



Flight

March 2026
Vol. 40 No. 3

Journal of the Bird Stamp Society

*The Bird Stamp Society Will Be
40 Years Old Later This Year!*



*Bird Stamps Issued in March 1986,
40 Years Ago This Month*

In This Issue

*My Hardest Bird ID Ever
First-Time Birds on a FDC
Digital Bird & Bird Stamp Books
Join the Packet Scheme (see pg 32)
Number of Bird Stamps Year by Year
New Listings & New Species on Stamps
Karen Mounsey-Smith, Stamp Designer
...and more*



In This Issue

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...and more*



The Bird Stamp Society

(www.birdstampsociety.org.uk)

Founded August 1986



The Bird Stamp Society was formed to cater for the large number of collectors worldwide who specialise in bird stamps and related philatelic materials

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Flight is the quarterly journal of the Bird Stamp Society, published in March, June, September, and December. It is sent by post or email to Subscribing Members (see Subscription options below). All Members are invited to submit contributions of any length for publication in *Flight*, including articles, letters to the Editor, enquiries, announcements, illustrations of recent exhibits or recently acquired stamps, varieties, covers, postmarks, postal stationery, or any other aspect of avian philately. Please send your contributions to the Editor at least one month preceding publication (i.e., at or before the beginning of February, May, August, or November). Please consult the Editor regarding the various formats that can be used to submit illustrations (editor@birdstampsociety.org.uk).

Membership. Annual Subscriptions (1 August–31 July) include four quarterly editions of our journal *Flight*, access to the Members Only area of the Bird Stamp Society (BSS) Website, entry to the Packet Scheme, Bourse, online events, and other resources. See the Website for Subscription rates and the membership application form.

Bird Stamp Society Website (www.birdstampsociety.org.uk). Our comprehensive website has two areas: GENERAL PUBLIC and MEMBERS ONLY. The General Public area gives access to who we are, membership application information, a sample selection of resources, a limited gallery, and a reference section. The Members Only area gives access to ALL back numbers of *Flight* with a searchable index and list of articles, recent bird stamp listings, a list of recent new bird species on stamps, a postal stationery feature, Society documents library, Committee and Membership data, a Member Gallery, and other resources.

PLEASE NOTE that it is necessary to log on to the website to access the MEMBERS ONLY area. To do this, new members will be contacted to register as a BSS Member Website User with the BSS Website Administrator, Gilly Christmas, at webmaster@birdstampsociety.org.uk. This process will allow you to choose a LOGON username and password, which will take you to the Members Only Home Page.



These bird stamps
were also issued
in March 1986,
40 years ago
this month



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40 years ago this month. The Bird Stamp Society
will be 40 years old later this year!*



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32 Stamps for Sale — Dealers

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Contributors to this issue of *Flight*

- Brent Allred
- Gilly Christmas
- Graham Horsman
- Rob Oliver
- Tim Phipps
- Kjell Scharning
- Graham U'ren
- Mel West
- Koenraad Bracke
- David Cox
- Tino Mischler
- Sarah Parr
- Tony Pollock
- Steve Strauss
- Tony Weatherley

Editorial



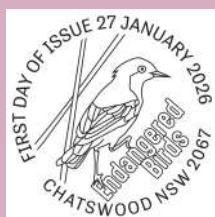
Steve birding
in Costa Rica,
March 2012

As I write this, in February 2026, I can tell you truthfully, and sadly, that I have not been on an aeroplane since December 2019. That is when I returned from five weeks photographing birds up and down the coast of Western Australia. (Earlier in 2019, my wife and I also visited and photographed birds in Costa Rica, in southern Arizona, and in Florida's Everglades Nat'l. Park). But at the end of 2019, COVID put an end to travelling anywhere, even by car. By the middle of 2020, I missed seeing, photographing, and enjoying pictures of new birds so much that I just had to find a suitable alternative. Aha! What about enjoying pictures of new birds on little pieces of paper (i.e., stamps)? I heard about, read about, and then joined the BSS at the end of 2020.

Fast forward six years. By the time you read this, in March 2026, I will have boarded an aeroplane (with fingers crossed) and flown to Belize, where my wife and I will spend a fortnight watching and photographing birds in several rainforest preserves. I will finally get back to my old hobby of photographing birds, but my newer, just as satisfying hobby of collecting bird stamps is here to stay.

As many readers know, I collect first day covers, and love to ponder who designed the stamps as well as the postmarks, cancellations, and cachets. I recently acquired five 1962 Monaco FDCs, each with two of the beautiful 10v Protection of Birds Useful to Agriculture set. I know the stamps were designed by Pierrette Lambert and were engraved by no fewer than eight well-known engravers of Monaco stamps. But I cannot find out any information about the artist who designed the stunning embossed cachets that have small reflective particles embedded in them so that they "glisten" when the covers are tilted back and forth in the light. I have written to the Monaco Museum of Stamps and Coins, but so far I have not received any information from them about the cachet artist who signed the cachets with the initials RG or RLG. If any reader of *Flight* knows the history of these FDCs, one of which is shown here, please let me know. Perhaps we can write an article about them for a future *Flight*. Thanks in advance!

Steve Strauss, *Flight* Editor



The Bird Stamp Society Needs a New Treasurer

The BSS needs a member to come forward and, after a period of transition, become the next BSS Treasurer. Since our accounts are in a UK bank, the law requires that our Treasurer must live in the UK. Please contact General Secretary Mel West to enquire about this important vacant position in the Bird Stamp Society (secretary@birdstampssociety.org.uk). Thank you!

Wanted: Contributors for the June and September 2026 Flights

Chair's Column: Flightless Birds on Stamps and Our 40th Year

Thanks to our editor's fastidious forward planning, I find myself writing this column well ahead of the publication date in March, on 25 January to be precise, the birthday of Robert Burns, so my incentive to finish it is the prospect of a haggis, neeps and tatties supper, accompanied by a wee dram!

I am thus reminded that, a couple of years ago, a colleague in one of my stamp clubs gave a display on the birds mentioned in the poems of the Scottish bard. Beside the relevant stanza he mounted stamps of the bird concerned. I was amazed to find that there are 59 different birds in Burns's poetry. This story, then, serves to illustrate just how varied thematic treatment of birds on stamps can be. Our chosen subject of birds is reputedly the most extensive thematic subject of all with a vast range, not only of subject matter but of types of philatelic material available.

A few days ago, I had the good fortune to be given the chance to browse a huge collection of bird stamps that a dealer friend of mine had just acquired. It not only provided me with a few hours of fun, adding many items to my collection, but it brought home to me that the kind of collection I was looking at was the bedrock of bird stamp collecting for so many people but very far removed from the kind of thematic collecting that I have come to pursue nowadays.

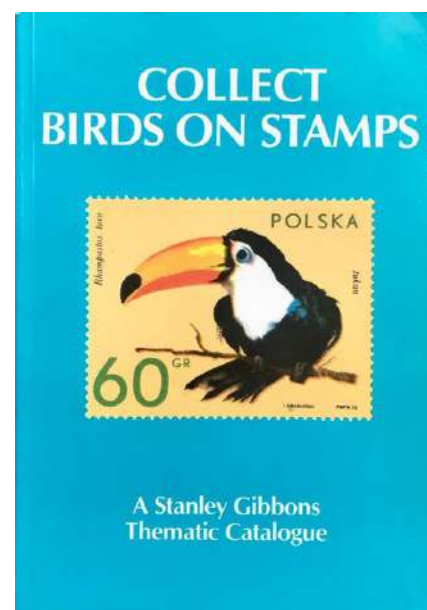
34 stock books of nothing but stamps, organised by country, is a treasure trove falling within the definition of Topical Collecting but not venturing into the world of storytelling that is the hallmark of Thematic Collecting. However, I immediately realised that this is how I began over 45 years ago, collecting any bird stamp I could find by country before finding that I was learning little from these random singles and mixed sets, especially about the birds of the wider world with which I was not familiar. I then spent a winter reorganising my collection into families and species and all the while referring to identification guides, thus adding hugely to my ornithological knowledge.

When the first Gibbons catalogue "Collect Birds on Stamps" was published in 1983, followed three years later by the start of the new issues feature in *Flight Magazine*, I realised that the number of bird stamps was greatly more than I had anticipated and was increasing rapidly. I therefore decided to specialise, but would it be by family, country/region or some other system? After some deliberation, I chose flightless birds and was pleased to discover, over the ensuing years, that this subject was not only philatelically diverse and ornithologically interesting, with some 63 living flightless species today in some 11 families (with many others which are extinct) and almost all featuring on stamps due to their distinctiveness, but lent itself to the discovery of a wide range of philatelic material.

Over time, I have subsequently broadened my collection with the benefit of experience into thematic studies of other species/families or towards the world of traditional philately where there may be a long running definitive series showing one or more birds, with many reprint varieties and flaws. A long way from the simple topical collection with which I started!

By the time you read this March edition, the Society will have embarked on its 40th year since foundation by David Cox. There will be a special edition of *Flight* later in the year, coupled with further events which we hope will allow us to use this milestone to raise the profile of the Society. One such event will be the four yearly Birdpex exhibition to be held at La Louvière in Belgium in August. If you are attending this or any other stamp fair in the course of the year, please look out for a Bird Stamp Society representative (sometimes a dealer). If indeed you can help us with promotion of the Society in any way, please get in touch.

Graham U'ren



National exhibition "birds"
with international participation
LOUVEXPO (La Louvière), 28-30/8/2026



More info on: www.birdpex.com

From the First Pages in the First Flight of Our First Year, 1986, to This Page in the First Flight of 2026. Happy 40th Anniversary!

The following is from the first 3 pages in the inaugural Flight, which was printed in August 1986 and mailed to the 34 members of the brand new Bird Stamp Society. Ed.



THE BIRD STAMP SOCIETY.

Welcome to your Society. That word is used deliberately, for the Society is yours. Though its activities will have to be governed by rules and regulations, if there is a general demand for anything to be changed, then if it can be done it will be done.

Even the name of the Society is your choice. Do you think Bird Stamp Society is right? Would you prefer Association of Ornithological Philatelists? If you have any strong feelings let us know.

In fact, tell us all your thoughts on any aspects of birds on stamps. For if we are to succeed we must know all about each other, at least as far as our stamp tastes are concerned. So start writing - apart from anything else your letters may help to fill up a few awkward gaps in future editions of the Newsletter.

With your help this first, paltry effort might one day develop into a proper magazine. After all, birds are said to be the most popular thematic subject, so when we have gathered every enthusiast into our fold we should be able to show a thing or two to those odd people who collect stamps showing musicians or space travel.

AND NOW, A FEW WORDS FROM OUR OFFICIALS

THE CHAIRMAN WRITES:

Firstly, may I extend a cordial welcome to all our members. With your help and encouragement I am sure we will go from strength to strength. Don't be frightened to put pen to paper and flood our Editor with anything you may think will be of interest. Through all, our efforts we will succeed.

When David Cox asked me to be Chairman I accepted most willingly in the knowledge that we have a very good team of workers behind us. My special thanks to David and to Tony Pollock and Lawrence Weatherley.

Who am I? Just a collector belonging to my local Swale Philatelic Society, the Bio-Philatelic Unit of the American Topical Association (what a mouthful) and the Butterfly and Moth Stamp Society. I'm also attempting to list and identify all new issues. More about that elsewhere.

So, once again, WELCOME and let's have your ideas.

TIM PHIPPS.



Silence for the man who had the initiative to form our Society, and did all the hard work to get it going.....

THE SECRETARY:

I am sure you all agree a group for us bird lovers is long overdue. From the letters of encouragement received I am certain that the Society is firmly established. This is an exciting new venture which I am pleased to be associated with. As is the norm with other Societies I felt we should have a name for our Newsletter. I have named the first issue FLIGHT. I hope this will meet with your approval, should any member have different views, then please let me know.

I have been collecting bird stamps for eleven years, and have exhibited at Stampex and B.P.E. I am a member of the Cirencester Society, having served as Chairman and Secretary. I am also a past President of the Three Counties Federation.

DAVID COX.

P.S. Would members comment on - perhaps the adoption of the 'Flying Swan' as our Logo?

THE TREASURER REVEALS ALL:

I was probably asked to look after the Society's money because I spent most of my working life in accountancy, and it was assumed that, even though I have retired, I have not lost what skills I did have. I came to bird stamps via birds. I have been a member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for some years, and am on the Committee of my local group. In 1981, when I was looking for a hobby in my retirement, the Society's magazine offered 500 stamps for £7. I sent off the money - and was hooked! I collect by bird species, rather than by country. Present score - 6733 stamps, spread over 1894 species.

TONY WEATHERLEY.

AND, SINCE THE EDITOR ALWAYS HAS THE LAST WORD

I've made it! I'm an editor - a position I never achieved during X number of years in journalism. I've been a scribbler for most of my life - but that doesn't mean I can produce a journal all on my own. So, to echo what the chairman said, please send me so many articles and letters that my postman will have to get a special trolley to deliver them. I, too, am a simple life collector - I want just one of each species. I turned to birds many years ago, as relaxation from the intricacies of Holland and Switzerland, but now birds on stamps seem to take up most of the time I can devote to collecting.

TONY POLLOCK.

