

spinning

felting

weaving

knitting

dyeing

**ashford**  
WHEELS & LOOMS

# the Wheel

ASHFORD'S FIBRECRAFT MAGAZINE – NEW ZEALAND

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*Spun angel*

Patsy Z's illegal yarn

Freeform capelet

*How to ...*

Weave curtains

Felt rabbits

Grow and process flax

... and much more

**GREAT NEW PRODUCTS AND PATTERNS INSIDE**

**Editor: Elizabeth Ashford**

The Wheel is published annually and is available to members of the Ashford Club (see below) or from your Ashford dealer. Copies of back issues 23 and 24 are available.

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### The Ashford Club

A club for spinners, weavers, knitters, dyers and felters, the Ashford Club is a place for sharing, learning and experiencing the wonderful world of textile art. Based at the home of the Ashford company, in Ashburton, New Zealand, membership costs only NZ \$10.00 (approx AUS \$9, Euro €6, GBP £5, US \$8, CAD \$8, Yen ¥800). Receive a glossy, members-only edition of The Wheel sent from New Zealand and quarterly online newsletters with competitions and special offers.

Pay by personal cheque or go to the club web site [www.ashfordclub.co.nz](http://www.ashfordclub.co.nz)

## Welcome

Richard and I get asked to speak to many business and community groups who are intrigued – and perhaps perplexed – that in the twenty-first century we make spinning wheels and weaving looms. In my talk I compare my previous career in the law to my life in craft. As a young lawyer in a small rural town I enjoyed helping my clients but, generally, whether in my office or the courtroom, they were stressed, having to deal with difficult situations. In contrast, craftswomen and men I meet are grounded, generous, and warm.

As well as the thrill and satisfaction of creating, and the soothing meditative qualities of our crafts, there is a great warmth and companionship amongst crafters who meet or who share through social media. I finish my talk by saying I am not sure whether only nice people do craft or craft makes people nice (I think it is probably both) but for thirty years now the support and sharing I have encountered have been a joy. I feel blessed to have traded my lawyer's wig for a lazy Kate and a niddy noddly!



*Happy to hand over the wig to daughter Lucy*



*Patsy Zawistoski*

Another wonderful part of our crafts is the opportunity to learn new skills. Earlier this year, in New Zealand and Australia, we have been fortunate to have the “Spinnin’Guru”, Patsy Zawistoski from the USA, as a tutor and lecturer for several weeks. I was able to attend three of her workshops and loved learning new techniques including Patsy’s “illegal” yarn. See page ten on how to break the rules.

New techniques can require new equipment. Richard, Kate and the team have been busy designing and testing products to meet the interest in weaving with art yarn (new 2.5dpi reed), using exotic fibres (new superfine carder), and “painting” with fibres using a new blending board, and much more. To see more about these new products see page forty-six.

Our woollen mill in Milton is going very well. Not only are we in control of the whole process – from sheep to you – we have the ability to develop new blends and Kate has released some beautiful new silk Merino colours and a fabulous new heather range of 30% alpaca with 70% fine Merino. If you would like to see inside the mill, go to our web site for a guided tour on YouTube.

[www.ashford.co.nz/ashfordwoollenmill](http://www.ashford.co.nz/ashfordwoollenmill)



*Kate and Richard with Louis (left) and George at the Mill*

There are great articles and projects in this issue of The Wheel. Enjoy! If you are a member of the Ashford Club, you receive a glossy version of The Wheel magazine as soon as it is printed in October each year, as well as receiving a quarterly online newsletter with more projects, news, and special offers. If you are not already a member of our Club I hope you will join by going to our web site [www.ashfordclub.co.nz](http://www.ashfordclub.co.nz) or post a personal cheque and your details to us at PO Box 474, Ashburton, New Zealand.

Happy spinning, weaving, knitting, and dyeing!  
Kindest regards,  
Elizabeth





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Cover: Angel Benedetti wears her art yarn.  
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# Freeform Weaving with art yarn

BY SUZY BROWN, SOEST,  
THE NETHERLANDS

Sometimes you happen to run into a new activity and before you know it, you're grabbed up by it and carried away.

**You discover that it has secrets which** have been waiting for you to find; you start lifting rocks and peering through shining pools to find the hidden treasure.

It was with this sense of adventure that I discovered weaving. I heard about the Saori style of weaving, a really 'in the moment' activity, no mistakes, no patterns and no complicated warping required. This kind of weaving is possible on any loom, freeing the weaver from rules and

complexity. In my mind, it's perfect for using 'art yarns', because with these, we can make even a really basic plain weave and still get amazing results: the yarn does the singing for us. Spin a crazy bulky, bobbly, sparkly, coily yarn and let it jump through your warp and weft, adding texture and even sculptural aspects without anything more complex than plain weave on a rigid heddle loom.

What I am doing with my yarns and looms, I consider to be 'freeform weaving', or weaving without a pattern. I use the yarns I have on hand, often stopping as I weave to add in some details or leaving gaps, adding an extra warp thread and weaving with it for a while before heading it

back into the warp; basically being free.

I can't really share a 'pattern' with you, because I simply don't have one. But I would like to share my process with you. Perhaps this will trigger some idea explosions for you too, about using your own yarns and experimenting with them to create something that excites your imagination.

I started with a thick and thin handspun, which was my colour inspiration for the whole piece. Next time I think I will try a more neutral colour pallet with some rustic natural yarns, and I am thinking of extending the collar and using some tail spun yarns around the edges. There are many possibilities!

# Freeform

A colourful use of handspun and art yarns to create a simple capelet.

**Size:** One size fits most

## You will need:

Loom: Rigid Heddle 60cm (24ins)

Reed: 5dpi

Warp yarn quantity and colour: Skeinz 'Moody Hues' DK/8ply approx. 50-80gm (1¾-3ozs); small quantity commercial spun eyelash yarn

Weft yarn quantity and colour: Skein handspun art yarns (I used my own WoolWench range) purple and emerald; commercial eyelash yarn approx 50gm (1¾ozs); Skeinz DK wool blend, 50gm (1¾ozs); pieces of handspun singles and embroidery thread

Other: Embroidery needle, 9mm crochet hook

## Here's how:

Total warp ends: 120

Total warp length: 1m (1yd)

Finished width: 48-50cm (19-20ins)

## Warping

Warp the complete width of reed with DK yarn and a couple of sections of the eyelash yarn as desired for texture. Change and add colours in any way that pleases you!

## Weaving

Allowing approx. 20cm (8ins) at each end for tassels, with a simple plain weave, work the length of the warp changing colours as you like. Thick and thin yarns make a nice wave pattern when used in the weft. Experiment with textures and thicknesses, pull up 'lumps' of yarn to make bobbles, add embroidered details while on the loom, free your imagination to play! I also wove through a section of i-cord to make a loopy addition to the front.

## Finishing

Remove weaving from the loom. Finish ends with knots. I plaited my tassels. Create the hole for the neck, reinforce where you will cut by sewing some cotton fabric onto the back of the woven cloth, stitching along both sides of the line to make a channel to cut between.

To crochet the collar, I worked around the neck making single crochet stitches into the woven fabric from behind the stitched lining. On my piece I made 40 stitches around the neck, with the thick and thin handspun yarn - it is very bulky. I went around again with a double crochet stitch and it was high enough for my collar. If you have a less bulky yarn you just need to add

more rows till you have the desired collar height.

For the 'sleeves', which are really more 'caps' because I made no side seams, I crocheted a chain of about 22cm (8½ins) joining front and back, about 18cm (7ins) from the shoulder, then crocheted into that and worked up towards the shoulder, reducing on each row and joining my stitches to the edge of the weaving at both ends. This forms a kind of triangle that sits around the shoulder comfortably.

## Editor's NOTE

Suzy, also known as the WoolWench, lives in Holland but grew up in New Zealand where her love of wool began. To see more of her work: [www.WoolWench.com](http://www.WoolWench.com)



Using yarns on hand



Plain weave certainly not plain



# WEAVING your own *Curtains*

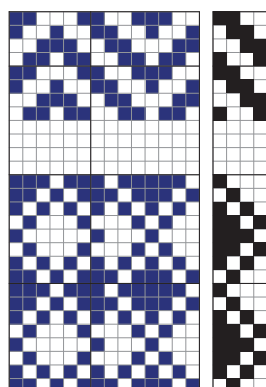
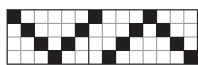
BY SHIELA DIXON, ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH, UK

These curtains are made from a warm but drapery fabric, in translucent golden colours that will give your room a warm glow.

## You will need:

Four shaft loom with a suitable weaving width  
Spinning wheel or spindle  
Ashford Merino sliver 100gm (3½ozs)  
# Cheesecake  
Natural white Merino 200gm (7ozs)  
Silk tops 50gm (1¾ozs)  
Commercial cottolin Ne 22/2 200gm (7ozs)  
Other: 2.5cm (1in) curtain header tape  
2m (2yds)

repeat



herringbone  
(twill)

waffle

The golden silk / Merino for the weft and cream cottolin for the warp are similar enough to make a fabric which looks fairly plain from a distance. But close up, the lustre of the silk/Merino contrasts with the matte cottolin to show the twill pattern.

Using header tape is an easy way to make your fabric into curtains with some gather and gives a modern, not-too-rustic look.

For a more decorative look you could add a waffle border near the bottom of each curtain, or weave a little extra fabric to make tie-backs.

## Editor's NOTE

Shiela is an Ashford dealer and now spinning has merged with a parallel career in communications. Shiela searches the web for spinning-related news, articles, freebies and fun, and compiles the monthly Hand Spinning News. You can read the current issue and sign up for a free monthly email at [hand-spinning-news.com](http://hand-spinning-news.com)

See also Shiela's shop at [handspinner.co.uk](http://handspinner.co.uk)

## Here's how:

### The yarn

Using a drum carder or hand carders, blend together 200gm (7ozs) of fibre per square metre (yard) of fabric that you want to make, in the following proportions: Ashford Merino in Cheesecake (30%), natural white Merino (65%) and silk tops (5%).

Passing these fibres through a drum carder or hand carders two or three times will achieve a fairly consistent colour with a little variegation which looks attractive. If you like more variegation, blend less thoroughly.

Spin the fibre into singles. You're aiming for a similar thickness to your cottolin. Spin using a short-draw for a semi-worsted yarn so that the resulting fabric isn't too soft and fluffy.

Your singles will be better behaved when you weave if you set them. You can either allow them to rest for a few days, set each skein in the usual way with warm water, or do as I did and steam on a niddy noddy over a kettle.

### The maths

#### Width

Measure the width of your curtain pole and divide by two. You could use that as



*Dyed and white Merino with silk tops*



*Achieve the right amount of colour variegation by carding*



*The lustre of the silk/Merino and the matt cottolin accentuates the twill pattern*

the width for each curtain but they'd look absolutely flat when they were drawn. Multiply your width by a 'fullness' factor to get a gathered / draped look. Multiply by 1.5 to 2 (fullness of 50% - 100%) for your fabric width.

Sett: 20 ends per inch (80/10), that's two ends in each dent of a standard 10dpi reed. Note that the work may pull in a little making your fabric a little short of your expected width.

Multiply your intended fabric width by 20 (ends per inch) to calculate the number of ends that you need in your warp.

### Length

For the length of your warp, add together the length of two curtains, plus four hems (top and bottom of each curtain) plus the usual allowances for tying the warp at the front and back.

You could add a little length for making tie-backs.

### The warp

This herringbone twill is based on the Rosepath draft - other twill patterns using the same threading are given on p58 onwards in the Ashford Book of Weaving for the Four Shaft Loom.

Make a warp at least as long as the length calculated above. Thread the Rosepath draft as shown.

### Weaving

Weave one pattern repeat in a contrasting colour so that you can easily check that the threading is correct.

Wind your spun singles onto a shuttle and weave the herringbone pattern.

### Optional waffle border

If you'd like the waffle border near the

bottom of each curtain, weave the waffle pattern in the appropriate place. I suggest weaving the pattern twice after 7.5cm (3ins) and then return to the herringbone pattern. Weave the waffle pattern twice more 7.5cm (3ins) before you finish.

### Finishing

Cut each curtain to length, allowing for a hem top and bottom. Hem using the cottolin and your favourite hemming method. Stitch the header tape using a running stitch.



*Stitch the header tape using a running stitch*



*Giving the room a warm glow*



# Magic of



BY LORY WIDMER HESS AND PETE COMSTOCK

Below: Carla in the class



Shearing the sheep at The Homestead School

In the German fairy tale *Mother Holle*, a good, industrious spinner is showered with gold, while her lazy stepsister is punished by being slathered with pitch. Is this a simple cautionary tale intended to frighten girls into fulfilling their societal role of churning out useful household goods? Or does the true significance and value of spinning – and other handwork – lie in some inner quality, some treasure that is not seen with the eyes but with the heart?

Lory and Pete both share their experiences of spinning's magic.

When Lory Widmer Hess learned to spin, it wasn't because she had to in order to clothe herself, or because she wanted the approval of family or a future spouse, or because she hoped to benefit financially from her industriousness. "The treasure I hoped to win was something more intangible, that even I couldn't clearly identify. Like many modern people, I had the wish to make something with my hands—but why?"

Lory was part of a class of eighteen women enrolled for a one-year journey "From Sheep to Shawl", taking a Romney fleece through all the stages of washing, teasing, carding, spinning, plant-dyeing, and finally knitting a garment. Now, she and her husband are preparing to leave their jobs of many years to take up a new task as co-workers in a community caring for resident adults with special needs.

"Why would we take this step into the unknown, away from our familiar haunts and habits? What could we possibly gain by working with individuals generally ignored and dismissed by our society? On a recent visit to the community I sat in the weavery, one of the workshops where residents and co-workers together make things that are both useful and beautiful. One resident, who has an amazing memory for facts, dates, and numbers, was in charge of sleying the warp; he could instantly say how many threads had been wound, without even counting. Another, whose delicate beaded earrings and colourful pullover testified to her sense of style and design, noticed right away when a mistake had been made in the pattern on her loom. A third, wheelchair-bound, sat and beamed upon us all while she tirelessly carded wool, the soft, cloudy puffs in her lap seeming but a reflection of her contented spirit."

At a small rural school in New York State, Carla Giuffrida creates a similar harmony in her knitting and weaving classes by leading children through the entire creative process—starting with the wool on a sheep's back out in the school's pasture, all the way to the colourful and unique caps that adorn her students' heads.

The school's flock of Shetlands is shorn annually with the children assisting. Then, the students help to process the raw wool,





# our Hands

washing, teasing, carding and spinning it with an Ashford Traditional Wheel or with drop spindles. Finally the students dye the skeins before incorporating their very own yarn into weaving and knitted pieces.

"The children come in here," remarks Giuffrida, "and they say, 'Oh, this is like sleeping,' which by that, they mean they're relaxing. It's very hard for a child to relax today in this world. Fibre arts automatically have the benefits of meditation. It lifts your spirits; it calms your mind; it quiets your breathing. The kids really love it."

"When you make something," says Giuffrida, "you put meaning into it. When I knit for my family, there is love in every stitch. There is magic in our hands and in the things we make." Carla Giuffrida has put love into every lesson as well; and it certainly shows in the ranks of her many students who know how to focus, to work with a purpose, and to create meaning in their own lives.



Lory

## Editor's NOTE

Pete Comstock is the Head of The Homestead School in Glen Spey, NY. See [www.homesteadschool.com](http://www.homesteadschool.com) to learn more about its innovative programme. Lory Widmer Hess learned to spin at the Fiber Craft Studio in Chestnut Ridge, NY. She now enjoys living and working within a special needs community in Temple, NH.

# Spinning illegal yarns

BY PATSY SUE ZAWISTOSKI, ELK GROVE VILLAGE, IL, USA

Shhhh!! I am a law-abiding citizen from Chicago, where allegedly one could find a speak-easy for information about an unlawful activity. Shhhh!! Here is an illegal yarn to try. Consider me your hand spinner's speak-easy.

## Illegal Yarns – One-Z and One-S

Every spinning student knows that if you spin two Z singles you must ply them S. Or if you spin two S singles then you ply them Z. You can't ply an S with a Z, or you get into trouble with the Spinning Police!

Why is that illegal?

Why can't you mix them up?

Well actually you can mix them up – just say the Spinnin'Guru told you so.

For the most success, you need to remember the dynamics of plying yarn. We all know singles get puffier and softer when they are plied, that's why we like plying.

Many spinners don't realise that each plying twist that joins the singles together is simultaneously removing a twist from each single ply.

Twist moves in and out of a single ply or plied yarn depending on which way the yarn was spun or plied and which way the wheel is turning.

