



Cascade 128 Superwash
Stacy the Owl



Designed by Betty Balcomb

Stacy The Owl

When my Pink Pig arrived at Cascade, I got a very quick e-mail asking if I could fashion an owl version. The request came from Stacy, the lovely lady who sends us notices and newsletters. Before starting the owl I did a rather thorough search on the web for knit and crocheted owls. Then I consulted my husband's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. While Stacy the Owl is not scientifically accurate, I actually relied more on the field guide than on the other yarn creatures. I borrowed elements of several owls, the screech owl for the ear tufts, the saw-whet owl for color, and the burrowing owl for the eyes.

Materials: 1 100 gram skein of Cascade 128 Superwash yarn, Color #1981, brown, 1 100 gram skein of Cascade 128 Superwash yarn, Color #1982, gold, and little bits of Color #821, bright yellow and color #871, white (maybe leftover from making my Penguin?). Size 10 double point needles. Polyfil or other stuffing (see note below on stuffing). Tapestry needle.

Gauge: 4 stitches per inch. NOTE: Gauge is not real critical with a stuffed owl but be sure that your fabric is tight enough that the stuffing won't leak through.

DIRECTIONS:

Body: With brown yarn, CO 4 sts. Slide the 4 sts to the right side of the needle, pull yarn behind sts and knit the 4 sts as if to make an I-cord. Slide the sts again but this time K1, M1, K1, start new needle M1, K1, M1, start new needle and K1, M1(8 sts). Join in the round and K 1 row even. On next round, [K2, M1] 8 times (16 Sts). K 1 row even. On next round, [K3, M1] 8 times (24 Sts). Continue in this manner with 1 more st between incs, adding 8 sts every other round until there are 56 sts in all. On final even row, inc 4 sts evenly spaced. Purl 1 round. If you prefer, there are enough sts to go to a 16" circular needle for a while, but I didn't bother since the need to return to the dpns comes so soon. Work even on the 60 sts until body measures about 5" from purl ridge.

Stuffing: Before starting decs, stuff the body. First pull all tails inside and secure them. Go ahead and tie knots, this is the exception to the never tie knots rule. I stuff it about 1/2-way with polyfil and then scrunch up a couple of plastic grocery bags and embed them in the middle of the stuffing. The plastic bags provide a great crinkly noise when the animal is squeezed and I feel so virtuous for reusing some plastic bags that would live in a landfill for all eternity.

Head: Now dec for head as follows: K8, K2tog 6 times, K 2 rounds even, K7, K2tog 6X, K 2 rounds even. Continue in this manner with 1 less st between decs, dec'g 6 sts every 3rd round until there are 18 sts. Work just 1 round even. Add more stuffing as you get close to the end. On next row, dec to 12 sts and then on the very next round dec to 6 sts. Cut yarn leaving about a 9" tail. Thread yarn onto tapestry needle, pass it through the 6 sts and pull tail tight.

For all the remaining parts, as you cast on leave nice long tails for sewing parts in place. After sewing in place, run any tails inside the animal. There are several places where you are directed to make an I-cord. If you do not know how to do this, there are good directions at my Hearts and Flowers Hat under Heritage yarn.

Tummy: With gold yarn, CO 6 sts. K 1 row. Turn and P1, M1, P4, M1, P1. Turn and K1, M1, K6, M1, K1. Continue inc'g 2 sts on every row at edges until there are 22 sts. Work 7 rows even and then dec 2 sts on every row at each edge. On knit rows work an SSK at the beg. of the row and a K2tog at the end. On purl rows, P2tog at the beginning and P2tog thru the back loops at the end. When 6 sts remain, bind off and sew the tummy in place flat against the body with the rows running crosswise. Encourage the tummy to be as much of an oval as you can, but it can be a little wonky, nature isn't perfectly symmetrical.

Eyes: With white yarn, CO 4 sts, slide the 4 sts to the right side of the needle, pull yarn behind sts and knit the 4 sts as if to make an I-cord. Slide the sts again but this time K1, M1, K1, start new needle M1, K1, M1, start new needle and K1, M1(8 sts). Join in the round and K 1 row even. Then double the sts again. Knit 1 more even row. You will cast off on the next round but as you cast off, M1 after every 2 sts so you are casting off 24 not 16 sts. Sew white eye rings to face about an inch above the tummy and about an inch apart. With brown yarn, CO 2 sts. K1, M1, K1, turn K3, turn K1, M1, K1, M1, K1, turn K1, K2tog, K2tog, turn, Slip 1, K2tog, pssso. Form brown eye centers into a bobble-like blob and sew securely to center of eye whites.

Face Plate: With gold yarn, CO 3 sts. Make a garter st triangle, inc'g 1 st. at each edge on right side rows until there are 21 sts. As you bind off, make a 4-st bobble at each end. Sew the face plate at the top of the head so it overlaps the eyes as shown in picture. Leave the bobbles/ear tufts sort of free-standing.

Beak: With yellow yarn, CO 7 sts, It's a bit of a stretch but I was able to do the beak as an I-cord. I knit 5 rows even and then dec'd to 5 and then to 3 and then closed it off. Sew beak to head at base of face plate.

Feet: With yellow yarn, CO 6 sts. Work an I-cord for 6 rows. Now you will make 3 separate 3-st I-cord talons. With the first 2 sts, K1, M1, K1, work the 3-st I-cord for 4 rows, Close off and run tail back through talon and ankle. Make 2 more talons with the remaining sts. Sew feet to body just above the purl ridge centered under the tummy about 2" apart.

Wings: With brown yarn, CO 18 sts. Divide onto dpns and work in the round for 2'. On the next 7 rows, begin the row with a K2tog and end with an SSK. Slide sts over from middle needle as needed. When 4 sts remain, cut yarn, put yarn on tapestry needle, run needle thru the 4 sts and pull tight. Sew wings to body about even with top of tummy and about 1" away from side edges of tummy.

Tail. I chose not to bother with a tail but if you want one, I recommend making it more or less like the feet but with brown yarn, starting with 4 sts and sew it on with the pointy end out.