*By March 1987, seven months after our founding,
the membership had tripled to 102. The nascent
Bird Stamp Society continued growing,
and, as they say, the rest is history.*

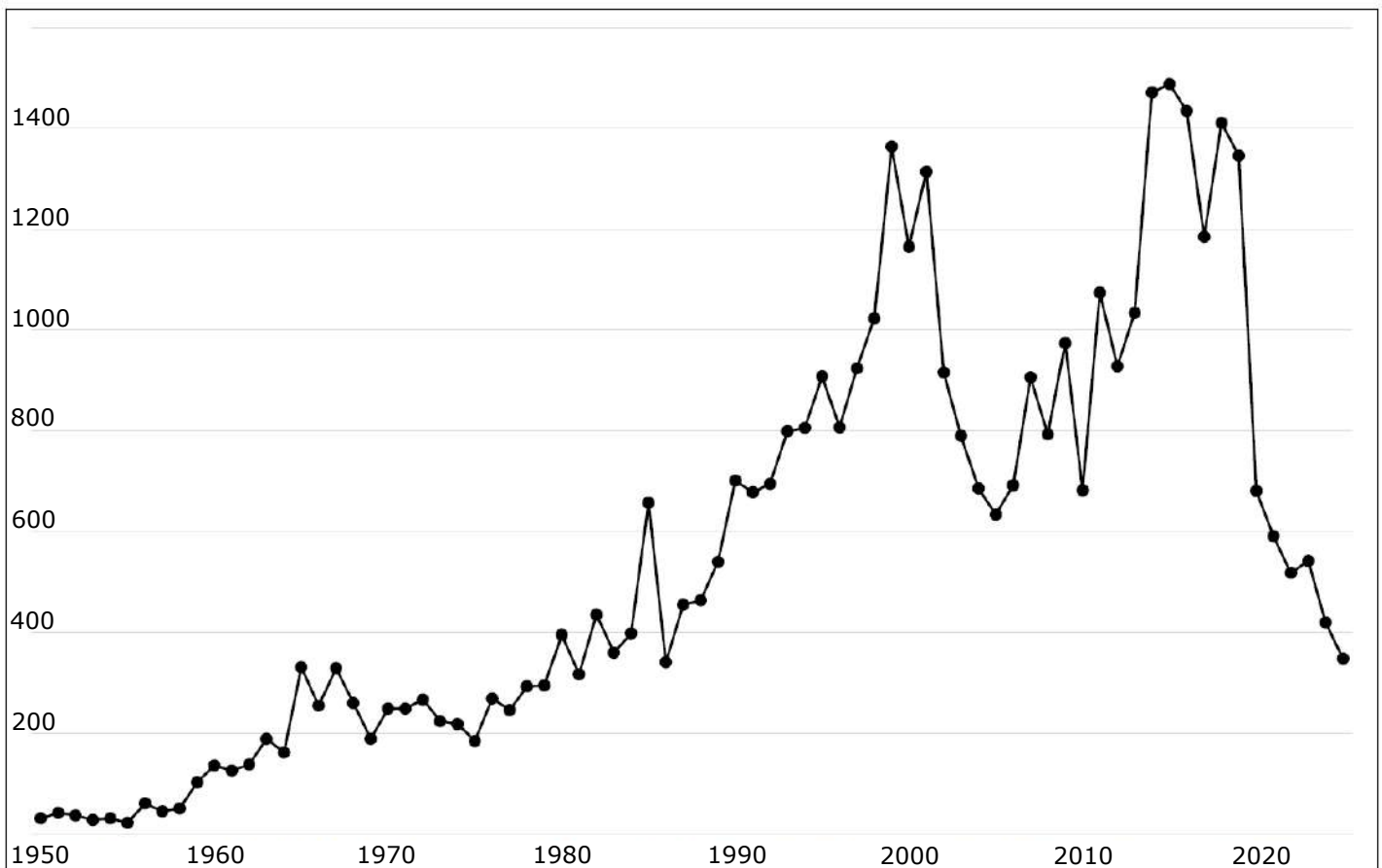
Number of Bird Stamps Issued Per Year

Kjell Scharning and Steve Strauss

There is a list of the total number of bird stamps per year on the *birdtheme.org* website. Since this may be of interest to all bird stamp collectors, we have reproduced the list below. The sum of all the numbers in the blue boxes below (i.e., all of the bird stamps issued between 1854 and 2025) is 42,949. This includes extinct and even prehistoric bird species. There are a number of "trends" that you may find interesting. Rather than tell you about those trends, we will leave them for you to determine in your own time. What do you see, and what do you think it means?

We have also made a graph, shown at the bottom of this page, of the number of bird stamps issued for each year from 1950 to 2025. The total number of bird stamps issued between those years is 42,152. Sometimes seeing numerical data displayed graphically can be quite illuminating. What is your interpretation of the peaks and valleys?

				2025	348	2024	420	2023	542	2022	518	2021	591	2020	681	2019	1346	2018	1411
2017	1185	2016	1435	2015	1488	2014	1471	2013	1034	2012	928	2011	1074	2010	682	2009	974	2008	793
2007	906	2006	692	2005	634	2004	686	2003	790	2002	916	2001	1314	2000	1165	1999	1364	1998	1023
1997	924	1996	807	1995	908	1994	806	1993	799	1992	695	1991	678	1990	701	1989	540	1988	464
1987	455	1986	341	1985	657	1984	398	1983	360	1982	435	1981	317	1980	395	1979	295	1978	293
1977	246	1976	269	1975	185	1974	218	1973	224	1972	267	1971	249	1970	249	1969	189	1968	260
1967	329	1966	255	1965	331	1964	162	1963	189	1962	138	1961	126	1960	136	1959	103	1958	51
1957	45	1956	61	1955	22	1954	31	1953	28	1952	37	1951	42	1950	31	1949	18	1948	27
1947	30	1946	21	1945	18	1944	17	1943	8	1942	27	1941	9	1940	4	1939	19	1938	27
1937	24	1936	9	1935	21	1934	14	1933	6	1932	48	1931	51	1930	11	1929	16	1928	23
1927	20	1926	25	1925	34	1924	27	1923	15	1922	16	1921	2	1920	10	1919	3	1918	11
1917	2	1916	4	1915	2	1914	1	1913	19	1912	4	1911	4	1910	2	1909	11	1908	3
1907	7	1906	7	1905	6	1904	3	1903	15	1902	12	1901	4	1900	8	1899	5	1898	9
1897	7	1896	1	1895	2	1894	2	1893	2	1892	2	1890	4	1889	4	1888	2	1885	2
1884	1	1881	7	1879	2	1876	1	1875	3	1874	1	1871	1	1865	2	1864	3	1863	1
1861	3	1860	1	1858	1	1857	1	1854	3										





New Listings

Rob Oliver
and Brent Allred

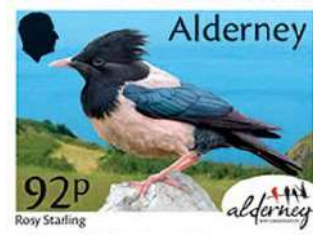
ALDERNEY

69p	Western Yellow Wagtail
92p	Rosy Starling
1.37£	Eurasian Hoopoe
1.47£	Purple Heron
1.81£	Great Bustard
1.90£	Bearded Vulture

11.02.2026

Alderney Bird Observatory 10th anniversary. 6v set

<i>Motacilla flava</i>
<i>Pastor roseus</i>
<i>Upupa epops</i>
<i>Ardea purpurea</i>
<i>Otis tarda</i>
<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>



ASCENSION

15p	Band-rumped Storm Petrel
20p	Black Noddy
25p	Brown Noddy
30p	Sooty Tern
40p	Fairy Tern
50p	Red-footed Booby
60p	Brown Booby
65p	Masked Booby
1£	White-tailed Tropicbird
1.30£	Red-billed Tropicbird
2.50£	Ascension Frigatebird
5£	Ascension Frigatebird

30.01.2026

Definitives - Seabirds of Ascension. 12v set

<i>Hydrobates castro</i>
<i>Anous minutus</i>
<i>Anous stolidus</i>
<i>Onychoprion fuscatus</i>
<i>Sternula nereis</i>
<i>Sula sula</i>
<i>Sula leucogaster</i>
<i>Sula dactylatra</i>
<i>Phaethon lepturus</i>
<i>Phaethon aethereus</i>
<i>Fregata aquila</i>
<i>Fregata aquila</i>



AUSTRALIA

1.70\$	Carnaby's Black Cockatoo
1.70\$	Mallee Emu-wren
1.70\$	Yellow Chat
1.70\$	Plains-wanderer

27.01.2026

Endangered birds. 3v set, 3v MS and 4v special MS

<i>Zanda latirostris</i>
<i>Stipiturus mallee</i>
<i>Epthianura crocea</i>
<i>Pedionomus torquatus</i>

NEW SPECIES
NEW SPECIES
NEW SPECIES



AUSTRIA

1 €	Great Tit
and	European Robin

3.11.2025

Christmas. 1 of 2v set

<i>Parus major</i>
<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>



BELARUS

N	Budgerigar
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25.11.2025

Pets. 1 of 4v set

<i>Melopsittacus undulatus</i>

Bird names in the New Listings, New Species on Stamps, and all other pages in Flight

All common English and scientific names of birds in *Flight* will now follow the AviList. See pages 12 and 13 in the December 2025 *Flight* for information about the AviList, which will be updated annually and will replace previous lists like Clements and the IOC. You can download the AviList for free from www.avilist.org. You can also obtain a version of the AviList that is simpler to navigate, with all subspecies rows and many columns deleted, by sending an email to steven.strauss@colostate.edu.

Corrections to Identifications or Descriptions

All members are invited to write to us on any point concerning the identification or descriptions of the birds in the *New Listings* or *New Species on Stamps* pages in *Flight*, no matter how tentative your judgment may be. Any additions or corrections will appear in the next *Flight*. Send any corrections to tino.mischler@gmx.de.

Stamperija New Listings & New Species on Stamps policy

Flight will not include *New Listings* or *New Species on Stamps* from many Stamperija countries. Currently, these countries are: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoro Islands, Congo (DR), Djibouti, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Maldives Islands, Mozambique, Niger, St. Thomas & Prince Islands (São Tomé), Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Tanzania, and Togo.

BOLIVIA

8.50b	Jabiru
15b	Cochabamba Mountain Finch
18b	Scarlet Macaw
19.50b	Andean Condor

2025

Jabiru
Cochabamba Mountain Finch
Scarlet Macaw
Andean Condor

CEFIBOL - Bolivia Bicentenary. 3 of 6v MS self-adhes

<i>Jabiru mycteria</i>
<i>Poospiza garleppi</i>
<i>Ara macao</i>
<i>Vultur gryphus</i>

NEW SPECIES

BOTSWANA

P4	Racket-tailed Roller
P10	Lilac-breasted Roller
P11	Rufous-crowned Roller
P14	Abyssinian Roller
P20 MS	Abyssinian Roller
P20 MS	Lilac-breasted Roller

26.09.2025

Racket-tailed Roller
Lilac-breasted Roller
Rufous-crowned Roller
Abyssinian Roller
Abyssinian Roller
Lilac-breasted Roller

Beautiful Botswana birds 2: Rollers. 4v set & 2v MS

<i>Coracias spatulatus</i>
<i>Coracias caudatus</i>
<i>Coracias naevius</i>
<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>
<i>Coracias abyssinicus</i>
<i>Coracias caudatus</i>



CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

2026

Bonaire

175c	Glossy Ibis
175c	American Flamingo
175c	Crested Caracara
175c	Royal Tern
175c	Blue-tailed Emerald
175c	Southern Lapwing
175c	American Coot
175c	Barn Swallow
175c	Wattled Jacana
175c	Yellow-shouldered Amazon

Birds. 4 x 10v MS

<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>
<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
<i>Caracara plancus</i>
<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>
<i>Chlorostilbon mellisugus</i>
<i>Vanellus chilensis</i>
<i>Fulica americana</i>
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
<i>Jacana jacana</i>
<i>Amazona barbadensis</i>



Saba

175c	White-tailed Tropicbird
175c	Purple Gallinule
175c	Summer Tanager
175c	Masked Booby
175c	Bananaquit
175c	American Oystercatcher
175c	Common Tern
175c	Northern Parula
175c	Western Cattle Egret
175c	Rock Pigeon

<i>Phaethon lepturus</i>
<i>Porphyrio martinica</i>
<i>Piranga rubra</i>
<i>Sula dactylatra</i>
<i>Coeleba flaveola</i>
<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>
<i>Setophaga americana</i>
<i>Ardea ibis</i>
<i>Columba livia</i>

St Eustatius

175c	Black-faced Grassquit
175c	Scaly-naped Pigeon
175c	Smooth-billed Ani
175c	Red-footed Booby
175c	Purple-throated Carib
175c	Green Heron
175c	American Coot
175c	Indigo Bunting
175c	Magnificent Tropicbird
175c	Brown Pelican

<i>Melanospiza bicolor</i>
<i>Patagioenas squamosa</i>
<i>Crotophaga ani</i>
<i>Sula sula</i>
<i>Eulampis jugularis</i>
<i>Butorides virescens</i>
<i>Fulica americana</i>
<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
<i>Fregata magnificens</i>
<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>

St Maarten

175c	Sanderling
175c	White-tailed Tropicbird
175c	Bridled Tern
175c	Blue-winged Teal
175c	Masked Booby
175c	Common Gallinule
175c	Laughing Gull
175c	Western Cattle Egret
175c	Black-and-white Warbler
175c	Black-necked Stilt

<i>Calidris alba</i>
<i>Phaethon lepturus</i>
<i>Onychoprion anaethetus</i>
<i>Spatula discors</i>
<i>Sula dactylatra</i>
<i>Gallinula galatea</i>
<i>Leucophaeus atricilla</i>
<i>Ardea ibis</i>
<i>Mniotilta varia</i>
<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>



CHINA

1.20y
1.20y

6.11.2025

Tooth-billed Pigeon
White Eared-Pheasant

China-Samoa relations 50th anniversary. 2v set

Didunculus strigirostris
Crossoptilon crossoptilon



FALKLAND ISLANDS

1.18£

15.01.2026

King Penguin

Summer. 1 of 4v set

Aptenodytes patagonicus

FIJI

2025

1c, 2c, 4c, 5c (x2), 20c, 23c
(x2), 44c (x2), 50c - all on 1\$

Pacific Robin

Provisional surcharges: 1995 1\$ definitive. 31v set
Additional surcharges: those listed in *Flight* vol 40.2
Petroica pusilla

FRENCH ANTARCTIC (TAAF)

