

MICHEL DINOSAUR CATALOGUE REVIEW

Michael Kogan, BU1863, & Dr. Peter J. Voice, BU1891

In April 2019, Germany-based MICHEL stamp catalog (*MICHEL-Briefmarken-Katalog*) announced their first topical catalogue devoted to prehistoric animals, *Dinosaurs – Whole World* (Dinosaurier – Ganze Welt).

Unfortunately, the issue was delayed four times and was finally published at the end of December 2019, instead of the beginning of May, as was announced initially.

The catalogue contains 160 pages in A5 paperback format (8.27×5.83 in) with approximately 2,500 color illustrations and about 20,000 price quotations. New issues up to MICHEL Rundschau 11/2019 have been included in this edition.

The first confusion starts on the cover of the catalogue as it shows not only reconstructions and fossils of dinosaurs, but also some other prehistoric animals (mammals) that are not dinosaurs.

The editors explain this in the introduction section, by saying that the catalogue includes not only dinosaur stamps, but also stamps of some other prehistoric and extinct animals such as mammoths, sabretooth cats, and dodos.

Regrettably, the catalogue does not list all the stamps that have been issued depicting dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals, mostly fossils.

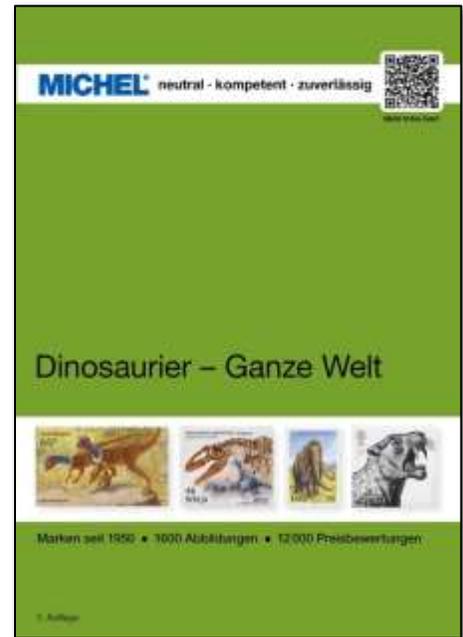
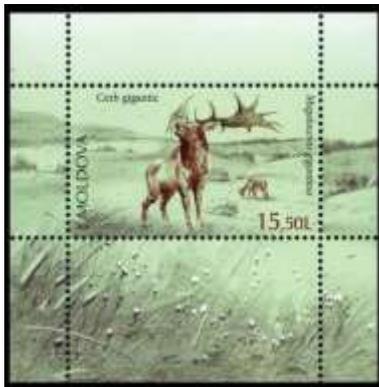
Here are a few examples of missing items:



Dinosaur stamp of Argentina (Mi#3601) & (Sc#2758) from a “Argentina in Antarctica” set issued in 2015.

Three Israeli stamps from 2000 (Mi#1576–78) & (Sc#1423a) issued in a strip inside a very nice MS/9.

Souvenir sheets from a Moldova set of extinct animals issued in 2016 (Mi#B1.75) & (Sc#928), and a 1995 Georgia set of prehistoric animals (Mi#B1.3) & (Sc#136) are missing. Only the regular stamps are listed in the catalogue.



The 1993 MS/6 from Malawi (Mi#B1.77) & (Sc#623) is listed separately from the three single stamps that belong to the same set.

This MS/6 is incorrectly listed as issued in 2019, while the stamps are listed in the 1993 year section.

In total, more than 50 stamp sets of dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals are missing from the catalogue. Perhaps some sets of extinct animals are missing too.

The catalog contains listings for some issues that probably are illegal.

Afghanistan 1998 (Mi#1784–90). According to the Universal Postal Union (UPU) Circular No. 345 dated 21 August 2000, no new stamps were issued in the country between 1989 and 2000, when the country was ruled by the Taliban. A note in the *Scott Catalogue* indicates that this set of six stamp plus a souvenir sheet are “false stamps” according to the President of the Afghanistan Postal Administration.

Democratic Republic of Congo dated 2003–2013. According to the UPU WNS stamps website, no stamps were issued in the country during this period.

To my surprise, the catalogue lists two French stamps with prehistoric animals depicted on cave paintings. I am not sure they belong to this topic, but if the editors think they do, then they should include many other such stamps that have been issued.

The same goes for two Canadian stamps (Mi#3289–90) & (Sc#2857a/2758) that show a landscape of Dinosaur Provincial Park in Alberta, Canada. There are many additional landscape stamps showing fossil discovery sites issued worldwide.

Conclusion: The catalogue is a nice help for beginners as it provides an overview of existing stamps and gives an idea of market prices. Its size enables you to carry it in small bag to stamp shows or swap events and use it as a reference for exchange. However, as it is incomplete, advanced collectors have to cross check it with other resources such as this website (<http://www.paleophilatelie.eu/>), the most comprehensive online resource about paleontology and paleoanthropology in philately.

For the interested reader, here is a list of reference books on prehistoric life on stamps:

Baldwin, Stuart and Beverly Halstead. *Dinosaur Stamps of the World*. Baldwin’s Books, Essex, United Kingdom, 1991. [Comprehensive when it was published, but focused on vertebrates.]

Domingo I Gimeno, Jordi, *Prehistorics and Fossils, Thematic Stamp Catalogue*, 25th edition. Domfil, 2003, 172 p. [Very comprehensive, well-organized, well-illustrated, and multi-lingual treatment of prehistoric life stamps from ~2000 and prior.]

Feldman, V.I. *Philatelic Geology*. Ministry of the Natural Resources of Russia and Russian Geological Society, Moscow, Russia, 2000. [Bilingual book that covers mostly geological themes, but has a nice chapter on prehistoric life with some illustrations of first day covers and other philatelic materials honoring Russian paleontologists as well as a diverse array of prehistoric life stamps. Not comprehensive.]

Shuker, Karl. *Dinosaurs and Other Prehistoric Animals on Stamps – A Worldwide Catalogue*. CFZ Press, United Kingdom, 2008. [Poorly illustrated listing of fossil stamp issues weakened by inclusion of cryptozoological stamp issues.]

And a few reference books that focus on more specialized groups. (Note: These three are all bilingual German-English texts.):

Ernst, Hans Ulrich and Frank Rudolph. *Trilobiten weltweit: Die Welt der Dreilapper und ihr Spiegelbild in der Philatelie*. Verlag Friedrich Pfeil, Munich, Germany, 2002. [Comprehensive treatment of trilobites on stamps.]

Ernst, Hans Ulrich and Christian Klug. *Perlboote und Ammonshörner weltweit: Die Welt der Kopffüßer und ihr Spiegelbild in der Philatelie*. Verlag Friedrich Pfeil, Munich, Germany, 2011. [Comprehensive treatment of ammonoids and nautiloids on stamps.]

Ernst, Hans Ulrich and Oliver Hampe. *Fossile Fische weltweit: Die Welt der prähistorischen Fische und ihr Spiegelbild in der Philatelie*. Verlag Friedrich Pfeil, Munich, Germany, 2018. [Comprehensive treatment of fossil fish on stamps.]