SNAKESKIN WRISTWARMERS

These wristwarmers started off with the desire to knit something with a pattern that looked like scales. Flicking through a stitch directory I came across a mock gull stitch – this was the shape I wanted, but the directory only showed it arranged in columns. It didn't overlap in the way scales actually do.

Some trial and error produced a mock gull stitch that overlapped like scales. I used this design to knit a pair of wristwarmers. I knit this first pair flat and sewed the edges together to create a tube.

But I hate sewing and like to avoid it when knitting, so I wrote a second version of the pattern. This version is knit in the round. Because you don't need to alternate between knit rows and purl rows to create stockinette when knitting in the round the second version is actually quite different to the first.

Both patterns have written instructions. The instructions can be complex so I recommend that you read through the pattern before casting on, use stitch markers to help you count pattern repeats and always mark which row you're currently working on to avoid confusion.

The circular version of the pattern was updated in 2016 and all updated text is coloured pink.

Thanks to Lucy Colegate for helping to photograph and model the finished product!

A NOTE ON SIZING

The size is changed by changing the gauge. I've provided instructions for two different sizes, but if neither suits you simple substitute the yarn and/or the needles.

For **SMALL** (7 inch knuckles) use:
Yarn: James C. Brett Supreme Baby 4 Ply (shade SY7)
Needles: 2mm straight needles
Gauge: 9 sts x 12 rows in stockinette = 1 inch

For **LARGE** (9 inch knuckles) use:
Yarn: King Cole Big Value DK (shade 463)
Needles: 3mm double-pointed needles
Gauge: 6sts x 8 rows in stockinette = 1 inch

My pictures show a small flat version in green and a large circular version in purple.

If messing around with gauge isn't your thing and you wish to resize the pattern mathematically, the mock gull stitch is worked over 8 stitches and the 2x2 rib is worked over 4 stitches. If you want to do the circular version your cast-on must be divisible by both 8 and 4. If you want to do the flat version your cast-on must be divisible by both 8 and 4, but immediately after the 2x2 rib you will increase your total number of stitches by 2. This way you'll have a border down the sides making it easier to sew up afterwards.

ABBREVIATIONS
2x2 rib – knit two stitches and then purl two stitches to end of row/round
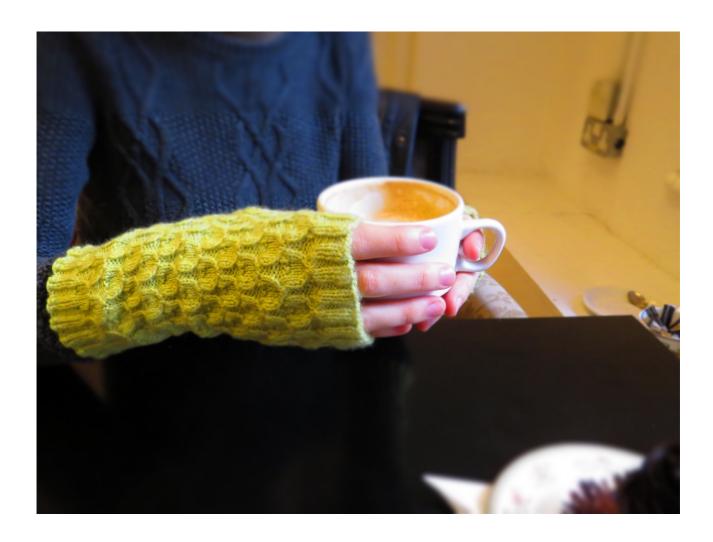k – knit
p – purl
m1 – make one (I usually pick up the strand between two stitches from the front and place on the left needle tip, knit through the back of the loop)
sl1 – slip one
sl2 – slip two
tog – together
tbl – through back of loop

FLAT VERSION

Using the long-tail cast-on, cast-on 64 sts
Knit 10 rows of 2x2 rib
k1, m1, k62, m1, k1 (66 sts)

Row 1: k2, * p6, k2, (rep from * to end)
Row 2: p2, * k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at the back, k2, p2, (rep from * to end)
Row 3: k2, * p2, sl2 with yarn at the front, p2, k2, (rep from * to end)
Row 4: p2, * sl2, hold next st at front of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, k held st, k2, hold next st at front of work, k2, k held st, p2, (rep from * to end)
Row 5: rep row 1
Row 6: p2, * k6, p2, (rep from * to end)
Row 7: rep row 1
Row 8: rep row 6