1.35 €

2.01.2026

Malagasy Pond Heron

L'isle Europa: sanctuary of four elements. 1 of 4v MS

Ardeola idae

NEW SPECIES

GERMANY

95c

8.01.2026

Rosy-faced Lovebird

Popular pets. 1 of 3v set

Agapornis roseicollis



GREENLAND

4 x 25k

7.11.2025

Snowy Owl

Snowy Owls in Greenland. 4v set

Bubo scandiacus

GUYANA

200\$
and

25.07.2025

Cocoi Heron
Hoatzin

Low carbon development strategy 2030. 1v

Ardea cocoi

Opisthocomus hoatzin



HONG KONG

2.20\$

30.04.2026

Red-crowned Crane

Animals in Chinese idioms. 1 of 4v set

Grus japonensis

INDONESIA

10,000r
20,000r MS
20,000r MS

20.11.2025

Common Myna
White-rumped Shama
Budgerigar

Fauna and flora. 3 of 6v (includ. 2v in 2 shaped MS)

Acridotheres tristis

Copsychus malabaricus

Melopsittacus undulatus

INDONESIA

20,000r
20,000r
20,000r

30.11.2025

Javan Kingfisher
Yellow-crested Cockatoo
Sulawesi Ground Dove

5 Nations Stamp Expo Indonesia 2025. 3v MS

Halcyon cyanoventris

Cacatua sulphurea

Gallicolumba tristigmata

JAPAN

2 x 110y

4.02.2026

Barn Swallow

Spring greetings. 2 of 10v MS self-adhesive

Hirundo rustica

KAZAKHSTAN

700t

17.10.2025

Golden Eagle

Markakol Biosphere Reserve UNESCO. 1 of 3v MS

Aquila chrysaetos

KAZAKHSTAN

100t and 200t

29.12.2025

Purple Swamphen

Red Book of Kazakhstan. 2 of 5v set

Porphyrio porphyrio



MACAU

2.50p
4p
4.50p
6p

5.01.2026

Barn Swallow
Little Egret
Eurasian Tree Sparrow
Oriental Magpie

Year of the Horse. 4v set

Hirundo rustica

Egretta garzetta

Passer montanus

Pica serica



MADAGASCAR

2,000Ar

9.10.2025

Madagascar Pochard

MAURITIUS

10r

25r

30r

1.2025

Rodrigues Parrot

Mauritian Turtle Dove

Dodo

NETHERLANDS

1

1

and

1

1

1

1

and

1

1

and

1

1

5.01.2025

Red-billed Tropicbird

Bananaquit

Smooth-billed Ani

Smooth-billed Ani

Black-necked Stilt

Brown Pelican

Blue Grosbeak

Osprey

Belted Kingfisher

Osprey

Black-and-white Warbler

Black-and-white Warbler

Antillean Crested Hummingbird

PERU

7.60\$

and

2025

Humboldt Penguin

Peruvian Pelican

Fauna. 1 of 4v set

Aythya innotata

Extinct species (reprint with new date, first issued 2024. 3v set

Necropsittacus rodricanus

Nesoenas cicur

Raphus cucullatus

Beleef de natuur - Birds of Saba. 10v set

Phaethon aethereus

Coereba flaveola

Crotophaga ani

Crotophaga ani

Himantopus mexicanus

Pelecanus occidentalis

Passerina caerulea

Pandion haliaetus

Megasceryle alcyon

Pandion haliaetus

Mniotilta varia

Mniotilta varia

Orthorhynchus cristatus

Nature reserve Mar Tropical de Grau. 1v MS

Spheniscus humboldti

Pelecanus thagus

**RUSSIA****11.12.2025****World Heritage of UNESCO series. Landscapes of Dauria. 1 of 3v MS**

80r

White-naped Crane

*Antigone vipio***SAMOA****6.11.2025****Samoa-China relations 50th anniversary. 2v set**

1\$

Tooth-billed Pigeon

Didunculus strigirostris

1\$

White Eared-Pheasant

*Crossoptilon crossoptilon***SOUTH AFRICA****23.01.2026****Critically endangered vultures. 5v MS**

B5

Cape Vulture

Gyps coprotheres

B5

Bearded Vulture

Gypaetus barbatus

B5

White-headed Vulture

Trigonoceps occipitalis

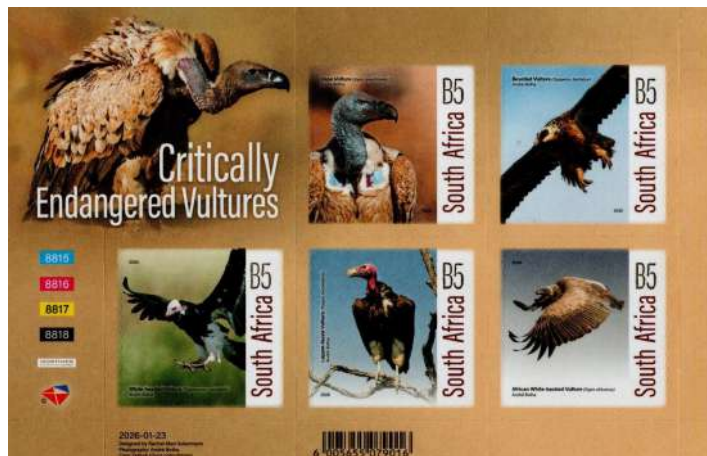
B5

Lappet-faced Vulture

Torgos tracheliotos

B5

White-backed Vulture

Gyps africanus**ST PIERRE et MIQUELON****17.01.2026****1v**

1.52 €

Pectoral Sandpiper

*Calidris melanonos***SWITZERLAND****6.11.2025****Day of the Stamp (Tag der Briefmarke) - Döttingen. 1v MS**

120+60c

Common Kingfisher

*Alcedo atthis***URUGUAY****2025****Bioparque M'Bopicia - Montes del Plata. 2 of 4v MS**

35\$

Toco Toucan

Ramphastos toco

90\$

Spix's Macaw

Cyanopsitta spixii

Some corrections to *New Listings* in the March, September, and December 2025 *Flights* are given on page 31.



We're
new
too!

New Species on Stamps

Tino Mischler



Australia 27 January 2026. Endangered Birds.

\$1.70 Mallee Emu-wren *Stipiturus mallee*

6,5 inches. Male with light blue throat. Restricted distribution: NW Victoria and SE South Australia. Endangered because of too frequent burning of spinifex understory of its mallee woodland. Only about 4000 individuals remain.



Australia 27 January 2026. Endangered Birds.

\$1.70 (Capricorn) Yellow Chat *Epthianura crocea macgregori*

4,3 inches. Golden underparts and forehead, the male with a black throat crescent. Yellow rump, white iris. This subspecies, critically endangered, is resident only in coastal central Queensland. Salty marshy plains in arid zone. Species distribution north and central Australia. Belongs in honeyeater family (Meliphagidae), but was formerly in its own family (Epthianuridae).



Australia 27 January 2026. Endangered Birds.

\$1.70 Plains-wanderer *Pedionomus torquatus*. Exclusive stamp (only in Special Edition stamp pack, minisheet of 4 for 12\$, including Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo and the two above).

6-7 inches, quail-like, but slender. Can be confused with Chestnut-backed Buttonquail. Distribution New South Wales and Queensland. Habitat grasslands. Endangered, according to Australian law critically endangered. Placed in its own family, Pedionomidae (new, too!).



Bolivia 6 August 2025. Bicentenary of Bolivia. 6v set with 2 other birds. Bs15.00 Cochabamba Mountain-Finch *Poospiza garleppi*

7 inches. Above slaty-grey. Forehead, small region under eye and below rusty-brown. Shown together with the Queen of the Andes, *Puya raimondii* (the second "i" is missing on the stamp), the highest bromeliad in the world. However, the habitat of *P. garleppi* lies lower. It is the dry bushland of the "valleys" (Los Valles) next to Cochabamba, central Bolivia, between 2700 and 4200 m. Restricted endemic, endangered.



French Southern and Antarctic Lands (TAAF) 2 January 2026.

Île Europa. 4v MS

€1.39 Malagasy Pond Heron *Ardeola idae*

Europa Island (Île Europa) lies between Madagascar and Mozambique, but philatelically belongs in TAAF. Bicoloured bill (base blue, tip black) rather thick (German: Dickschnabelreiher). 18-19 inches. Belongs in the genus of crested white herons. Shown in the picture is a non-breeding or juvenile individual with light brown neck streaks. Distribution: Madagascar and this island. Winters southern half of Africa to Yemen. Prefers mangroves. Endangered.

My Hardest Bird ID Ever — Leading to a New Species on Stamp

Tino Mischler

First, I have to confess something: I was roaming in the forbidden territory of Stamperija stamps, occupying myself with a Liberia 2022 issue, where I should better — by the collector's behavioural code — take my hands off. But when you follow the crazy goal of finding and collecting all species ever issued on stamps, I might get some pardon from you.

I stumbled over this edition by the "new species on stamps" section in *Biophilately*, December 2023, page 252. A stamp from Liberia, 30 Sep 2022, 250\$ (below) drew my attention. The identifying text read



"Spot-bellied Tanager, *Tangara vassorii atrocoerulea*", with the additional remark "Calliste (on the stamp) is tanager in French" (Glenn G. Mertz & Charles Braun). The extended yellow nape spot made my mind critical, as from year-long observations in Colombia and Ecuador I knew that such an obvious spot never came across me. I knew *Tangara vassorii* as depicted in a recent 2024 Colombian issue, shown below: all intense blue on the back with no bright spot, the Blue-and-black Tanager literally, mentioned, by the way, in *Flight*, September 2024, p.33, as a species for the first time new on a stamp.



But wait: I remembered one with a neck spot: *Tangara ruficervix*, which I observed on western Andean slopes in mixed flocks in Ecuador. The species name says "rufous nape". Could it be this one? No, because in the same Liberia set this tanager is depicted (shown at the top of the next column).



There is no bright extended yellow spot, and the back is spotted with black. I took a closer look at the complete minisheet, shown below, where four species of tanagers were lavishly depicted. These were exact drawings from the period of describing new species in detail. I might probably get some more information, if I only could find the original descriptions.



A google search finally revealed the source: *A Monograph of the Birds Forming the Tanagrine Genus Calliste; Illustrated by Coloured Plates of All the Known Species*, by Philip Lutley Sclater, John Van Voorst, London, 1857, pg 69).



Original plate by Philip L. Sclater

Sclater, describing the species, states: "No one who had seen an example of the present Tanager would be likely to confound

it with the *Calliste ruficervix* (which happens sometimes; I ran into the same trap). The wholly blue under-surface and the peculiar pale straw-coloured nuchal patch render this species easily distinguishable among its near allies, known as Turquoise Tanagers (*Calliste brasiliensis*, *flaviventris*, &c.)" Although he mentions correctly the three sources of descriptions before him, all ending with *atrocoerulea*, he equivocally places *Calliste atricoerulea* as the title at the bottom of the plate. This name error has pertained in the actual labelling on the stamp. Yes, Calliste up to now is used as the word for tanager in French, but not on the stamp, where it functions as the old genus name from Sclater's times.

My further investigation then concentrated on the subspecies term '*atrocoerulea*'. Although this again means nothing but "black-and-blue", the idea is to follow up descriptions where all the subspecies are listed. In the original Sclater plate no belly spots are visible. I consulted *Birds of Peru* by T. Schulenberg et al., 2007. Three forms are illustrated, as shown below, with *atrocoerulea* not too nice, but with additional characters visible, a faint yellowish hue (not a spot) on the neck and some black spots below. Aha! Here we come back to the name 'Spot-bellied Tanager'.

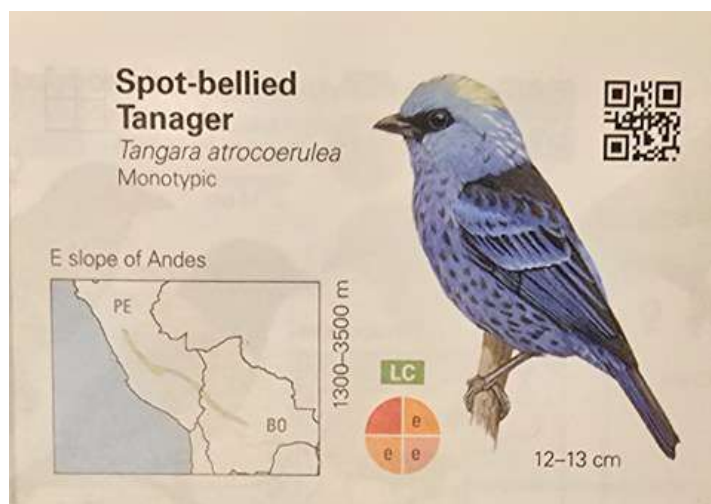


T. vassorii with its 3 subspecies (*Birds of Peru*)

An ultimate research in HBW *All the Birds of the World 2020* yields certainty (see next page): This Tanager has black spots in U-form below and a bit of yellow on the neck. Here — and already so in the 2014 HBW "Illustrated Checklist" — this form is listed as a full species, *Tangara atrocoerulea*, separated geographically (mid-Peru to west Bolivia) and subtly by further four colour criteria from *T. vassorii* (northern Peru to Colombia). I hope that other world checklists will follow suit. In the meantime I declare this a new species on stamp, and this is now my favourite stamp after a good deal of research to find the actual species limits.

My Hardest Bird ID Ever — Pg 2

Leading to a New Species on Stamp



T. atrocoerulea (HBW 2020)

All the confusion arose from Sclater painting a broad yellow blotch, sharply limited. Indeed, there is no such obvious mark. Yet the stamp copies exactly this historic drawing, and even the misspelled species name is conserved. The other drawings are much closer to nature and exact.

By looking at the separate minisheet finalising the set, I found out another species, the large bird in the surrounds of the minisheet, shown below, labelled *Tangara mexicana brasiliensis*.



White-bellied Tanager

It is now (HBW checklist 2019) a species on its own, White-bellied Tanager, *T. brasiliensis*, separated geographically with its distribution in the Mata Atlantica from the true *Tangara mexicana*, Turquoise Tanager, which occurs in Amazonia, not Mexico. The latter has a very similar subspecies *T. m. mexicana*, which is buff-bellied. But alas! As the White-bellied Tanager is shown only in the surrounds of the minisheet, it cannot be counted as new on stamps — yet. In the meantime, readers, and I, should be content with the new-on-stamp Spot-bellied Tanager.