When you do illegal plying, with one Z and one S, consider the effect of plying with more S twist. The Z-twist single will puff up, soften, and actually become slightly longer as Z twist is removed. At the

same time the S twist single will become tighter, smaller, and even shorter as the S twist is increased.

A weird kind of spiral starts forming. For most yarns this is a really bad plan. The ply that is getting tighter usually gets wiry and kinky and the two plies can never become balanced.

BUT if you play your cards right it can work really well.

Illegal yarns are three bobbin yarns, and should be sampled to check the twist amounts before spinning the full quantity.

To make a successful illegal yarn, you must take full advantage of the tightening and loosening effects of twist. Choose a decorative fibre for the ply that loosens. I chose Tencel® which comes as a brilliant white top.

Tencel is a registered name for the ecological rayon. Unlike previous rayon that had a great amount of downstream waste, Tencel recycles the solution it is extruded into. Tencel also has a wonderful drape and swish since it is a heavier rayon fibre.

I have photos of two ways to spin Tencel - thick and thin, or fuzzy and irregular. It is spun Z with enough twist for each to ply

back on itself well.

First, pull off a manageable length to work with and then split that into halves or thirds. Pull a narrow bit of Tencel through the leader loop to get started. (Photo 1)

Tencel spins a great textured yarn, just remember to spin it Z.

Encourage inconsistent drafting by letting the twist run a bit between your hands before beginning to draft, causing the twist to jump over the thicker areas to settle in the thinner parts. (Photo 2)

Put in a good "plying amount" of twist. Soft spinning creates a very disappointing yarn.

Always make a control yarn by letting the yarn self-ply then save it to refer to while plying. It's particularly helpful for this illegal yarn.

Or spin a fuzzy textured Tencel by making a short stack of fibres, pulled off the end of the roving. (Photo 3)

Hold the fibres in the middle of the stack so the fibres draft straight from the middle leaving many ends standing out sideways. This should guarantee texture. Again don't skimp on twist and do make a control yarn. (Photo 4)

Or get texture by hand teasing a pile of Tencel and spin out of a handful, making it very hard to spin smoothly.





Next, I chose a silk hankie (a silk cap would also work) for the ply that gets tighter. Expanded silks have very long fibres and if drafted fine they can take plenty more twist and still feel soft, look good, and be strong.

The hankies and caps are expanded silks, also called Mawata, created from degummed cocoons that are opened up under water and allowed to dry either on a square or a dome shaped form.

I prefer to pre-draft a fine roving before spinning.

Start by pulling off one sheer layer of the hankie. (Photo 5)

Grab each side and stretch it apart in different directions. (Photo 6)

Soon you will have a large donut shape, as you continue to stretch and draft a fine roving from the hankie. To make the stretching/drafting easier, keep your hands about 12 to 15 inches apart and keep the fibres spread open in your hands, a bit like snapping your fingers or making a cat's cradle from yarn. (Photo 7)

I call it defeating the gang effect. Silk is the strongest natural fibre for its size and if you keep the fibres gathered up, they become stronger by the gang effect.

Keep stretching, until you find a weak point, and then break the roving apart and wind the end around cardboard to keep it from catching on everything. (Photo 8)

Continue drafting and winding up the thin silk roving.

Start spinning by pulling about 15cm (6ins) of the silk roving through the loop at the end of your leader.

Spin the fibres off the card, remembering to use an S twist. (Photo 9)

Also save a self-plied length of the silk. Any joins can be done by opening up the last slub and pulling the new fibres through it like you did with the leader.

This yarn should be thinner than the thin spots in the textured Tencel. If you need to draft a section thinner be sure to spread open the fibres in your back hand and defeat the gang effect.



Finally the illegal plying. **Remember always ply in the same direction of the softer, finer, spun yarn.** Ply S the same direction the silk was spun. Place both bobbins on the plying supports, tie the two ends together and pull the ends through the leader loop 2 times, as it stays better that way.

Find the Tencel self-plied control yarn and lay that on one knee. As you ply you

will refer to that and match the plying angle and shape of the plied Tencel.

As you ply, the yarn should look like a small spiral or zigzag yarn. Hold the two yarns under even tension by the back hand before the front hand releases the plying twist.

Keep the last 25cm (10ins) of plied yarn out of the orifice. This markedly increases the evenness of your plying, legal or not.

As always, wind the skein and tie it in four places before washing. When you first let go of the skein it should twirl itself up in the Z direction. Remember it isn't a balanced yarn, so twirling is a good sign. But I promised a great yarn, so trust me at this point.

Wash it, rinse it, and press out as much moisture as you can with a towel.

Place the skein around your wrists

and snap a couple of times in several directions.

This skein needs to dry under restriction, not blocked. It's a bit like a child in "time out" not a child tied to a chair.

Hang it over a towel, in a big oval, half on one side and half on the other. It will shorten up so no weights at all. Your goal is to prevent the extra S energy from twisting the whole skein. The excess S twist moves the Tencel into more exaggerated puffy spirals, and the silk settles down.

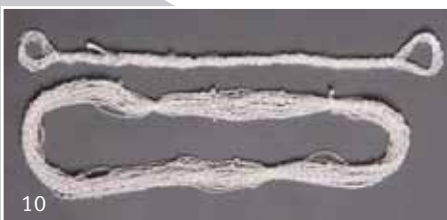
In photo 10 the top skein is straight off of the bobbin and the lower skein is after washing and drying with restriction.

Once the twist energy is used up, the skein will hang docilely, great for textured knitting or crochet, and is very strong and easy to use as warp or weft.

If the finished yarn is not what you were hoping for, then compare the control yarns and make adjustments.

Usually there's not enough difference between the two plys, but other times there is too much difference.

Hey, it's an illegal yarn after all and not completely guaranteed!



## Editor's NOTE

Patsy was one of the guest tutors and speakers at the 2013 NZ Creative Fibre Festival and gave highly successful workshops throughout NZ and Australia.



# Revival

BY ZSUZSANNA FÜZES,  
BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

In Hungary there was a folk tradition of spinning, but since the industrial revolution hand spinning has fallen into oblivion. My objective is to help the tradition to awake, and help people to learn about spinning! I'm in love with textile crafts; I spin, knit, and weave. I have a blog, where I publish my projects and thus I try to keep people inspired: [harmat-cseppek.blogspot.com](http://harmat-cseppek.blogspot.com)

I recently published a book. This is the only one available about spinning in Hungarian, and I organised the First WoolFest of Hungary on the 27th of April, 2013. The goal of this event was to give hand spinning back to the country by showing the wool processing from shearing across carding and dyeing to spinning. I hope it will become a tradition.

I'm glad to work with your wonderful tools and to be a little distributor of your products in Hungary.

I made this autumn vest from a hand-dyed (using Ashford dyes, of course) Merino/alpaca/mulberry silk blend. I spun and plied fingering-weight singles and knitted intuitively, using an oak leaf motif at random and Aran at the waist.

*I hope you like it!*



*My spinning book – the only one available in Hungarian*

*Vest with oak leaf motif*





BY YUKI NICKOLICHUK,  
VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA

As pincushions they are perfect for needles because the wool contains a touch of natural oil to keep them from getting rusty.

#### You will need:

4gm (1/7oz) white sliver wool  
3gm (1/10oz) pink sliver wool  
2gm (1/14oz) chocolate sliver wool  
0.5g (tiny amount) red sliver wool  
38 gauge felting needle  
Needle felting foam  
Little glass tea light holder  
Sewing needle  
Brown hemp cord or brown cotton strings

# CUPCAKE *pincushions*

These cute little felted cupcake pincushions are delightful decorations or for delicious make-believe afternoon tea parties.

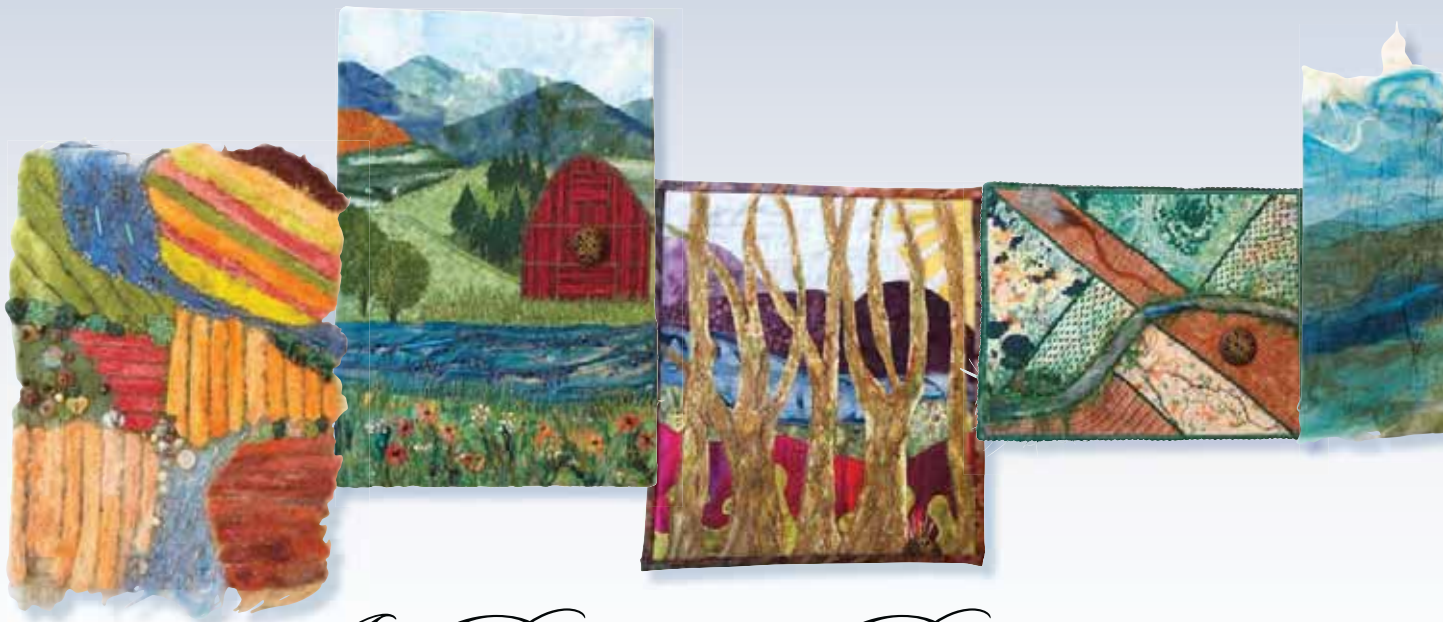
#### Here's how:

1. Take some of the white wool and felt into a ball using the medium needle.
2. When firm cover the white ball with the chocolate wool.
3. Put the ball into the tea light holder and felt the brown ball shape into the glass holder.
4. Remove the cupcake base from the glass holder and put some glue in the glass holder. Put the felted brown cupcake base back into the glass holder and glue them together.
5. Take some strips of pink wool and twist before felting them on the felting foam. Felt the strips of pink wool around the brown cupcake base.
6. Take some red wool and felt into a little round ball.
7. Using a regular needle insert a hemp cord or cotton thread "stalk" through the red round felted ball.
8. Felt the edge of the red felted cherry on top of the pink cream of the cupcake.

## Editor's NOTE

Yuki was born and grew up in Osaka Japan and since she was a little girl has enjoyed the arts and crafts. She now lives and works in Vancouver.  
Visit Yuki's online store  
[www.etsy.com/shop/HoneyCanada](http://www.etsy.com/shop/HoneyCanada)  
[www.honeycanada.com](http://www.honeycanada.com)





# *A River Runs Through It*

BY KAREN SELK,  
SALT SPRING ISLAND, BC, CANADA

Armed with a theme (“a river runs through it”), the size of 10 inches (25cm) wide, and twelve small envelopes of mystery components, our group of twelve fibre artists set out to meet a challenge.

Our final goal was to display the individual pieces so the river from one piece ran into the river of the next piece for the Embroiderers’ Association of Canada annual Seminar, held in Winnipeg, Manitoba 2013. Our challenge was to keep to the 10 inch wide format and use all twelve items (even if they were altered in some way).

We started as twelve and became nine as other life commitments had to take priority. Each of the original twelve participants chose one item to be put into the twelve envelopes and the items varied from shisha mirrors, throwsters silk, ribbon, buttons and feathers, to cheesecloth and many others. The inspirations and techniques we used to execute our pieces were as diverse as the items we had to incorporate into them.

We assembled as a group, but each of us worked in solitude in our own studios.

We would see glimpses of each other’s work in progress at meetings. We exclaimed our appreciation and wonder for each other’s work when we gathered to put the finished pieces in order for our display. But we did not really share in depth how we arrived at the finish line. So in writing this article I became privy to the inspirations and creative minds of each of my teammates. Here is a peek at the stories and heart that goes with each little work of art.



**Jo Ann Allan** drew on her memories of the muddy waters of the Assiniboine and Red rivers, and of the farm fields which dominate the landscape around Winnipeg, Manitoba. The farm areas are intersected with the tree-lined river. In spring and fall hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese land in the marshes adjoining the fields on their great migration north and south. The farmers plant certain fields to help the birds and protect their other crops from devastation. Feathers stitched into the field represent this fascinating seasonal journey.



**Deanna Bertelsen** enjoys camping in the mountains and forests of British Columbia, which abound with streams, rivers and waterfalls. The background hills, sky and forest were her debut at fabric painting. She used Tyvek (a synthetic fibre) to fashion the rocks and incorporated the branch and butterfly that were left over from other projects.



**Diana Caleb** created the sky, mountains, fields and barn from gorgeous fabrics. Brown paper was painted and crumpled to form a dimensional river, later embellished with beads. The orange section of the forested mountains represents large areas of trees in British Columbia that are dying from the infestation of the pine beetle.





Diana's trees are skillfully shaped with machine embroidery, while the flowers and grasses in the meadow foreground are brilliantly laid down with layers of hand stitching.



**Pat Davis** began her piece with a section of silk fusion for the river and it grew organically from there, driven by how the twelve treasures would be incorporated. She broke the large bugle beads and attached the pieces as well as bright flecks of foil with misty fuse. Machine and hand stitching give depth and detail to her work.



**Barbara Gilbert** made a special trip to the UK last year and visited the ruins of Haile's Castle that overlooks the River Tyne in Scotland; Haile is Barbara's maiden name. She painted the background and applied various layers of different fabrics to create the landscape. Silk fusion was used for the castle façade.



**Susan Harrington** wanted to create an

impressionistic, watery image, much like Monet's work. Silk fusion offered this softness for the water and background as if looking at a distant landscape. Minimal hand stitching was incorporated to give subtle definition to the work.



**Margaret Preece** comes from the soft, rolling foothills of Alberta, where rivers are clear and plentiful, providing her with the inspiration for her piece. She painted her background of foothills, fields of crops, the river and the foreground. The island was constructed with Tyvek and puffy paint gave it dimension. Cord was used to give the tree trunk its life-like quality. Lots of thoughtful and well-grouped embroidery brought the work to life.



**Pat Toronitz's** piece was developed from Gloria Loughman's technique of laying down landscapes, both with raw-edged appliqué and edge-turned machine appliqué. Pat lives in the forest and views her landscape through the trees. Overlaid, painted silk dupioni trees became the foreground. The trees were given texture by stuffing them slightly, adding chiffon and netting, and finally using a variety of silk threads and yarns to create bark.



I was invited to New Zealand to give a presentation and workshops at the annual Creative Fibre Festival that was held in Blenheim in April, 2012. Blenheim is in the heart of Marlborough wine country. As my small plane rose above the landscape, the fields of assorted wine grapes displayed themselves by their autumn colours in a patchwork of grid lines. I made my piece with a background of silk fusion and the textured fields of grapes were created by needle felting throwsters silk into the background. Beading and stitching lend contour to the view from above.

Our group wants to grow in our personal work, learn new things and set deadlines to keep us enthused and inspired to continue making art. Each of us knows without these challenges and deadlines we could easily be doing something else like cleaning the windows instead of being in the studio. And really, wouldn't we all rather be in the studio creating?



# Felted YARN *Lace*

BY DIANE GONTHIER, SAINT-FAUSTIN-LAC-CARRÉ, QUÉBEC, CANADA

Out of an artistic need I discover a new textile “science” with stunning creative possibilities!



Exploring the sculptural potential of felt, through creating large scale three-dimensional felt rugs, has been my main focus for several years (see [www.savoir-faire-textile.com](http://www.savoir-faire-textile.com)). But the theme of a new series required my work to express “delicacy”, “subtlety” and “vulnerability”. I wanted to show the *care* required in our relations, in different life phases. I envisioned strong but *lacy* structures.