Row 9: p2, * p2, k2, p4, (rep from * to end)
Row 10: k1, sl1 st purlwise with yarn at the back, * k2, p2, k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at the back, (rep from * to last 8 sts), k2, p2, k2, sl1 purlwise with yarn at the back, k1
Row 11: p1, sl1 with yarn at the front, * p2, k2, p2, sl 2 with yarn at the front, (rep from * to last 8 sts), p2, k2, p2, sl1 with yarn at the front, p1
Row 12: k1, * hold next st at front of work, k2, k held st, p2, sl2, hold next st at front of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, k held st, k2, (rep from * to last 9 sts), hold next st at front of work, k2, k held st, p2, sl2, hold next st at front of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, k held st, k3
Row 13: rep row 9
Row 14: k2, * k2, p2, k4, (rep from * to end)
Row 15: rep row 9
Row 16: rep row 14

Repeat these 16 rows five more times

p1, p2togtbl, p62, p2tog, p1 (64 sts)
Knit 10 rows of 2x2 rib
Bind-off using a stretchy bind-off method

Sew the sides together leaving a space for the thumb. Repeat for second wrist-warmer.

CIRCULAR VERSION

Using the long-tail cast-on, cast-on 64 sts
Join and begin working in the round, marking round beginning
Knit 8 rows of 2x2 rib

Round 1: p2, k6 (rep to end)
Round 2 – 3: p2, k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at the back, k2 (rep to end)
Round 4: p2, sl2, hold next st at front of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, k held st, k2, hold next st at front of work, k2, k held st (rep to end)
Rounds 5 – 8: p2, k6 (rep to end)

Round 9: k4, p2, k2 (rep to end)
Round 10: sl2, k2, p2, k2 (rep to end)
Round 11: sl2, k2, p2, k2 (rep to last 2 sts) sl2
Round 12: hold next st at front of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, k held st, k2, [round marker should be between the 2 stitches you have just knitted] hold next st at front of work, k2, k held st, p2 (rep to last 2 sts) k2 [round marker should appear after these two sts]
Rounds 13 – 16: k4, p2, k2 (rep to end)

This next section (rows 17 to 32) is knitted flat in order to leave a space for the thumb

Row 17: p2, * k6, p2 (rep from * to last 6 sts) k6, slip round marker, p1, turn work
Row 18: k1, slip round marker, * p2, sl2 with yarn at front, p2, k2 (rep from * to last 7 sts) p2, sl2 with yarn at front, p2, k1, turn
Row 19: p1, * k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at back, k2, p2 (rep from * to last 7 sts) k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at back, k2, slip round marker, p1, turn
Row 20: k1, slip round marker, * sl2, hold next st at back of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, p held st, p2, hold next st at back of work, p2, p held st, k2 (rep from * to last 7 sts) sl2, hold next st at back of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, p held st, p2, hold next st at back of work, p2, p held st, k1
Row 21: p1, * k6, p2 (rep from * to last 7 sts) k6, slip round marker, p1, turn

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Row 22: k1, slip round marker, * p6, k2 (rep from * to last 7 sts) p6, k1, turn
Row 23: rep row 21
Row 24: rep row 22

Row 25: k3, * p2, k6 (rep from * to last 5 sts) p2, k2, slip round marker, k1
Row 26: sl1, slip round marker, p2, k2, * p2, sl2 with yarn at front, p2, k2 (rep from * to last 3 sts) p2, sl1
Row 27: sl1, k2, * p2, k2, sl2 purlwise with yarn at the back, k2 (rep from * to last 5 sts) p2, k2, sl1
Row 28: hold first st at back of work, p1, move round marker to here, p1, p held st, k2, * sl2, hold next st at back of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, p held st, p2, hold next st at back of work, p2, p held st, k2 (rep from * to last 3 sts) sl2, hold next st at back of work and move slipped sts back to left needle, p held st, p2
Row 29: rep row 25
Row 30: p1, slip round marker, p2, k2, * p6, k2 (rep from * to last 3 sts) p3
Row 31: rep row 25, now rejoin the work so you are knitting in the round again
Row 32: k3, * p2, k6 (rep from * seven times) p2, k2 [*your round marker should be here, reposition it if not*]

Repeat rounds 1 to 16 two more times

Knit 8 rows of 2x2 rib
Bind-off using a stretchy bind-off method

Repeat for second wristwarmer.