

## CARNIVORES ON STAMPS AND CURRENCY

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Many of us carnivorous plant enthusiasts are collectors at heart. We tuck moss-filled aquariums in all the corners of our homes, and when we inevitably have nowhere else to put another *Nepenthes* or *Sarracenia* hybrid we start collecting pygmy sundews. If this sounds like you, then you should consider collecting carnivorous plant stamps and currency. A complete collection will fit into a small notebook and you do not need to find someone to water it when you go on your next scenic bog vacation!

The last Carnivorous Plant Newsletter article devoted to stamps was in the March 1981 issue. Since then the number of carnivorous plant stamps has more than tripled, and the number of carnivorous plant genera pictured on stamps has more than doubled. There has even been a new banknote featuring a carnivorous plant. Pitcher plants are still the most popular carnivorous plant subjects, with *Nepenthes* being the most-portrayed carnivorous plant genus. As noted in the 1981 article, the Seychelles had produced two stamps of *Nepenthes pervillei*; they have since added two more to their stamp repertoire. In 1983 they issued a series commemorating the centennial of Marianne North's visit to the Seychelles. Marianne North, the botanical illustrator for whom *Nepenthes northiana* was named, painted many members of the Seychelles' flora, and four of her works, including her rendering of *Nepenthes pervillei* (Back cover, top left), are reproduced in this stamp series. Another Seychelles *Nepenthes pervillei* stamp features an immature pitcher and was issued in 1990 for the International Garden and Greenery Exposition held in Japan that year. Both of these Seychelles stamp series are available as separate stamps or as "souvenir sheets" which have all four stamps and a decorative border.

Several countries have honored their *Nepenthes* on stamps for the first time. In 1986, New Caledonia portrayed *Nepenthes vieillardii* on a 73F stamp, while in the following year Palau issued a seventeen stamp series of native plants that included *Nepenthes mirabilis* on the \$2 stamp (Back cover, top row). In 1996, Malaysia issued a wonderful series of four *Nepenthes* stamps depicting upper and lower pitchers of *N. sanguinea*, *N. macfarlanei*, *N. rajah* and *N. lowii* (Back cover, top row). Hybrid *Nepenthes* have also made an appearance on stamps. A 1991 series from Sierra Leone, honoring the Munich Botanic Gardens, shows *Nepenthes* × *mixta*, a manmade cross of *N. maxima* and *N. northiana*, while a 1995 series from Tanzania depicts *Nepenthes* × *hybrida* (Back cover, second row), a manmade cross of *N. gracilis* and *N. khasiana*.

Three cheers for Laos, which made the first stamp series devoted entirely to our favorite plants! This series of six *Plantae Insectivores* was issued in 1995 and shows *Nepenthes villosa* (Back cover, second row), *Dionaea muscipula* (Back cover, second row), *Sarracenia flava*, *Sarracenia purpurea*, *Nepenthes ampullaria* and *Nepenthes gracilis*. It seems a little ironic that Laos would be the first country to put the Venus Flytrap on a stamp and detail oriented carnivorous plant enthusiasts will no doubt notice that the artist put seven trigger hairs on one lobe and eleven on the other. The stamp of *Nepenthes gracilis* is a singlet souvenir sheet with the majority of the image running off the stamp and rendered on the border.

A series titled "Wildlife Stamp Week" from Malaysia, issued in 1996, also has a *Nepenthes* along the margins. While the foci of this souvenir sheet are animals, there is an unmistakable *Nepenthes* lurking in the bottom right corner at the foot

of a tricolored squirrel.

Other new carnivorous plant stamps of previously represented genera have come from The Faroe Islands, Japan, Sierra Leone, and Ireland. The Faroe Islands' stamp depicts *Pinguicula vulgaris* as one in a series of four on native wildflowers (Back cover, third row). The most recent carnivorous plant stamp that I am aware of shows *Aldrovanda vesiculosa* in Hozoji-numa Pond and was issued by Japan in 1997 (Takai, 1998). Two new *Sarracenia* stamps celebrate botanic gardens. The first was produced by Sierra Leone in 1991 and honors the Munich, Brooklyn and Tokyo botanic gardens on three sheetlets. The series on the Munich gardens shows *Sarracenia flava* (Back cover, third row) as well as the above mentioned *Nepenthes* × *mixta*. Ireland issued the second new *Sarracenia* stamp in 1995 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. This stamp shows *Sarracenia* × *moorei*—the first artificially produced *Sarracenia* hybrid—and is named after Dr. David Moore, the director of the gardens at that time (Nelson, 1998).

In addition to the first stamp of the Venus Flytrap in the series from Laos, there are several genera of carnivorous plants that are new to the world of philately, including *Triphyophyllum*, *Drosera*, *Utricularia*, *Darlingtonia* and *Cephalotus*. The Ivory Coast issued the first stamp of the rarely seen *Triphyophyllum peltatum* in a series of three native plant stamps in 1985 (Back cover, third row). France has the honors of issuing the first *Drosera* stamp with a depiction of *Drosera rotundifolia* in a series on wetland flora (Back cover, third row). Thailand issued an attractive series of four stamps, three of which are *Utricularia*, including *U. delphinoides*, *U. minutissima* (Back cover, fourth row) and *U. bifida*. The United Nations continued its annual series on endangered species, and in 1996 issued a series of twelve plants, including *Darlingtonia californica* and *Cephalotus follicularis* (Back cover, fourth row).