I had seen in some felt books mohair yarn felted on itself\*. Could felted wool yarn become a successful “open” felt structure? How would different yarn and wool types influence the felting action? My research became a formal in-depth study for the OHS Master Spinner program (Ontario Handweavers and Spinners, in Canada). From 2009 to 2012, I immersed myself in the subject, as a solitary searcher.

My hand spinning research focussed on comparing basic spinning parameters (twist, number of plies, grist and woollen/

worsted types) in order to measure their respective influences on felted yarn lace, comparing different wool percentages in blends with a cellulose fibre (tow flax), a man-made fibre (soya silk) and a non-felting protein fibre (Bombyx silk), including homogeneous and heterogeneous blends and investigating and “improving” classic novelty yarns for felted yarn.

A new lace construction technique came about.

We could define *lace* as *openwork* fabric where combinations of open spaces and dense textures create designs, serving mostly *decorative* purposes.

Traditionally, laces made from yarn or thread, have been mostly developed around four main textile construction techniques: *interlooping* (knitting, crocheting), *interlacing* (weaving, bobbin lace), *knotting* (netted lace, tatted lace, macramé), and *embroidering* (needle-made lace, cut work, pulled fabric).

Each of these categories provides a specific yarn structure enabling the lace to hold together as one fabric (loop, stitch, warp and weft). Most of the time, it is executed one small portion at a time, in line or in a point form, following a set pattern in order to create a large array of effects; a time-consuming process creating a fine, discreet and often complex fabric results.

The felted yarn lace technique would belong to a *miscellaneous contemporary* lace category.

The yarn layout is done all at once on a flat surface (free of wind!), encouraging as many yarn crossings as possible to maximise yarn attachment but at the same time, using as little yarn as necessary to ensure the “free space” needed for any lace fabric. Its sound structure becomes apparent only after the final felting and fulling of the piece; a lace construction technique with a holistic approach rather than point by point.





*Left: Rug or mural in felted wool with cotton, flax and mawata silk inserts, 2.9 x 1.8m (3 x 2yds)*



*Curtain, 100% Shetland wool handspun yarn with dyed Husky dog down, 80 x 40 cm (32 x 16ins)*

*Small reversible cape, hand spun commercial Merino with silk, soya silk and bead inserts, 1.14m diameter (3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>ft)*

Making felted lace requires certain steps that all play an important role in the process:

- **Proper yarn selection.** I have observed that, just as some yarns are more appropriate for warp and others for crocheting, the yarns required for felted lace need to be invented! That is what I call “the spinner advantage”!
- **Yarn measurement estimation.** The yarn density used in a lace plays a crucial role in the end results, making a dense, equal or sparse lace.
- **Yarn conditioning.** Reviving a flat or compressed yarn in a steam or warm bath makes the wool more “available” to felting.
- **Yarn layout and design.** The felt lace technique frees us from set patterns and as we learn more and more to efficiently construct the lace structure, outstanding new lace possibilities appear! The technique leads us to create a real yarn composition including wool blends, and even rethink the traditional way to use colour in laces.
- **Adapted felting and finishing.** In my experience, lace felting happens to be the “extreme sport” of the felting

world, thus requiring special care.

The yarn intersections need to be “convinced” to bond and not move throughout the felting process. The lace is brought to a complete full stage which ensures maximum solidity and completely machine washable felted lace pieces.

- **Keeping records** of our trials and errors is of major importance as we are setting the basis of this new technique. Along the way, I have made up a strength test and a lace type scale, graphics and so on, to better compare my results.

The qualities wanted in the final lace have to be in line with the end use intended: the final strength required for a project needs to be taken into consideration before starting.

Wool is a medium that has a great variety of textures, types and qualities. As lace, it can be a delightful thick lace bed rug, lace bracelet or belt with bead insertions, 3D long sleeve lace gloves, insulating lacy curtains or a cool but warm “menopause” blanket.

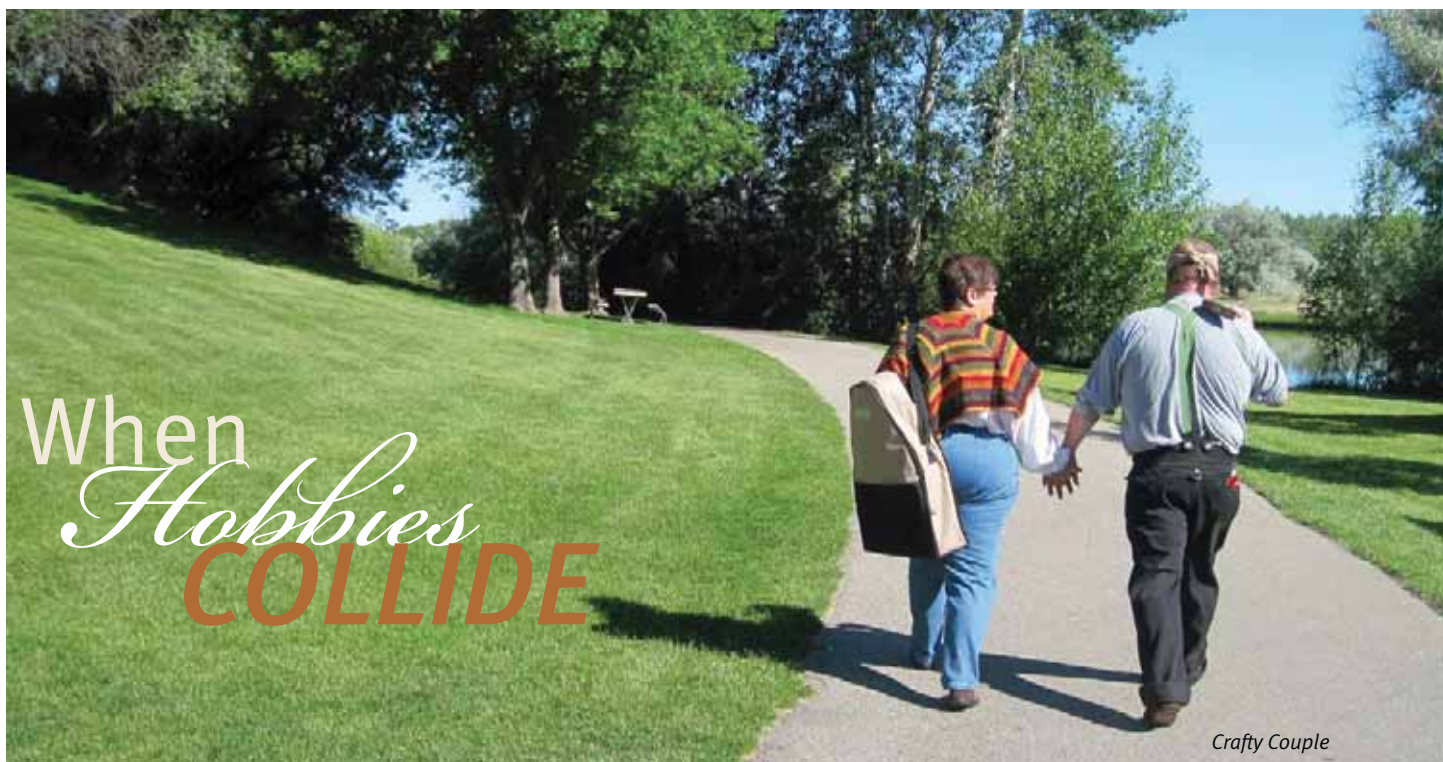
I believe that making felted lace from yarn is less time consuming than

traditional lace making, although the technique is not portable and needs plenty of space due to its high shrinkage rate (50 to 80%).

This technique definitely forces us to look at yarn in a new way: a weak yarn becomes stronger during the felting process; a highly stressed yarn becomes even more stressed during the felting process, making a weaker felted lace.

Felt lace making is an innovative technique that is already making its way among fibre artists. Recently, the technique has been taught in Québec and Ontario (Canada), California, and France, in workshops varying from half a day to five days. It is a wonderful and holistic way to use our renewable wool yarns and a new opportunity to expand our view and use of lace as an art form. Spread the word!

\* Jorie Johnson, *Feltmaking and Wool Magic; Contemporary Techniques and Beautiful Projects*, Quarry Books. ISBN – 13: 978-1-59253-275-9



# When *Hobbies* COLLIDE

*Crafty Couple*

BY MELANIE SMITH, BOISE, IDAHO, USA

Inspiration, as you know, can come from anywhere. As fibre artists, we look to books, magazines, fibre fairs, and internet sites to find inspiration for our next project. Sometimes we look to nature to get that next great idea. For my family, we can find inspiration from each other.

**I have been a long time artisan. It started** with clay, glass, metal and paint and now it's knitting, tatting, spinning, dyeing and weaving. Not only does it bring me great joy to create something from fibre, it has also provided a part-time income for over ten years.

My husband is not that different when it comes to creating. Although Wade doesn't find his muse in fibre, he finds it in metal. Wade learned to smith about ten years ago and now he creates knives, camping tools, wall hangers, and often gets requests for custom work.

On occasion, Wade and I work together on a project. Wade started with purse handles a few years back for a purse design that called for D shaped handles. That was the beginning of when both our hobbies collided.

Now we are working on what I call a "shawl bead." Wade carefully bends the hot steel into a spiral about the size of a macramé bead. The centre hole is large enough to slip the two ends of a shawl through, but not large enough for it to slip off.

Last fall at the spinning retreat SOAR (Spin Off Autumn Retreat) and visiting

the Ashford booth, I couldn't resist the wonderful Merino sliver. I bought seven different colours and used them all in a shawl I designed. Neither a triangle nor a rectangle the shape seems to fit well. Wade made a shawl bead and while the piece was still hot he brushed it with a brass brush. The heat of the steel caused the brass to melt and adhere to it, which created a beautiful effect!

We are really happy with our collaboration and are already working on our next project together.



## THE Shawl

### You will need:

4.5mm (US/UK 7) 60cm (24ins) circular needle  
30gm (1oz) each of 7 different colours of Ashford Merino sliver (I used Butterscotch, Toffee, Olive, Aubergine, Cherry Red, Amethyst and Fern Green)  
Spinning wheel

### Here's how:

Spin the fibre into a 2 ply fingering weight yarn at about 22 wpi or 2600 ypp. The colour order choice is up to you, you can knit this shawl in one colour, monochromatic, analogous, complementary, or like I did, and pick seven colours that appeal to you.

*For the knitting abbreviations see page 39.*

### Knit gauge

6 sts per 2.5cm (1in) when blocked.

### Border set up

Cast on 4 stitches with any colour of your choice.

Row 1-8: knit.

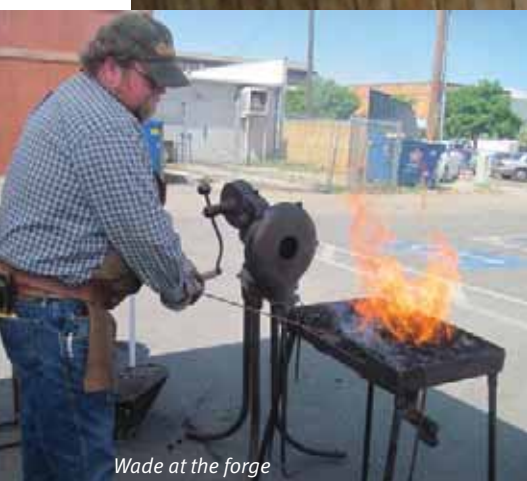
Row 9: Turn piece and pick up and knit 3 sts into the garter stitch bumps along the side, pick up and knit 4 sts on cast on. (11)

Row 10: k4, pm, p33, pm, k4.





*Neither a triangle nor a rectangle*



*Wade at the forge*

### Body of shawl

Row 1: k4, sm, (yo, k1) 3 x, yo, sm, k4.  
 Row 2: k4, sm, p across to next marker, sm, k4.  
 Row 3: k4, sm, (yo, k1, yo, pm, k1) 3 x, yo, k1, yo, sm, k4.  
 Row 4: k4, sm, p to last marker, sm, k4, slipping all markers as you come to them.  
 Row 5: k4, sm, yo, knit to just before next marker, yo, sm, (k1, yo, k to just before next marker, yo, sm) 2x, k4.  
 Row 6: k in each stitch across, slipping markers as you come to them, change to next colour at the end of the row.  
 Row 7, 9, 11: k4, sm, yo, knit to just before next marker, yo, sm, (k1, yo, k to just before next marker, yo, sm) 2x, k4.  
 Row 8, 10, 12: k4, sm, p in each stitch across slipping markers as you come to last

marker, sm, k4, change to your next colour at the end of the row 12.

Row 13, 15, 17, 19: repeat row 7.

Row 14: k in each stitch across, slipping markers as you come to them.

Row 16, 18: repeat row 8.

Row 20: repeat row 14, changing to next colour at the end of the row.

Row 21, 25: k4, sm,\* (yo, k2tog) repeat to last st before marker, yo, k1, yo, sm, k1, repeat from \* to last marker, sm, k4.

Row 22: repeat row 8.

Row 23: k4, sm,\*yo, k1, (yo, k2tog) repeat to marker, yo, sm, k1, repeat from \* to last maker, sm, k4.

Row 24: repeat row 14.

Repeat rows 7-24 three more times and then rows 7-20.

### Border edging

Row 1: with new colour, k in each st across, removing markers as you come to them.

Row 2: (Bind off): Cast on 2 sts, then bind off 6 sts, repeat until all stitches have been bound off.

Weave in all ends and block.



*Clever shawl "bead"*

## Editor's NOTE

If you would like to buy one of Wade's beautiful forged shawl pins or "beads" please contact this crafty couple at [yarnsnthreads@gmail.com](mailto:yarnsnthreads@gmail.com)



# FAT and Fabulous

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND



Wild yarn can be really wild, as warp floats, in this plain weave scarf.

Visiting art yarn specialists Steph Goran and Angel Benedetti have inspired me with their wild – and wonderful – yarn.\* It may be fat and fragile or gnarly and knotty but I just love the combinations of fibres and novelties. In their own right the yarns are fascinating and in a skein or ball sure to draw attention but how to incorporate them into weaving is a challenge. Used in the weft, some of the character is lost and even Richard's new very big 2.5dpi reed can't cope with some of the really chunky yarn in the warp.

So I was delighted to read in copy for Elsa Krogh's upcoming advanced rigid heddle book the solution - floats in the warp direction. So long as they are strong enough to be manipulated, even the wildest yarns can be accommodated! These warp floats are added as a kind of supplementary warp, but do not go through the reed. Each length of this pattern yarn can be wound around a small piece of cardboard or left in small balls. They are picked up or pushed down between the warp ends after a number of weft picks, i.e. the wild yarn is either hanging under the weaving or resting on top of it.

**Note:** it is best done on a loom on a stand, so the pattern yarns can fall unobstructed.

## Technique

Plain weave with finger manipulated warp floats.

## You will need:

Loom: Rigid Heddle loom with min. 20cm (8ins) weaving width (I used a SampleIt loom)

Reed: 40/10 (10dpi) reed

Warp and weft yarn: Ashford Mackenzie 4 ply Merino (100% wool; 385m/421yds; 100gm) 2 balls white

Warp pattern yarn: art yarn cut into 7 lengths each 190cm (75ins) long and wound on mini-shuttles, pieces of cardboard or rolled into small balls



### Here's how:

Total warp ends: 68  
Total warp length: 200cm (79ins)  
Finished width: 15cm (6ins)  
Finished length: 180cm (70ins)

### Warping

Warp 68 ends using the white Mackenzie yarn.

### Weaving

1. Weave a few picks of scrap yarn to spread the warp ends, and then weave about 10 more picks also with scrap yarn, leaving a small gap between these two groups. Check that the warp between here and the front beam stick is long enough for the planned fringe.
2. Here comes the only tricky part of this technique – starting the floats. Place the floats equal distance across the warp threads.
3. Push the beginning end of each pattern yarn down in the gap between the two groups of scrap yarn. The end pushed down should be as long as the fringe in the finished scarf is planned to be.
4. Now take every second of the pattern mini-shuttles and push them down after

the last scrap yarn pick, taking care not to pull the beginning length up from the gap. Leave the other mini-shuttles on top of the scrap yarn weaving. If you find the pattern yarn too slippery, you can anchor all the pattern ends with a pin each in the scrap yarn weaving.

5. Begin the proper weft leaving a weft end as long as four times the weaving width. Weave 15 picks. The pattern mini-shuttles hanging under the weaving are now picked up and those resting on top are pushed down in the spaces between the warp ends.
6. Before weaving again, take a blunt needle and thread the long weft tail into it. Hemstitch around three ends, three picks and catching the pattern yarn end. Continue hemstitching across the width of the warp, incorporating the pattern yarns as you go.
7. Weave 15 plain weave picks. Change the places of the pattern minishuttles, every second going down, the others going up. Continue in this way the length of the warp.
8. End with 15 picks and hemstitching across the width with the last end of the weft.

