

# A Twisted Yarn

yarn n.  
1. a spun thread;  
2. a story often having incredible  
elements

June

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## Yarn Club - Mediterranean Flowers

As many of you may be heading off to the Med for your holidays this summer, we thought the type of flowers you might see on your travels would make for some good summer knitting or crochet. From lavender fields baking in the sun and the tall flower-heads of blue agapanthus, to the red geranium packed balconies of holiday hotels, alongside the hot pinks of bougainvillea, there are lots of bright colours to tempt us and we'll be looking to feature some of these in our new colourways.

Yarns for this club will be a choice of two laceweights and one 4-ply, or two 4-ply and one laceweight: Alpaca Silk Cashmere Sparkle Lace, Mulberry Silk in Laceweight or 4-ply, and Silk Yak Merino 4-ply. You'll receive around 100g of each yarn over the course of the next three months.

Subscriptions are now available on the website and will be open until the end of July, or earlier if all places are sold out. Prices including shipping are as follows:

<b>UK</b>	<b>£77</b>
<b>Europe</b>	<b>£81</b>
<b>Rest of the World</b>	<b>£83</b>



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We definitely want to continue to recognise the many wonderful people that we have met over the years since Watercolours & Lace started exhibiting in 2014. We started this feature in February 2017, but seem to have run out of volunteers recently. Please give it some thought ... and don't throw that e-mail from Alan into the bin!



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## July Crochet-a-Long

While all of our crochet designs are proving incredibly successful, and are in fact currently outselling our knitted patterns (and yes, Julie will be designing more in due course!), sadly there are only a few projects being posted on Ravelry for each of them. As the three shawl designs are all somewhat challenging and not really suited to beginners, we wondered if some of you are finding them a little difficult to work and would appreciate some help, so Julie has decided to hold a **Crochet-a-Long (CAL)** starting on 1 July. This will feature on both Ravelry and our Facebook group (don't forget to join one or both of these if you'd like to work with us on the CAL) and Julie will make herself available as much as possible throughout July and August to assist with any queries.



Our three crochet shawl patterns, in order of difficulty (left to right): Trinitas, Irene and Nicole

You can work any of the three shawl designs - Julie suggests that Trinitas is the easiest, followed by Irene and then Nicole. Trinitas was designed in both laceweight and 4-ply, while Irene and Nicole have instructions for laceweight and fine lace. However, there is no reason why you can't work the latter two in 4-ply if you prefer - but you are likely to need more than 200g of a 400m/100g yarn as you'll need to use a larger hook size. If you need a custom order for your yarn, do please get in touch.

There will be a prize draw at the end of August, for the best finished shawl for each design, so it's definitely worth taking part if you've been itching to start one! If you'd like to join us, then post in the threads on Ravelry or Facebook with details of which one you plan to make and the yarn you've chosen to use.

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## Workshops

Julie is running a workshop at the **Southern Wool Show** at Newbury Racecourse on Saturday, 31 August.

It is called "Introduction to Knitted Lace Shawls". The cost is £18 per person, which includes yarn and pattern - you just need to bring your own needles.

If you organise or attend a knitting or craft group, or are running an event, and would like Julie to teach a workshop for you, please get in touch. She can offer various topics, particularly knitted lace, beaded lace and Fair Isle, and workshops could last from two hours to a full day, for between 6 and 20 people. We can also bring along a selection of yarns for purchase. Charges would depend on timings, numbers and travel distance. Email [julie@watercoloursandlace.co.uk](mailto:julie@watercoloursandlace.co.uk) with details of your area of interest and we'll see what we can do.



## Award Nomination

We are delighted to tell you all that we have been nominated in the **Best Independent Hand Dyer Category** for this year's Knitting & Crochet Awards!

You can vote for us online at [letsknit.co.uk/awards](http://letsknit.co.uk/awards) or via the July issue of **Let's Knit Magazine** or issue 113 of **Let's Get Crafting**, and you'll be entered into a draw to win hundreds of pounds worth of amazing prizes. Voting closes on 29 August. Thank you to everyone who nominated us, and for your continued support.

