

STAMPS WITH BIRDS EATING FROGS

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It is often cited that one value of amphibians is their voracious eating of flies, mosquitoes, and other bothersome insects, many of which carry diseases that infect humans. It is often overlooked that these soft-bodied vertebrates, particularly the frogs and toads, themselves serve as meals to sustain populations of a variety of other familiar animals and birds.

At least eight nations have not overlooked the fact that a variety of shorebirds dine on frogs, and have so pictured a hapless frog in the beak of such a predator. Usually it is a heron or stork native to the country that is holding the unfortunate frog in its beak.



Ciconia nigra
Belarus Sc#561, 2005



Scopus umbretta
Botswana Sc#314, 1982



Ciconia ciconia
Bulgaria Sc#3328A, 1988



Grus grus
Finland Sc#1053, 1997



Anthropoides paradiseus
Namibia Sc#1052f, 1997



Ardea alba
Nevis Sc#406, 1985



Ardeola ralloides
Russia Sc#4465, 1976

The conclusion here is that in the web of life a species that is a predator may itself become prey to another species.



Nyctanassa violacea
St Vincent Sc#2290i, 1996

NEW ISRAELI STAMP TO BE ISSUED

Israel Post is planning to issue several new stamps on 16 December 2014. One of these is a single stamp commemorating the friendly relationship between Israel and Ecuador that is part of a joint issue of the two countries. Ecuador will be issuing the same design sometime next year.

Ecuador was one of the 33 countries that supported the establishment of the State of Israel during the historic UN General Assembly vote on 29 November 1947. The two countries cooperate in many areas including agriculture and high technology.

The stamp shows two species of orchids, the Bee Orchid (*Ophrys fuciflora*) and the Monkey Orchid (*Dracula simia*). Both are members of the Orchidaceae family.

The Bee Orchid resembles a bee, hence its name. It has an underground egg-shaped part where it accumulates food. It is widespread across much of Europe and the Middle East and grows wild in mountainous areas of Israel, sprouting leaves and tall flowers in early winter. The Bee Orchid serves as the symbol of the Israeli Orchid Society and is one of eight species of wild bee orchids that are known to grow in Israel.

The Monkey Orchid grows on trees in the high forests of Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru. It gets its scientific name from its appearance. *Dracula* refers to its resemblance to the famous Count's fangs, and *simia*, which means monkey, refers to the arrangement of the petals and lip that resembles a monkey's face. It blooms throughout the year.

The stamps are printed by offset in sheets of 15 stamps and five tabs by Cartor Security Printing in France. They measure 40×30 mm. Contact the Israel Philatelic Service for ordering information at www.isrealpost.co.il, or by email at philserv@postil.com.

