

Optical Delusion



Pattern Name: Optical Delusion: Conflagration by Kim McBrien

Source: Indigodragonfly: Smart-Ass Knitters/World Domination 5

Yarn: unknown fingering (see details below), 113 g (4 g left over)

Gauge: (I used 3.25 mm)

Tags: short-rows

Notes

I used pattern version 2.3, which alternated white and gray columns five stitches wide. New versions have eliminated the color-coded columns, so the following notes won't make much sense. :-)

Chart Issues

On chart 2A, row 100 should end “K3, sl 1, CO 2” instead of “K2, sl 1, CO 3” (at the right end of the chart row). Note that on row 67, after we complete the BOs, there will be four stitches, not three, in the gray column (between markers C and D, see below). That means there should be four existing stitches on row 100. The total number of symbols is correct for the needed stitch count, but you only need to CO 2 to get there.

On chart 3A row 51, the two leftmost symbols should have a gray background, as should the leftmost symbol on row 52.

~~On chart 2B, I think the rightmost symbol on row 144 should not be there, as there is no symbol above it on row 1 of chart 3A. Other knitters have noted issues in the same spot, but as the designer says, the pattern is very forgiving and we just need to make sure we have the correct number of stitches at the beginning of each chart. Now that I've gotten there in the knitting, I think the real problem is that there should be one more BO at the beginning of row 1 on chart 3A. Looking back to chart 2A row 100, there's a single white CO symbol at the right end of the row, with a stitch symbol above it. That's the position of marker C (see below), and that same stitch is present on chart 2B rows 124 and 125, so its presence on row 144 must also be right, which means row 1 on chart 3A needs another BO. UPDATE: That extra BO is needed only when changing from chart 2 to chart 3A. When restarting 3A after working 3B, that extra BO is NOT needed.~~

~~At the end of chart 3A row 1, the sl 1 needs to be moved two spots to the right, as the leftmost symbol in the white column, just before marker O (see below). The the next two symbols to its left should both be CO, for a total of twenty-two stitches cast on at the end of the row.~~

Transitioning to Chart 3A

Note that beginning of chart 3A matches the end of chart 3B perfectly, but not the end of chart 2B.

When Completing Chart 2B

1. Add a row "145": "BO 16, k to last st, sl last stitch, CO 22." You should have 67 sts.
2. Skip row 1 on chart 3A, and start with row 2.

When Completing Chart 3B (i.e., starting the next pattern repeat)

1. Start with row 1 in the usual way.

Pattern Nit

On page 2, the written instructions for working charts 2A and 2B should end with row 144, not 145 (although adding a "fake" row 145 as described above may be useful).

Project Yarn

The yarn is something I got in a Christmas swap a bazillion years ago (1998-ish?). I don't still have the band, but I think it was from Cherry Tree Hill. It's a two-ply with pretty tightly twisted plies; it's very spongy and has a lot of loft. I think it's pure regular (not superwash) wool, but I'm not going to do any tests to verify the fiber content, as I'll always hand-wash it because it will need blocking.

- UPDATE: It spit-splices, so it's definitely not superwash and probably doesn't have any nylon, so if it is CTH, it's not Sockittome, for example.

Originally used the yarn held double for a scarf, but somehow stitches got cut at the edge, so it's been sitting around frogged forever. I decided to do a yarn purge (very liberating!), and as I was unplying and rewinding, I realized it had the color lengths that OD is written for. Yay!

It's dark electric blue, purple, burgundy, and medium-dark magenta.



Color closeup

Don't Count Past 3!

I recharted the entire project, because I wanted to see if the gray and white columns of groups of five stitches matched up between the various charts. Most of the project notes talk about having to count how many stitches are worked after each turn, which just seems very slow to me, not to mention making it harder to do while talking, watching a movie, etc.

I made a multi-column, multi-row table in my word processor, and put in each cell the stitch symbols using my own knitting font. Row numbers on both edges, since I knew the chart would be pretty wide (usually I just do public-side row numbers). I put a gray highlight on every other column to match the pattern chart, and if a symbol column didn't have five symbols, I used the Left or Right Justify buttons to move the symbols to the proper side (instead of using spaces, because then I can select a chart's stitch cells and my WP will automatically tell me how many symbols--and thus stitches--are in each chart).

Now I could see that there were twenty-one groups of stitches, so I will put markers between each group of five, letters A through T. Then for each row I only need to see from the chart that I "Work

three stitches past J, wrap and turn” or “Wrap the last stitch before E, and turn.” Counting to three is about as much as I want to do!

In essence, I do all my counting just once and ahead of time. (I did essentially the same thing on Dreambird.)