Closed Album



In Memoriam Michael (Mike) Smith

It is with great sadness that my predecessor as Treasurer, Mike Smith, passed away just before Christmas. Mike was 89 and suffered from heart failure following a heart attack. Mike had a very distinctive accent as he was born in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

Mike attended Rhodes University in South Africa where he gained a Batchelor of Science in Commerce and Diploma in Accountancy.

Mike met his wife Anna in Lazard Brothers Merchant Bank whilst on a trip to London. Their daughter, Naomi, was born in the UK, but Mike and Anna went back to Rhodesia where their son James was born. Mike and his family moved back to the UK when President Mugabe was elected in 1980.

Living in the same county as our founder, David Cox, Mike had regular conversations with David and they both tried to put the world to rights. A favourite topic of their conversations was Rugby Union.

Mike took over the role of Treasurer from Michael Petch in June 2012 and handed over to me in November 2018. A six year stint in this role for Mike was often demanding, especially when subscriptions became due. Despite this hectic period in our calendar, Mike was always on the ball and performed his tasks admirably.

Although Mike was a philatelist, he also had a very large coin collection. Mike participated in our auctions and pack-et schemes.

Mike was a widower and is survived by his children, Naomi and James.

Graham Horsman



Sole Toes Bird Stamps – Collecting Simplicity?

Part 1 of a series by Steve Strauss

From Steve to Mel: A Fur Toes stamp has a "first-time-on-a-stamp" bird on it. So, we can refer to the stamp as a Fur Toes stamp, and we can also refer to the bird as a Fur Toes bird. What shall we call a Fur Toes stamp that is still the only stamp with that bird?

From Mel to Steve: Good question. The answer is obviously a "Sole Toes." The stamp would be unique and quite a feat—sorry, I meant feat—to acquire.

The brief conversation above between Mel West and me is reprinted from the December 2024 *Flight*. Mel has always been creative in coming up with clever and useful abbreviations for categories of stamps that all of us collect. In this case, I agree that 'Sole Toes' is the perfect shorthand expression for birds that have only appeared on *one* stamp.

The title of this series of *Flight* articles that I will write, *Sole Toes Bird Stamps – Collecting Simplicity?*, is a dual tongue-in-cheek, but heartfelt, homage to (i) Tony Statham's *Birds Rarely Seen on Stamps* and (ii) Mel's *Collecting Complexity* series.

What could be more "rarely seen on stamps" than a bird that is only on one stamp? And what if you limit your collection to just one stamp for each species, as some people do? If a bird you are interested in collecting is a Sole Toes, there are no decisions to confuse or confound you. Go find that stamp, issued in *that* year by *that* country. Period. That would be "Collecting Simplicity", would it not? Hmm. Let's see.

Methodology. The goal of this project is to find as many Sole Toes birds as my time and patience will allow, and bring them to you in a series of articles. I have no idea how many there might be: a few dozen, a few hundred, more than a few hundred? Time will tell.

Now, how to go about finding them? The first idea that comes to mind is obvious. Every bird stamp on the *New Species on Stamps* pages in each *Flight* is, by definition, a Sole Toes bird stamp, at least until another stamp with that species is issued.

I began with that idea. Pick an issue of *Flight*, the older the better, print the *New Species on Stamps* pages, and then check off in succession each bird on those pages against Kjell Scharning's outstanding and indispensable *birdtheme.org* website to see which ones are *still* Sole Toes after the intervening years. But I immediately ran into a multitude of problems.

Flight began publishing the predecessor of *New Species on Stamps*, which was called *Recent New Birds in the Philatelic Aviary*, in March 1991. Back then the *dates of issue* were not included, only SG numbers, and I do not have access to Stanley Gibbons catalogues unless I drive an hour to the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library in Denver.

And it is not a pleasant drive — the maze of interchange ramps at the intersection of Interstate 25 and Interstate 70 in the heart of Denver is called "The Mousetrap".

So let's start a couple of years later, with the September 1994 *Flight*, where some of the dates of issue are given in the *Recent New Birds in the Philatelic Aviary* pages. One stamp that was listed there is shown below. The problem is, this stamp was *not*



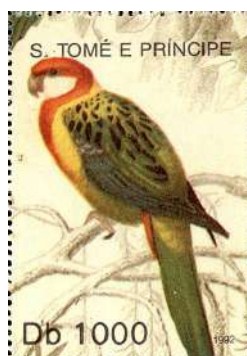
Blue-throated Roller (*Eurystomus gularis*)
Benin, 24 May 1993

the first stamp with this bird. That honor belonged to the stamp shown below, which was issued 40 years earlier!



Blue-throated Roller (*Eurystomus gularis*)
Liberia, 11 August 1953

Another "new" bird listed on the pages in the September 1994 *Flight* is shown below, the Eastern Rosella. And again there was a



Eastern Rosella (*Platycercus eximius*)
São Tomé & Príncipe, 15 September 1992

problem. The first Eastern Rosella stamp was *not* issued in 1992: It was issued by Ras Al Khaima 20 years earlier. That stamp is shown at the top of the next column.



Eastern Rosella (*Platycercus eximius*)
Ras Al Khaima, 1972

Here is a final example. In March 2020 the American Topical Association Biology Unit's journal *Biophilately* listed the "Red-Breasted Dotterel (*Charadrius obscurus*)", issued by New Zealand in August 2017, in *New Birds in the Philatelic Aviary* (pg 51). *Flight* actually depended on *Biophilately* for new species on stamps at that time, so BSS members read about this new species on a stamp in the June 2020 *Flight* (pg 37).

There are two problems here. The first is less important. The bird's English and scientific names in quotes above may have been correct in 2020 (i.e., on the 2020 Clements Checklist), but these names will completely confound you today when you try to find this stamp. This is because in 2025 the bird is known as the New Zealand Plover (*Anarhynchus obscurus*). Even the English name printed on the stamp, a picture of which was shown in *Biophilately* and in *Flight*, would only have added to the confusion. It is shown below.



New Zealand Plover (*Anarhynchus obscurus*)
New Zealand, 2 August 2017

The second, more important problem for someone like me, on the hunt for Sole Toes stamps, is that in 2020 there *already* was a second stamp with this bird, shown below.



New Zealand Plover (*Anarhynchus obscurus*)
Niuafo'ou, 3 May 2018

Sole Toes Bird Stamps – Collecting Simplicity? (pg 2)

Therefore, when the “first” New Zealand Plover stamp was brought to the attention to *Flight* readers, in 2020, it was no longer a Sole Toes stamp. It *had been* a Sole Toes for 11 months, from April 2017 to May 2018, but I didn’t know about that until 2020. Clearly, relying on *New Species on Stamps* to identify Sole Toes stamps without a lot of additional follow up wasn’t going to be easy.

I want to find Sole Toes bird stamps that are still Sole Toes today, 11 months, or 11 years, or even longer after they were first issued. To avoid some of the above-mentioned problems, and because I think it might be interesting to find older Sole Toes stamps issued even before the Bird Stamp Society was founded, I tried something else.

I scrolled through my list of bird stamps (arranged in alphabetical order of English common names) and noted the birds on only one stamp in my collection. If that stamp was issued before August 1986, I looked up that species on *birdtheme.org* and found out if the stamp I had was a Sole Toes. Most were not — I just didn’t have more than one stamp of that bird. But I did find a few old Sole Toes this way.

Then, as long as I was online, I crossed my fingers and, for each Sole Toes bird I found, I looked at the other birds in that genus. Sometimes that led to another Sole Toes bird, but most times it did not.

In the end, not exactly an elegant, or simple, method of searching. But it did get me started, and led to Sole Toes stamps in the rest of this article, plus a few more.

Still Sole Toes After All These Years.

Here are the first stamps that I found with a bird that is still, to this day, only on one stamp. After all that work, I hope you enjoy them as much as I enjoyed finding them.



Black-tailed Trainbearer (*Lesbia victoriae*) and Sword-billed Hummingbird (*Ensifera ensifera*) Ecuador, 7 January 1958, 4v (5 birds)

This stamp, and the three others, were designed by Ecuadorian artist Francisco Reyes Hens and printed by Thomas De La Rue & Co. Ltd. Reyes Hens designed other stamps for the Ecuador postal administration, but these are apparently the only bird stamps that can be attributed to him.

This is an interesting case because there are two birds. The Black-tailed Trainbearer is a Sole Toes bird. It does not appear on any other stamp (as of January 2026). The Sword-billed Hummingbird, perched on a

branch, is a Fur Toes bird but not a Sole Toes bird. It has appeared on two other stamps, in 2000 and 2021. So is this a Sole Toes stamp or not? I think it is, because it is the one and only stamp to show a Sole Toes *bird*, the Black-tailed Trainbearer.



Solitary Cacique (*Cacicus solitarius*) Ecuador, 3 February 1958, Tropical Birds



Cordilleran Parakeet (*Psittacara frontatus*) Ecuador, 3 February 1958, Tropical Birds

The two stamps above are the only stamps ever issued with these two birds, so both birds are Sole Toes birds and both stamps are Sole Toes stamps. They were designed by Nicolás Delgado Espinosa and printed by De La Rue. They are usually sold as a “4v set” along with two other Tropical Birds stamps issued later that year, on 30 October 1958 (e.g., on StampWorld, eBay, etc.).

The Solitary Cacique is widespread throughout Amazonia, in forested lowlands and swamps. Its large range (see map) makes me think that either Peru, Brazil, Bolivia, or Paraguay should also issue a stamp with this bird. Its large range also led to its IUCN classification as Least Concern.

There are 10 *Cacicus* species on the AviList, four of which are on stamps. And what do you know, but my first “genus check” found three more Sole Toes! All of the four caciques on stamps are Sole Toes birds.



Golden-winged Cacique (*Cacicus chrysopterus*) Uruguay, 27 Sept. 2000



Red-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus haemorrhous*) Suriname, 9 Jan. 2003

Yellow-rumped Cacique (*Cacicus cela*) Nevis, 2 Dec. 1996



The Cordilleran Parakeet is rare and local in Ecuador and common in some areas in Peru. In accordance with its name, it is found on the western slope of the Andes. It’s IUCN classification is Near Threatened.

There are 12 *Psittacara* parakeets on the AviList, 10 of which are on stamps. The Cordilleran and four other *Psittacara* Parakeets are Sole Toes; they are shown below.



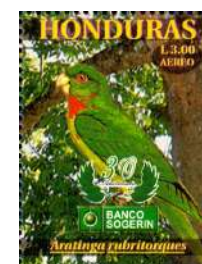
Scarlet-fronted Parakeet (*Psittacara wagleri*) Colombia, 28 June 2024



Finsch's Parakeet (*Psittacara finschi*), Nicaragua, 30 Nov. 1981



Pacific Parakeet (*Psittacara strenuus*) Honduras 13 May 2004



Green Parakeet (*Psittacara holochlorus*) Honduras, 8 July 1999



Huayco Tinamou (*Rhynchotus maculicollis*) Argentina, 6 February 1960

The Sole Toes stamp above was part of a 5v Child Welfare (“Pro Infancia”) set of semi-postal stamps, two of which (including this one) were air post semi-postals. The stamps were designed by Horacio Romulo Alvarez Boero. He was born in Buenos Aires on 6 July 1925. A distinguished designer and graphic artist, he studied at the School

Sole Toes Bird Stamps – Collecting Simplicity? (pg 3)

of Fine Arts. For many years, he illustrated some of the best stamps for the Argentine Postal Service.

The stamps were printed by offset lithography by Casa de Moneda de la Nación, the Argentina national mint in Buenos Aires, which was established in 1875. In 1960 it printed stamps, coins, banknotes, and government stationery.

On *colnect.com* the printer is listed as "Casa de Moneda S.E.", "S.E." being the abbreviation for State Company (Sociedad Estado). However, this is incorrect because the law that transformed Casa de Moneda into a state company was not passed until 1977.

This stamp has four watermark variants. It is not clear if the variants were printed and/or issued on different days.

Three of the other birds in the 5v set are Fur Toes, but not Sole Toes: Fork-tailed Flycatcher; Magellanic Woodpecker; and Greater Rhea. The fifth is Andean Condor.



Bornean Banded Pitta (*Hydornis schwaneri*)
Malaysia, 9 Sept. 1965, Birds definitives

The stamp above was part of an 8v set. None of the other stamps is a Sole Toes, although three others birds in the 8v set are Fur Toes birds: Asian Fairy-bluebird; Great Argus; and Blyth's Paradise Flycatcher. The set was photogravure printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd.²

This particular stamp in the 8v set has a known plate flaw. It is in Plate 1A, position R6/1. It appears as a diagonal white flaw in the Jawi script located above the letter "I" in "MALAYSIA", as shown in the image on the right.

There are 13 *Hydornis pittas* on the AviList. Five of them are on stamps, and two of those, in addition to the Bornean Banded Pitta, are Sole Toes birds. The one and only stamp for each of them are shown at the top of the next column.



Blue Pitta
(*Hydornis cyaneus*)
Bhutan, 22 Nov. 1989

Bar-bellied Pitta
(*Hydornis elliotii*)
Vietnam, 28 Sept. 2000

The New Zealand Bellbird, a honeyeater, is a Sole Toes bird. It's one stamp is below. There is another *Anthonis* species on the AviList, the Chatham Island Bellbird (*A. melanocephala*), but it is not on any stamp.



New Zealand Bellbird (*Anthonis melanura*)
New Zealand, 3 August 1966, Health Stamps

The design of this stamp (and the other stamp in the 2v set) is attributed to the New Zealand Post Office in Wellington, not to a specific artist/graphic designer. These semi-postal stamps were photogravure printed by Harrison and Sons Ltd.

The next Sole Toes stamps that I found are from a 1967 Ethiopia 5v set. Although only the two stamps shown below are Sole Toes, all five birds are on Fur Toes stamps, so I was also interested in obtaining a Trifecta FDC with all five stamps, which is also shown below.



