

FLOCKS



ABOUT FLOCKS

FLOCKS is the brainchild of Christien Meindertsma (1980), she lives and works in Rotterdam. Together with a knitter, a graphic designer, spinners, farmers and felters from all over the world she makes the products for FLOCKS, a knitwear brand in the broadest sense of the word.

FELTED YARNS FROM KYRGYZSTAN

“On my quest to find new and interesting ways to experiment with wool and ways of making yarn, I discovered Kyrgyzstan. Landlocked and mountainous, it borders Kazakhstan to the north, Uzbekistan to the west, Tajikistan to the southwest and China to the southeast. Wool is one of the mayor commodities and it has a very old and rich felting culture, which is still very much alive today. It was here that I found craftsmen to work with on making a high quality felted yarn; during my last visit we developed one perfect for knitting a pouf.”



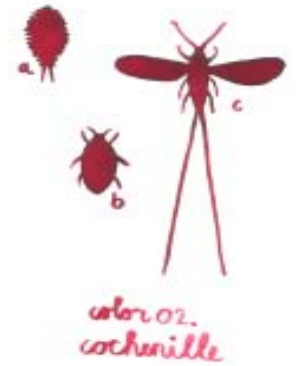
NEW COLORS

Next to **black, brown, gray and white**, the colors of the sheep themselves, the Urchin poufs have 5 colors; Indigo-Blue, Common Madder-Red, Cochenille-Pink, Weld Yellow and Weld&Indigo-Green. Color is added as an extra ingredient to the white wool of crossbred sheep from New Zealand.

Blue comes from the true indigo plant; *Indigofera Tinctoria*. The dye is obtained from the processing of the plant's leaves. They are soaked in water and fermented in order to convert the glycoside indican naturally present in the plant to the blue dye indigotin. This plant grows in India and it takes 84 to color a small pouf blue.

Common Madder; *Rubia Tinctorium* is used to color the wool **red**. It has been used since ancient times as a vegetable red dye for leather, wool, cotton and silk. For dye production, the roots are harvested in the first year. This plant grows in Zeeland (a Dutch province). It takes 49 roots to color a small pouf red.

The **pink** originates from Cochenille lice; *Dactylopus coccus*. In the ancient world of the Aztecs, carmine was the homage of kings. It was considered more valuable than gold. This bright red colorant required the labor of hundreds of subjects combing the desert in search of the cochineal insect. It is believed that around 1518, Cortez discovered the Aztecs using cochineal.



To the Spaniards, it was an amazing colorant and considerably stronger than other dyes used in Europe. The Spanish government turned it into a lucrative export. Europeans were never told of its insect origin. This insect *Dactylopus coccus costa* attaches itself to specific varieties of cactus (*Opuntia* or *Nopalea*) found in the semi-arid areas of Peru, Bolivia, Chile, The Canary Islands, and Mexico. Collection of the insects is a cottage industry, but development of plantations and deliberate seeding of the cacti is on the increase in all the producing areas. The colorant is extracted from the bodies of female insects just prior to egg-laying time. It takes 1750 lice to color a small pouf.



The **yellow** is made out of the Weld plant; *Reseda Luteola*. Weld is a weedy plant that was used in the past as a source for a brilliant yellow dye. It was originally from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Mediterranean area, but has subsequently spread throughout Europe. Weld is harvested by cutting and binding the flowering stalks together after the flowers are nearly finished blooming.

The whole plant is used and it takes 56 plants to color a small pouf.

Green is a mix of Indigo and Weld

