

Luxury Yarn Advent Calendars

Having received lots of interest in our Yarn Advent Calendars, we're delighted to be able to launch them this month. We have options for both 12-skein and 24-skein versions and two yarns for you to choose from.

Most of the Calendars available elsewhere contain sock yarns, either merino or merino nylon bases, so we've decided to go for something a little different to give a real touch of luxury and make these a wonderful present for a special friend or relative - or, of course, yourself!

The 4-ply Calendar will feature our gorgeously soft 100% British Blue Faced Leicester wool, which is spun especially for us by the Natural Fibre Company in Cornwall. Each 20g skein contains 80m of yarn and this is perfect for Fair Isle and other colourwork techniques. We haven't found a laceweight Calendar anywhere, so we're also offering the option of an 80% non-superwash Merino, 20% Silk laceweight version. Each 20g skein will contain 160m of Merino Silk Lace, perfect for shawls, scarves, cowls, etc.



There are two colour themes to choose from:

Silent Night will feature sky colours from starry silver-grey through blue to deepest navy/black.

Rudolph's Revenge means everybody gets a red nose - with colours from the palest red to deepest burgundy. The 12-skein boxes will contain your choice of one theme, the 24-skein box will combine both themes.

There will also be extra gifts, such as patterns featuring the 20g skeins, stitch markers and, with the 24-skein box, an exclusive small project bag made by us in a suitably glitzy (although not specifically Christmas-themed) fabric.

You'll receive a sturdy white box containing individually

wrapped and numbered skeins, together with the extras. The box will be despatched and protected in a recyclable mailing bag so the calendar box can be wrapped and presented as a gift. We'll aim to despatch all packages by early November, allowing plenty of time for them to be sent on elsewhere in the world for receipt before the start of December.

You can reserve your box(es) on the website here now, where you will be charged a non-refundable deposit of £10 per box. The remainder of the cost, plus relevant shipping charges, will then be payable by the end of August, at which stage we'll start dyeing the yarns. (We anticipate the completed packages will weigh up to 500g for the 12-skein box and under 1kg for the 24-skein version.) We'll send you a link in early August to a separate listing to pay your balance, which must be settled before 31 August.

There will be a limited number of Yarn Advent Calendars available, so reserve yours without delay. (You might want to print out the listing from the website and add it to your list for Santa - or just leave a copy somewhere your partner will see it!!) We hope you'll enjoy receiving them as much as we've enjoyed planning them!

If you're a member of our Loyalty Scheme, your Calendar(s) will of course count towards your points total for your next discount voucher, so sign up with your next order to be sure of this benefit.

Prices:	12-skein box	£75 + shipping
	24-skein box (including special project bag)	£145 + shipping

Yarn Clubs



– Emerald Isles

All skeins for our current club, The Emerald Isles, were despatched early last week. Some of our overseas subscribers may not yet have received their packages, so we'll share pictures of the colourways next month.

Gold Rush

Our next club will revert to the previous style of three separate skeins, one despatched each month, in different yarn bases. The theme will be “*Gold Rush*”, featuring various shades of yellow and gold. One of the Pantone Institute's Colours of 2021 is “Illuminating”, a bright yellow, so these shades are quite fashionable at present and we know many of our customers love these sunny hues.

The yarn bases will be available in both laceweight and 4-ply and will feature Mulberry Silk, Baby Alpaca, and Alpaca Silk Cashmere.

Subscriptions are now open here and will be available until the end of June or until all places are sold. The prices shown below include shipping - please select the appropriate option for your part of the world.



Note: For anyone who would prefer to receive all three skeins in a single package to save on the postage, please message us at julie@watercoloursandlace.co.uk and we'll set up a custom order for you on the website, to include the correct postage. Your package of three skeins will then be despatched during September.

Prices:	UK	£70.75
	Europe	£77.35
	Zone 1	£84.40
	Zone 2	£89.20
	Zone 3	£92.35

Special Offers

Don't forget the last few days of our 25% discount on all the yarns in the Limited Edition/Ends of Line category with the code **LIMIT21**. You'll see some of these yarns have been reduced even more, so grab the last few skeins to get a bargain.

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Top of the Pops

Not surprisingly, it has been quite a while since we looked at our overall sales – August 2019 in fact! The relative popularity of our yarns are shown in the table, right.

The Fine Lace yarns are, once again dominated by the *Shetland Cobweb*, which remained on top spot, with the *Suri Alpaca Merino Silk Lace* in second place – as they were last year. But their sales were only half as good as the Shetland, and were joined in second place by *Falklands Merino Light* – a yarn type that didn't make the Top 10 last time! As you can see on the table, only five of the entries were in the Top 10 last time we looked.

The standard laceweight group seems to be a bit more stable with six entries from the 2019 table. But we have a 'new entry' in top spot – *Merino Silk Sparkle*.

Understandably, perhaps – given our preference for lace designs – both of these yarn grades are more popular than our 4-ply options. We do like to emphasise to people – and especially to show organisers – that we are not the normal, 'bog-standard' indie dyer. Primarily because of the colour effects, but also because of the range of yarns we love to use. This is especially noteworthy in the 4-ply listings.

We have a new 'leader' – *Guernsey* – which is actually a 5-ply at only 280 metres per 100 g! Meanwhile, the previous number one – *Mulberry Silk* – has tumbled to number 8.

Next time, we will look at our colour ranges.

