

Wool into Stone Afghan

AMY TYLER



Photos by Joe Coca

Farm
& Fiber Knits

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When a friend offered me ten raw Shetland wool fleeces of various colors, my exact words were, “Heck, yes!” Although the fiber was a nice quality—soft, with an even crimp—the fleeces had vegetable matter, dirty bits, and second cuts. After two days picking over the fleeces, I took them to Stonehedge Fiber Mill. Gathered all together, the fleeces looked remarkably similar to the colors of Petoskey stones.

The Petoskey stone, *Hexagonaria percarinata*, is the official state stone of Michigan. It derives its name from the Odawa word petosegay, which translates to “sunbeams of promise.” Although Petoskey stones can be found outside of Michigan, the finest examples are most plentiful in northwestern lower Michigan. This stone is a type of fossilized coral with a distinctive design of roughly hexagonal elements, round centers, and radiating lines that go out to a light-colored edge. The colors vary, but they are all in the black/gray/white direction.

I used the ten rovings to create my first Petoskey project, a wall hanging. After finishing the wall hanging, I created afghans for my sisters, Meg and Jo.

The important elements of a knitted Petoskey stone include a nonuniform shape, allowing four- to nine-sided polygons; a circular center that is usually darker than the outer edge; lines that start outside the circular center and radiate outward to the border; and a light-colored border.

Each of the medallions that make up these afghans is knitted in a circle from two to three colors. The rough hexagonal shapes that result are due to the way the medallions are crocheted together and some strong blocking of the final piece. The center portion of each circle is worked in garter stitch to accentuate the shape, and on the outer portion, a two-stitch twist on a background of reverse stockinette mimics the radiating lines in Petoskey stones. The white yarn is reserved for the border of each medallion and for crocheting the medallions together.

KNITTING

Because each medallion is stretched and blocked in its own shape, gauge is not measured in the traditional sense. Before blocking, the small medallions were about 5½" in diameter, and the large medallions were about 9" inches in diameter.

MATERIALS

Yarn 1,550 (1,440) yards or about 28 (26) ounces 2-ply worsted-weight 100% wool yarn in 6 or 7 natural colors.

Needles Size 7 (4.5 mm); set of double-pointed (dnp). Adjust needle size if necessary to accommodate your chosen yarn.

Gauge 18 sts and 32 rnds = 4" in garter st. Gauge is not critical for this project, but it will affect the amount of yarn used.

Notions Size G/6 (4 mm) crochet hook; markers (m); tapestry needle; safety pins.



Finished size About 56 (55)" long and 41 (37)" wide. Small medallion: about 5½" in diameter after blocking. Large medallion: about 9" in diameter after assembly and blocking.

See farmfiberknits.com/abbreviations for terms you don't know.

NOTES

- The original design was written for handspun yarn. Substitute your choice of naturally colored wool yarn.
- Instructions are given for Meg's/larger (Jo's/smaller) afghan.
- You can use any weight of yarn for these medallions; the thicker the yarn, the bigger the medallions. Use a needle size appropriate to the yarn.
- Each medallion is limited to two or three colors, not counting the white border. When changing colors in the garter-stitch center, do so at the beginning of a knit round. For the cable-stitch outer edge, you may vary where you change color.

STITCH GUIDE

1/1 LC: Knit 2nd st on left needle through back loop (tbl), knit first st through front loop, then drop both sts from left needle.

1/1 RC: Knit 2nd st on left needle through front loop, knit first st through front loop, then drop both sts from left needle.

SMALL MEDALLION (MAKE 13 [19])

Using Emily Ocker's circular method, CO 8 sts. Transfer sts to dpn. Place marker (pm) and join in the rnd.

Garner st center:

- Rnd 1 Knit.
- Rnd 2 Purl.
- Rnd 3 *K1, M1; rep from * to end—16 sts.
- Rnd 4 Purl.
- Rnd 5 K1, [M1, k2] 7 times, M1, k1—24 sts.
- Rnd 6 Purl.
- Rnd 7 *K3, M1; rep from * to end—32 sts.
- Rnd 8 Purl.
- Rnd 9 K2, [M1, k4] 7 times, M1, k2—40 sts.
- Rnd 10 Purl.
- Rnd 11 *K5, M1; rep from * to end—48 sts.

Cable st outer edge:

- Rnd 12 *P1, 1/1 RC (see Stitch Guide); rep from * to end.
- Rnd 13 *P1, M1P, 1/1 LC (see Stitch Guide), p1, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—56 sts.
- Rnd 14 *P2, 1/1 RC, p1, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.
- Rnd 15 *P2, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—64 sts.
- Rnd 16 *P2, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.
- Rnd 17 *P1, M1P, p1, 1/1 LC, p2, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—72 sts.
- Rnd 18 *P3, 1/1 RC, p2, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.
- Rnd 19 *P3, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, p1, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—80 sts.
- Rnd 20 *P3, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Border:

- Rnd 21 Purl.
- Loosely BO all sts.