- UPDATE: This works very quick and easy, as expected.
- BONUS ADVANTAGE: Binding off only part of a row is always tricky to me (in fact, I count off one extra stitch and put a marker there to know when to stop). With markers every five stitches, then I just need to BO until I have the correct number of stitches remaining on my source needle (the left one) before the marker that follows them. So on chart 1 row 19, I BO until there are three stitches left before F. Easy peasy!
- UPDATE: You have to reset the markers as you work row 1 when you restart chart 3A on subsequent repeats. See the bold para below.

As I cast on at either end of the existing stitches, I’ll add the appropriate letter marker every five stitches.

Note that having the markers run from A to T means I always know if I’m looking at the public or private side.

For those who want to do the same marker trick, here are the letters to put between the columns below the first row of each chart (the letters are listed from left to right):

Chart 1: G F E D C

Chart 2A: N M L K J I H G F E D C B A

Chart 2B: K J I

Chart 3A: S R Q P O N M L K J I H G F E D

Chart 3B: Q P O N M L K J I H G F E

Chart 4: S R Q P O N M L K J I H

*** Note that on chart 2A row 67, the first letter goes five symbols from the left side, where the white column touches the gray column, NOT all the way at the left end of the row (because you couldn’t put a marker after the leftmost stitch on the needle--it would fall off). Similarly, the final marker goes five stitches from the right end of the chart row 67, not all the way at the right end of the row.

- **UPDATE: If you do the marker setup every five stitches, then note that the marker locations at the end of chart 3B are NOT the same as at the beginning of chart 3A for each pattern repeat. On chart 3B row 100, the rightmost marker is H (with five stitches before it), BUT when you turn back to row 1 of chart 3A, the rightmost marker is D (with five stitches before it).** (This issue doesn’t arise if you simply count stitches after each turn. That’s because chart 3B row 100 ends with sixty-two stitches with the last five being gray, and when you turn, you have sixty-two stitches with the first five being gray, matching chart 3A row 1.)

So, when switching from 3B to 3A,

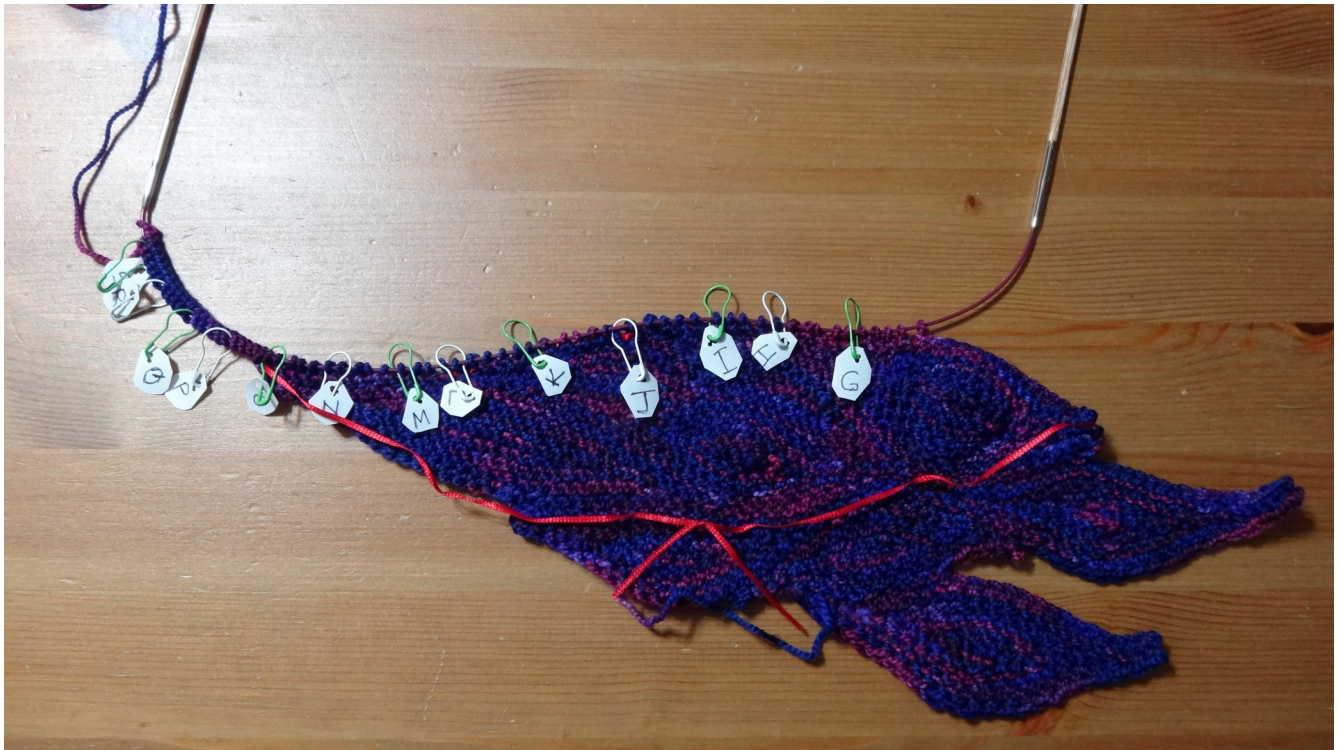
- put aside temporarily markers H, I, and J while BO