Wattle Ibis
(*Bostrychia carunculata*)



Blue-winged Goose
(*Cyanochen cyanoptera*)

The Blue-winged Goose is the only *Cyanochen* species of bird on the AviList. There are five *Bostrychia* ibises on the AviList, three of which are on stamps, but only the Wattle Ibis is a Sole Toes bird.



The other birds on the FDC are Yellow-billed Duck (*Anas undulata*; 2nd from left),

Lesser Striped Swallow (*Cecropis abyssinica*; 2nd from right), and Black-winged Lovebird (*Agapornis taranta*; far right). The stamps were photogravure printed by Hélio Courvoisier S.A. The cover was posted from Harar, Ethiopia to East Lansing, Michigan, USA, where it was forwarded to a P.O. Box in Marshfield Hills, Massachusetts.

Looking for Sole Toes stamps in these genera, I found that three *Cecropis* swallows are Sole Toes. They are shown below.



Greater Striped Swallow
(*Cecropis cucullata*)
Ciskei 17 August 1984



Sri Lanka Swallow
(*Cecropis hyperythra*)
Sri Lanka, 9 Oct. 2021



Eastern Red-rumped Swallow
(*Cecropis daurica*)
Bequia, 29 Aug. 2011

There are nine *Agapornis* lovebirds on the AviList, all of which are on stamps, but none other than the Black-winged Lovebird is a Sole Toes bird.

There are 31 *Anas* ducks on the AviList, 25 of which are on stamps, and four of those birds, shown below, are Sole Toes.



Andaman Teal
(*Anas albogularis*)
India, 23 Nov. 1994



Bernier's Teal
(*Anas bernieri*)
Jersey, 2 Sept. 1997



Brown Teal
(*Anas chlorotis*)
New Zealand, 2 Feb. 1987



Sunda Teal
(*Anas gibberifrons*)
Indonesia, 1 Dec. 1998

In the next *Flight* I will continue showing 1960s Sole Toes stamps, and whatever other Sole Toes those stamps lead me to.

1. According to *colnect.com*, someone named Alec Fraser-Brunner designed the 1965 Malaysia 8v set. However, there is a problem with this: Alec Fraser-Brunner was a British ichthyologist (1906–1986). He was the curator of Singapore's Van Kleeef Aquarium. But he never designed fish stamps, so why would he have designed bird stamps? If any reader can shed light on who designed these stamps (maybe it really was Fraser-Brunner), please let me know.



Upcoming Stamp Shows, Fairs, & Exhibitions



We will publish in every other issue of *Flight* a list of upcoming stamp shows, fairs, exhibitions, etc. that may be of interest to BSS members. The next list will be in the Sept. 2026 *Flight*. Let me know if there are any important shows in 2026 or 2027 not listed here, and we will list them in the Sept. 2026 *Flight*. Ed.



KEMPTON PARK, 20–21 March 2026, Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road East, Sunbury On Thames, TW16 5AQ

Boston 2026 World Expo, 23–30 March 2026, Boston Convention and Exposition Center, Boston, Massachusetts, USA. Executive Director: mark.butterline@boston2026.org. Website: <https://www.boston2026.org>

STAFFORD, 15–16 May 2026, Staffordshire County Showground, ST18 0BD.

KEMPTON PARK, 26–27 June 2026, Kempton Park Racecourse, Staines Road East, Sunbury On Thames, TW16 5AQ.

PhilLat26 International Exhibition, 26–29 June 2026, Riga Railway Museum & Latvian Nat'l. Library, Riga, Latvia.

MACAO 2026 Specialized World Stamp Exhibition, 26 June–1 July 2026, Macao, China.
Website: <https://www.macao2026.org.mo>

YORK RACECOURSE, 17–18 July 2026. Racecourse, YO23 1EX.

Great American Stamp Show (GASS), 12–15 August 2026, Donald Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont, Illinois, USA.

BIRDPEX 10, 28–30 August 2026, LouvExpo, La Louvière, Belgium. Website: birdpex.com. You can also contact Koenraad Bracke (kobra22@telenet.be)

Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, 4–6 September 2026, Jubilee Hotel, Nottingham.

POSTEX, October 2026, National stamp show in the Netherlands.

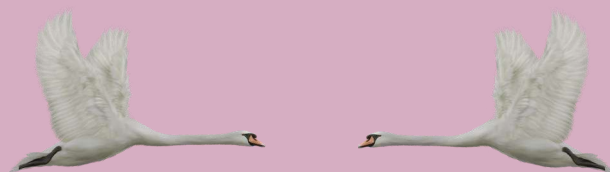
STAMPEX, 28–31 October 2026, Business Design Centre, Islington, London, N1 0QH.

STAFFORD, 6–7 November 2026, Staffordshire County Showground. ST18 0BD.

PHILATAIPEI World Stamp Exhibition, 19–24 November 2026, Taipei City, Taiwan. U.S. Commissioner Vesma Grinfelds: vesmag@gmail.com. FIP Patronage World Stamp Exhibition.

LICHFIELD, 5 December 2026, Boley Park Community Hall, Ryknild Street, Lichfield, WS14 9XU (off A51).

Belgrade 2027 International Exhibition, 12–17 November 2027, Belgrade, Serbia.



A New Bird Stamp Society Treasurer is needed before the next *Flight*

As we reported in the December 2025 *Flight*, our long-time and tried-and-true Treasurer, Graham Horsman, is stepping down (although he will remain the BSS Membership Secretary). Since the BSS Accounts are in a UK Bank, the BSS urgently needs a UK member to come forward and assume the role of BSS Treasurer. Graham will advise and assist you during a period of transition. Contact General Secretary Mel West (secretary@birdstampsociety.org.uk) to enquire about this important position in the Bird Stamp Society. All of us thank you in advance for volunteering to help the BSS.



[Note: First person comments in this article are from Graham Horsman]

FORGERIES. I have, over the years, become interested in forgeries & replicas. Most philatelists will be aware of infamous forgers — Madame Joseph who specialised in forged postmarks. Philip Spiro was head of the Spiro Brothers printing firm in Hamburg, and in about 1864 they started to produce forgeries of numerous stamps including the 1875 Japanese bird stamps.

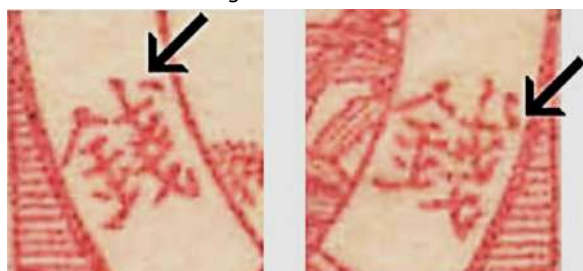
The 1875 Japanese 12 Sen, 15 sen, & 45 sen bird stamps

Below are examples of a genuine 12 sen Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*), 15 sen White Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*), and 45 sen Eurasian Goshawk (*Astur gentilis*). These bird names are from *birdtheme.org*. I must stress that the names in *Collect Birds on Stamps 5th Edition* are listed as questionable: "12s Bean Goose?", "15s Pied Wagtail?", and "45s Northern Goshawk?".

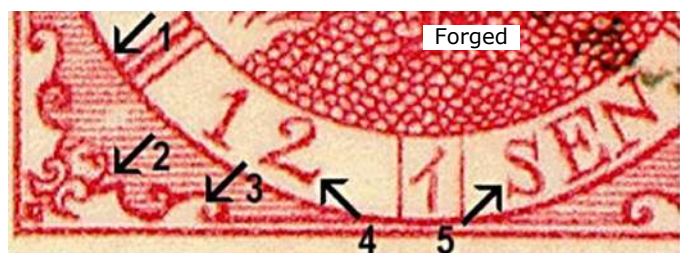
A must read is <https://stampforgeries.com/spud-papers/>. This gives brilliant examples of all 3 of the 1875 Japanese bird stamps.



According to <https://japanstamps.org/2021/03/09/cherry-blossoms-bird-issue-12-sen-rose-with-syllabics>, the 12 sen secret marks are shown below. The left character has a horizontal mark with one elongated dot. The right character has a vertical mark with two distinct elongated dots.



In addition to these secret marks, there are other differences between the genuine and forged 12 sen stamps, as shown below.



1. Genuine: The outer circle frame is two lines very close together. This does not show up well in scans, but is clear under magnification. **Forgeries:** The frame has a single heavier line.

2. Genuine: There isn't any shading in this space. **Forgeries:** The shading line or lines are present.

3. Genuine: The corner scrolls end in solid balls and never touch the outer frame. **Forgeries:** The scrolls usually end in open curls and are close to, or touch, the outer frame.

4. Genuine: The bottom stroke of both the upper and lower '2' ends in a sharp upward stroke. **Forgeries:** The upward stroke is often missing or is much shorter.

5. Genuine: The 'S' in each 'SEN' is noticeably smaller than the 'E' or 'N'. **Forgeries:** The three letters are about the same size.

According to <https://japanstamps.org/2021/03/03/cherry-blossoms-bird-issue-15-sen-lilac-with-syllabics>, The 15 sen stamp has two secret marks near the top and three near the bottom. They are listed below. They are not easy to see, and this makes it difficult to detect a forgery.

Top (below): The arrows show that the left side has a single curved line in the scrollwork but the right side has two curved lines.



Bottom (above): The far left side does not have a line between the scroll and the outer circle frame; the far right side has a line. Underneath the number '1' on the left side, there is no line joining the scroll and the bottom circle frame underneath the number '1'; underneath the letter 'N' on the right side, there is a line joining the scroll and the bottom circle frame. Finally, underneath the '5' on the left side, there is a short line below the outer circle frame, but there is no short line below the outer circle frame underneath the 'E' on the right side.

In addition to these secret marks, there are other differences between the genuine and forged 12 sen stamps, as shown below.



1. Genuine: The bird's tail ends in a V-shaped notch. **Forgeries:** The end of the tail is either squared or rounded.

2. Genuine: The bird's wing ends in a V-shaped notch. **Forgeries:** The small wing tip is missing.

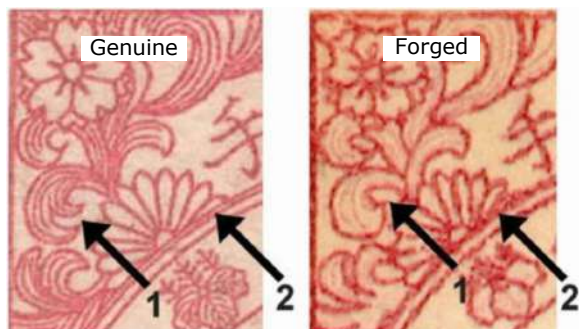
3. Genuine: The tips of these two leaves on the right extend to the inner frame. **Forgeries:** The tips of these two leaves are pointed do not extend to the inner frame.

4. Genuine: There is space between the bottom circle frame and the outer frame. **Forgeries:** In most forgeries, the bottom frame touches the circle.

According to <https://japanstamps.org/2021/02/26/cherry-blossoms-bird-issue-45-sen-carmine-with-syllabics/>, the secret marks on the 45 sen stamp are that the left flower shown with an arrow below has 11 petals but the right flower has only 10 petals.



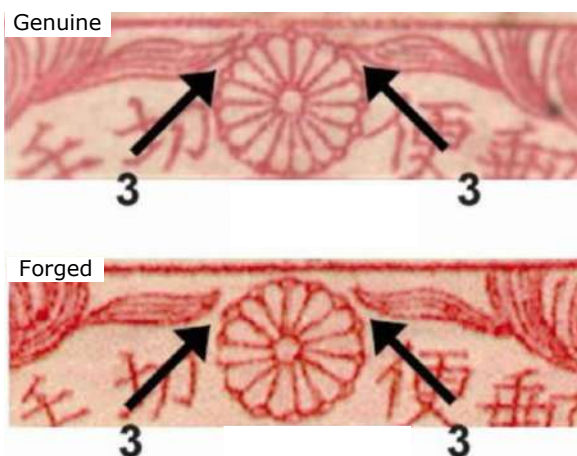
In addition to the flower-petal secret marks, there are other differences between the genuine and forged 45 sen stamps, as shown below.



1. Genuine: The larger scroll leaves just below the upper left and upper right cherry blossoms are split and have two tips.

Forgeries: Most forgeries have only one tip.

2. Genuine: The outer circle frame consists of three lines, with the outer two very close together. **Forgeries:** The outer circle frame consists of only two lines, with the closely-spaced lines combined into one.



\$3. Genuine: The leaves on each side of the chrysanthemum crest either touch the crest or are very close to touching it.

Forgeries: In many, but not all, forgeries there is a clear space between the leaves and the crest.

<https://stampforgeries.com/forged-stamps-of-japan/>

Forgery wise, Japan is complicated. Especially the classic period. Numerous forgers have taken a stab at Japan, making it difficult – but not impossible – waters to navigate.

In its 2nd edition, the Forgery CD from the International Society of Japanese Philately contains 2300 pages with more than 2800 images. It is an indispensable resource for learning about the forgeries of Japan, and is only \$50.

The following are forgeries of these stamps advertised online in December 2025. See if you can spot the telltale flaws.



REPLICAS. There is a very vibrant market for replica items, which are perfectly legal providing they are advertised and sold as such. I only became aware that replicas existed after I set up searches on a well known internet site for some of the more elusive and highly catalogued bird issues.

The first replica stamp I came across was the Belize 60c Painted Bunting SG822a, which was a 1988 addition to the 1985 Audubon set. This stamp was intended for internal use only. However, just as we can use GB 1st class stamps in combination with other GB stamps to send mail to overseas locations, so could Belize residents do likewise.

The picture below shows the real stamp on the left and a replica to the right. Unless you have the real stamp, the identification of the differences is not easy. There are three differences that I have found. First, the replica is on greyish paper. Second, more importantly, is that the bird at the top in the genuine stamp has some thin grass in its beak, and this is missing from the replica. Finally, the leaves at the bottom left are more defined and greener than those on the replica.



Real Stamp

Replica

The catalogue value for this stamp in Gibbons is a joke and understated in the extreme. There is absolutely no point in producing a replica of a stamp that has a minimal catalogue value — you might as well buy the real thing. Mel West provided catalogue values for this stamp from one of his many catalogues, which lists this stamp at €3,000 for mint and €1,000 for used.