\*Steph Goran featured in Issue 24 of The Wheel and Angel on page 38 of this issue.

*Manipulate the pieces of art yarn by hand bringing them up and above the weaving or push down below*



*Elsa Krogh used a background warp of cotton 16/2 used double in a 50/10 (12.5dpi) reed and floats of fat green/grey singles plied with a black moderate eyelash yarn. When warping Elsa left every fifth hole empty in the reed and placed the pattern yarn into these empty spaces*

## Serendipity

BY ALISON FORAGE, SOUTH HOBART, TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA

**Four things came together recently: I was bored; I needed a new, showy, autumn outfit; I was learning to make shoes (cordwaining); and I had just bought a 50cm (20ins) Knitters Loom.** Knitting the outfit was easy, but what about the shoes and a bag to match?

Easy! I wove a metre and a half (5ft) from the same yarn as the outfit (a soft Merino DK weight) in autumn solid shade stripes for the warp and a variegated yarn for the weft.

I backed the fabric in kidskin for the shoes and cut my shoe pattern with a 1.5cm (1/2in) allowance before fray-stopping and oversewing the edges. I appliquéd leaf-shaped leather pieces onto the right side of the fabric and sewed, glued and stretched the fabric on to the last. The lining and heel were made of co-ordinating tan buckskin.

The bag was a simple oblong with leaf-shaped buttons and handles from the left-over fabric. The bag can be full size or folded and secured with a tie for a handbag.







# WEAVING A STRONG *thread across Pakistan*

BY REWA NOLAN, COOMA, NSW, AUSTRALIA

“Sheep in our areas are like mobile banks.” With these intriguing words Grant Vinning had me picturing four legged ATMs with booties on! This wasn’t quite the scene. “The day we left, a bomb blast in Quetta left a hundred and four people dead,” Grant continued.

Sitting here in Cooma, in regional Australia, Quetta seems a long way away. Quetta is the capital of the Balochistan province of Pakistan and I’m sharing a cup of tea with Grant Vinning, International Marketing Specialist with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations.

Funded by the United States aid organisation, USAID, and the Australian aid organisation, AUSAID, a group of fifteen women and men travelled to Cooma, NSW to learn skills and farming practices that they will take back to their communities. “With the sheep the first thing [they get] is the milk, then the meat then the wool. And the wool is to some extent a throw away product,” says Grant.

“Seventy per cent of the population would earn their income from agriculture. People actually use the animal as a store of wealth. People keep them because it’s often their only form of income. I’m talking about people who are living on fifty cents a day and this is poverty like you’ve got no idea. It’s pretty damn tough.”

With an aim to learn techniques to improve the income that comes from wool, the group get hands-on with turning wool into gold. Members of the Monaro Fibre Artists shared their wealth of experience and enthusiasm for everything fibre: fibre preparation, carding, spinning, weaving, knitting, felting – it was a feast of fibre that we shared for three days.

The group has a huge task ahead of them. Each member represents twenty separate communities with about twenty households in each. The skills they are learning will be shared across these communities.

The group was divided into two teams. The women in the “wool team” involved themselves in every aspect of working with the fibre, while the all-male “sheep team” went to experience wool classing, sheep handling, dog mustering, livestock sales, shearing and maintenance of equipment. These men are also farmers who have the job of extracting the principles to take back to their villages. “Farmers can talk to farmers better than any public servant or academic or politician,” says Grant.

For many in this group it is the first time they have been out of their province. Their confidence grows in front of us as they absorb the many skills being taught to them. This cascading effect is what gets Grant smiling. “Look after the sheep, look after the wool, do something with the wool. This all in turn helps to improve the livelihood of communities back home.”







Grant continues, “Livelihood is normally improved by increasing prices but you can also improve by reducing costs. They were told if you bale wool it will rot. They used to transport wool by putting open wool on the back of a cart, jumping up and down, and then carting it away. We have introduced baling and suddenly one truck can take ten bales where before one truck was taking the equivalent of only one. Transport costs have gone down by 80%. Even if you don’t improve prices by reducing costs you have improved their livelihood. We are trying to do both things: improve prices and reduce costs. This is income earning.”

The project started about ten years ago when the area was suffering from severe drought. The project became a food security and poverty alleviation program and grew from there.

The program employs one hundred and sixty people, mostly local Pakistanis, and covers an area with a population of about fifty thousand people, many of whom live in parts of Pakistan not even Grant was allowed to enter because it was too dangerous.

*Meeting with Grant was a truly unforgettable experience; the encouragement and dedication he provides to every member of his project is remarkable.*

“They are astounded,” he says. “You can’t fake this level of enthusiasm. The reaction has been highly fulfilling and uplifting and very encouraging. The sheer pride of what they are doing has been so good for them,” ends Grant.

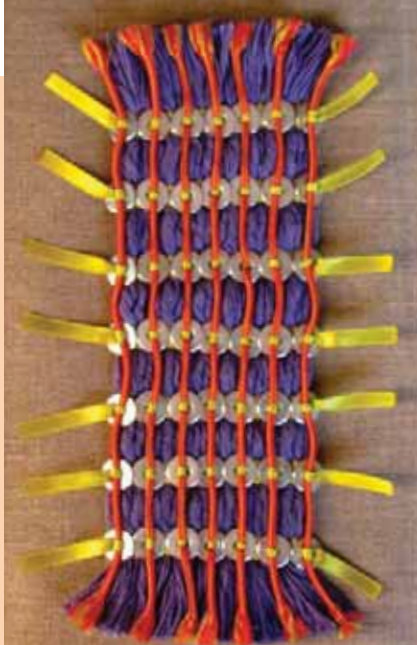
For this unique opportunity I feel very privileged to spend time, share skills and provide equipment to these inspiring people, and I know they will return home and weave together a rich yarn across war-torn communities throughout Pakistan, perhaps even booties for their mobile ATMs!



## Editor's NOTE

Rewa is Walter Ashford’s granddaughter and is the new face of Ashford Australia. She is continuing to provide the Ashford range to online shoppers especially to those in remote areas of Australia, through her website. See [www.ashfordaustralia.com](http://www.ashfordaustralia.com)





# 21st CENTURY *Samurai*

BY CARLOTA  
DU PONTAVICE,  
SANTIAGO, CHILE

A decorative wall piece inspired by Samurai armour.

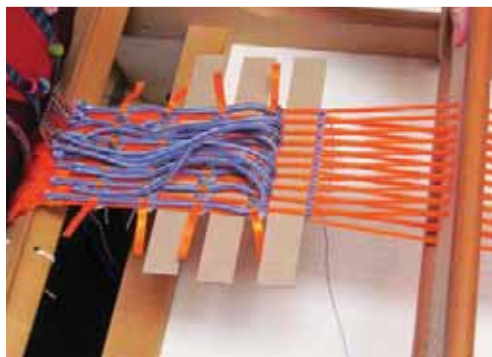
When I was in London, the Victoria and Albert Museum was just around the corner from the Royal College of Art where I was studying. I was fascinated by all the exhibits from the different cultures and admired the diversity and skill of human beings to make such beautiful and creative things with their hands.

In my work I firmly believe in experimenting with techniques and materials. I don't think silk is any more precious than plastic, for example, it depends on how you mix, measure and put everything together. I make everything by hand and most of my pieces use some recycled materials. This piece, inspired by the Samurai suits of armour in the V&A, uses metal washers.



Carlota

1. Weave 12 picks of the mercerised cotton



5. Re-thread the ribbon through the first and last washers on each row

**Here's how:**

Total warp ends: 20  
Total warp length: 5m (16½ft)  
Finished width: 9cm (3½ins)

## Warping

Warp the middle part of the reed 10 slots and 10 holes.

## Weaving

1. Weave 10 picks with any scrap yarn and then place a card strip.
2. Weave 12 picks in your mercerised cotton, beating each pick very firmly so that the weft completely covers the warp.



## Size

Purple background/red cord piece 25 x 9cm (10 x 3½ins)

Orange background/purple cord piece 29 x 9cm (11½ x 3½ins)

## You will need:

Loom: SampleIt or Rigid Heddle

Reed: 5dpi (20/10cm)

Warp yarn: multi-stranded chunky knitting yarn 1 ball approx. 100m (109yds) will be enough to make 5m length warp, in orange or purple

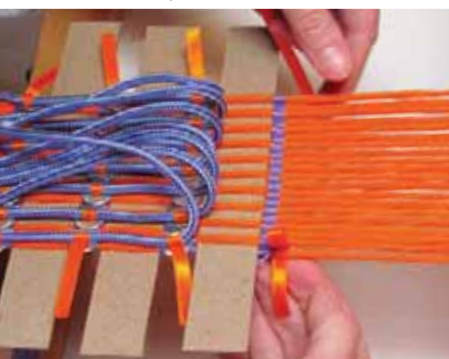
Weft yarn: mercerised cotton DMC/Coats perlé 5 colours acid yellow with purple

warp; purple with orange warp  
Other: 2m (6½ft) satin ribbon 5-7mm (¼-¼in) wide lime green with purple warp and orange with orange warp cut into 7 equal lengths;  
2.50m (8ft) climbing/sailing cord between 4-5mm (¼-½in) diameter cut into 7 equal lengths;  
49 metal washers 1.4cm (½in) diameter with 5mm (¼in) hole;  
strips of strong card 18cm (7ins) in length 2cm (¾in) wide for the purple warp and 2.5cm (1in) width for the orange warp

## Editor's NOTE

Carlota studied constructed textile design and especially woven textiles at Birmingham Polytechnic and then at the Royal College of Art in London. She has lived in many parts of the world before moving to Chile where she teaches textile experimentation to design students, designs jewellery, accessories, and dolls, and produces one-off woven and embroidered textile pieces for galleries.

2. Form a loop with the ribbon



3. Pull the loop through a washer



4. Thread the cord through the loop



6. Count 3 warp threads and make another loop

7. Place more washers across the warp

8. Armour inspiration

3. Working from right to left take a satin ribbon length and form your first loop between the first and second warp thread.

4. Pull this loop through a washer (shiny side uppermost) and thread the climbing/sailing cord through the loop. On this first washer (and the last washer on the other edge) re-thread the ribbon back through the washer and pull tightly to secure it.

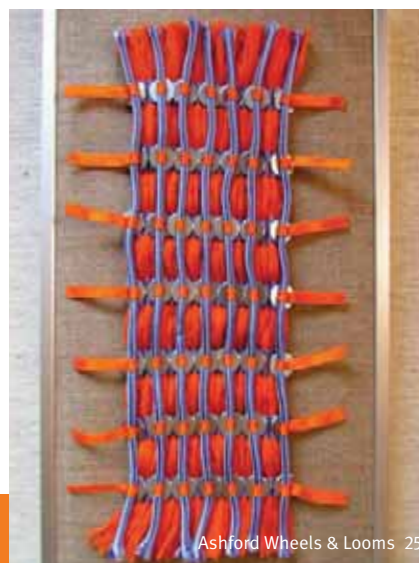
5. To evenly space the washers across the warp, count 3 warp threads and make a loop. You should end up using 7 washers per row IOIOIOIOIOIOIOIOIOIOIOI.

6. Weave 12 picks in the mercerised cotton, beating firmly as you go then place a cardboard strip. Repeat another 6 times.

## Finishing

Remove weaving from the loom. Pull out the cardboard strips carefully. Trim the warp ends and cords evenly. Trim all the ribbons to the same length on each side and very carefully burn the edges to stop any fraying.

Frame as you wish. I used a metal frame to go with the washers and linen background this time but quite often put my work in acrylic boxes too.



# Putting it to the Test

BY KATE SHERRATT, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

I love my rigid heddle and this project sure gave it a good workout.

**Rigid heddle looms are so versatile; I love that you can think about a project and just do it. From plain weave, pattern with colour, pick-up-stick patterns to double weave and double width - you can do it all on this simple loom. And the looms are so easy to warp - you can be weaving in half an hour!**

For this project I wanted to use the new 2.5 dpi (10/10cm) chunky reed and also test out the function of the loom with the thick, strong yarns. The new clicker pawls are a great development and they worked a treat even under enormous tension. The handles were easy and comfortable to turn.

This project is a floor rug; thick, soft and durable with the added interest of a linked warp. I used hand-dyed chunky (about 4wpi) carpet yarn singles. The linked warp requires the warp threads to be double through each eye and slot - so the new 2.5 dpi chunky reed was perfect!

## Technique

Linked warp. Plain weave.

## You will need:

Loom: Rigid Heddle loom with min. 60cm (24ins) weaving width

Reed: 10/10 (2.5dpi) reed

Warp yarn: Hand-dyed chunky carpet yarn single 4wpi (100% wool; 200m/ 218yds) approx. 1kg in purple and black

Weft yarn: Ashford Tekapo 8 ply/DK (100% wool; 200m/218yds; 100gms net) 1 ball Charcoal #210

## Here's how:

Total warp ends: 60 (double ends)

Total warp length: 160cm (63ins)

Finished width: 57cm (22½ins)

Finished length: 125cm (49¼ins)

## Warping

Warp 60 ends using the purple and the black carpet yarn. You will have a double thread through each slot and each eye. You will thread these as you warp.

1. Tie the purple yarn to the back stick as normal; take a loop through the first slot on the right.
2. Tie the black yarn to your warping peg, bring the ball of black yarn to the purple loop and thread it through the loop and back to the warping peg.
3. Take the purple thread and pull a loop through the next eye.
4. Bring the black yarn from the warping peg and take it through the loop of the purple and back to the warping peg.
5. Continue across the width of the loom. You can make your links a consistent length, make a pattern or just go random. Remember to keep your tension even, so check you pull both yarns taut as you go.

## Weaving

1. Begin weaving leaving a weft end as long as four times the weaving width. Weave four rows with the Ashford Tekapo. Thread a blunt needle with the long weft tail and hemstitch across width of warp.
2. Weave the entire length with the Ashford Tekapo.
3. Hemstitch across the end. Remove from the loom.

## Finishing

Trim fringe to

equal lengths.

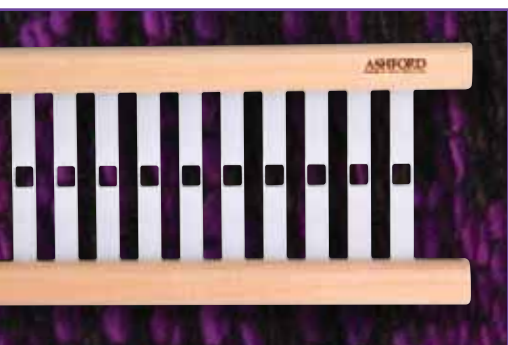
Wash gently and lay flat to dry.

## Hints

Clamp your loom to the table while weaving.

Use cardboard to cover the knots at the beginning of your weaving.

Beat firmly throughout.



2.5 dpi (10/10cm) reed for bulky yarn



Clicker pawls - make winding on a breeze, no matter what the tension!



ASHFORD

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Try our new softer blend of  
**100% New Zealand wool – grown, dyed and spun locally!**

Now available in 8 Ply Double Knit and 12 Ply Triple Knit.

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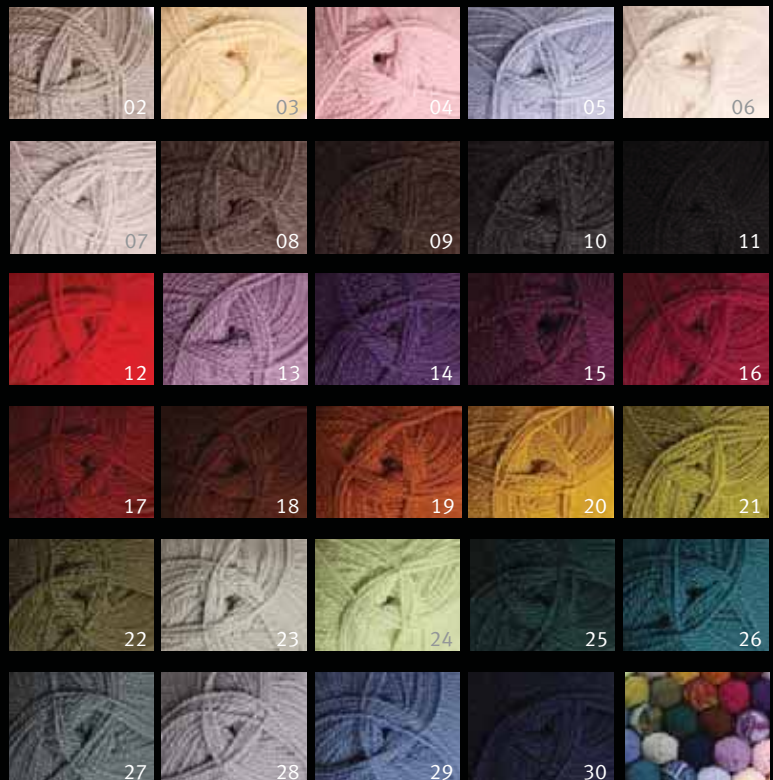
Perfect for all your knitting, weaving and knit/felt projects.



