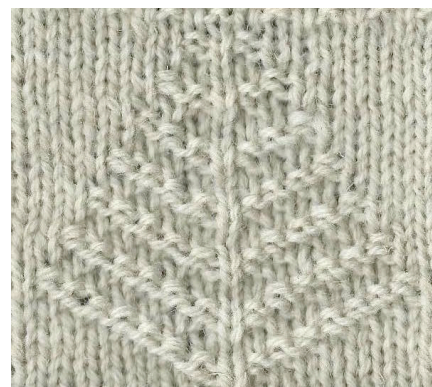
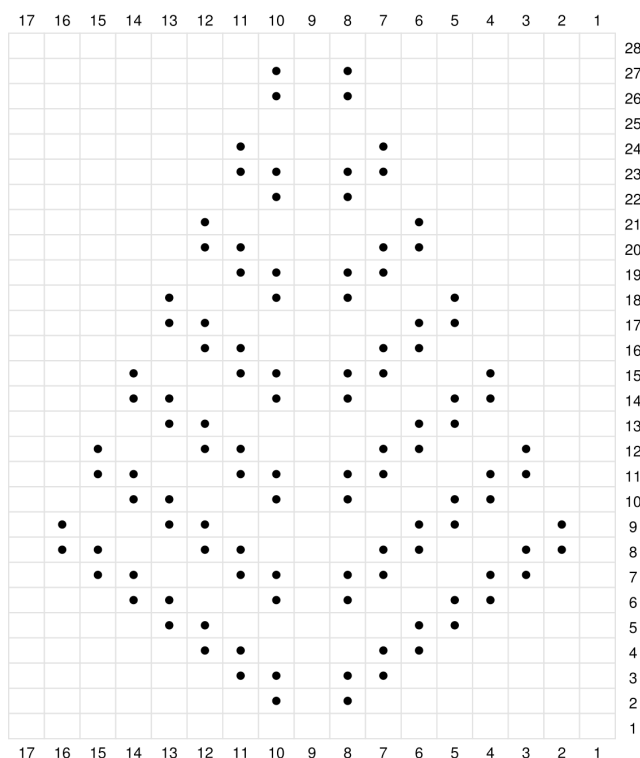


# COMMON ERISKAY GANSEY KNITTING MOTIFS

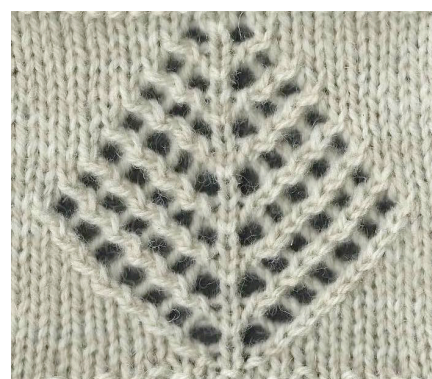
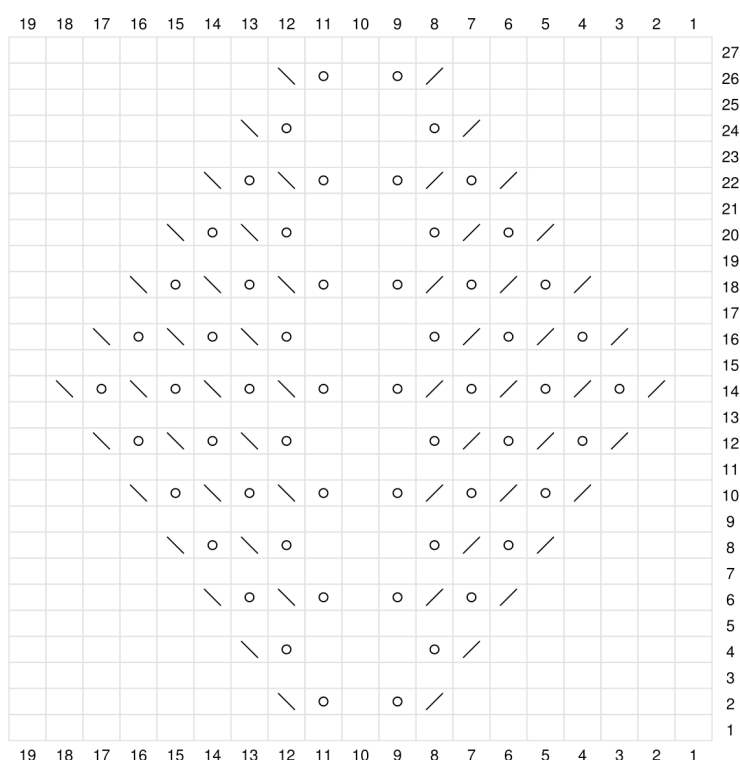
The fisherman's gansey is made throughout the British Isles, but on the small island of Eriskay in the windswept Outer Hebrides this art reached its peak, richly patterned in traditional and symbolic designs. Some of the most common and distinctive Eriskay gansey motifs are charted here.