- stop BO when 4 sts remain before K
- change markers from K...S to G...O as you knit across, and add P...S as you CO

August 19, 2018

Have completed through row 1 of chart 3A for the first time. I did put a lifeline in, just in case I screwed up the corrections to the pattern on this row.

Had 102.0 g left, which means I worked 2153 sts (25 CO sts, 861 sts of chart 1, 698 sts of chart 2A, and 569 sts of chart 2B) with about 14.0 g of yarn. So $2153/14.0$ equals 154 sts/g. Round down to 150 sts/g for some margin means I need to leave 5.7, make it 6.0 g for chart 4.



Beginning of chart 3A

August 20, 2018

Finished first repeat of charts 3A and 3B in right at two hours with 92.5 g of yarn left, so I used 9.5 g for the repeat. Since I have to leave 6.0 g to finish, I can do another

$$(92.5 - 6.0)/9.5 = 9 \text{ rpt}$$

for a total of ten repeats. A bit shorter than I'd like maybe, but I haven't a clue how many yards the yarn had.

The two charts have 822 and 745 sts, for a total of 1567 sts/rpt. At 9.5 g, I got 165 sts/g, better than the first three charts. I'll keep an eye on usage as I go.

August 22, 2018

How cool would it be to do each short-row area (hereafter SRA) in a different color? I gave away all the yarn from Unplying last weekend, unfortunately, because I couldn't figure out what to do with it.

But it occurs to me that this pattern would be ideal for a stashbuster.

Also, while I usually do W&T short rows for things like shoulder shaping before a 3nbo, it's getting to be really annoying here, especially when a row is only two stitches long! Since the turns happen to occur at the same points when you start long-rowing after the center of each SRA, I think that's what making the fabric hump up a bit at the turns. It will look fine when it's all done, because the whole thing will be bumpy.

But I wonder if we could eliminate both the wrapping and the bumps by working the turns in the first half of each SRA one stitch later. In the second half of each SRA, keep them in the same spot. So in chart 3A, for example,

- on row 2, actually work a white stitch before turning instead of turning after the last gray stitch
- on row 3, work three (instead of two) white stitches before turning
- on row 4 work a gray stitch before turning
- on row 5, work four gray stitches before turning
- on row 6, work two white stitches before turning

and so forth through row 10. On rows 11 through 18, turn where indicated. And do it all without wrapping any of the stitches at the turns. I **think** garter stitch might hide the holes sufficiently or at least that they'll be fairly small to not be bothersome (YMMV). But even if they were somewhat noticeable, they'd still be occurring regularly, which in itself makes a pattern. Yes, no, maybe???

Saving Yarn

I just realized that it would not only save time to not wrap, it would also save **yarn**. Let's assume a wrap uses the same amount of yarn as an actual stitch.

- Charts 1, 2A, 2B, and 4 have 3003 sts and 187 wraps, so 3190 "sts" total, with wraps using 5.9 percent.
- Charts 3A and 3B have 1566 sts and 94 wraps, so 1660 "sts" total, with wraps using 5.7 percent.

Since I need 1566 sts to work an unwrapped repeat of 3A/3B, then how many repeats do I need to work doing the whole thing without wraps so I can get an extra repeat?

$$187 + 94x = 1566$$
$$x = 14.7$$

So if I work 15 pattern repeats and omit all the wraps, I actually get to work a sixteenth repeat.

If I only work 10 pattern repeats and omit all the wraps, I save 1127 "sts" (187 + 10 times 94), which is more than enough to work chart 4. Again, these numbers assume a wrap uses the same amount of yarn as a stitch. We save over 5.5 percent of the yarn and tons of time and effort too!

August 23, 2018

I'm doing my lifelines after I BO on chart 3A row 1 but before I do the CO.

Finished repeat 2 last night, which used 10.0 g, so I have 82.5 g left.

Finished repeat 3, 73.0 g left. Since I need 6.0 g for the final chart, I should be able to work six more repeats.

