--silken braid catnip mouse--------------------

as told by :	12 yards. Noro Silk Garden & 3.75 mm (US 5) double pointed needles (3 needed)
cast on :	3 stitches, leaving a long tail of yarn for sewing up with (a piece that stretches from the tip of your nose to your outstretched hand will do nicely, and the humor of the action prepares you for the knitting ahead!)
row 1 :	(right side) k fe&b of every stitch (6)(number of stitches by end of row)
2 :	k 1, p 4, k 1
3 :	k fe&b, k 2, m 1, k 2, k fe&b (9)
4 :	k 2, p 5, k 2
5 :	k 1, k fe&b, k 2, m 1, k 1, m 1, k 2, k fe&b, k 1 (13)
6 :	k 3, p1, k fe&be&f, p3, k fe&be&f, p 1, k 3 (17)
7 :	k 2, k fe&b, k 1, s 2 tog as if to knit, k 1, pssso, k 1, m 1, k 1, m 1, k 1, s 2 tog as if to knit, k 1, pssso, k 1, k fe&b, k 2 (17 stitches now)
8 :	k 4, p 9, k 4
9 :	k 5, m picot ear, k 5, m picot ear, k 5
10 :	k 4, p 9, k 4 making sure picot ears stay on right side (this is a wrong side row)
11 :	k 3, k fe&b, k 4, k fe&b, k 4, k fe&b, k 3 (20)
12 :	k 5, p 10, k 5
13 :	k 4, k fe&b, c4f, c4f, k 2, k fe&b, k 4 (22)
14 :	k 6, p 10, k 6
15 :	k 5, k fe&b, k 2, c4b, c4b, k fe&b, k 5 (24)
16 :	k 7, p 10, k 7
17 :	k 7, c4f, c4f, k 9
18 :	k 7, p 10, k 7
19 :	k 9, c4b, c4b, k 7
20 -23 :	repeat rows 16-19
24-26 :	repeat rows 16-18
27 :	k 5, k 2 tog, k 2, c4b, c4b, k 2 tog, k 5 (22)
28 :	k 6, p 10, k 6
29 :	k 4, k 2 tog, c4f, c4f, k 2, k 2 tog, k 4 (20)
30 :	k 5, p 10, k 5
31 :	k 1, k 2 tog twice, k 2, c4b, c4b, k 2 tog twice, k 1 (16)
32 :	k 1, k 2 tog , p 2 tog 5 times, k 2 tog, k 1 (9)
33 :	k 1, k 2 tog, s 2 tog as if to knit, k 1, pssso, k 2 tog, k 1 (5)
34 :	k 1, p 3, k 1
35 :	k 2 tog, k 1, k 2 tog (3) *Do not turn! Instead, slide the stitches to the right end of needle and knit them by bringing the working yarn up behind them. Repeating from* will create a tube of knitted stitches, in this case the cutest mouse tail ever. At first you may notice a ladder of yarn across the backside but after a few rows, pulling down on the cord will make the ladder disappear. Make any length you wish & then bind off. Shadow (resident cat) prefers to have a few knots tied in the tail for easy biting which requires additional tail length.
sewing up :	not being a seam expert, I tend to let the seam show and call that decorative. placing the garter edges together, sew down from the nose about an inch, then stuff to capacity with catnip (Shadow recommends organic) and finish sewing down to tail...then back up to nose again for strength if you wish. Use remainder of silk for whiskers.

:: Glossary ::

k = knit & p = purl

k fe&b = k in front and back of stitch (increases one stitch)

k fe&be&f = k in front, back and front again of stitch (increases 2 stitches)

m 1 = with right hand needle lift the strand between the stitches of the previous row from back to front, place left needle in front of this lifted stitch and k. When done right the lifted stitch forms a loop under the knitted stitch.

s = slip stitch without knitting (in our case slipping 2 as if to knit them together)

pssso = pass slipped stitches over (in our case 2)

m picot ear = k the next stitch and then place it back on the left hand needle. Cast on 3 stitches (cable method works nicely) then bind off 3 stitches.

c4f = slip 2 stitches onto separate needle(cable needle), hold in front of work, k next 2 stitches, then k 2 from cable needle

c4b = slip 2 stitches onto separate needle(cable needle), hold in back of work, k next 2 stitches, then k 2 from cable needle.

tog = together

a "wonderful" explanation of cable cast on (used for ears) can be found here :
http://www.wonderful-things.com/newknit1.htm

Any yarn can be used with this pattern. Choose a needle sized smaller than usual in order to knit a tight fabric to prevent catnip leakage.

single pointed needles can also be used. In this case you will also need a cable needle & when it is time to do i-cord tail you will have to slip the stitches back onto left needle before each row.

Always take a moment at the beginning of a row to tighten up the fabric in this manner : knit the first stitch, place working needle into the next stitch and gently pull working yarn to snug up the edge (again this is to prevent the catnip from getting away)

I am a great fan of leaving mistakes in my knitting whenever possible. ah ho. mare