## Tree of Life (purl)



This motif may derive from old Celtic traditions, in which the Tree of Life is said to symbolise the rites of passage, or stages of life and the importance of family. It may also be a more recent adaptation of the tree or fern leaf motif, often used as an increase / decrease device in yoked stranded colourwork sweaters from Shetland and Iceland.

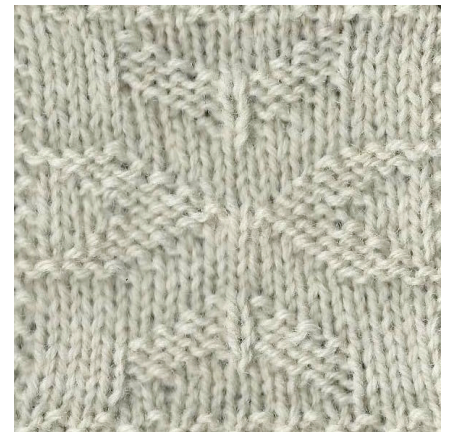
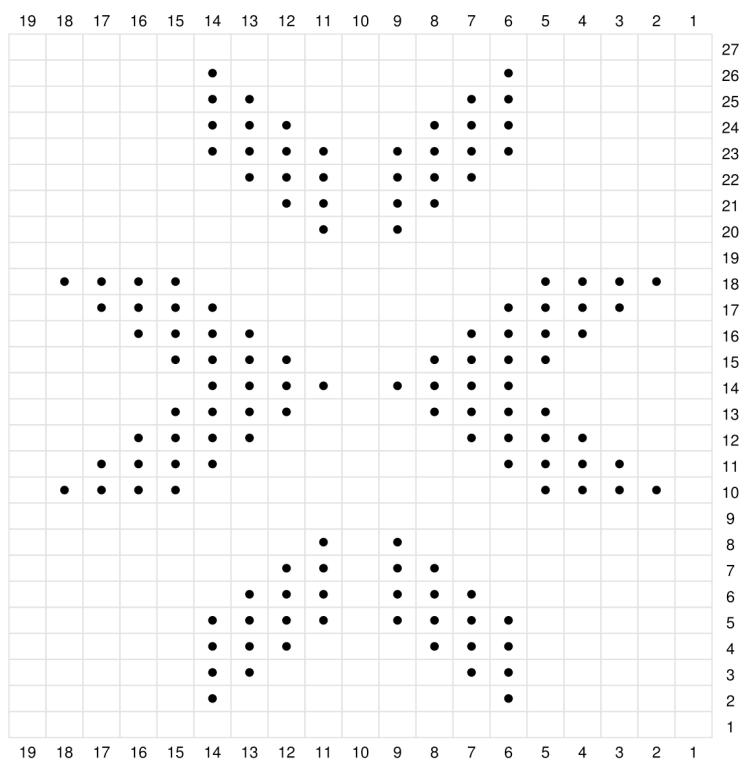
## Tree of Life (lace / openwork)



A lace / openwork version of the motif above, this is worked in a very different fashion. Frequently used on the yoke of an Eriskay gansey, this lends a bold yet feminine touch to a garment. However, this, and other lace / openwork motifs, should be used sparingly in order to preserve the warmth-retaining properties of the garment.

