and dry it. Although the colour will not be very intense, the shade should be evident. The photo right above shows some feathers which have been just dipped.

If the tone is right, you can put this cupful of dye into a saucepan with vinegar and heat it, then add a feather to get a more intense tone. Below right are some deeper coloured feathers which have been boiled in dye .