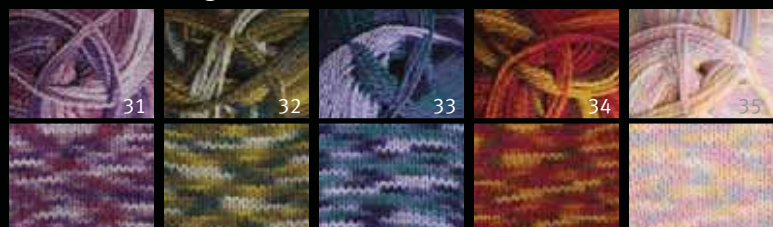
8 Ply Double Knit - 100g ball 200m/218yds

12 Ply Triple Knit - 100g ball 134m/146yds

### 29 Solid shades



### 5 Co-ordinating random shades



## Editor's NOTE

Kate is our Marketing and Sales Manager who travels around the world meeting customers, exhibiting at shows and teaching. Although she is an expert multishaft weaver (she helped design the portable 8 shaft Katie Loom) Kate is a fan of the quick and easy rigid heddle loom.



# NEEDLE White Felted SPRING Rabbit

BY SANDRA GRIEVE,  
WANGANUI,  
NEW ZEALAND

Felt this beautiful white spring rabbit.

This debonair rabbit was created in my little studio surrounded by walls of wool in every colour imaginable. My studio is shared with felted creations big and small – rabbits, dogs, toadstools, butterflies and many more creatures. Hidden away from the world I find myself creating whenever I have a spare moment. Wool is a beautiful medium to work with, being so versatile in what you can do with it, limited only by your imagination!

## You will need:

Coarse to Fine Felting Needles  
Ashford White Corriedale Sliver 60gm (2oz)  
Ashford Lime Corriedale Sliver 15gm (½oz)  
Ashford Black Merino Sliver 1gm  
Ashford Ice Merino Sliver 1gm

## Here's how:

### Head and Body

Using your coarse needle and 35gm (1oz) White Corriedale, start by forming your rabbit's head, felting it to an oval egg shape. Next roll your wool to form the large body; felt with your coarse needle working down to using your medium needle. Continue to felt, making sure the head and body are firmly attached at the neck area.

### Face

With your medium needle carefully indent where your rabbit's nose will be. Now come down from this with the mouth. Remembering this is just a guide for you to know where to attach your black wool later. Follow the same technique for placement of the rabbit's eyes.

### Ears

Take 5gm (¼oz) White Corriedale and separate the wool evenly in half. Form the flat shape of the ear and felt until firm. Roll the edges together and join at the base. Now place the ear on the rabbit's head and felt into place with your coarse needle until securely attached. Repeat these steps for the other ear.

### Legs, Feet and Arms

Begin by separating your wool into two even amounts of 3gm (1/10oz) for each arm. Roll your rabbit's arm tightly to form a long rolled length and felt until quite firm. Attach arm to the rabbit's body by gently felting it until it is firmly attached; repeat this step for the other arm. Take 5gm (¼oz) of wool for each leg and





follow the same process as for the arms only you'll be adding a ball of wool to the end of the leg for the rabbit's large hind leg. Attach again by felting in the edges of her leg. Repeat these steps for the second leg.

## Hat

Your rabbit will look very stylish in her lime green hat. Begin with 10gm (½oz) Lime Corriedale wool and roll this to form the short round shape for the top of your hat. Roll your wool until you are happy with the size and shape. Now felt firmly starting with your coarse needle until it's firm.



Finish the hat by using your fine needle. The hat's base is a flat circular shape; take 5gm (½oz) Lime Corriedale and roll the wool until it forms this flat circular shape. Continue felting until it's nice and firm. Now you are ready to join the two parts of your hat together. Place the top and base together and carefully felt until they become one piece.

Position and attach your rabbit's hat onto her head. Begin felting until firmly in place.

## Tail

Roll 3gm (1/10oz) White Corriedale wool into an oval shape and softly felt. When happy with the result, attach to the rabbit's body using the coarse needle.

## Eyes, Nose and Mouth

Use your fine needle for all three areas. Take a tiny amount of Black Merino wool and rolling it to form a long thin line, begin to felt this onto all the blind indentations you had made earlier. Work in with your needle, making sure all your edges are nice and neat. Repeat this step for the black outline of the eyes.

Once this is done you're ready to fill in the eye using your Ice Merino. Take two small pieces of wool and begin to fill in the eye. You can layer in more Ice Merino if needed until the white wool in the eye is fully covered. Roll two very small balls of Black Merino and felt into the centre of each eye, repeating this step with white for the eye's reflection.

## Finishing Touches

You can add some finishing touches to your white spring rabbit by adding a ribbon or flower to her hat or a collar around her neck. I have added a ruffled felt collar, a soft blue spring flower to adorn her lime green hat and rabbit has been out in the fields gathering toadstools on this beautiful day!

## Editor's NOTE

To contact Sandra email her at [softblue@outlook.com](mailto:softblue@outlook.com)



Sharon

### You will need:

Spinning wheel with bulky flyer  
One 40 x 40cm (16 x 16ins) cushion inner  
20mm Knitting needles  
Bulky yarn approx 870gm (30ozs) 71m (77yds)  
Twillys Goldfingering 3 ply (80% Viscose, 20% Polyester; 100m/109yds; 25gm) 1 ball  
WPI: 3

# Goldilocks Fireside Cushion

BY SHARON TAYLOR,  
FELIXSTOWE,  
SUFFOLK, UK

Cuddle up with this handspun cushion.

### Here's how:

#### Spinning

I teased the locks of Wensleydale fleece apart with my fingers and added just a little Angelina for sparkle before spinning. I plied it with a fine (fingering weight) commercial metallic yarn.

#### Knitting

Cast on 15 sts  
Row 1: knit  
Knit 55 rows until it measures about 90cm (36ins) or to fit around cushion inner.  
Sew up edges inside out or crochet the edges together like I do (it's so much easier and makes your work look neat) and turn out the right way.  
Place cushion inside and sew up opening.



## Editor's NOTE

Sharon makes beautiful bespoke art yarns using local fleece.  
See: [www.taylormadeyarns.com](http://www.taylormadeyarns.com)

Double crochet hat in blue

Handspun silk

Pink sock yarn



# Year of the hat

BY ALEXANDRA WEIKERT,  
TAUFKIRCHEN, GERMANY

A year ago my best friend Elke was diagnosed with cancer. I wanted to help her, even though we live far apart, so I crocheted a hat for her - and launched the year of the hat.

**For someone without hair the hat needs** to be tight but gentle on sensitive skin. A double crochet in mercerised cotton yarn is soft and easy to wash.

I started on the top of the head/crown, crocheting a circle. As we all learned in maths the circumference of a circle is the diameter multiplied by Pi. I took a tape measure, found out that my head measures 56cm (22ins) in circumference, divided this measurement by 3.14, giving the result for the diameter as 17.8cm (7ins). Of course a head is not really a circle but close!

But the double crochet was so stretchy I had to unpick the hat and start with a smaller circle of 14cm (5½ins). Now the hat was fitting perfectly snug on my head and quickly the first two hats were made (one to wear and one to wash).

But Elke was cold at night so I found some blue silk yarn in my stash with the same gauge as the cotton yarn with 125m per 50gm (136yds/1¾ozs). Some hours later the next hat was finished and on its way to Elke.

As summer was slipping into fall and the evenings grew colder, I picked up some sock yarn, crocheted a circle up to the diameter of 14 cms and made another hat. As the yarn is finer / thinner than the cotton and silk yarn I had used for the other hats, I needed more rounds and of course more stitches, too.

I could have stopped crocheting hats, but by that time I was curious - especially about different diameters and stitch usage.

Regardless of which kind of yarn I used to crochet a hat for a head with about 56

cms circumference, with double crochet 14 cms in diameter seemed to be perfect. I started to explore the differences in crochet hook sizes and stitches. The tighter the crocheted fabric gets, the less stretchy it is, the more the diameter needs to be closer to the calculation result of 17.5 cms.

After all my research I know to use hook size 4.0mm (USAG6, UK8) for the cotton yarn, for the sock yarns with 420m/100gm (457yds/3½ozs) hook size 3.0mm (UK11) and 3.5mm (USA4/E, UK9) for the silk-cotton blend with 150m/50gm (163yds/1¾ozs) which I used for another hat. (Note I crochet quite tightly and tend to use larger sizes of hooks than recommended by the manufacturer.) For my own handspun silk yarn (remember crocheting untwists plied yarns so over ply on purpose), I used a 3.5mm crochet hook. Surprisingly the hat from the plied handspun silk yarn weighs only 30gms (1oz). So even though it takes some time to spin a yarn, it is not too much of an effort for a friend.

## Here is my pattern for crocheting a hat.

The advantage of crocheting a hat from the top is that you don't need to swatch much first. You just start and decide if you should use a different hook size because the beginning circle seems to be too tight or too limp. Then you work the circle you need for the hat and the sides until you are finished. Of course it is always handy to have a head in the right size in reach to try on the hat in progress!

**Setup Round:** Start with a slip knot and work 3 chain stitches. Insert the hook into

the first worked chain stitch and close the round with a slip stitch. Now you should have a tiny circle.

**Round 1:** To gain height work three more chain stitches (ch).

**Note:** These three chain stitches at the beginning of **each** round will be counted as one double crochet!

Insert the hook into the circle to work 11 double crochet (dc). Insert the needle in the third chain stitch at the beginning of the round and work one slip stitch to close off the round.

**Note:** Every round will be finished with a slip stitch (slst) into the topmost chain stitch of the beginning of the round.

Now you have 12 double crochet. (Remember to count the three chain stitches as one double crochet!)

## Round 2: Every stitch will be doubled.

Start with 3 chain stitches, followed by a double crochet into the base of the first chain stitch, i.e. in the topmost chain stitch of the round below. That makes two stitches on top of one stitch in the round below.



\* Work two double crochet into the next stitch \*, repeat from \* eleven times. Now you have 24 double crochet stitches (including the three chain stitches at the beginning). **Note:** Be careful **not** to work into the slip stitch of the round below. That would add two more stitches. If you are not sure, if you have gone too far, please count your stitches. If you do increase by more than 12 double crochet per round your circle won't stay flat.

Finish the round with a slip-stitch into the topmost chain stitch at the beginning of the round.

### **Round 3: Every other stitch will be doubled.**

Work 3 chain stitches, work 2 double crochet stitches into the next stitch. Repeat \* 1 double crochet, 2 double crochet into the next stitch \* 11 times (= 36 double crochet stitches), finish the round with a slip stitch. Remember not to work into the slip stitch of the round below.

### **Round 4: Every third stitch will be doubled.**

Work 3 chain stitches, 1 double crochet, work 2 double crochet into the next stitch. Repeat \* 2 double crochet, 2 double crochet into the next stitch \* 11 times (= 48 stitches), finish the round with a slip stitch.

**Round 5:** Work 3 chain stitches, 2 double crochet, work 2 double crochet into the next stitch.

Repeat \* 3 double crochet, 2 double crochet into the next stitch \* 11 times (= 60 stitches), finish the round with a slip stitch.

Continue to increase 12 double crochet stitches every round by adding one stitch to the number of stitches between the increases in every round.

To get a snug hat in the end you should work a circle to about the size of 14 cms in diameter for an adult hat, and then continue crocheting in rounds without increasing for about 10cm (4ins). Cut yarn at the end of the round and sew ends in.

In the meantime Elke's hair has grown back. She is feeling better now and started working again. She has even made a crocheted hat herself!

**Elke writes:** "Last year during my illness I had quite a hard time. The hats of my best friend Alexandra then brought a lot of warmth and colour back in my life! I am very thankful for the hats and I still like to wear them."

# No Excuses

BY ROBERT SMITH, NAPLES,  
NEW YORK, USA



Ashford dealer Robert Smith has certainly faced more than his fair share of challenges. The solo parent of three teenage boys in northern New York State, Robert lost his dominant arm after a DIY accident and has also had to cope with a degenerative bone disease that meant he had to have further surgery to fuse the shoulder joint. It was around this time that a friend made the offhand comment that Robert "would never be able to learn to spin." At that point he decided he would learn, and that nothing was going to stop him.

Robert found a fifteen-year-old Ashford Traditional in a local second-hand store and, using the wool from his sons' pet sheep, he began to practise. For three months he battled for several hours each evening with his wheel, until he was satisfied with his yarn. After acquiring a computer for the family, Robert discovered the range of other Ashford products and ordered four bobbins and the Ashford Book of Spinning. When they arrived he noticed that the return address was for Straw into Gold – Ashford's North American distributor at the time – and realised that his community needed a place where others could buy Ashford products. He contacted Straw into Gold and has been a dealer ever since.

Along with ordering stock for his new shop, Robert invested in a new double drive Traditional and a drum carder as, spinning long draw one-handed, he finds it easier to draft well-carded fibre. He cards each batt at least three times and spins from strips about two inches (5cm) wide. He has the tension set just high enough to take the yarn in without ripping it out of his hand. "I was finally

able to discover, using a pair of hand carders – one under my foot, the other in my hand – that I could get a rolag, and slowly treadle, letting my arm back slowly and counting. I hold the fibre in the palm of my hand with the thumb and index finger facing up. When I need to slow the take-up of the wool I pinch with my index finger and thumb."

Since then, Robert has had to deal with even more surgeries, this time on his back, but has recovered and now his business is going better than ever. He teaches spinning and weaving and has built a following on the internet for his beautiful hand-dyed rainbow tops. He has mastered Navajo plying using his knees and good hand and can warp a rigid heddle loom using a warping peg in an hour!

Robert hopes his story will inspire others with challenges and make them realise they can do what they want, even if they have to do it a little differently. "I have had customers call on the phone wanting to try a wheel, but giving excuses for why they likely will not buy. Then they come into the shop and it seems like all the excuses were left at home. I have had a few tell me they decided they could learn to spin once they saw me spinning."

Despite all the hardships, Robert remains positive about life. "I still have the rest of my life to live, with a lot of things I want to do, make and see in this world we live in. You need to take care of your own mental health as well as physical. Spinning, weaving, dyeing and teaching others to spin and weave feel good to me, make me happy, and that is what makes me want to get up in the mornings. The rainbow dyeing brightens gloomy days and makes sunny days even sunnier."



## Editor's NOTE

Bob's attitude and achievements are inspirational. Visit him at his business Winderwood Farm in Naples, NY, or at shows such as Finger Lakes Fiber Festival, Hemlock Fairground, NY in September.





# The SAMPLE IT Loom *Travels*

BY MARIA SHTRIK,  
MOSCOW, RUSSIA



May is the best time for all Russian people! It is the start of spring. The weather is fine. And we have ten free days, so a lot of Russian people travel and rest at this time.

**My family travels to the Russian north** every year in May. It often floods but the birds that come from the south love the water and the warm weather; it is the best time for nesting. We love this wonderful time!

I do not know how to relax without my hobby - my lovely weaving loom. I have to create something new every spare moment. While I create, I am alive!

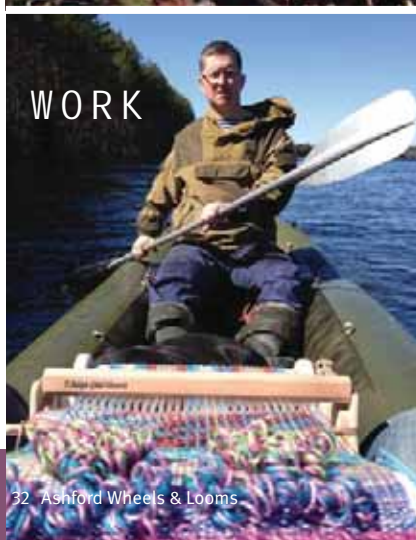
I decided to take with me my new Sample IT loom. I thought it was a good idea, a compact and light loom. It didn't take a lot of space in the car and in the rubber boat. I chose the yarns and prepared my loom for our travel. I was surprised at how handy it is in the car! Of course when somebody else (not YOU!) drives!

Moscow is a very big city. Traffic jams here can take several hours. This time I did not notice traffic jams, I was busy with my loom. I was weaving through the traffic!