The replicas come from various sellers — mostly European. There is no legal requirement to mark these stamps as replicas, and there are copies with and without the word REPLICAS on the gum side and/or in the online description. An unscrupulous dealer might buy replicas and try to sell them as the real thing.

My next find was one of the Liberian 1941 'First Flight' overprints. I have lost count of the number of forgeries of one of these stamps that appear on internet sites that are claimed to be the real thing. The 50c on 1c Tawny Eagle SG594 is the most valuable, catalogued at about £2,700 for an unmounted copy. I would recommend that this be purchased only with some form of certification.

I reported an internet seller who was offering the Liberian First Flight 50c on 1c stamp as real when in fact it was clearly a forgery. I even sent this seller a picture of my stamp along with the certificate, but he did not respond nor did he remove this item.



Back of real stamp

Real stamp

Werner's Replica

Werner's replicas, or Wernerities, began to be popular around 2000. Thanks to them it was possible for the first time to obtain a copy of a stamp that looked like a missing rarity in a collector's album, and at the same time could not be used to deceive collectors, as is the case with high-quality hand-printed forgeries (e.g., from the work of the Sperati forger).

The set of Chinese stamps below (SG100–104) is catalogued £6,000 (give or take) and the main differences are that the paper used for the replicas is much thicker than the real stamps. The overprints are also much bolder on the real stamps, and the perforations tend to be less well defined on the real stamps. The replica set can be found on internet sites for \$50.



Real Stamps

Werner's Replicas

A First Day Cover with First-Time-on-a-Stamp Birds

Steve Strauss

According to *birdtheme.org*, as of mid-December 2025 there are 4,518 birds on stamps (this includes some extinct and prehistoric birds). I have learnt, mostly through private correspondence, that a philatelic goal of some Bird Stamp Society members is to obtain at least one stamp for every bird species. That is one of my goals too, although not my only goal. As I write this article for the March 2026 *Flight*, I have 3,685 bird species, each on at least one stamp. So, I still have 800+ birds to collect in the months/years ahead.

Another one of my goals is to collect the *first* stamp ever issued for each bird species (i.e., for all 4,518 of them, as of this writing). That will be much more difficult to achieve for three reasons. In the first place, I would have to *know* the first stamp issued for every bird, and that is not a trivial task.⁵ Second, older bird stamps can be very expensive or not readily available. Finally, one must avoid forgeries when shopping for older stamps, and determining their authenticity using a philatelic expert can also be expensive.

Here are a few examples of first-time-on-a-stamp birds that are difficult to collect. The 1875 Japan 3v bird stamps are expensive, and the market is fraught with forgeries that are difficult to detect without consulting an expert, as Graham Horsman and I discuss on page 20 in this *Flight*. Other examples are the 1854 Western Australia Black Swan 3v set, for which many forgeries are on the market.

I have started to collect FDCs with at least one first-time-on-a-stamp bird. Some have more than one. As I stated above, there is no complete list of first-time-on-a-stamp bird stamps at this time, so my collecting has been, shall we say, random. Nevertheless, I have kept track of how many first-time birds are on the FDCs in my collection. Right now I have 564 first-time birds on 336 FDCs. I have shown some of my FDCs in previous *Flights*. Another one is shown below, a Mauritius FDC with 15 stamps issued on 16 March 1965 and mailed from the Phoenix, Mauritius, post office, to [name withheld] on St. Paul's Road in Phoenix. Except for the Dodo, the other birds are first-time-on-a-stamp birds. Wow, 14 first-time birds on a single FDC! The birds are (left-to-right, row by row):

1. Broad-billed Parrot (*Lophopsittacus mauritianus*); 'BROAD-BILLED PARROT/PERROQUET de MAURICE (EXTINCT)'
2. Red Rail (*Aphanapteryx bonasia*); 'RED RAIL/POULE ROUGE (EXTINCT)'
3. Rodrigues Solitaire (*Pezophaps solitaria*); 'RODRIGUES SOLITAIRE (EXTINCT)'
4. Dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*); 'MAURITIUS DODO (EXTINCT)'; N.B. The Dodo was only found on Mauritius
5. Mauritius Blue Pigeon (*Alectroenas nitidissimus*); 'DUTCH PIGEON/PIGEON HOLLANDAIS (EXTINCT)'
6. Mauritius Bulbul (*Hypsipetes olivaceus*); 'MASCARENE BUL-BUL/MERLE'
7. Pink Pigeon (*Nesoenas mayeri*); 'PINK PIGEON/PIGEON des MARES'
8. Mauritius Kestrel (*Falco punctatus*, Mauritius National Bird); 'KESTREL/MANGUER de POULES'
9. Mauritius Cuckooshrike (*Lalage typica*); 'CUCKOO-SHRIKE/MERLE CUISINIER'
10. Echo Parakeet (*Psittacula eques*, one of the rarest parrots in the world); 'PARRAKEET/GROSSE CATEAU VERTE'
11. Mauritius Grey White-eye (*Zosterops mauritianus*); 'GREY WHITE-EYE/OISEAU MANIOC'
12. Mauritius Fody (*Foudia rubra*); 'MAURITIUS FODY/COLIN'
13. Mascarene Paradise Flycatcher (*Terpsiphone bourbonnensis*); 'PARADISE FLYCATCHER/COQ des BOIS'
14. Mauritius Olive White-eye (*Zosterops chloronothos*); 'OLIVE WHITE-EYE/OISEAU PIT-PIT'
15. Rodrigues Fody (*Foudia flavicans*); 'RODRIGUES FODY/OISEAU JAUNE'



⁵. Mel West and I began a 'Fur Toes Birds on Stamps' project in 2023. Our goal is to create a list of the first stamp to depict each and every bird that has ever appeared on a stamp (i.e. the list will eventually have 4,518 entries). As of today our project is approximately half complete.

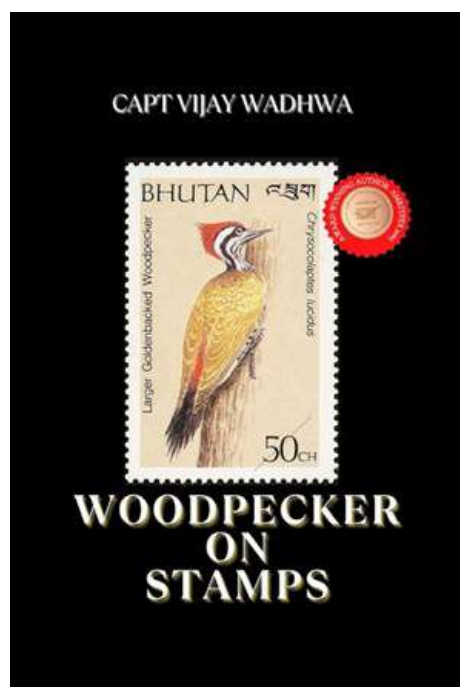
A Series of Digital Books from India by Capt. Vijay Wadhwa

Koenraad
Bracke

[Part of this article is reprinted, with permission, from the March 2024 issue of PAGO Magazine, pages 59–60. Ed.]

Woodpeckers on Stamps

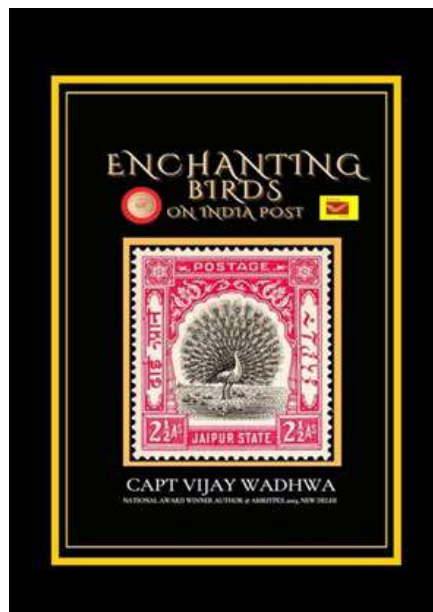
Stamp collectors worldwide have long appreciated the beauty and significance of woodpeckers. These birds are featured on stamps from many different countries, including Canada, Japan, and Brazil. Each stamp tells a unique story about these fascinating birds, showcasing their beauty, behaviour, and importance in our natural world. Author Capt. Vijay Wadhwa has compiled all these stamps issued by various UPU member countries in his book, *Woodpecker on Stamps*. It includes detailed information on the bird's English common name, its scientific name, a complete list of 239 woodpecker species, and the 94 species commemorated on stamps from many different countries.



Enchanting Birds on India Post

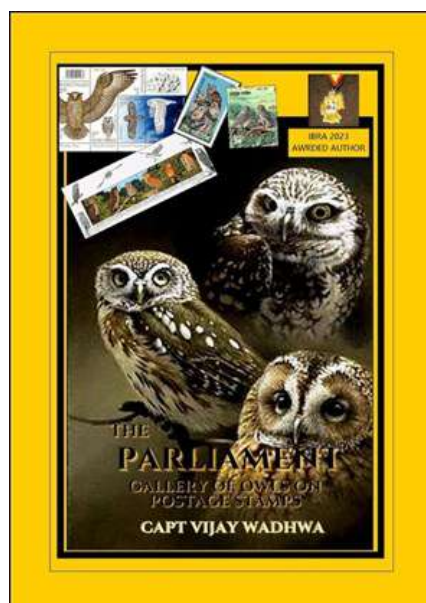
India Post has issued a series of stamps featuring native and migratory birds. These stamps not only celebrate the beauty and diversity of India's birdlife but also help raise awareness of the need to protect these species for future generations. As stamp collecting remains a popular hobby in India and around the world, bird stamps are likely to remain a cherished and important subject for many years to come, and India Post continues to lead the way in raising awareness among the masses of various stamps through this issue. This led to the need to compile all officially issued

stamps, maximum cards, and various post-cards (from 1931 to 2022) into this single book to serve as a reference for all collectors, hobbyists, and philatelists.



The Parliament — Gallery of Owls on Postage Stamps

Owls on postage stamps testify to the enduring fascination owls hold for human culture. Through its rich visual content, inspired stories, and meticulously researched information, this book aims to foster a deeper appreciation for these magnificent birds, their role in myth and symbolism, and the art of stamp design. An attempt has been made to list all postage stamps issued up to 2022 for each owl species (with the exception of some commemorative blocks featuring mixed species or other birds or animals).



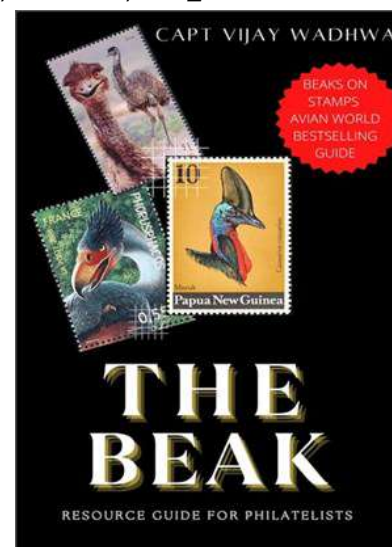
Now That's Fascinating — Birdlife on Stamps

This book celebrates the world of feathered wonders on planet Earth through countless postage stamps. Nearly every aspect of the avian world has been designed, sketched, and painted by renowned artists from many countries. It is an attempt to connect the world of birds with the world of philately and to explore fascinating facts about the avian world. This book aims to help nature lovers and philatelists, collectors, schoolchildren, and every reader gain new insights into the avian wonders that nature has bestowed upon humankind.



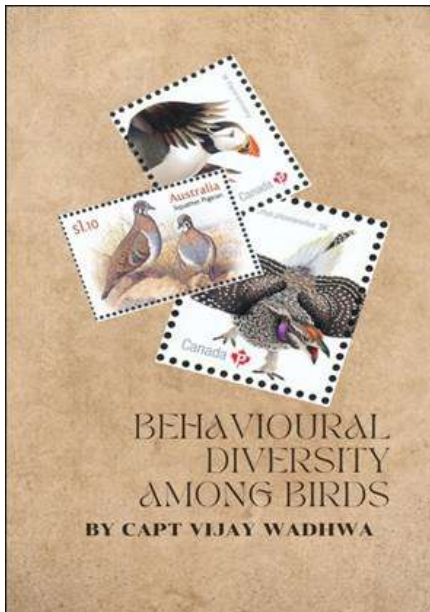
The Beak — Resource Guide for Philatelists

Have you ever wondered why birds' beaks look so different? The author has not only written a book about bird beaks, but has also curated an exhibit on the subject: "Evolve... A Beak at Evolution." The exhibit is also available online: www.paleophilatelie.eu/exhibitions/beak_evolution.html.



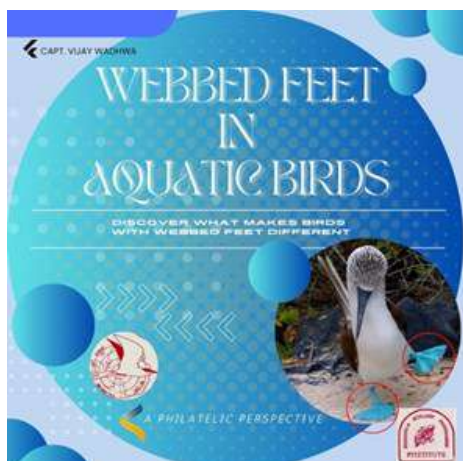
Behavioural Diversity Among Birds

Behaviour is fundamental to living organisms: Bacteria actively move in response to chemical gradients; amoebas change body shape to wrap around food; and daffodils reorient flowers to face downwind in moderate winds. Bird diversity, with ca. 11,000 species alive today, is greater than that of mammals (ca. 6,400 species) or amphibians (ca. 9,000 species), and nearly as great as that of reptiles (ca. 12,000 species). This book is about the different behaviors exhibited by birds, both between and within populations.