Currency does not change as quickly as stamps but carnivorous plants are even appearing on money. The 1981 Carnivorous Plant Newsletter article described the Newfoundland pennies with *Sarracenia purpurea* and the June 1985 Carnivorous Plant Newsletter had a picture of the Malaysian \$20 note with *Nepenthes rafflesiana*. Recently, the \$5 note from Brunei began sporting an engraved rendition of *Nepenthes lowii*.

If all these new stamps of carnivorous plants have you itching to start your own collection, then here are a few hints. Knowing the stamp number will help you communicate what you are looking for to stamp dealers. Stamp dealers in different countries use different numbering systems. Scott is used almost exclusively in the United States while Stanley Gibbons, Michel and Yvert & Tellier are some of the most common systems elsewhere. Table 1 has a complete listing of Scott numbers and a partial list of other numbering systems. In most cases, the number for the individual stamp is listed but be aware that the same stamp alone, or in a souvenir sheet, can be assigned different numbers. Most of these stamps are relatively inexpensive but it can be quite a challenge to locate them. Stamp dealers are typically reluctant to break up a set of stamps to sell the one of interest so be prepared to purchase the whole series. Stamp shows are a good place to check out multiple stamp dealers at the same time. Be prepared to search through boxes of stamps labeled "flowers." Your local dealers can tell you what stamp shows will be occurring in your area. Lastly, for those with access to the World Wide Web, there are two sites devoted to carnivorous plant stamps, one maintained by myself and another by Ruedi Fürst, a collector in Switzerland:

<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/8564/>

<http://www.schulnetz.ch/unterrichten/fachbereiche/botanik/>

[cp\\_homepage/insektivoren\\_anders.html](http://www.schulnetz.ch/unterrichten/fachbereiche/botanik/cp_homepage/insektivoren_anders.html)

Table 1: Numbers for Carnivorous Plant Stamps

Country	Year	Gibbons	Michel	Scott	Yvert	Plant pictured
Canada	1966	552	352	427	352	<i>Sarracenia purpurea</i>
Faroe Islands	1988	160	159	172	159	<i>Pinguicula vulgaris</i>
France	1992	3087	2911	2299	2767	<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>
Guyana	1971	542	395	133		<i>Heliamphora nutans</i>
Ireland	1978	423	392	430	380	<i>Pinguicula grandiflora</i>
	1995	974	918	984	921	<i>Sarracenia</i> × <i>moorei</i>
Ivory Coast	1985		885	769c	724c	<i>Triphyophyllum peltatum</i>
Japan	1978	1497	1356	1320	1258	<i>Pinguicula ramosa</i>
	1997			2315	2358	<i>Aldrovanda vesiculosa</i>
Laos	1974	394	381	C116	115	<i>Nepenthes mirabilis</i>
	1995	1461		1237		<i>Nepenthes villosa</i>
	1995	1462		1238		<i>Dionaea muscipula</i>
	1995	1463		1239		<i>Sarracenia flava</i>
	1995	1464		1240		<i>Sarracenia purpurea</i>
	1995	1465		1241		<i>Nepenthes ampullaria</i>
	1995			1242		<i>Nepenthes gracilis</i>
Madagascar	1973	255	692	496	532	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
	1973	256	693	497	533	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
Malaysia	1996	599		578	598	<i>Nepenthes sanguinea</i>
	1996	600		579	599	<i>Nepenthes macfarlanei</i>
	1996	601		580	600	<i>Nepenthes rajah</i>
	1996	602		581	601	<i>Nepenthes lowii</i>
	1996	626		604	B/F16	Unidentified <i>Nepenthes</i>
New Caledonia	1986	797	793	549	527	<i>Nepenthes vieillardii</i>
Palau	1987	186	186	140	168	<i>Nepenthes mirabilis</i>
Romania	1966	3399	2527	1867	2232	<i>Aldrovanda vesiculosa</i>
Seychelles	1970	288	282	280	275	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
	1977	418	408	402	386	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
	1983	571	543	527	538	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
	1990	778	725	702	715	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
Seychelles Zil Eloigne Sesel	1980	15	15	15	15	<i>Nepenthes pervillei</i>
Sierra Leone	1991	1692	1682	1424e	1354	<i>Sarracenia flava</i>
	1991	1698	1688	1424k	1360	<i>Nepenthes</i> × <i>mixta</i>
St. Pierre & Miquelon	1962	419	393	C24	27	<i>Sarracenia purpurea</i>
Tanzania	1995	1920	1883	1306	1705	<i>Nepenthes</i> × <i>hybrida</i>
Thailand	1995	1748	1613	1584	1589	<i>Utricularia delphinoides</i>
	1995	1749	1614	1585	1590	<i>Utricularia minutissima</i>
	1995	1747	1615	1587	1592	<i>Utricularia bifida</i>
United Nations Geneva	1996	G293		283	311	<i>Darlingtonia californica</i>
United Nations New York	1996	696		676	697	<i>Cephalotus follicularis</i>

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