

EIDER DUCK

KNITTING PATTERN



hekla.cwist

Hello! :)

This little eider duck was created as a limited edition pattern for **Knit for Wildlife** – a charity project using knitting to help tell the stories of wild species that deserve more attention.

This edition of the project is dedicated to the **common eider duck**, a sea duck connected with the Vega Archipelago in Norway, where people and eiders have lived alongside each other for generations. Around Vega, eiders are part of a very old and gentle tradition: people build small nesting shelters for them, protect them during the breeding season, and collect the soft eiderdown only after the birds have safely left the nests.

Sadly, eider ducks in this area are now in serious decline. Recent surveys around Vega showed a dramatic drop in numbers compared with the 1980s, linked to changing ocean conditions and reduced food availability.

So this tiny knitted eider is a small bird with a big story behind it.

It is still one of my **#nopressurepatterns** – quick, simple, and happy to be made from whatever yarn you already have at home. No stress, no perfect gauge, no complicated steps – just a few stitches here and there, and suddenly you have a little sea duck friend.

It's a lovely small project for one evening, a keychain, a bag charm, a tiny handmade gift, or a quiet little reminder that even small handmade things can carry important stories.

My goal is to leave a little space for creativity in my patterns, so feel free to play around.

Change the colors, make the head darker or lighter, add a tiny embroidered wing, sleepy eyes, bead eyes, a dramatic side-eye, a little scarf, or anything else your eider seems to need. :)

I would love to see your eider ducks with their own characters.

Materials:

For a classic common eider-inspired look, you may use:

- light or off-white yarn for the body
- black, dark brown, or charcoal yarn for the head/chest details
- a little pale green, soft grey, or muted yellow yarn for the beak detail, if you want to suggest the eider's face markings
- a small amount of black yarn for eyes, or other eye materials
- a little orange yarn for the beak and legs
- DPNs or circular needles for magic loop
- stuffing — yarn scraps work perfectly too
- tapestry needle

- optional: keyring or lobster clasp

But please remember: this is a no-pressure bird.

Your eider does not need to be scientifically perfect. It can be soft, strange, sleepy, wonky, dramatic, elegant, or completely unbothered.

Abbreviations:

- **k** – knit
- **p** – purl
- **m1l** – make one left
- **m1r** – make one right
- **k2tog** – knit two together
- **SSK** – slip, slip, knit
- (...) * - repeat the sequence twice, once on each needle
- (k2tog)*3/4 – repeat the decrease three/four times
- **W+T** – wrap and turn
 - **on the right side:** knit the required number of stitches, bring yarn to the front, slip the next stitch purlwise, bring yarn to the back, return the slipped stitch to the left needle and turn your work. You now have the wrong side facing you with the yarn in front, ready to purl the next row.
 - **on the wrong side:** purl the required number of stitches, bring yarn to the back, slip the next stitch purlwise, bring yarn to the front, return the slipped stitch to the left needle and turn your work. You now have the right side facing you with the yarn in the back, ready to knit the next row.

More info:

- worked in the round
- use needles slightly smaller than recommended on the yarn label
- body is closed with 3-needle bind off
- there is a little **short row section** – if you're not familiar or not comfortable with the W+T method then you can just skip the round 9 it will also look good!

BODY (start with black/charcoal):

CO 10 sts using Judy's Magic Cast On (5 sts on each needle)

1: k10 (10)

2: (k1, m1l, k3, m1r, k1)*2 (14)

3: k14 (14)

4: (k1, m1l, k5, m1r, k1)*2 (18)

Change the color to white

5: k18 (18)

6: (k1, m1l, k7, m1r, k1)*2 (22)

7: k22 (22)

8: k1, m1l, k20, m1r, k1 (24)

9: SHORT ROW

- k3, W+T
- p6, W+T
- k3

10. k24 (24)

11. k1, m1l, k8, k2tog, k2, SSK, k8, m1r, k1 (24)

12. k24

Now you'll close the body, creating the back and tail part.

For this bind off 14 stitches (7 from each needle) using the 3-needle bind off method.

You should now have 5 stitches on each needle and one extra stitch. I recommend placing that extra stitch on the back needle to avoid creating a hole. You will knit the last two stitches together in the next round.

HEAD – continue in white

13. k9, k2tog (10)

14. k10 (10)

15. k1, m1l, k8, m1r, k1 (12)

16. k12 (12)

17. k1, m1l, k10, m1r, k1 (14)

18. k14 (14)

Change color to black/charcoal

19. k14 (14)

20. k14 (14)

Stuff the duck now, so the shaping will be easy. Remember to push the back/tail part a bit up and push the chest forward – you have created the little chest bump there before by increasing and decreasing stitches.

21. (k2tog)*3, k2, (k2tog)*3 (8)

22. (k2tog)*4 (4)

Add a little more stuffing to the top of the head if needed.

Cut yarn leaving a 15 cm tail. Thread through remaining stitches and pull tight to close.

Now insert the needle into the middle of the head and pull through the bird. Tighten gently to flatten the head a little. Secure the yarn.

Eyes:

Embroider small French knots, use beads, or create V-shaped sleepy eyes.

Beak + legs:

Take the yarn in beak color and pick up two V-stitches in the center of the neck, 2 rows below the head color change (see the picture for reference). Leaving the 15 cm tail, join the yarn. Make 3 rows of 4 stitch i-cord and bind off. Cut the yarn leaving 15 cm tail.

Pull both tails, one by one, through the bird and bring them out at the bottom in the leg position. Trim the legs evenly.

Embroidery:

Now it's the time to embroider the remaining dark parts. See the photo and/or the chart for placement and pattern.

Final touches:

Attach a keyring or lobster clasp if you'd like to turn it into a charm or keychain.

You can also add a few beans inside for extra weight.





Done!

Your little eider duck is ready.

It may now guard your keys, decorate your bag, sit quietly on a shelf, keep you company at your desk, or become a tiny worry buddy to squeeze when life feels overwhelming.

This limited edition pattern was created for **#knitforwildlife** to help raise awareness about the common eider duck and the fragile coastal world around the Vega Archipelago.

If you make one, I'd love to see it, so please tag me: **@hekla.cwist** and **#nopressurepatterns** on Instagram.

You can also use the project hashtag: **#knitforwildlife**

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Thank you for choosing my pattern and for helping this little sea duck story travel a bit further. :)