

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

As winter winds down, we enter a period when stamp shows, both national and local, are popping up just like the daffodils in my yard. By the time you read this, the annual American Philatelic Society (APS) winter show, AmeriStamp Expo, will have been held in Birmingham, Alabama. Look for a report in the next issue. Here in the Northwest Federation we have a dozen shows scheduled in March and April alone.

This issue is larger than usual due to the extensive listings of new issues. It seems that not only have many countries waited until the end of the year to issue stamps with biological themes, but also Scott Publishing Company has determined to list the plethora of issues from some of the client nations of Stamperija.

Stamperija, for those who may not know, is a security printing company operating from Vilnius, Lithuania that publishes, apparently under contract, "official" issues of topical stamps from mostly African countries and others as well. Some of these countries, such as Saint Thomas & Prince Islands, are well known for their excessive issues aimed solely at separating collectors from their money.

Saint Thomas & Prince is an archipelago off the coast of West Africa with an area of 386 square miles and a population of fewer than 200,000 people. Nonetheless, according to statistics assembled by *Linn's Stamp News*, in 2016 (the latest data available), this country issued a total of 162 major Scott listings with a face value of 18,008,000 dobras (around \$900) and a catalog value of \$1,644.50. A major Scott listing can include a single stamp or a sheet of 20 or more. I admit that I buy some of these items because they often are the only ones in existence that depict a particular species or subject.

There are also flocks of New Birds and wheelbarrows full of New Plants.

In this edition, we complete the three-part series on the International Botanical Congresses by Dr. John Gray. I am looking for more articles, so please dust off your keyboard and send some to me.

Also in this edition, I have noted some new issues that depict endangered species of both plants and animals. Laurie raises an interesting question in her President's column this time. How many of the plant and animals that appear on stamps in the topics we collect are threatened or endangered? I would be very interested in and eager to publish an article on this subject. Who out there will help me out?

It is not too early to plan for attending the annual National Topical Stamp Show (NTSS) that this year will be held as a joint show with the American Philatelic Society (APS) StampShow in Columbus, Ohio, 9–12 August 2018.

The Biology Unit will hold its annual meeting at the NTSS at 10:00 AM on Saturday, 11 August 2018. Ordinarily this is a social meeting and we do not discuss detailed business matters. See more information about the NTSS-APS show on page 2.

I wish you all a terrific springtime and hope to see some of you at a stamp show soon.

Jack R. Congrove



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