August 24, 2018

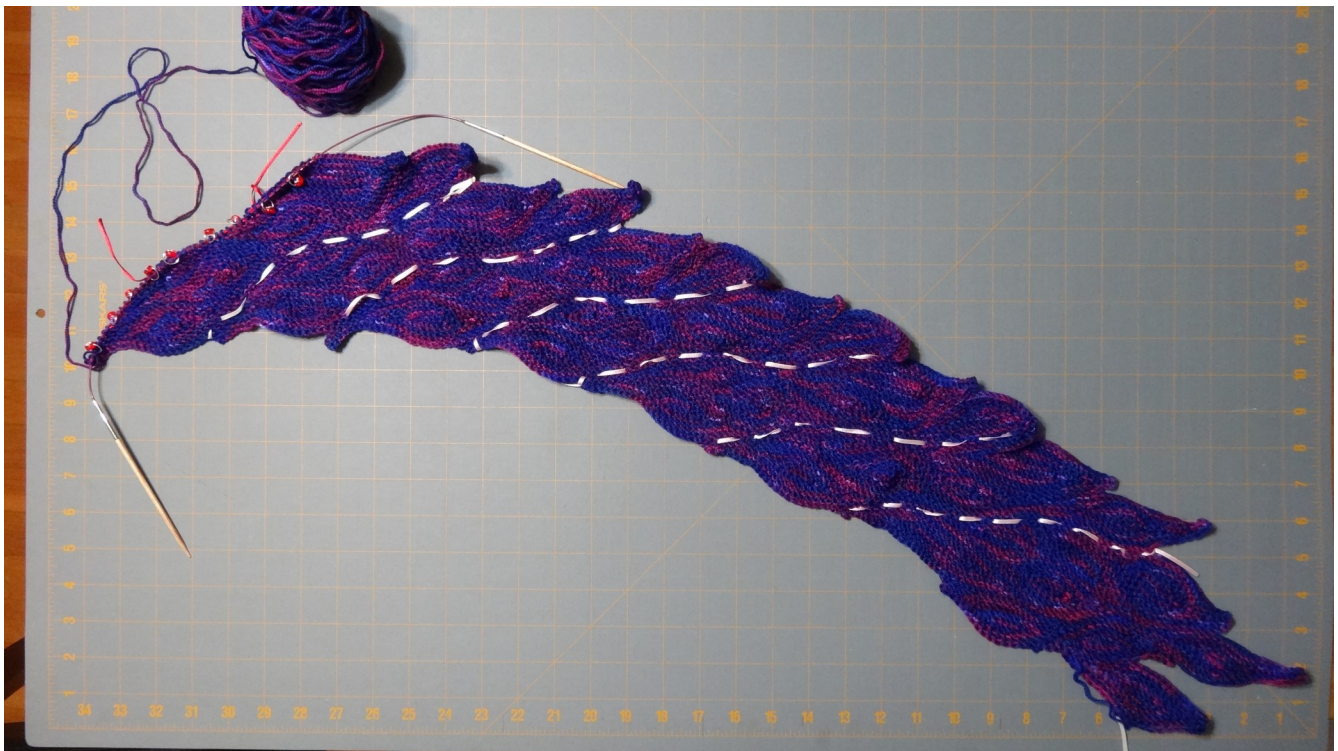
I made myself some better [alphabet stitch markers](#), as my original long, dangly but cheap ones kept getting in the way. The new ones ROCK!

August 25, 2018

Managed to cast on 3 extra stitches on row 1 of the fourth repeat, so just bound them off when I got back to them on row 20. Yes, there's a little nub on the neck edge, but it will be hidden in wearing. :-P

August 28, 2018

Completed repeats 6 and 7 today, have 36.0 g of yarn left. I'm considering working 10 repeats, then either working less of chart 4 to finish or possibly switching down one needle size, just to help with the yarn chicken.



Beginning repeat 7

August 29, 2018

I'm beginning to think the yarn is doomed. In addition to the actual cuts that made me frog the original project, there are nicks where less than one of the plies is holding the yarn together. Of course, I don't notice them until I'm about to form a stitch with that bit, so then I have to tink back to have enough to spit-splice.

I am about to splice in the final ball, though. I'm wondering if I could save a bit of yarn by only wrapping the **second** time in a given turn location. It seems unnecessary to wrap both times when turning at the same spot, but I can't visualize it and don't want to take the time to try it to see what happens.

September 3, 2018

I actually finished knitting last Thursday. It took 113.0 g of the mystery yarn with 4.0 g left after all the spit-splicing.

The main width is 5", and it's 7" wide from outer point to neck edge.

Neck edge is 59" from point to point.