

Purple Paradise Shawl

You can call it "Paradise" for short, if you're not knitting it in purples; or, for the scientific-article-title version, "Combining Two Colorways Without Significant Color Pooling While Exploring a Non-Standard Method of Creating a Triangle Shape." Since that's what I set out to do.

FINISHED MEASUREMENTS

72" wide x 36" deep

MATERIALS

Color A: KnitPicks Sock Garden (100% merino, 220 yards/50g); 2 skeins Hydrangea

Color B: KnitPicks Sock Landscape (100% merino, 192 yards/50g); 2 skeins Rocky Mountain Dusk

One US 7 circular needle, 24" or longer (or size needed to obtain gauge)

One stitch marker

One large stitch holder OR waste yarn OR one spare smaller circular needle

Tapestry needle

GAUGE

18 sts/24 rows to 4" on US 7 needles, unblocked

As I know from comparing the needle sizes I end up using to the recommended sizes in most patterns, I knit very loosely. If you consider yourself an average tension knitter, skip the 7's and try 8's; a tight knitter, 9's. As with many shawls, gauge isn't critical, but since I designed this pattern to use all the yarn specified--I had less than two yards of A and ten of B left--matching the gauge closely is necessary to get this size shawl with only this amount of yarn.

YARN SUBSTITUTION

Any combination of KnitPicks Sock Garden, Sock Landscape, and Sock Memories may be used. The differing yardage of the skeins is not critical--simply follow the pattern for the increasing center section until the first skein of each color is almost gone, then divide and begin the side triangles, whether or not you've completed three full repeats of the pattern. This advice also applies to substituting entirely different yarns--the center square uses half the yarn, and each side triangle one quarter, so if

you have more or less yarn, keep working or stop short of the three repeats, then begin the two side triangles on the pattern row after the one you left off on the center square.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This shawl requires two decisions to be made before starting. First, random striping or set stripe pattern? The sample is randomly striped, working either two, four, or six rows before changing yarns. However, a slightly more orderly color progression is possible with a set stripe pattern, and it can be as simple as 2A/2B, 4A/4B, or more complex, like 2A/4B/4A/2B...as long as the two yarns are used at equal rates, otherwise one will run out long before the other.

The second choice is whether to incorporate the increases along the center back into the stitch patterns. The sample shawl is worked this way, but as I was knitting it, I dreaded the prospect of trying to write a line-by-line description of how I did it in any way that would make sense to someone other than me. If figuring it out on your own seems too intimidating--or too much bother--then the stitches resulting from the center increases can be worked in stockinette stitch for the remainder of the rows of that stitch pattern. When beginning a new stitch pattern, work it across all the stitches to the center stitch, and the increase sections will form small stockinette diamonds running up the center back.

STITCH PATTERNS USED

Stockinette

All RS rows: Knit.

All WS rows: Purl.

Garter

All rows: Knit.

Seed Stitch

Row 1: *K1, P1* across, ending K1 if worked over an odd number of stitches.

Row 2: K all P stitches and P all K stitches.

Moss Stitch

Row 1: *K1, P1* across, ending K1 if worked over an odd number of stitches.

Row 2: K all K stitches and P all P stitches.

Row 3: *P1, K1* across, ending P1 if worked over an odd number of stitches.

Row 4: K all K stitches and P all P stitches.

Eyelet Mesh (Center Square)

Row 1: K1, *K2tog, yo* to within one or two stitches of center stitch (this depends on whether the number of stitches for half the row is even or odd), K1 (or K2), yo, K1, yo, K1 (or K2), *yo, SSK* to last stitch, K1.

Row 2: Purl.

Row 3: K2, *K2tog, yo* to within one or two stitches of center stitch, K1 (or K2), yo, K1, yo, K1 (or K2), *yo, SSK* to last two stitches, K2.

Row 4: Purl.

Eyelet Mesh (Right Side Triangle)

Row 1: K1, *K2tog, yo* to last two or three stitches, then either K2tog or K1, K2tog.

Row 2: Purl.

Row 3: K2, *K2tog, yo* to last two or three stitches, then either K2tog or K1, K2tog.

Row 4: Purl.

Eyelet Mesh (Left Side Triangle)

Row 1: SSK, *yo, SSK* to last one or two stitches, then either K1 or K2.

Row 2: Purl.

INSTRUCTIONS

Using the long-tail cast-on method, CO 3 stitches loosely with A

If striping randomly, change colors at will while working, carrying the unused yarn loosely up the side. If working more than six rows without changing yarns, twist the unused yarn with the working yarn before beginning a row every few rows to prevent the floats from being too long.

If you decided on a set stripe order, follow it as you work the stitch pattern changes, counting the cast-on as the first two rows.

Row 3: K1, *yo, K1* twice.

Rows 4, 6, 8, and 10: Knit.

Row 5: K2, yo, K1, yo, K2.

Row 7: K3, yo, K1, yo, K3.

Row 9: K4, yo, K1, yo, K4.

This is the first pattern band of garter stitch. There is a clearly defined center stitch with yo increases worked on each side. No matter what pattern stitch being worked, always work *yo, K1, yo* at the center stitch on RS rows. On WS rows, the center stitch may be either knit or purled depending on what feels most natural--for instance, in the garter sections it makes more sense to knit it, but in stockinette sections it's easier to purl it. Do whatever works best for you.

Maintaining the central increases throughout, continue working the shawl according to this row sequence:

10 rows garter stitch (for the first repeat, this is the section you have already worked)

2 rows stockinette

6 rows eyelet mesh (Rows 1-4 and then 1-2 again)

2 rows stockinette

8 rows moss stitch

4 rows garter stitch

2 rows eyelet mesh

6 rows stockinette

8 rows seed stitch

6 rows eyelet mesh

4 rows stockinette

When three full repeats of the row sequence have been worked, divide for the two sides as follows:

Next row (RS): K to center stitch, K into front and back of center stitch, placing a stitch marker in between these two stitches, K to end. *Do not work yo's as before.* Knit one row.

Next row: K to two stitches short of marker, K2tog. Remove marker and place remaining stitches on a stitch holder. The stitches on the needle have become the beginning of the Right Side Triangle.

(If you're dividing the two sides at a point in the row sequence other than garter stitch, work in the appropriate stitch pattern instead of working these rows in knit. And make sure you note what row you'll be starting the side triangles on, so you work them both the same!)

Continue to follow the row sequence, starting this time with Row 4 of the ten rows of garter stitch (or appropriate pattern row as noted above). The last two stitches of each row are always worked K2tog. When only two stitches remain on the needle following a RS row, BO both stitches knitwise on the following WS row.

Return the live stitches for the Left Side Triangle to the needle. For this side, follow the row sequence as before but begin every RS row with an SSK. (For the purpose of establishing the first row of a new band of moss or seed stitch, I counted the SSK as the first knit stitch and always purled the next stitch.) When only two stitches remain on the needle following a RS row, BO both stitches knitwise on the following WS row.

Weave in ends and block. Finis!