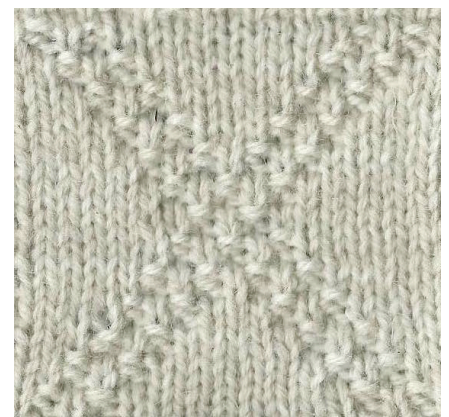
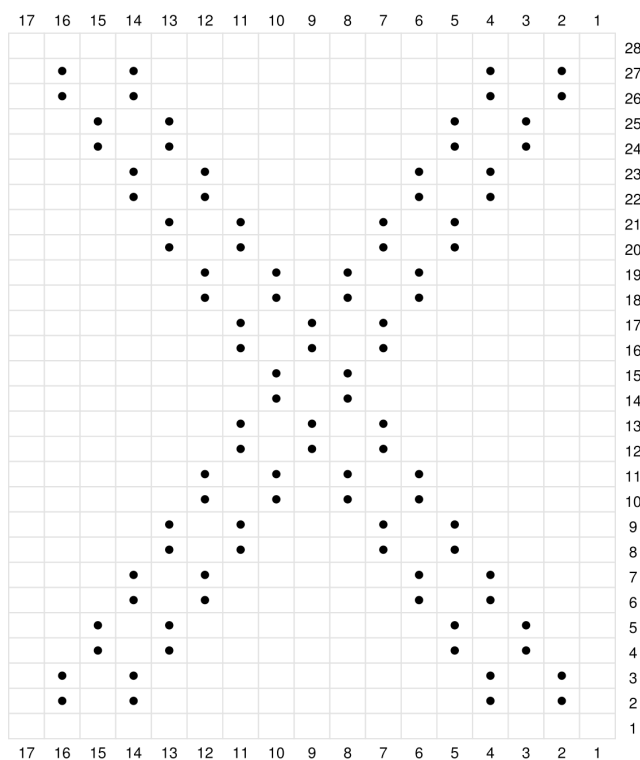
# COMMON ERISKAY GANSEY KNITTING MOTIFS

## Starfish / Nordic Star / Snowflake



Large and making a striking impact, this is a commonly-seen knitting motif, also found in Scandinavian and Shetland knitting patterns. It is possible that Hebridean fisher-lassies / knitters were exposed to and brought this pattern back from their travels when working in Shetland or other east coast ports.

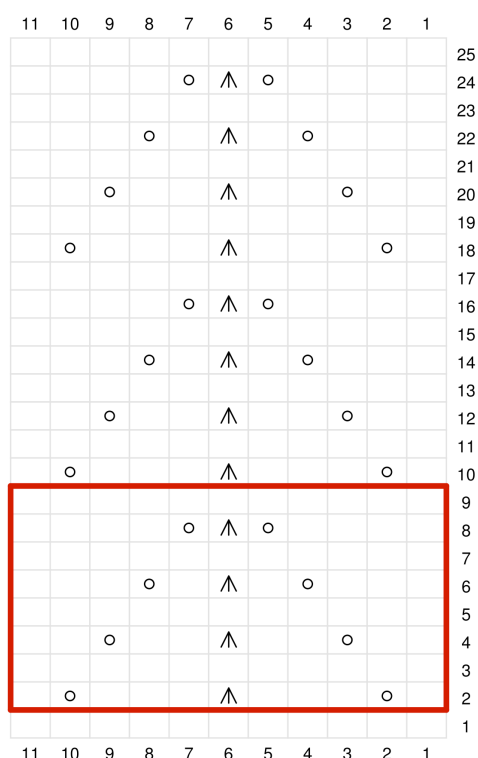
## Starfish



Simpler, but equally impactful, this large motif also represents the starfish. This might be an adaptation of the crosses found within the OXO motifs originating on Fair Isle. Smaller, much simpler versions are also used, often interspersed with diamonds, when the similarity to the OXO patterns is even more evident.

# COMMON ERISKAY GANSEY KNITTING MOTIFS

## Horseshoe (lace / openwork)



An elegant lace/openwork motif, often used on the yoke, and representing the hoof prints of Eriskay ponies on the wet sand of *Coilleag a'Phrionnsa*, Prince's Strand. This can lend a more feminine air to a garment.

### Key:

	Knit
	Purl
	Slip stitch knitwise, twice, knit slipped stitches together
	Knit 2 together
	Yarn over
	Slip 2 together knitwise, knit 1, pass 2 slipped stitches over
	Pattern repeat

**Nb:** all charts to be read as working in the round, i.e. all rows are right side rows worked from right to left of the chart

### More info:

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