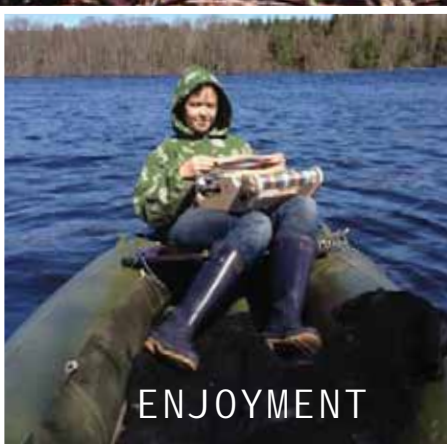
Eight hours in the car and you are far from Moscow. You can enjoy the most beautiful forest and rivers in the world.

Spring flowers, the colour of the grass and trees... *Hepatica nobilis*, *Pulsatilla patens*.

I was agreeably surprised again. The loom is very handy for using in the rubber boat. While one person works, the other enjoys herself - it is greatest rule of the world!



WORK



ENJOYMENT



This loop pile has the colours of spring flowers.

Lovely Ashford, THANK you for your SampleIt loom! It is the perfect loom for trips and travels. Now I do not need to make sketches of my ideas. I can immediately make samples!



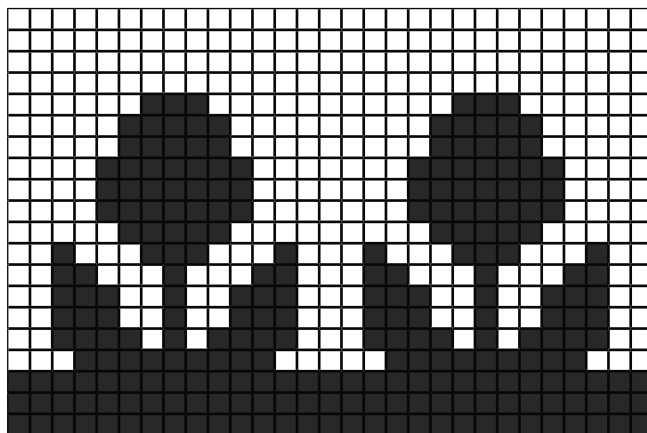
## Editor's NOTE

Maria has recently been appointed our dealer in Moscow and we wish her every success. See her web site: [www.ashford.su](http://www.ashford.su)



# Rigid Heddle Pattern: *Loop pile*

Weave spring flowers with colour and texture. Hand woven loop pile is a great way to display your weft yarns and create interest in plain weave projects.



Loop ☒  
Usual weave ☐

### Size

16 x 10cm (6 x 4ins)

### You will need:

Loom: SampleIt loom 20cm/8ins

Reed: 7.5dpi (30/10cm)

Warp yarn: "spring coloured"

multicoloured bamboo yarn (100% bamboo; 220m/241yds; 50gm net) less than 1 ball

Weft yarn: use doubled strands "spring coloured" multicoloured bamboo yarn (100% bamboo; 220m/241yds; 50gm net) less than 1 ball

Other: 1 knitting needle of your choice: a big knitting needle will create large loops, a small knitting needle for little loops.

### Here's how:

Total warp ends: 58

Finished length: 10cm (4ins)

Finished width: 16cm (6ins)

Weave Structure: loop pile

### Warping

Warp the complete width of reed with the bamboo yarn.

### Weaving

1. Plain weave 2.5-4cm (1-1½ins) to create a frame.

2. For the grass weave three rows of loops as follows:

- Put the reed into the up position.
- Pass the shuttle through the weaving space, making sure the weft is slack. Do not beat.
- With the shed open, use a knitting needle to pick up loops of the weft between every two raised warp threads. The size of the knitting needle will determine the size of your pile loops.
- Place the reed in the down position and weave a plain row.
- Carefully pull out the needle. Beat the loops firmly in place.
- Weave 1-3 plain weave rows between each row of pile loop rows. Note that

fewer rows of plain weave will make a denser pile.

- Continue in the same manner until you make three rows with loops.

3. For the Flowers:

See the chart and weave alternating between loops and usual weave.

**Remember:** you are creating texture and you can make different textures! This will allow you to place accents. For example, you can use a big knitting needle for flowers and small knitting needle for the grass. You could use different yarns for soft loops or rough and crisp loops.

### Finishing

Remove the fabric from the loom. Finish ends with knots. Cut the ends. Now you can use glue and craft paper to create unique postcards.

**Note:** the loops are not tied knots. So they can be pulled out. Do not worry! Just wash the fabric after weaving. Washing will fix the loops.

# Simple Art Yarn Shawl

BY PAMELA SAPETTO, ORANGE,  
CALIFORNIA, USA

## You will need:

### For the Art Yarn

The fun thing about art yarn is you can spin just about anything you have in your stash into it in order to create colour and interest. This project can put that stash to good use.

1. A spinning wheel fitted with the large plying head and an orifice big enough for the art yarn to pass through. Ashford's Country Spinner is ideal, of course. You will also need two plying bobbins and a lazy kate.
2. At least 225gm (8ozs) wool or wool blend roving or batt in the colour or colours of your choice.
3. A cone of strong weaving yarn/thread in a colour compatible or complementary to your wool.
4. Art yarn add-ins. I used multi-coloured ribbon snippets, but you could use felt pieces, sequined or beaded yarn snippets, pompoms, mohair locks, any fabric cut in strips, novelty yarn snippets. Let your imagination run wild.
5. Scissors.

### For the Shawl

1. A fine mohair blend lace weight yarn. Choose a colour that will set off your art yarn colour, I chose a light lilac colour since my art yarn colours were blue, purple, turquoise, fuchsia and greens. Two balls should be enough.
2. Size 10, 10½ or 11 circular needles, at least 80cm (32ins)

## Do you need to be an expert?

Absolutely, not! I work full-time and spin for a creative outlet, pleasure and relaxation. I started spinning about five years ago, but I am limited to evenings, weekends and vacation, so I consider myself still a beginner. This shawl is a great piece because it shows off your art yarn so well and can be worn anytime of the year, either as a summer shawl for cool evenings or as a scarf over a heavy sweater, poncho or coat.

Any beginning spinner can do art yarn and it is so much fun! This is a simple project that should whet your appetite for doing more.







*Pam and her lamb Frosty*

## Here's how:

### Art Yarn

1. Spin your roving or batt into thick and thin yarn. Remove your bobbin with the finished yarn and put it into the lazy kate.
2. Cut up your snippets of ribbon, fabric, novelty yarn, etc. into at least 5 - 6cm (2 - 2½ ins) strips. Make lots! Place them in a bowl or container that you can have handy to reach into and grab a piece as you are plying.
3. Place your cone of weaving yarn/thread on the lazy kate and begin plying the thick and thin yarn with the strong weaving yarn/thread. As you ply make cocoons, beehives, halos, loops, coils, bumps, whatever strikes your fancy, or just ply the thick and thin. Spin in your snippets in regular intervals as you ply. Place these pieces so they are caught and spun in as you ply. I chose to tie in the ribbon as an extra step so that the ribbon was fully secured. This is a slow process, ply slowly so you have time to grab the pieces and place them in between the two yarns as you ply. The love is in the process.
4. Wind your yarn onto a niddy-noddy to form a skein.
5. Finish your yarn in a warm or steam bath, perhaps give it a snap, and then let dry by hanging with no tension or weighting.

### Knitting up the Shawl

1. Cast on at least 120 or up to 130 stitches with the art yarn. You will start with two art yarn rows and end with two art yarn rows.

2. This project is knit stitch only, otherwise known as garter stitch. Choose your needle size based on your preference. Knit a gauge with the art yarn and the lace weight yarn and choose the gauge you like best. Luckily for us, this is not a fitted garment!
3. After casting on with the art yarn, knit one row with the art yarn, then switch to the lace weight yarn and knit four rows, carrying up the art yarn. Knit the next two rows in the art yarn, carrying up the lace weight yarn. Knit 84 rows in this pattern and then finish, knitting one art yarn row and binding off the next row with the art yarn. Feel free to knit more or fewer rows depending how much art yarn you have spun.
4. Weave in any loose ends.
5. There is no need to wash and block this piece.

## Editor's

## NOTE

Pamela is an urban planner by profession and owner of a planning consulting firm, Sapetto Group Inc., and co-owner with her daughter of a soap and body care company called Dirty Momma Soap but she says spinning, weaving and knitting are her passions.



## CREATIVE FIBRE EVENT Legacy of Yarns DUNEDIN

24-27 April 2014

The New Zealand Spinning, Weaving & Woolcrafts Society annual Creative Fibre event will be held at Dunedin, Otago.



Exhibition, trades, challenge, displays, workshops, lectures.

For more information  
email: [nolaallan02@gmail.com](mailto:nolaallan02@gmail.com)  
or visit [www.creativefibre.org.nz](http://www.creativefibre.org.nz)



## 2014/2015 Ashford Retreats

Nicola Bota at the Ashford Craft Shop is hosting the popular Ashford Retreat 3rd - 7th March and 3rd - 7th November 2014.

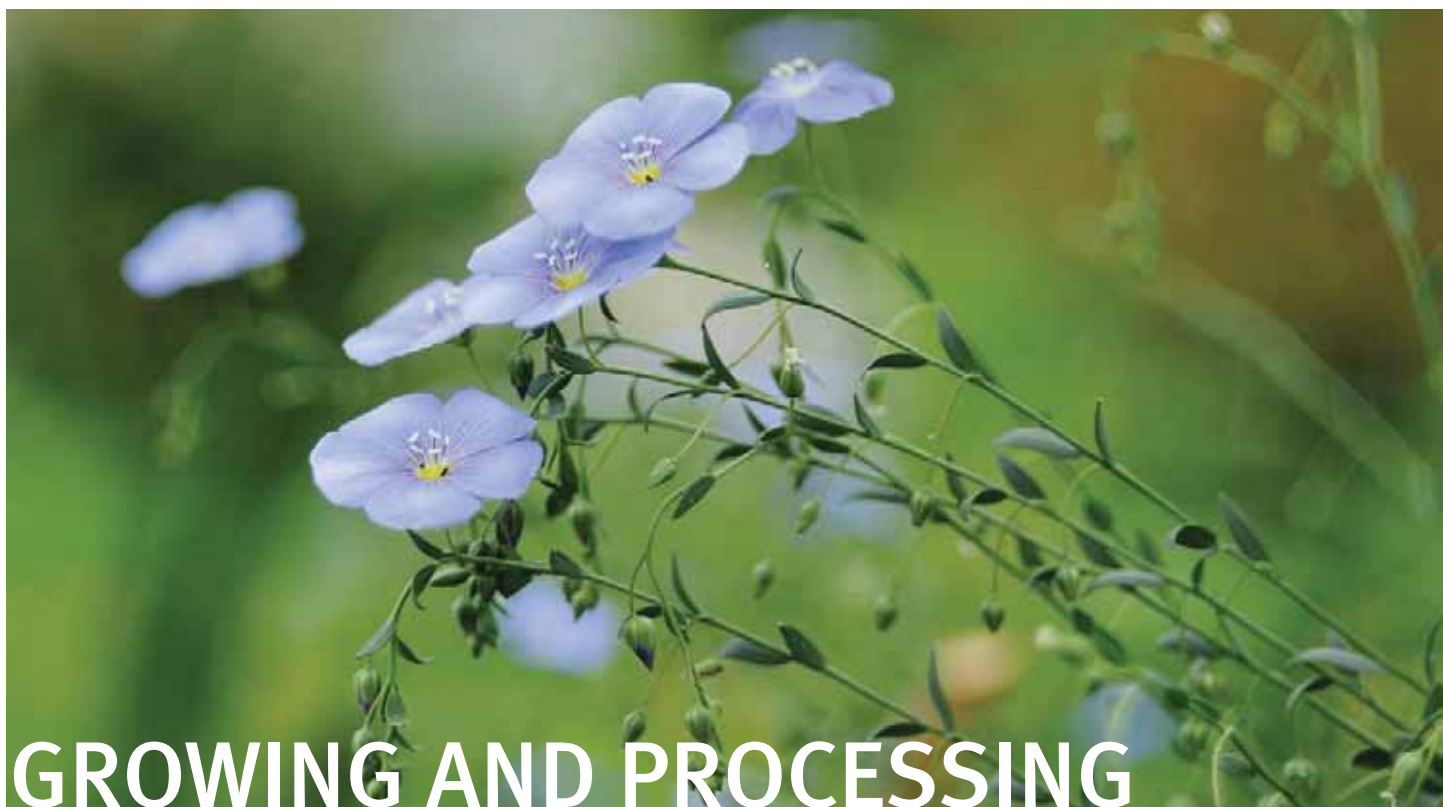
She is also offering an Ashford Enthusiasts Retreat 9-13 March 2015, a reunion for past retreaters. If you enjoyed your last experience at the Ashford Retreat come back for another treat and build on skills learnt in a new and exciting way.

For more information, contact Nicola  
[sales@ashfordcraftshop.co.nz](mailto:sales@ashfordcraftshop.co.nz)



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# GROWING AND PROCESSING

## *Your Own Flax*

BY NANCY VAN TASSEL, SAN RAMON, CA, USA

Ever since my mother stood me up on a chair to get to the ironing board to iron what she called the “flat work”, I have been fascinated with flax and linen. Growing up, our best tablecloths and napkins were made of linen. As soon as I learned to spin in 1995, I knew that I wanted to spin flax – and to try to grow it. I am just an ordinary person with an ordinary back yard garden and have had no formal training in growing or processing flax, but I have done it – grown, processed and spun flax!



*Flax (and cucumbers) in my garden*



*Flax drying (Wendy Lacy)*



*Flax stricks (a bundle of hackled flax)*



## EQUIPMENT

It took me some time to assemble all of the equipment. However, much of it can be improvised.

### You will need:

1. Flax seed for fibre.
2. A flax comb. A wide-tooth plastic hair comb works fine.
3. Ret box. I use a plastic storage box designed to hold wrapping paper. Other home flax growers use a child's wading pool.
4. A flax break. This was the most difficult item to find. If you cannot find a flax break, a mallet or rolling pin may be pressed into service.
5. Scutching sword. These are for sale on the internet or a child's toy wooden sword may be used.
6. Scutching board. The back of a lawn chair works reasonably well.
7. Hackles. Shop the internet or hammer nails into a board.

## GETTING STARTED

The best resource for how to grow, process, spin and weave your home-grown flax is:

**LINEN: From Flax Seed to Woven Cloth**, Linda Heinrich, Schiffer Publishing, Copyright 2012

You will need to purchase flax seeds for fibre flax (*Linum usitatissimum*). Seeds for fibre flax are now available on the internet. Do not buy seeds sold for consumption, they won't give you usable fibre.

Flax is a hardy plant and grows easily in most climates. I live in San Ramon, California. Our town is about one hour north and east of San Francisco. We have a mild climate with winter rains and dry summers. It is warm in the summer (70-80 degrees Fahrenheit) but we do not get really hot temperatures until August and September. We get no rain in the summer so we have installed an automatic watering system in our garden for our vegetables and flowers. Sow the seeds in a broadcast pattern and scatter new earth over the seeds to cover. I ordered two pounds (approx 1 kg) of fibre flax seed to sow an area 2 x 3yds (m). The closer the flax seeds are sown, the finer the flax fibre will be. Cover the seeds with some top soil and pat the earth down a little with your feet. If you live in an area without regular rain, water daily until the plants begin to show. After that, you can water every other day. The plants take about 100 days to mature. Stop watering the plants about a hundred

days after you plant. They will be ready to harvest when the plant is about 2/3 yellow and the flowers have turned into little brown seed pods. Harvest the flax by pulling it up by the roots and tying it in bundles just large enough to hold in your hand. Wash the earth off the roots with the garden hose and store the flax bundles root-side down in a dry warm place. The bundles will dry into what looks like dead grass with little hard brown berries on the end.

## PROCESSING THE FLAX TO GET FIBRE

**RIPPLING** Once the flax bundles are good and dry, the first step is to comb out the seeds. This is known as "rippling". Comb the end of the flax bundle with the wide-toothed comb and the seeds will fall off.

**RETTING** This step is the trickiest. The flax has an outer coat that has to be removed before the fibres can be released. This is done by soaking the flax in water (water retted) or spreading it on the ground to weather in the sun and rain (dew retted). Water retting gives the flax its golden colour while dew retting gives a grey/brown colour. My golden flax was retted in the wrapping paper storage box. I knew that if I spread the flax on the grass, my absent-minded husband would run over it with the lawn mower! I weighed the flax bundles down with bricks and covered them with water. I then placed the box in the sun with the lid on which produces a chemical reaction that helps rot the outer stem. After three or four days, the retting process was complete. When the flax fibre is ready to take out of the water, a stem wrapped around your finger should easily break into small pieces and threads of flax fibre will pop out. After removing it from the ret box, hose it down thoroughly to remove any gummy pectin and to try to reduce the smell. The next step is to dry the flax again. Keep it in the bundles and hang it in a dry place until it is thoroughly dry.