Last 6 Months to Dec				
2017	2018	2019	2020	Dec
Fine Lace				
6	1	1	1	SSL Shetland Cobweb
(13)	3	2	2	AML Suri Alpaca Merino Silk Fi
2	7	(11)	2	MLL Falklands Merino Light
			4	WDL Wool Cashmere Fine
			5 =	SLL Fine Spun Silk
8	(12)	10	5 =	SCL Cashmere Silk Fine
			7 =	ESL Fine Wool
(13)	10	8 =	7 =	CFL Cashmere Fine
8	6	3	9 =	SAL Alpaca Silk Cashmere Fine
			9 =	MIL Merino Mohair Cobweb
Last 6 Months to Dec				
2017	2018	2019	2020	Dec
Laceweight				
1	2	(12)	1	SPL Merino Silk Sparkle
10	8	3	2	BAL Baby Alpaca
(13)	5	4 =	3	ACL Alpaca Silk Cashmere
	(18)	(17)	4	PSL Alpaca Silk
3	1	1	5 =	SIL Mulberry Silk
	(12)	4 =	5 =	MYL Merino Silk Yak
8	3	7	5 =	SOL 50:50 Merino Silk
		10	5 =	BPL BFL Purest
			9	WDL Wool Cashmere Fine
10	(11)	9	10	TSL Tussah Silk
Last 6 Months to Dec				
2017	2018	2019	2020	Dec
4-ply				
7	7	6	1	GWS Guernsey Wool
7	2	2	2	BAS Baby Alpaca
	(18)	7	3	SOS 50:50 Merino Silk Singles
5	4	4	4	BFS Blue Faced Leicester
5	6		5 =	MBS Merino Baby Camel
5	(15)	(12)	5 =	SAS Alpaca Silk
			7	PWS Poldale Silk
5	1	1	8	SIS Mulberry Silk
7	(12)	8 =	8	ACS Alpaca Silk Cashmere
	9	8 =	8	COS Corriedale Mohair
				new in 2020

Did You Know #74 – Devon and Cornwall Longwool

The Devon and Cornwall Longwool is a hardy sheep. They are easy to care for; being quiet and easy to gather when needed. These sheep are content and tend to stay within the boundaries of fields.

The Devon and Cornwall Longwool is the amalgamation of two local breeds: The South Devon and the Devon Longwool in 1977. The breed is relatively local and there are few flocks outside of the South West

Breed history

The Devon and Cornwall Longwool flock Book Association was formed on 1st January 1977 following the amalgamation of the South Devon Flock Book association and the Devon Longwool Sheep Breeder's Society.

Although the breed has been in existence for well over 100 years in the West country, the former breeds were slightly different in stature, especially in the early 1900's. The bigger South Devon was found mainly in South Devon, East and south Cornwall. The smaller Devon Longwool was mainly in North Cornwall, North Devon and South Somerset. However, the breeds over the past few decades have become much more similar, to the extent that the amalgamation is both desirable and practical for all breeders.

This breed is well suited to varying climatic and topographical conditions in and outside the West Country. It is an easy grazer, docile with no need for elaborate fencing. They thrive on grass and fodder crops.



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Characteristics

The Devon and Cornwall Longwool is a large heavy sheep, somewhat stockier and shorter in the leg than some other British longwool breeds; rams usually weigh some 115–135 kg, ewes about 85–110 kg. Like the breeds from which it derives, it is polled (hornless). The wool is long and forms curls or ringlets, covering the head and legs as well as the body. The face is white, with black nostrils.



Uses

The Devon and Cornwall Longwool sheep produces a very heavy fleece of good quality wool. From ewes the average clip can weigh 7-8kgs and from rams it can weigh in excess of 15kgs.

This wool is attractive to spinners for weaving rugs. It can also be used for dolls hair, needle felting and to create a variety of home furnishings.

It is a productive provider of wool, and may give the heaviest fleece of any British breed. Fleece weight is usually in the range 7–10 kg, but weights over 20 kg have been recorded. The wool is of coarse but hard-wearing quality, with a Bradford count of 32s–36s and a staple length of about 30 cm; it is suitable for making carpets and for some industrial uses.

The fleece of the Devon and Cornwall Longwool may not be the finest quality but it is very hard. The breed has so much wool that animals can be sheared as lambs (at about six months) and Devon lambswool is highly prized. Staple length- 20-25cms.

Did you know?

They are known for their massive fleeces. It is often said that they produce more wool per sheep than any other British breed.

On the Road Again ... 2021

As we all know, the last 15 months have been bizarre and, for some people, tragic. But we remain optimistic that we will be able to meet some of you in a few months with two of our favourite shows in September.

First, we will be heading south to Newbury Racecourse for the Southern Wool Show.

Then three weeks later, we will travel to Yorkshire for Yarndale. At the moment, the government's Road Map is still being followed, so we look forward to seeing you there!

On the Road ... 2021

All shows confirmed, except those marked (TBC)

All shows with a grey background have been cancelled

YarnLace

4-5 Sep (TBC)	Southern Wool Show	Newbury Racecourse
25-26 Sep (TBC)	Yarndale	Skipton Auction Mart
? Oct (TBC)	Fenland Fair	Burgess Hall, St Ives
?? Nov (TBC)	Suffolk Lace Day	Kesgrave Community Centre
?? Nov (TBC)	Aragon Lacemakers' Day	Addison Centre, Kempston
?? Dec (TBC)	Lace, N'craft and Quilting Christmas Fair	Cranmore Park, Solihull

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