Webbed Feet in Aquatic Birds

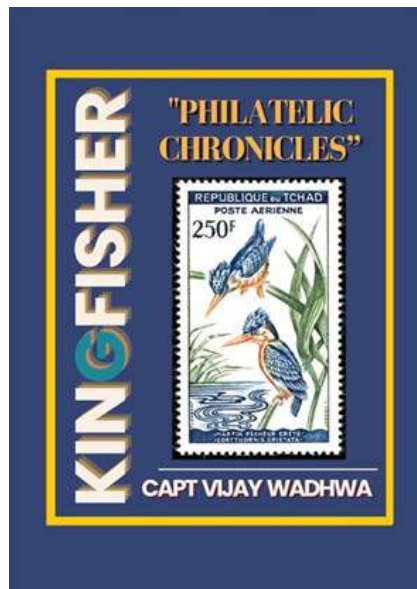
This is a multidisciplinary exploration into the evolutionary, anatomical, ecological, and conservation dimensions of webbed feet in marine birds — an evolutionary innovation marked by interdigital membranes that confer hydrodynamic efficiency. The book explains how variations in webbing are correlated with different foraging strategies, diving depths, and ecological zones.



Kingfisher — Philatelic Chronicles

In the enchanting realm where avian wonders meet the intricate world of philately, one name has soared to eminence — the prolific author and philatelist, Capt. Vijay Wadhwa. With an unwavering passion for birds, he has woven tales of winged splendor through the pages of ten captivating volumes, the latest being the richly illustrated *Kingfisher — Philatelic Chronicles*.

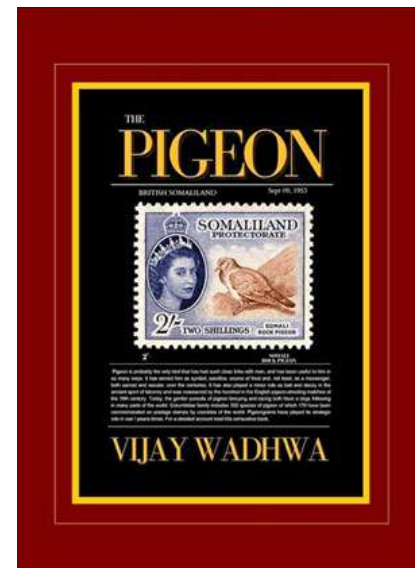
This book delves into the fascinating realm of one of nature's most captivating bird families. Kingfishers are renowned for their vibrant plumage and remarkable fishing prowess. Approximately 68 species, out of a total of 116 species alive today, have left an indelible mark on the world of postage stamps.



The Pigeon

Finally, there is a book about another important group of birds, pigeons and doves, birds with extensive historical ties to humanity. They have served various roles as a symbol, sacrifice, messenger, and food source.

Despite their significant contributions throughout the centuries, "the pigeon" is now often viewed as a civic nuisance in urban areas. These birds have a long-standing affinity with humans, playing roles in ancient oracles and serving as messengers in wars. While the white dove remains a symbol of peace, the modern city pigeon faces prejudice, although it has adapted well to urban life. This book explores the rich history of all 179 species of pigeons and doves commemorated on postage stamps globally, shedding light on their characteristics, historical significance, and their role in post and peace, making it a valuable resource for bird enthusiasts and avian philatelists.



These nine books are all relatively new, having been published between April 2023 and January 2026. Printing these extensive works (they range from 150 to 380 pages) would have been very expensive. Digital distribution has kept costs down and has allowed for faster, worldwide distribution. They can be found as Kindle Editions at www.amazon.com, and for each of them some sample pages can be viewed.

Four of the books are free if you are a Kindle Unlimited subscriber: *Woodpecker on Stamps*; *Enchanting Birds on India Post*; *Now That's Fascinating*; and *The Beak*.



Capt. Vijay Kumar Wadhwa

The author of these books, Vijay Kumar Wadhwa, was commissioned in the Indian Army in 1978. After leaving the army, he pursued a career in banking, and retired as an Assistant General Manager. Since 2016 he has pursued his childhood hobby of philately. He has participated in, and has won awards at, int'l. philatelic exhibitions, including India's first ever virtual philatelic exhibition, Philavirtu 2022, and SAVPEX 2020 (South Africa), FILANANIAS 2020 (Philippines); SEAPEX 2021 (USA); JUBILLEPEX 2021 and BANGABANDHU 2021 (Bangladesh), BALIPHEX 2021 (Indonesia), EMIRATES 2021 (Dubai); and CAPEX 2022. His publisher is Rainbow Publications, India.

Karen Mounsey-Smith (née Odiam) — Graphic Artist, Illustrator, and Bird Stamp Designer

Steve Strauss



Karen Mounsey-Smith
[photo: www.linkedin.com]

One of the last two stamps in my *Hanging Bird Nests on Bird Stamps* article in the December 2025 *Flight* is the 2021 South Africa Sociable Weaver stamp that was on the 2v Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park MS shown below. At that time, I learnt from collect.com that the designer was Karen Odiam, but I could not find out anything more about her, or what other bird stamps she designed. There was literally nothing on the internet about Karen Odiam. During the past few months, a fellow birder in New Zealand was able to find out that in 2010 she moved with her family from New Zealand to Brisbane, Australia, which is where she started Gidgeymo Illustrations as Karen Mounsey-Smith.

"My chosen career path chose me really. I just love to draw — all the time. Originally I was going to be an entomologist or do veterinary science, but my heart over ruled my head and I decided to follow my passion and chose art and design."

"My first inde book venture was *Bertie Beetle's Birthday Surprise*. I was both the author and illustrator. I was only 8, and I still have the book."



South Africa, 12 May 2001, part of an 8v joint issue with Botswana



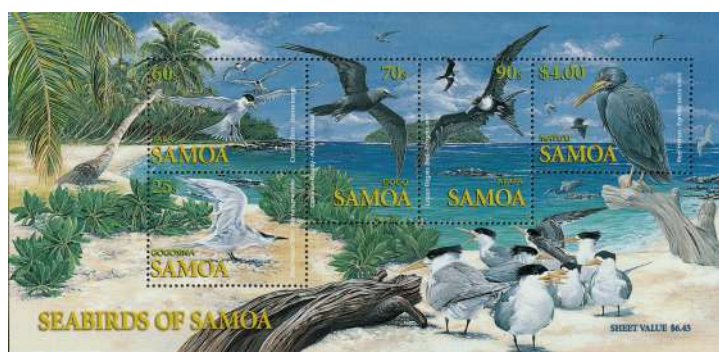
Sociable Weavers (*Philetarius socius*)

The 2001 South Africa joint issue with Botswana was offset lithography printed by Cartor Security Printing. The stamps are 40 × 30 mm, perf 13 × 13¼. Unlike many joint issues, only four of the eight stamps were issued by South Africa, with the other four stamps issued by Botswana.

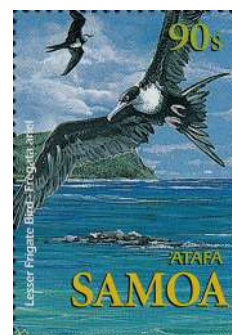
"Music and exercise help to clear my mind of all the noise and crazy mish-mash of ideas that come with a new project."

"I spend a lot of time researching and doing thumbnail sketches before I begin the more final ideas."

Karen has also designed bird stamps for Samoa in 2004 and 2011 and for Pitcairn Islands in 2004.



Samoa, 16 June 2004, Seabirds of Samoa, offset lithography printed by Wyatt & Wilson, New Zealand, 42 × 30 or 30 × 44 mm, perf. 13



The birds are: 25s Black-naped Tern (*Sterna sumatrana*); 60s Greater Crested Tern (*Thalasseus bergii*); 70s Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*); 90s Lesser Frigatebird (*Fregata ariel*); and \$4.00 Pacific Reef Heron (*Egretta sacra*).



Samoa, 25 May 2011, World Wildlife Fund, Many-coloured Fruit Dove (*Ptilinopus perousii*) offset lithography printed by Southern Colour Print, Dunedin, New Zealand, 43 × 30 mm, perf. 14



Karen Mounsey-Smith also designed a set of Christmas stamps for New Zealand in 2011 (no birds). And before she changed her name and moved to Brisbane, Karen Odiam designed several dozen stamps other than bird stamps for New Zealand (1993, 1994, and 1995), Samoa (2003), and Vanuatu (2003).



Pitcairn Islands, 17 November 2004, World Wildlife Fund, Murphy's Petrel (*Pterodroma ultima*), offset lithography printed by Southern Colour Print, Dunedin, New Zealand, 37.5 × 26 and 26 × 37.5 mm, perf. 14½



Countries That Have Issued the Greatest Number of Bird Stamps

As of January 2026, according to birdtheme.org, the countries that have issued the greatest number of bird stamps (not including the Stamp-erija countries listed at the bottom¹), are:

1	643	Gambia	14	345	Ghana	32	240	Fiji
2	641	Australia	15	337	Marshall Island	33	238	New Caledonia
3	564	Guyana	16	334	Palau	34	230	Colombia
4	491	Surinam	17	332	Dominica	35	229	Bulgaria
5	476	Romania	18	331	Grenada Grenadines	36	229	Iceland
6	475	North Korea	19	323	St Vincent & Grenadines	37	229	Netherlands
7	469	Cuba	20	320	Taiwan	38	226	Papua New Guinea
8	429	Grenada	21	313	Caribbean Netherlands	39	223	Bhutan
9	426	Japan	22	310	Philippines	40	221	Lesotho
10	412	USA	23	301	Uganda			
11	407	Antigua & Barbuda	24	293	Jersey			
12	383	Falkland Islands	25	269	Botswana			
13	355	New Zealand	26	264	Belarus			
			27 ²	261	French Antarctic Territory			
			28	255	Ecuador			
			29	253	Zambia			
			30	247	Mongolia			
			31	244	Namibia			

1. This list excludes the overly-prolific Stamp-erija countries Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoro Islands, Congo (DR), Djibouti, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Maldive Islands, Mozambique, Niger, St. Thomas & Prince Islands (São Tomé), Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Tanzania, and Togo.

2. The literal translation of *Terres Australes et Antarctique Françaises* is French Southern and Antarctic Lands.

Swallow & Swiftlet Bird Nests on Bird Stamps

Bird Nests on Stamps, Part 3 Steve Strauss

In this part of my survey of *Bird Nests on Stamps* I decided to limit my search to those birds that build "adherent" nests that are fastened to (i.e., adhere to) vertical surfaces such as rocky cliffs, cave walls, under bridge eaves, or on buildings. They are usually highly visible.

Some swallows, including some martins, and some swifts and swiftlets build those kinds of nests. Swifts and swallows look similar superficially but are not closely related (swifts are more closely related to hummingbirds). Swifts have long, thin, sickle-shaped wings and spend nearly all of their time in the air. Swallows have more triangular wings and are often seen perching on wires or on buildings.

The Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) is the most widespread species of swallow in the world (see map). Not surprisingly, it is featured on many stamps. As of this writing, the Barn Swallow has appeared on 209 stamps from no fewer than 96 postal authorities. I found nests on 11 Barn Swallow stamps, which are shown below. The adherent cup-shaped nest is built using mud pellets collected by both parents with their beaks, and is typically lined with grass and feathers. Up to 1,000 mud pellets are used to build the nest.



green: resident/breeding
blue: passage/non-breeding



source: textbooktravel.com



Anguilla 1985



Anguilla 1980



Comorro Islands 1985



Central African Rep. 1985



Grenada Grenadines 1985



Romania 1959



(left) Georgia 1996



(right) Iran 1971



←Laos 1982

USSR 1989→



(below) USA 1987



The Western House Martin (*Delichon urbica*) was originally a cliff & cave nester, and some cliff-nesting colonies still exist, with nests built below an overhanging rock. It now largely uses human structures such as bridges and houses. Unlike the Barn Swallow, it uses the outside of inhabited buildings, rather than the inside of barns.

Nests are built at the junction of vertical and horizontal surfaces, so they are strengthened by attachment to both planes. Three stamps with WHM nests, and a photo of a nest, are shown below.



Belgium 2004



Andorra (French) 1997



photo: Claus Ableiter



←North Korea 2001

photo: Tony Gazso



Lesotho 1985

On the right are a photo and a stamp showing the nests of American Cliff Swallows

(*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*). They are gourd-shaped structures built from over 1,000 mud pellets, featuring small, often downward-facing entrance holes, constructed in large, tightly packed colonies on vertical surfaces like cliffs, bridges, culverts, and building eaves, usually under a horizontal overhang for protection.

Swiftlets are known for constructing nests in caves using plant material and their saliva, or, in the case of the Edible-nest Swiftlet, entirely from saliva.

Atiu Swiftlet nests are not commonly harvested for consumption. They are primarily protected for their ecological role in the island's ecosystems. Two Cook Island stamps with their nests are shown below.



Edible-nest Swiftlet (*Aerodramus fuciphagus*) Vietnam 1994



Atiu Swiftlet (*Aerodramus sawtelli*)

Cook Islands 2005



Cook Islands 2007

The last three adherent swiftlet nests on stamps that I found are shown below.

Black-nest Swiftlet (*Aerodramus maximus*) Malaysia 2019



Christmas Island Swiftlet (*Collocalia natalis*) Christmas Island 1982



Seychelles Swiftlet (*Aerodramus elaphrus*) Seychelles 1979-1980

I found a favourite bird stamp quite by accident – Sara Parr

Hi Steve,

In an attempt to keep my stamp collecting under control, I decided at some stage to limit my collection to Commonwealth stamps pre-1985, which generally means stopping at the 200th Anniversary Audubon stamps. Whilst this is a very neat arrangement, it clearly doesn't end there as I have picked for my current favourite stamp a 1947 stamp from French West Africa. Such is the joy of breaking your own rules!

I am particularly attracted to the artwork on stamps and I love the French colonial stamps from the 1950/60s, albeit the French Antarctic stamps are wonderful to the present day. I also love that stamps can identify a particular stage in a country's history, through name and currency changes and particularly enjoy a series of the same stamp with different overprints.

