

Unusual Insect Stamps

By Paul Freytag

This is about unusual insect stamps that have been overlooked or unlisted by catalogs. Rather than a list, I will give the reader an insight as to what these are and let each collector look for these if one is inclined to collect this type of thing.

The first group is the type of stamp that has insects on the tab (label or selvage). This type can be found on insect stamps or non-insect stamps. Most collectors know this type, as it occurs on the stamps of Israel. The stamps with tabs usually sell for more because there are only five per sheet of fifteen or twenty stamps. This type is not covered for other countries by catalogs, and there are many countries that have issued stamp sheets in a similar format. Two which have done so are Panama and El Salvador (Figure 1). The stamp from Panama is from a set of butterfly stamps (Scott #483-483E) and the ones from El Salvador are from the butterfly set (Scott #966-970) and the dragonfly set (Scott #1072-1077).

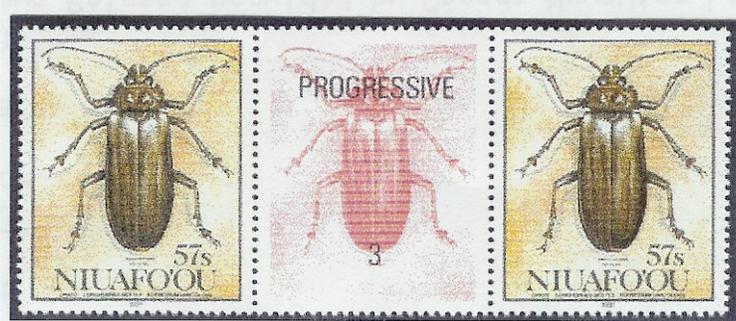


Figure 1.

A more recent butterfly set from Moldova (Scott #440-443) has a butterfly in each corner of the sheet and one on the tab opposite the middle stamp on each side (figure 2.). This sheet would yield six different tab stamps.



Figure 2.



Another type of tab is the gutter pair which is well known on many British stamps. Two of this type are shown (Figure 3 & 4) with insects printed on the gutter. Both of these are from Tonga-Niufo'ou insect stamp sets (Scott #140-143 and #225-228). There is at least one other set from this country with a similar format (Scott #168-171). Each of these sheets would have five gutter pairs.

Figure 3 ↑ - Figure 4 ↓.



The sheets from China-Taiwan have a different sheet margin in that it is larger and the insect is printed only in one corner of the sheet. This type is shown (Figures 5a & 5b) from two sets of insect stamps (Scott #3311-3314 and #3497-3500).



Figure 5a



Figure 5b.

These are best collected in full sheets or as shown in blocks of four. Other sets from this country are printed similarly (Scott #3117-3120, #3168 and #3544-3547).



Figure 6.

The next type is where a sheet has only one tab printed with an insect on it. This type is represented by the set from Malta (Scott #677-678). Part sheets (upper left blocks of 4) of both are shown (Figure 6), and again are best collected as a full sheet of 10 stamps.



Figure 7.

Another type is represented by the set from Mongolia (Scott #2247J-P). The six stamps in this set are printed in sheets of 9 with two butterflies, one in each upper corner (Figure 7). These same butterflies are on the souvenir sheet of six, and the left butterfly is on the souvenir sheet of one. This would make twelve tab butterfly stamps and two souvenir sheets. ATA Handbook 150 lists the souvenir sheet of one and the Domfil Catalog pictures both souvenir sheets, but no one lists the stamps from the sheets.

Another example that is difficult to categorize is shown on the sheets from mainland China in a set of orchid stamps (Scott #3137-3140). One of these has a butterfly in the upper left corner and one in the lower right corner. These are best collected as full sheets. [illustration was too poor – Ed.]

The same country issued a set of two and a souvenir sheet in a booklet (Scott #1677-1678 and #1678a). The sheets have a butterfly tab on the left side and the souvenir sheet has the same design as a background. These also have a tab with a swallow on it as in Scott #1605, and these can also be called butterfly stamps. It should also be noted that there are two of the swallow stamps with butterflies on them (Scott # 1605-1606), with the butterflies on the wings (#1605) and on the tail (#1606). None of these are listed as butterfly stamps. [illustration was too poor – Ed.]



The last type is not insects on stamps, but rather insects on booklet covers as issued by various countries. Those booklets that have insect stamps in them are usually listed, but the ones with other types of stamps are not. Three examples of this later type are shown. That from Great Britain (at left) is from

the series on Pond Life (Scott #BK242 and BK244), and there are four different covers. The second is a booklet from Sweden (Scott #841a), shown at right and there are at least two others from this country. The third is from Finland (Scott #555a), shown below, and there are similar ones from this country. Probably others exist, but they are usually hard to find as few dealers handle booklets.

Have fun looking for these and hopefully you will find others.



The booklet above has two varieties, the first with a yellow cover has one pane of stamps (1 x 0.10, 2 x 0.20 & 1 x 0.50), while the second with a blue cover has two panes of stamps (2 x 0.10, 1 x 0.30, 1 x 0.90 and 1 x 1.10).