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## Do You Know - #55 - Texel

*As you can see from the reference number, we are safely into our second half-century of Facts about Yarn. So far, we have covered many breeds of sheep and other animals that provide our fibre/yarn. For those of you wondering about what we will do when we run out of sheep, we should warn you ... Earlier today, we found a listing on line which included over 200 breeds of sheep. We confess that most of these were reared primarily for meat, but there were at least 30 whose primary function was providing wool, and another 70 where wool was part of the breed's attraction. So, keep reading!*

*This month, we turn our attention to Europe and focus on the Texel.*



The Texel is a breed of domestic sheep originally from the island of Texel in the Netherlands. A heavily muscled sheep, it produces a lean meat carcass and will pass on this quality to crossbred progeny. The Texel is primarily used for meat, but the sheep is also kept for its fleece, which is usually around 32 micrometres and is mostly used for hosiery yarns and knitting wools.

The exact origin of the breed is unknown although it is thought to be a cross of multiple English breeds. It was slowly bred into a breed of outstanding carcass quality. It is now one of the most common breeds in the Netherlands, making up seventy percent of the national flock.

In 1985, the first Texel in the United States were imported by the Meat Animal Research Center in Nebraska. In 1990 and after a five-year quarantine, some were released for purchase by private individuals

In the early 1970s, the superior quality of the Dutch Texel caught the attention of some English breeders who were interested in importing Dutch Texels to the UK. They were unable to import the Dutch Texels at the time and instead opted for importing French ones due to import laws. At the end of the decade UK import laws changed and allowed the import of Dutch Texels.

What is now known as the British Texel has proven to be a huge success in the UK, with many stud rams being used in commercial flocks for the production of meat. The breed has shown that its hardy nature has been well suited to the requirements of the British market. These qualities have helped the Texel breed become the most popular terminal sire breed in the UK.



The Texel breed is a white-faced breed with no wool on the head or legs. The breed is characterized by a distinctive short, wide face with a black nose and widely placed, short ears with a nearly horizontal carriage.

They have black hooves. The wool is of medium grade (46's-56's) with no black fibres. Mature animals shear fleece weights of 3.5 kg (7.7 lbs) to 5.5 kg (12.1 lbs).



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## On the Road ... 2019

This is already a very strange year ... we had our ninth show of the year (our fourth Yarn Show) in Dublin in June, followed immediately by another Lace Day in Essex. We are just over half way through the number of shows – but we don't have another show for two months!



We will be sitting around patiently, producing new colourways and new accessories waiting for our return to the Southern Wool Show in Newbury on 31 August. We are really looking forward to that; we enjoyed the show there last year, and this year it has grown to two days, so we're sure it will be wonderful.

We have two more shows in September and four in October, so we hope to see many of you on our travels!



## On the Road ... in 2019

All shows confirmed

Yarn Show Lace Fair

1	9 Mar	Fenland Lace Day	Burgess Hall, St Ives
2	17 Mar	Essex Suppliers' Fair	Chelmer Valley HS, Chelmsford
3	13-14 April	Spring Into Wool	The Grammar School, Leeds
4	27-28 April	Wonderwool Wales	RW Showground, Builth Wells
5	4-5 May	Knit & Stitch	Rheged Centre, Cumbria
6	11-12 May	Buxton Wool Gathering	Pavilion Gardens, Buxton
7	18 May	Lace, Quilt and N'craft Fair	Kingsgate Conf Centre, P'borough
8	1 Jun	Lavender Lace Day	Hunstanton Community Centre
9	14-15 Jun	Woollinn	City North Hotel, Dublin
10	22 Jun	Essex Lacemakers' Day	Henry Dixon Hall, Rivenhall
11	31 Aug-1 Sep	Southern Wool Show	Newbury Racecourse
12	21 Sep	Suffolk Lace Day	Community Centre, Kesgrave
13	29-30 Sep	Yarndale	Skipton Auction Mart
14	5 Oct	Fenland Fair	Burgess Hall, St Ives
15	12-13 Oct	Bakewell Wool Gathering	Agricultural Centre, Bakewell
16	18-19 Oct	Loch Ness Knit Fest	Leisure Centre, Loch Ness
17	25-26 Oct	East Sussex WS&D Guild	Town Hall, Lewes
18	16 Nov	Southern Counties Lace Fair	Havant Leisure Centre
19	30 Nov	Lace, Quilt & N'craft Xmas Fair	Cranmore Park, Solihull

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