And so to my favourite stamp. Fabulous artwork to start. The only bird stamp from French West Africa, which I subsequently found to be "a federation of 8 French colonial territories", who issued postage stamps from 1895 to 1959. This particular stamp has "Niger" at its base which identifies it as having been issued whilst Niger was part of that federation, prior to its independence in 1958. The bird is the Great Egret.



The added attraction of this stamp is that I found it in a stamp shop in Bridlington. No searching the internet, not part of a bird stamp collection, just the thrill of finding a stamp I hadn't been looking for and knew nothing about. A bit like a self-found bird in the field, completely memorable.

Sarah Parr

Steve,

I'm a big fan of bird stamps that depict species under threat, and this one tops the bill:

The Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea*

One of a set of four stamps from Singapore, featuring critically endangered species, issued in September 2025. This is a beauty, just look at that unique spatulate shaped bill! 'Spoonies', as they are fondly known, are one of the world's rarest waders, and are threatened throughout their migratory and wintering ranges due to tidal flats being reclaimed for coastal development. A number of conservation initiatives are underway to protect the Spoon-billed Sandpiper but their population is still sadly in decline. If interested, take a look at:

Spoon-billed Sandpiper *Calidris pygmaea* Species Factsheet | - BirdLife DataZone

Gilly Christmas



More favourite bird stamps

I do not have a "favourite" bird stamp as such, but there are scores of stamps that stand out for me and of which I am very fond. I have always been an admirer of Swedish and French engraved issues, and so it was a challenge to decide what to put forward here. But I also like owls, so in the end I went for this Eurasian Eagle-Owl from the French Nature Conservation set of 1972. Designed and engraved by Forget, it's superb!

Mel West



As several other contributors to this column have commented, selecting one favourite bird stamp presents a dilemma. Should it be my favourite bird, stamp content or design? For me, design is a major influence as this is probably what attracted me to collect bird stamps in the first place.

Since 1998 I have admired the Namibia bird stamp designs of Helge Denker. Having read an article in Flight of March 2025 I was persuaded to collect them. His illustrations of the species are clear with some allusion to the featured bird's behaviour and often a minimal suggestion of its habitat.

One example is this stamp of a Great Snipe (*Gallinago media*), below right, from the 2021 set of three snipes, in a pose which the male will adopt during the lek when it returns to the northern hemisphere for the breeding season.



With the plethora of bird stamps which has appeared in modern times, it is always satisfying to find older issues of attractively designed stamps, often engraved. My favourite example from my collection is the standard design of the Raggiana Bird of Paradise, above left, which made up the 1931 and 1932 issues of the Territory of New Guinea when under Australian mandate. This classic stamp design, balancing the central fine illustration of the bird with the country and value information, was created by Thomas Harrison and his son of the note printing branch of the Commonwealth Bank, Melbourne.

Graham U'ren

I am an avid watcher of wildlife documentaries and I am left in awe at the stunning plumage and the complex courtship of the Birds-of-paradise. Their names also make me wonder as to how did the King of Saxony and Princess Stephanie's name get associated with these birds.

Maybe members can enlighten me.

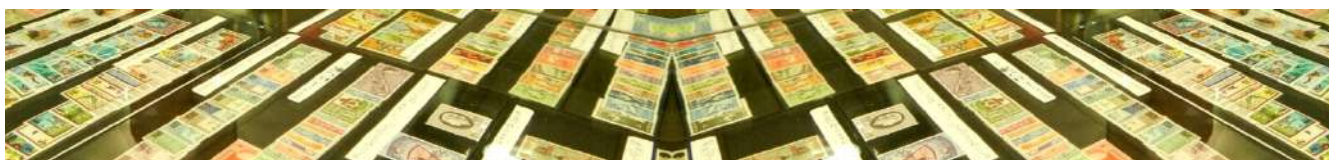
Graham Horsman



Goldie's Bird-of-paradise
Papua New Guinea 1973

[Was "...this one tops the bill" a pun that was intended? Ed.]

The Bird Stamp Society Bourse



The Bird Stamp Society Bourse is a free-of-charge internal market place to enable bird stamp collectors to sell, buy, exchange, or give away philatelic material to BSS members, including bird stamps, covers, whole collections, postal stationery, philatelic equipment or accessories, etc. The operating conditions for the Bourse were published in the September 2022 issue of *Flight*. Read that information first, then send your Bourse ad for the June 2026 *Flight* to editor@birdstampsociety.org.uk.

FOR SALE

Many items from our large collection: We are selling our entire collection of birds stamps and related materials. Please see the printout of our Database, which has been posted on the BSS Website. More than 3500 stamps all issued before 2000 and almost all unmounted mint. Please contact us by email to discuss availability, current prices, shipping, etc.

Contact Jens & Hanne Eriksen: hjerman@gmail.com

WANTED

Sierra Leone, 1992: 750 Northern White-faced Owl + 1000 Blue Cuckooshrike; without dates and in postally used condition.

Sierra Leone, 1999: 100 Crested Malimbe, 200 Superb Sunbird, 300 Canabis's Bunting, 1000 Blue Cuckooshrike, 2000 White-necked Rockfowl; all with imprint 1999 & postally used condition.

Contact Ton Plug: tonplug@essmail.nl

WANTED

Guatemala (1879–1900): Any Resplendent Quetzal issues. Must be in used condition with "mute" (cork) cancellations.

Examples of these cancellations on cover or paper for any early Quetzal issues.

Belgium Buzins: Examples of postal stationery — postal cards, change of address cards, etc., in any of the different language combinations. Mint and used.

WILLING TO TRADE

My Collecting Interests: Bird covers and postal stationery (esp. postally used as well as FDCs, bird cachets and cancellations), Buzins on cover, any early Latin American issues, Australian KGV's and Irish bird Definitives.

Contact Mel West: melwest48@gmail.com

WILLING TO TRADE

My Collecting Interests: Bird issues from Commonwealth and European countries but no poultry or cartoon birds.

Contact Charlie Cowan: charlescowan@hotmail.com

WILLING TO TRADE

My Collecting Interests: Worldwide birds except poultry, cartoon, and stylized birds. Predominantly mint. Mini-sheets, souvenir sheets, FDCs & selected issues from Stamperija. Also, prehistoric birds, art and bird stamps, Lundy Island, and a separate collection of doves.

Contact Gilly Christmas: gillychristmas@btinternet.com

WANTED

Mint postal stationery: Anguilla 1990, aerogramme 40c Yellow-crowned Night Heron; Botswana 1997, aerogrammes 40t and P1.40 — Barn Owl; Romania 1968, PSE 55b CIC meeting, Great White Pelican; Sierra Leone 2000, PSE 300l Cabanis Bunting; Sierra Leone 2003, 1000l Blue Cuckooshrike; Ukraine 2013, PSE 2h Kiev Zoo, Crowned Crane.

FOR SALE

Benin 2009 African Pygmy Goose 300f surcharge on 50f Dahomey (cat. £80+), €7 + postage. For other items for sale or exchange:

Contact Rob Oliver: roboliver1@gmail.com

WANTED

Solomon Islands, 1939: KGV FDC with Melanesian Megapode 2/6 stamp (other stamps from the 13v set OK; addressed and posted preferred).

Austria, 1925: FDC with any one or more of the 7v definitive Golden Eagle stamps.

Liechtenstein, 1939: FDC with 15r Black-headed Gull and/or 20r European Herring Gull and/or 30r or 50r Common Buzzard stamps (other stamps from the 7v set OK; posted preferred).

Contact Steve Strauss: stevenstrauss@colostate.edu

WILLING TO TRADE

Having recently retired from stamp exhibiting on the theme of falconry, my main interest now is for "Travelling birds" to create collectable covers which become postal history. I plot these covers on my google map of Travelling birds (tinyurl.com/34p5h4xs). If you would like to exchange bird covers with VeraBird, please...

Contact Vera Radnell: veradnell@gmail.com

FOR SALE

Complete set: 12 USA Nature of America sheets 1999–2010 (Sonoran Desert; Pacific Coast Rainforest; Great Plains Prairie; Longleaf Pine Forest; Arctic Tundra; Pacific Coral Reef; Northeast Deciduous Forest; Southern Florida Wetland; Alpine Tundra; Great Lakes Dunes; Kelp Forest; Hawaiian Rainforest). Each sheet has ten stamps, 42 of which show birds, with others in surrounds. £50.

WANTED

1) GB 1966 British Birds block of 4 with missing colours.

2) Ethiopia 1919 12g Ostrich with 1926 overprint with Amharic numbers spelled out:

አንድ ግርሽ

Contact Graham U'ren:

oreo@fion.co.uk

1 guerche



Hedwig
and I want
to hear
from you!

Yes, we do!
So send us
something
to put on the
Bourse page
in the June
2026 *Flight*.

It's Free!



Hedwig and Baldy

Corrections, Addenda, and Notes Added in Proof

Note: The *Flight* editorial office welcomes any and all comments about typos and/or other mistakes in the previous *Flight* from any member of the Bird Stamp Society. Thanks in advance! Ed.

Corrections to New Listings in previous Flights:

Flight Mar 2025, page 8:

China (PR)	25.5.24	Lake Chao Hu 3v.
1y20	Pallas's Gull	<i>Ichthyaetus ichthyaetus</i>
1y20	Oriental Stork	<i>Ciconia boyciana</i> (was correct)
1y20	unidentified Gulls	—

Flight Sep 2025 page 10, Japan: correct **issue date** of Or. Magpie from 16 Jul to **18 Sep 2025**

Dec 2025 *Flight*, page 16, Korea South, 17.9.25:
2 identical stamps, face value 430w or, in MS, **1800w**, **species:**
Red-crowned Crane *Grus japonensis*

add to *Flight* Dec 2025, page 17, Mexico: **issue date:** 19 Sep 2025, and **issue:** Biosphere reserve 'El Triunfo'

Tino Mischler

New Bird Stamp Society Members:

We welcome the newest members of the Bird Stamp Society, Debi Knight, Geoffrey Dobson, Ralph Jones, Ian Wojcik, Jane Holmes, Robert Moll, and Christopher Baden. We hope that your memberships will be both worthwhile and longlasting.

In addition, feel free to share any stories about the latest bird stamps in your collection with anyone whose email address is listed on the Bourse page. No trading, buying, or selling is necessary. Just share a bird stamp story.

Graham Horsman, Membership Secretary

AviList taxonomy update:

For the Fur Toes Project that Mel West and I are working on, I determined the Fur Toes stamp for the 18 species of Tytonidae owls on stamps. I made that list in November 2023. I just checked the AviList and found that I must now make the following taxonomic changes (they never seem to cease).

First of all, hyphenation and capitalisation: All Bay-owls, Barn-owls, Grass-owls, Masked-owls, and Sooty-owls are now properly named Bay Owls, Barn Owls, Grass Owls, Masked Owls, and Sooty Owls.

The former Congo Bay-owl (*Phodilus prigoginei*) is now properly named Itombwe Owl (*Tyto prigoginei*).

The former Australian Masked-owl (*Tyto novaehollandiae*) is now properly named Australasian Masked Owl (*T. n.*)

The former Moluccan Masked-owl (*Tyto sororcula*) is no longer a full species. It is now a sub-species of Australasian Masked Owl (*T. n. sororcula*).

The former Greater Sooty-owl (*Tyto tenebricosa*) is now properly named Sooty Owl (*T. t.*).

Steve Strauss

Note: All of the 17 Tytonidae owls now on the AviList as full species are on stamps, two *Phodilus* owls and 15 *Tyto* owls.

Corrections to the September 2025 Flight:

The name of **Bernd Wirthmann** was misspelled on pages 3 and 4 (Brent Wirthmann) and on page 8 (Bernt Wirthmann) in the September 2025 *Flight*.

Also, the email address for BIRDPEX 10 should have been *kobra22@telenet.be* (not *telnet.be*). The correct email address is given on page 19 in this *Flight*.

I apologize for these errors, which were brought to my attention last September by Koenraad Bracke. I neglected to include the corrections in the December *Flight*, and for this I am doubly sorry. Ed.



A New Bird Stamp Society Treasurer is needed before the next Flight

As we reported in the December 2025 *Flight*, our long-time and tried-and-true Treasurer, Graham Horsman, is stepping down (although he will remain the BSS Membership Secretary). Since the BSS Accounts are in a UK Bank, the BSS urgently needs a UK member to come forward and assume the role of BSS Treasurer. Graham will advise and assist you during a period of transition. Contact General Secretary Mel West (secretary@birdstampsociety.org.uk) to enquire about this important position in the Bird Stamp Society. All of us thank you in advance for volunteering to help the BSS.



A frequently heard question:

Where can I find the stamps I need?

You can join our Packet Scheme (see the back cover). The BSS operates its own packet scheme within the UK, and if you take up this option available to you as a member, you will receive a packet of ten books with bird stamps every few months. The packets operate on a circuit. When received you select those issues you want, pay the Packet Secretary, and then pass the packet on to the next member. You can also sell some of your own stamps in the packets. Learn more by contacting the Packet Secretary, Philip Cant (packet@birdstampsociety.org.uk). He will tell you all about the Packet Scheme and how you can join it.

Unfortunately, for insurance purposes, the Packet Scheme is only available to BSS members with a UK address.

Please send me a few sentences about your Favourite Bird Stamp. Ed.



Does anyone collect duck decoy stamps? If you do, please consider writing an article about them for *Flight*.



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DO YOU BELONG TO THE BIRD STAMP SOCIETY POSTAL PACKET?

The BSS has an active Postal Packet Scheme, with all sorts of material for sale, including mint and used stamps, sets, minisheets, covers, and larger items.

There are 6-8 packets yearly, each containing 8-10 books of material covering all aspects of bird stamps, including new issues and less common material.

The packet is insured by the Society, so it can be sent by 2nd class post. Sorry, but for insurance reasons the packet is only available to those with UK addresses.

You can sell your own material in the packet, with an 8% commission on items sold going to the BSS. Blank club books are available from the Packet Secretary.

How can you join? Contact the Packet Secretary, Philip Cant, by phone on 01256 415699 or by email on packet@birdstampsociety.org.uk for more details and to get on the BSS Packet Scheme. Why not give it a go?

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