**BREAKING** Once the bundles are dry, it is time to break and scutch. Of all the equipment needed to process flax, the hardest to find was the flax break. To break the flax, grasp it firmly in one hand and place it in the break. Several blows with the arm of the break are sufficient to break up the outer stalk of the flax plant. Keep passing the bundle through the break until you have freed as much of the fibre as you can. Now you are ready to scutch.

**SCUTCHING** If you have a scutching board, place the flax in the groove and scrape down the fibres with the scutching sword



*If wet-spun flax produces a stronger, smoother yarn*

until you have removed as much of the loose fibre as you can. There will be some straw still clinging to the line flax. I place the fibre over the back of a lawn chair and scrape it along the back of the chair.

**HACKLING** Pass the handful of fibre through the teeth of the hackle by pulling it toward you. Then, reverse the bundle of fibre and pull it toward you again. Do this several times until all of the straw and short fibres have been removed. The short fibres left in the hackle are called "tow". You can save the tow to spin into coarse thread or use it in the fireplace as kindling. When the fibre is clean of any tow wrap it into a twist and continue the process until all of your flax is in twists and ready to spin.

The internet has several YouTube videos on how to break, scutch and hackle flax. Each gives a good lesson narrated by expert re-enactors who work with the fibre from sowing to weaving.

Keep in mind that our ancestors raised flax for thousands of years and you can do it, too!

*My woven table runner in my hand spun flax and green hemp yarn*



# Spun Angel art yarn

BY ALLISON ANGEL BENEDETTI,  
SARASOTA, FLORIDA, USA

## Editor's NOTE

Angel visited us here in New Zealand. She travels internationally, teaching private lessons and workshops. To see more of Angel's work [www.SpunAngelArtYarn.com](http://www.SpunAngelArtYarn.com) and [Facebook.com/SpunAngel](https://Facebook.com/SpunAngel)

I love to slow down and focus my time constructing spun yarn. It is meditative. It seems to bring me, my conscious and subconscious being, more in tune with the present. Spinning motions are organic and mesmerizing. They synchronize with natural body tempos, with breathing, with heartbeat, with rhythmic touch. It seems as if an element of my spirit itself embeds into the yarn. The finished hand spun skein contains traces of an intimate relationship.

In this day and age the opportunity to work with materials directly from nature is something of a rarity. There is an intricate connection between man, animal, earth and a higher source. While embracing these raw materials, I feel a universal connection with the environment. A pure, unspoken truth emerges from engaging nature with bare hands.

I approach each new skein to be a unique individual. I consider its mood, colour palette, possible end use and message. Once my materials are collected and my umbrella concept is established, I spin in an intuitive style. I surround myself with my materials and instinctually spin in my bits. My intention is not to create a yarn that is formulaic or with a repeating structure. My work is playful and explorative.

My yarn featured here I call 'Nana Nouveau'. It features antique lace, crochet, embroidery, printed and woven hankies, zippers and a rusted xylophone jewellery charm. The foundation of the yarn is a variegated handspun woollen single plied with a cotton thread to create a strong yarn. My roving's colour palette is natural. Playing off the art nouveau ("new art") movement, the skein employs old items giving them a new life. The art nouveau style is characterized by undulated, flowing lines and so I cut my textile strips and spun coils. Art nouveau blended fine art with utilitarian designs – there is a similar goal for this skein.

The main feature of this skein is my spun-in textile additions. The key to locking in my additions is plying at a 90 degree angle. For example, when I want to spin in an embroidered detail, I cut out the embroidered piece and pull roving through the back of it so that it may help grab a hold of the yarn. I align the fibres carrying the embroidered detail with the spun single. The spun single is held tightly towards my body. With the cotton ply thread, I tie the two together. I hold the cotton ply thread at a 90 degree angle from the handspun which is momentarily treated as a core. I will continue to treadle, allowing the ply thread to wrap the two together. I let the ply yarn pile up at the top of the embroidered piece's fibres for several cycles, creating a strong bond. Then I direct the top-piling ply thread to travel down the yarn, so that all fibres are spinning together in unison. At the base of the added-in embroidery I again hold the cotton ply thread at a 90 degree angle from the core-treated handspun single. I let the cotton thread twist for several revolutions, piling up and sealing off my textile addition.

From zippers to lace, try top piling spin-ins for a unique skein.

## *I am Spun Angel,* a free form art yarn spinner.

Free form

(Noun) 1. A shape having an irregular contour

(Adjective) 2. Encouraged to function or evolve without advance planning; spontaneous

(Adverb) 3. Without restrictions or preconceptions

My artistic journey began at a young age and has morphed through many forms, all of which have accumulated and reflect in my yarn spinning. I grew up training as a dancer, painter, sculptor and then a textile artist. I approach my spinning from this hybrid vantage. My work is structural and dimensional. Within each skein I employ a variety of techniques and the yarn passes through various expressions.







*"Nana nouveau" pieces ready to be cut and shaped*



*Thread roving through the back of the pieces*



*Ply a woollen single with a cotton thread*

*Surround yourself with the pieces and include them as you ply*



## Locking in the additions

1. Align the fibres carrying the embroidered detail with the spun single



2. Hold the cotton thread at right angles and ply, locking in the top of the addition



3. Allow the cotton thread to travel down the yarn



4. Lock the bottom of the addition with the cotton thread



## Knitting Abbreviations

k	knit
k2tog	knit 2 stitches together
k1tbl	knit next stitch through back of loop
p	purl
p2tog	purl 2 stitches together
p2togtbl	purl 2 stitches together through back of loop

pm	place marker
sm	slip marker
ssk	slip next two stitches on to right needle knitwise place left needle into both stitches & knit together
wrap stitch	bring yarn forward, slip next stitch on to right needle, yarn backward, slip stitch back on the left needle
yo	yarn over

# LACE ON *Lace*

BY JO REEVE, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

What a huge thrill it was to win the supreme award in the runway show at this year's Creative Fibre festival. The festival, themed *Fabric of Life*, was designed to showcase what all members of Creative Fibre do best – making textiles. The festival was held in late April at the stunning Te Rauparaha Arena in the centre of Porirua, 20km north of Wellington. It featured Creative Fibre's national exhibition where over 130 beautiful textiles were exhibited at Pataka Art + Museum, the runway show, classes and lectures throughout the festival, and a busy trades hall where there was something for everyone. As well as the 300 registrants, more than 800 visitors came to the festival to enjoy all that was on offer. The arena was buzzing with activity and Porirua turned on stunning weather for the event.



Official photo by Vision Photography

On the catwalk – modelled by Courtney  
Photographer: Gareth Reeve



## Weaving the fabric

Before knitting the top, I decided to get the weaving started then so I could make the garments simultaneously –

weaving during the day when possible, and spinning/knitting at night. My chosen weave structure was a variation of huck lace that I had previously woven into scarves so I knew it would be right for the intended garment. The drape was always lovely and I could see in my mind's eye that the structure would make a lovely fabric for a skirt. Lace weaves are delightful, simple weave structures in which floats are created by an interruption of the plain weave. Keeping to my plan of 'less is more', I chose two blues for the warp and black for the weft but for a more vividly coloured garment, several colours could be used in the warp. In this draft, one side of the fabric has light blue vertical floats and horizontal black floats on the other. I chose the side with the vertical blue floats for the right side of the skirt.

## Weaving the fabric

Wind a warp following Fig. 1 and prepare the loom using your preferred method. Before you begin threading, check you have enough heddles on shaft 1. Shafts 1-4 to weave the huck lace stripes in light blue and shafts 5-8 weave the dark blue plain weave stripes. If you don't have enough heddles on shaft 1, shafts 5 and 7 could be used instead in some of the huck lace sections. Thread following Fig. 2. Weave a header then weave the fabric following the lifting sequence in Fig. 3. Angle the weft generously to minimise draw-in and aim for a weft sett of 20 picks per inch. Weave the pattern repeat until the woven length measures 2.3m (2.5yds) under tension on the loom.

Remove the fabric from the loom and secure the ends by machine stitching. Hand wash in warm water until the fabric has felled. Hang over a rod to dry and press using a wool setting.

The panels for this skirt were cut out in a single layer then stabilised with a knitted, fusible interfacing which was perfect to maintain the drape of this lightweight fabric, then over-locked around all edges before construction. It is fully lined with an invisible zip for a smooth and comfortable fit. The finished length is 44cm (17ins). For a longer skirt remember to add extra length to the warp and a wider piece of fabric could be woven by simply adding extra pattern repeats.

### Weave Structure: Huck lace

207     9     9     ● Dark blue  
330     15     ● Light blue  
537

11x

A 11x grid showing a sparse pattern of black squares on a white background. The grid is divided into three sections by a blue header bar at the top. The header bar contains the text "11x" and a series of numbers: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. The grid itself is composed of black and white squares, with the black squares forming a sparse, irregular pattern. The pattern is most dense in the middle section and becomes sparser towards the top and bottom sections.

# AUTUMN *Splendour*

BY LINDY BOSHLE, MARGATE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

Make this lovely hand dyed, hand spun and knitted sleeveless silk top with collar.

I dyed Ashford Mulberry Silk Sliver according to the instructions on the Ashford website (tutorials) in Brown, Rust and Green stripes with Yellow randomly applied on top. The silk sliver was then stripped into narrow sections to prevent long stripes of colour and spun to a 3ply thickness and plied with mercerised cotton.



*Applying Yellow dye on top of the Brown, Rust and Green stripes*



*Lindy and her beautiful top*

## Knitting the Garment

### You will need:

300gm (10½ozs) Ashford Mulberry Silk Sliver dyed, spun and plied  
Ashford Mercerised Cotton 20/2 (100% cotton; 1700m/1859yds;  
100gm/3½ozs) Lime #335 1 cop  
2 x 3.5mm (US 4) circular knitting needles approx. 80cm (31½ins)  
1 extra 3.5mm needle for casting off  
1 x 3mm circular knitting needle approx. 40cm (15¾ins)  
Stitch holders  
Tapestry needle for sewing in ends



*The dyed sliver is plied with mercerised cotton*

**Tension** - 18 stitches per 10cm (4ins) over pattern when stretched.

As silk stretches, fewer stitches are used and a tight fit is required. By knitting in the round on 2 cable needles it is possible to try the top on as you knit to ensure that it's not too loose and that you have knitted it long enough.

If you use a tension that is not stretched, it may fit the first time, but after washing and wearing a couple of times you will end up with a dress with very large armholes!!

**Note** - This pattern has 9 stitches per repeat in odd numbered rows and 10 stitches per repeat in even numbered rows. Be aware of this when you get to the armhole shaping to ensure you have the correct number of stitches once shaping is completed.

### Pattern

See pattern graph

*For knitting abbreviations see page 39*

Row 1: \*k5, ssk, k3. Repeat from \* to end.

162 sts

Row 2: \*yo, k1tbl, yo, k4, ssk, k2. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 3: \*k7, ssk, k1. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts

Row 4: \*k1tbl, yo, k6, ssk, yo. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 5: \*k7, k2tog, k1. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts

Row 6: \*k6, k2tog, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 7: \*k5, k2tog, k3. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts

Row 8: \*k4, k2tog, k2, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 9: \*k3, k2tog, k5. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts

Row 10: \*k2, k2tog, k4, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 11: \*k1, k2tog, k7. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts

Row 12: \*yo, k2tog, k6, yo, k1tbl. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts

Row 13: \*k1, ssk, k7. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts





Row 14: \*yo, k1tbl, yo, ssk, k6. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts  
Row 15: \*k3, ssk, k5. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts  
Row 16: \*yo, k1tbl, yo, k2, ssk, k4. Repeat from \* to end. 180 sts  
The garment is knitted in one piece up to the armholes. Front and Back are both knitted the same. For a smaller or larger size garment, change size of knitting needles or number of repeats.  
Using one 3.5mm circular needle cast on 181 sts. Purl to last stitch. Check that there are no twists in knitting, slip last stitch on to left needle. Knit last and first sts together to form circle. Place marker to indicate beginning of row. (180 sts)  
Work Rows 1 to 16 of Pattern Repeat until garment is desired length to armhole, ending with Row 16.  
When you want to try top on for shape and size, pattern halfway across the row. Complete row with second circular needle. This way garment will stretch easily around your body without losing stitches.

### Armhole Shaping

Row 1: \*p4, k1, ssk, k3, (k5, ssk, k3) 7 times, p4. Repeat from \* to end. 162 sts  
Row 2: \*p4, k5, (yo, k1tbl, yo, k4, ssk, k2) 7 times, k5 p4. 99 sts  
Leave remaining sts on first cable needle.  
Using second cable needle TURN and work on these sts only to complete Front.  
Row 3: Cast off 2 stitches. k3, p4, \*p1, p2togtbl, p7. Repeat from \* to last 9 stitches. p4, k5, TURN. 79 sts  
Row 4: Cast off 2 stitches. p4, k3, \*k1tbl, yo, k6, ssk, yo. Repeat from \* to last 7

stitches. k3, p4, TURN. 84 sts  
Row 5: ssk, k2, p3, \*p1, p2tog, p7. Repeat from \* to last 7 sts. p3, k2, k2tog. 75 sts  
Continue knitting these stitches as set out below until you reach desired length to neckline, ending with Row 5. (68 sts per row on Odd Rows and 82 sts on Even Rows)  
Row 6: p3, k3, \*k6, k2tog, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 7: k3, p3, \*p3, p2tog, p5. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 8: p3, k3, \*k4, k2tog, k2, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 9: k3, p3, \*p5, p2tog, p3. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 10: p3, k3, \*k2, k2tog, k4, yo, k1tbl, yo. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 11: k3, p3, \*p7, p2tog, p1. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 12: p3, k3, \*yo, k2tog, k6, yo, k1tbl. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 13: k3, p3, \*p7, p2togtbl, p1. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 14: p3, k3, \*yo, k1tbl, yo, ssk, k6. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 15: k3, p3, \*p5, p2togtbl, p3. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 16: p3, k3, \*yo, k1tbl, yo, k2, ssk, k4. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 1: k3, p3, \*p3, p2togtbl, p5. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 2: p3, k3, \*yo, k1tbl, yo, k4, ssk, k2. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 3: k3, p3, \*p1, p2togtbl, p7. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts  
Row 4: p3, k3, \*k1tbl, yo, k6, ssk, yo. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. k3, p3. 82 sts  
Row 5: k3, p3, \*p1, p2tog, p7. Repeat from \* to last 6 sts. p3, k3. 75 sts

### Shape neck

Row 6: p3, k3, (k6, k2tog, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k8, wrap next st, TURN. 34 sts  
Row 7: p8, (p3, p2tog, p5) twice, p3, k3. 32 sts  
Row 8: p3, k3, (k4, k2tog, k2, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k4, wrap next st, TURN. 30 sts  
Row 9: p4, (p5, p2tog, p3) twice, p3, k3. 28 sts  
Row 10: p3, k3, (k2, k2tog, k4, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k1, wrap next st, TURN. 27 sts  
Row 11: p1, (p7, p2tog, p1) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 12: p3, k3, (yo, k2tog, k6, yo, k1tbl) twice, k1, wrap next st, TURN. 27 sts  
Continue working on these sts as set out below  
Row 13: p1, (p7, p2togtbl, p1) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 14: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, ssk) twice, k1. 27 sts

Row 15: p1, (p5, p2togtbl, p3), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 16: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, k2, ssk, k4) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 1: p1, (p3, p2togtbl, p5) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 2: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, k4, ssk, k2) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 3: p1, (p1, p2togtbl, p7), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 4: p3, k3, (k1tbl, yo, k6, ssk, yo) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 5: p1, (p1, p2tog, p7), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 6: p3, k3, (k6, k2tog, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 7: p1, (p3, p2tog, p5) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 8: p3, k3, (k4, k2tog, k2, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 9: p1, (p5, p2tog, p3) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 10: p3, k3, (k2, k2tog, k4, yo, k1tbl, yo) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 11: p1, (p7, p2tog, p1) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 12: p3, k3, (yo, k2tog, k6, yo, k1tbl) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 13: p1, (p7, p2togtbl, p1) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 14: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, ssk) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 15: p1, (p5, p2togtbl, p3), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 16: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, k2, ssk, k4) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 1: p1, (p3, p2togtbl, p5) twice, p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 2: p3, k3, (yo, k1tbl, yo, k4, ssk, k2) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 3: p1, (p1, p2togtbl, p7), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Row 4: p3, k3, (k1tbl, yo, k6, ssk, yo) twice, k1. 27 sts  
Row 5: p1, (p1, p2tog, p7), p3, k3. 25 sts  
Leave these 25 sts on holder.  
Place 11 centre sts at neck on holder.  
Working on remaining 32 sts work left neck shaping to match right.  
Place the 25 sts on holder.  
Work back armhole and neck shaping the same as front.