LARGE MEDALLION (MAKE 17 [15])

Using Emily Ocker's circular method, CO 8 sts. Transfer sts to dpn. Pm and join in the rnd.

Garner st center:

- Rnd 1 Knit.
- Rnd 2 Purl.
- Rnd 3 *K1, M1; rep from * to end—16 sts.
- Rnd 4 Purl.
- Rnd 5 K1, [M1, k2] 7 times, M1, k1—24 sts.
- Rnd 6 Purl.
- Rnd 7 *K3, M1; rep from * to end—32 sts.
- Rnd 8 Purl.
- Rnd 9 K2, [M1, k4] 7 times, M1, k2—40 sts.
- Rnd 10 Purl.
- Rnd 11 *K5, M1; rep from * to end—48 sts.
- Rnd 12 Purl.
- Rnd 13 K3, [M1, k6] 7 times, M1, k3—56 sts.
- Rnd 14 Purl.
- Rnd 15 *K7, M1; rep from * to end—64 sts.
- Rnd 16 Purl.
- Rnd 17 K4, [M1, k8] 7 times, M1, k4—72 sts.



Cable st outer edge:

Rnd 18 *P1, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 19 *P1, M1P, 1/1 LC, p1, 1/1 LC, p1, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—80 sts.

Rnd 20 *P2, 1/1 RC, p1, 1/1 RC, p1, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 21 *P2, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, 1/1 LC, p1, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—88 sts.

Rnd 22 *P2, 1/1 RC, p2, 1/1 RC, p1, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 23 *P2, 1/1 LC, p2, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—96 sts.

Rnd 24 *P2, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 25 *P1, M1P, p1, 1/1 LC, p2, 1/1 LC, p2, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—104 sts.

Rnd 26 *P3, 1/1 RC, p2, 1/1 RC, p2, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 27 *P3, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, p1, 1/1 LC, p2, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—112 sts.

Rnd 28 *P3, 1/1 RC, p3, 1/1 RC, p2, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Rnd 29 *P3, 1/1 LC, p3, 1/1 LC, p1, M1P, p1, 1/1 LC; rep from * to end—120 sts.

Rnd 30 *P3, 1/1 RC; rep from * to end.

Border:

Rnd 31 Purl.

Loosely BO all sts.

TIPS FOR KEEPING TRACK

- Note that increases are on odd-numbered rounds.
- If you change color at the beginning of a round, use the join to help you keep track of the beginning of the round.
- For both size medallions, the point at which you change from the garter-stitch center to the cable-stitch outer edge must be when the number of stitches in a round is divisible by 3 (the cable pattern repeat) and 8 (the number of increases in the round). For the small medallion, the cable-stitch outer edge starts when you have 48 stitches. For the large medallion, the cable-stitch outer edge starts when you have 72 stitches.
- When the large medallion gets big enough, you can switch to one circular needle; you may want to use a stitch marker to mark the beginning of the round.
- The increases that occur in the cable-stitch outer sections occur in clusters of 2 pattern repeats for the small medallion and in clusters of 3 pattern repeats for the large medallion.

In the cable-stitch outer edge section, increases occur on 1/1 LC cable rounds. There are no increases on 1/1 RC cable rounds.

FINISHING

Weave in ends with exception of border ends. Lay medallions on a flat surface, arranging them in a pleasing manner and trying not to leave any extreme gaps. Pin together with

safety pins. With border color, join medallions using a chain crochet st. When working, insert crochet hook through ½ st of one medallion and ½ st of adjacent medallion. It is important to make these seams somewhat flexible so they can stretch to odd shapes. Weave in rem ends. Block, pinning medallions into polygonal shapes. **Outer edge:** Work 3 rnds of single crochet around outer edge of afghan, working 2 single crochet at each medallion corner to encourage them to rem pointed. Change color with each rnd. Block again.

Amy Tyler is clearly mad for Michigan. Michigan's lakes, trees, fruit, sand, skies, and rocks often find their way into her spinning, knitting, and writing.

RESOURCES

Mueller, Bruce, and William H. Wilde. *The Complete Guide to Petoskey Stones*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2004, and Traverse City, Michigan: Petoskey Publishing, 2004.

Zimmermann, Elizabeth. *Knitter's Almanac*. New York: Dover, 1981.

Stonehedge Fiber Mill, East Jordan, Michigan, www.stonehedgefibermill.com