### Bind off shoulders

Place the back and front right shoulder sts on to 2 knitting needles. With right side facing each other and using a third knitting needle, \*(pick up one st from back and front right shoulder and knit the 2 sts together) twice. Place one of the left hand needles through the front of the 2 sts on the right hand needle and knit these 2 sts together. Repeat from \* to last st.  
Place back and front left shoulder sts on to 2 knitting needles and join together the same way.



Use circular needles

## Collar

Collar is worked with front of pattern facing the inside of the top so that it will sit correctly once it is turned down.

Turn top inside out and join yarn to the inside of one of the shoulder seams. Using one 3.5mm circular knitting needle, \*pick up 1 stitch on shoulder seam, 44 sts along neckline, knit 11 sts on holder, pick up 44 sts along neckline. Repeat from \* once (200 sts).

Work pattern rows 1-16 twice. To cast off \*purl 2 sts, place the left needle through the 2 sts on the right needle with point facing towards back of work, purl these 2 sts. Repeat from \* to end.

## Armhole Edge

Using 3.00mm circular knitting needle with right side of top facing, join thread under arm and pick up 90 sts around armhole edge. Work 6 rows garter st. Cast off purlwise in the same way as for collar. Sew in ends.

## Shaping Garment

Cut a piece of cardboard to your width and cover it with plastic. Gently wash garment in soapy water and rinse well. Stretch out over cardboard and pin out edges.

Symbols	Front of work	Back of work
	No Stitch	No Stitch
	Knit	Purl
\	k2tog	p2tog
/	ssk	p2togtbl
0	yarn over	
!	k1tbl	

## Editor's NOTE

Lindy has been designing and producing prize-winning craft pieces for over forty years. An Ashford dealer, Lindy is also the President of the Redcliffe Spinners, Weavers and Dyers Group.

				\			0	!	0	16
					\					15
						\	0	!	0	14
							\			13
!	0							/	0	12
								/		11
0	!	0					/			10
						/				9
0	!	0			/					8
				/						7
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			\							1



Coldstream Corriedales

# Mill News

**Our woollen mill is going very well. Since we made the big decision to buy into the Milton Mill in December 2011, we have been thrilled with the outcome.**

The first key to the success was employing the four best technicians; Kevin, Wayne, Louis and George have between them over 100 years' experience in wool processing. Their knowledge and passion for fibre allow us to experiment and develop new ranges quickly and successfully.

Recently we have produced a beautiful 19 micron white Merino sliver, a versatile white Romney sliver and a popular white Perendale Sliver. Kate has also been able to introduce more gorgeous silk/Merino blends. There are more colours in the Corriedale and Merino sliver ranges, too. Coming soon is a fabulous eight-colour 30/70 alpaca/Merino blend sliver and a sumptuous white silk/alpaca/Merino blend. These are wonderful to spin and felt!

The second key to the success of the venture has been obtaining the best quality fibre. Kate is in regular contact with specialist sheep breeders and a wool buyer to ensure the fibre meets our specifications: good length (free from breaks), high bulk, bright, in the right micron range and free of vegetable matter. We only accept wool from local, ethically-produced, grass-fed sheep that have not been mulesed.

The wool is scoured (washed) locally in Timaru using a standard aqueous treatment using an eco-friendly detergent that breaks down quickly in water. It is then dried and transferred to Milton for dyeing by Kevin in our two dye vats using Oeko-Tex 100 compliant dyes. Wayne cards the fibre into a tape using one of our two large carders. Louis and George then gill and comb the wool to remove any short pieces and to align the fibres. It is then balled and bagged ready for you!



# BRIGHTER FUTURE

BY ANNE BLISS, ALTO LAS CRUCES,  
TALCA, CHILE

In 2007, the Chilean Ministry of Development began a project in the Maule Region of the Valle Central (Central Valley) of Chile. Although a rich food producing area, it is one of the poorest regions in Chile. The men with only basic education, seasonal work, frequent moving and interdependent families, earn 250,000 pesos a month (about \$500USD), which, in a country with costs comparable to those of highly developed countries, means these families struggle to maintain their daily lives. The women may work as low paid household help, or in the fields or packing houses. But, all the agricultural work is seasonal, and the families typically have very little income during four months of the winter.

The Ministry's *Auto Consumo* or Self-Sufficiency Project started with sixty families of the Comuna de Talca, around the regional capital of Talca. The project focuses on education in practices leading

to self-sufficiency and improved health and lifestyle.

In 2010, the Talca area suffered a magnitude 8.8 earthquake, which damaged or destroyed most of the adobe homes and outbuildings of the families involved in the project, and about seventy per cent of the city of Talca was destroyed. As a result many people in this already vulnerable group lost their jobs, especially the women.

To assist the earthquake victims, the New Zealand Embassy funded a women's group for a year's class in basic business and computer use at the Catholic University of Maule (UCM) and introduced New Zealand sheep and genetics into the area, in order to improve the wool.

The women in the project had been spinning with simple stick spindles without carding or preparing the wool properly. Neither the yarn nor any products made from it were very durable, or marketable. So to upgrade the quality of spinning, dyeing and producing goods by weaving, knitting or crocheting, I came to teach, using my Ashford spinning wheel, my hand cards, and a second donated Ashford wheel. Each woman received a free drop spindle, but the hand cards and the spinning wheels are wonderful additions and are minor miracles in terms of production! These women are used to

using their hands, and most of them took to carding and wheel spinning with grace and ease, sharing the equipment in workshops and practice sessions.

The women in the project meet monthly for workshops on various topics: wool washing, natural dyeing, spinning, loom making and food preparation. They have great enthusiasm for this project and for improving the skills needed to produce better yarn and marketable goods. Beginning in December, the summer of 2013, the group will also undertake a project to do standardised testing of local native and introduced plants for natural dyes, and to produce a guidebook, with instructions, to natural dye plants and dyes in the Maule Region.

The women are now growing vegetables organically, improving their family diets, enjoying a creative and productive outlet, and are introducing other women to the project. The women also have the ability to produce high quality yarns more easily and efficiently than with the sticks and spindles.

These women, whose lives have been harsh and shattered by disasters of many types, are hopeful, enjoying the camaraderie and laughter with new friends made around common practices and goals; their future is bright.

Anne, helping  
to make the  
future brighter



## Editor's NOTE

Anne is the author of *North American Dye Plants* and former *Interweave Press Spinoff Magazine* editor. She now lives half the year in Chile and works with UCM and the Ministry of Education.



## What's new from Richard and Kate!

Richard, Kate and all the team have been exceptionally busy designing and testing new products this year. They are delighted to put into production a shawl-width Knitters loom, a super-wide-eye 2.5dpi reed for weaving with your art yarns, a super fine carder and more!



### BLENDING BOARD

Paint with fibre.  
Blend fabulous fibres  
in your favourite colours and  
create beautiful rolags for spinning  
on the Ashford Blending Board.  
Rotating and adjustable keel.  
Large 30 x 30 cm (12 x 12ins) carding area.  
108 point card cloth.  
Convenient carry handle.  
Comes with blending brush and two dowel rods for drafting and  
removing the rolags.



### KNITTERS LOOM 70

NEW Shawl-width Knitters Loom.

Due to demand we now offer our incredibly popular Knitters Loom 70cm wide (28ins).

This width is perfect for weaving shawls (plus anything else your heart desires).

Combine colour and texture to create your own unique shawls on this ultra portable rigid heddle loom.

The loom folds in half with the weaving in place.

Comfortable handles and strong 30 teeth nylon ratchets with "clicker" pawls remain in place when weaving, folding or transporting the loom.

Thicker rails to make this wider loom extra strong.

Includes 7.5dpi (30/10) reed, step by step instruction booklet, 2 shuttles, threading hook, warping peg and clamps.

Assembled and lacquered.

The Knitters Loom is also available 30cm and 50cm wide (12 and 20ins).

All Knitters Looms are available as a combo which includes the Knitters Loom carry bag.

Accessories: Second heddle kit, carry bag, extra reeds 2.5, 5, 7.5, 10 and 12.5 dpi, loom stand 70cm with support brace.

### THANK YOU, PATSY

We have known American spinning expert Patsy Zawistoski for many years. We value our relationship and are proud to print her experiences using Ashford spinning wheels.

"Spinners ask me: 'What is your *go to* wheel?' An Ashford of course! For travelling and teaching I always use an Ashford wheel. I learned on my Ashford Traditional in 1981: I still consider it a perfect wheel to have around the house, for beginning or advanced spinners. Today I travel with my Ashford Joy. It packs easily, travels well, sets up in less than a minute, and carries its own bobbins. Now the Joy has an art yarn flyer with larger bobbins and a sliding yarn guide. It is the most versatile wheel I own; I teach everything on the Joy from cotton to cashmere, to thick, soft woollen yarn or highly textured bouclé. Over the 30+ years I have owned Ashford wheels I have appreciated how Richard and his team listen to their customers and users, making changes and improvements to their already great wheels. Kudos to the thought and quality that go into Ashford products! Yes, there are a number of good wheels on the market, but my most reliable and most used wheels are Ashford. Ashford is spinning wherever you are."

Patsy Zawistoski, international spinning instructor



## SUPERFINE DRUM CARDER

Prepare your fine or luxury fibres effortlessly for spinning or felting.

Have fun creating and mixing your own blends and colours.

Carding width 20cm (8ins).

Card 50gm (2oz) batts.

Superfine 120 point teeth.

Two carding ratios for more flexibility.

4:1 – For creative blending of slivers.

6:1 – For smooth, controlled carding of fleeces.

Adjustable drums to suit all fibres.

Includes packer brush, cleaning brush, doffer and clamps.

Assembled and lacquered.



## PACKER BRUSH

Packer Brush – now as standard.

The adjustable packer brush to smooth, control and pack more fibres onto the large drum is now standard on all Ashford drum carders. It is especially helpful when carding mohair, angora, alpaca and other fine low crimp fibres. A Packer Brush can be fitted retrospectively to all Ashford 20cm (8ins) drum carders.



## SILK MERINO

These four new striking silk/Merino colour blends were inspired by our most popular random yarn colour blends.

Storm 109 - Midnight shades of ruby and grey

Sunset 110 - Soothing warm tones from crimson to purple

Sorbet 111 - Pastel milkshake blend

Gemstone 112 - Rich jewel tones

The full range of fifteen beautiful random colour ways is made from 80% New Zealand Merino and 20% silk.

The fine 22 micron Merino and the lustre of the silk make this a truly luxurious blend. Create fine, lacy and lightweight yarn for knitting or unique semi-worsted yarns for weaving.



## ALPACA MERINO

So luxurious and warm. Alpaca is five times warmer than sheep's wool and so silky soft. Fine 21.5 micron baby alpaca is blended with our 22 micron Merino (30/70) to give you a sumptuous blend in 7 beautiful heather colourways and white.



## NEW OIL BOTTLE

The new design has a convenient 32mm (1 ¼ins) blunt needle applicator - for hard-to-reach bobbin, flyer and wheel bearings.

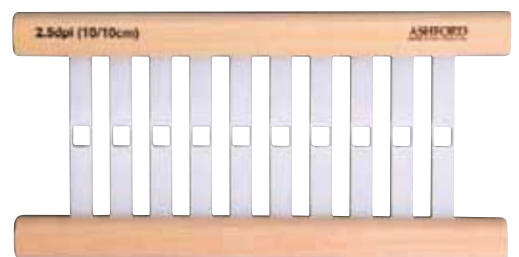
Enjoy quiet, effortless spinning with the high grade white mineral lubricating oil that is non-staining, aroma-free and classified non-hazardous.

The new 15ml (½oz) squeeze bottle will be included in Ashford Maintenance Kits and is available individually.

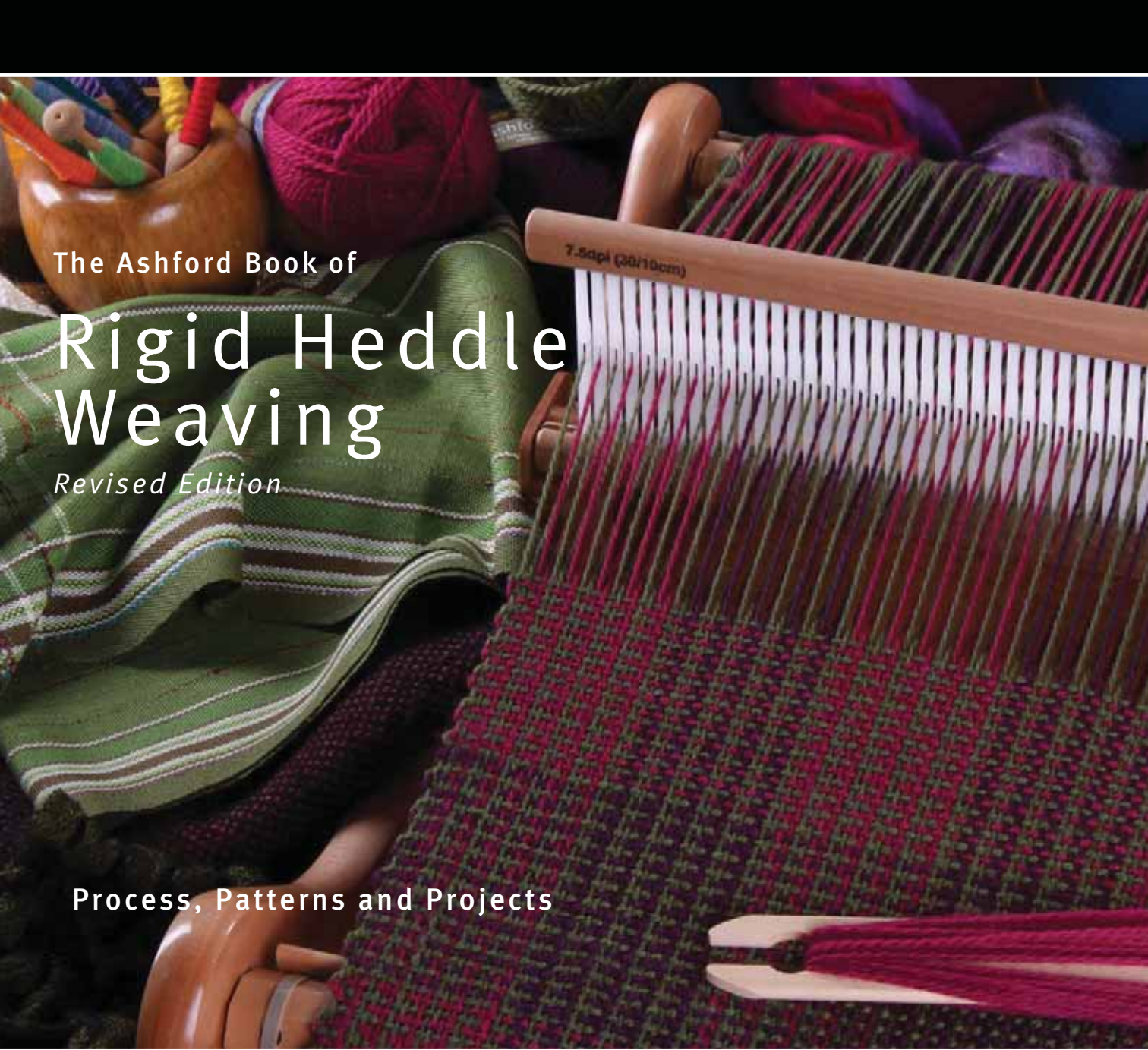
## 2.5DPI REEDS

Perfect for your chunky, novelty and art yarns!

Available in all loom widths for all rigid heddle looms, including the Knitters Looms and the Samplett Loom.







The Ashford Book of

# Rigid Heddle Weaving

*Revised Edition*

Process, Patterns and Projects

The Ashford Book of Rigid Heddle Weaving by Rowena Hart *Revised Edition*

Process, Patterns and Projects

This very popular, practical and inspirational guide to the versatile rigid heddle loom has been completely revised and expanded to include more tapestry designs, clothing, and projects in Bronson and using the second heddle kit. New weavers will be amazed at how easy it is to make unique handwoven creations, while experienced weavers will enjoy finding new directions. Be inspired by Rowena who has worked and taught weavers worldwide. The Ashford two shaft looms – Rigid Heddle, Knitters and Samplelt Looms – are simple to use, light and compact, and will open a world of colour and texture for you. Pages 116 . *Available soon.*

