

Commemorative Issue



Stamp Bulletin No. 365



Centenary

**Wild Life Nature Protection
Society of Sri Lanka**

1994.11.24

**Philatelic Bureau,
Department of Posts,
General Post Office, Colombo 01
SRI LANKA**

Department of Posts,
Transworks House,
Colombo 1.

The Philatelic Bureau of the Department of Posts will issue a set of four new postage stamps in the denominations of Rs. 1.00, Rs. 2.00, Rs. 10.00 and Rs. 17.00 on 24th November, 1994, to mark the Centenary of the Wild Life and Nature Protection Society in Sri Lanka.

The Wild Life and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka, having established itself as the Game Protection Society of Ceylon in 1984, has served the cause of wild life and nature conservation for a continuous period of 100 years.

As a result of its representations a separate Wildlife Department was created with the enactment of the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (1937) and representatives of the Society have to serve on the Statutory Advisory Committee since its inception. In 1968 the Society was incorporated by Act of Parliament (Act No. 28) and continues to receive national and international recognition.

Rs. 1.00 — Stamp depicts the emblem of the Wild Life and Nature Protection Society of Sri Lanka, which carries the head of the male Sambhur.

Rs. 2.00 — Horned Lizard (Ceratooonora Stoddarti).

The Agamid lizards of the genus ceratoonora are represented by three species in Sri Lanka which are confined to the wet mountainous zones. The decimation of these areas has greatly endangered their survival.

The best known of these horned lizards is *ceratoonora stoddarti*, which possesses a smooth rostral appendage reminiscent of a rhino horn. The other two species are *ceratoonora terrenti* and *ceratoonora aspera*.

While *ceratoonora terrenti* and *ceratoonora aspera* have been quite intolerant of habitat change, *ceratoonora stoddarti* has become more adoptable, being seen in less forested areas. However, their numbers too seem to be declining due to predation by the Common Coucal (*Centropus sinensis*) and competition by the commoner Gaster Lizard (*Calotes versicolor*).

The males of *C. stoddarti* can change the colour of the horn from grey to white and uses this possibly as a camouflage manoeuvre. When approached they will not move away unless almost touched and then only very slowly.

Unless steps are taken to protect their habitat these very interesting and unique lizards will be lost to the island forever.

Rs. 10.00 — Giant Squirrels (Ratufa Macroura Dandolena).

Giant Squirrels are large arboreal squirrels with long tails.

In Sri Lanka the species has an island wide distribution, being represented as three different subspecies namely, the Highland Grizzled or Long Tailed Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa macroura macroura*) which is confined to the highlands, the Black and Yellow Oriant Squirrel (*Ratufa macrours melanochra*) inhabiting the remaining wet zone evergreen forests and the common Lowland Giant Squirrel (*Ratufa macroura dandolena*) to be found in the dry zone.

It is an arboreal, diurnal animal, spending most of its time in trees, Food consists of vegetable matter in the form of leaves, bark and fruit, although it no doubt consumes birds eggs and grubs when available.

The Giant Squirrel confines itself to its own territory, living alone or with a mate. They build a number of nests in the tree-tops and rest in these during the heat of the day. They quite often become quite tame and will permit close observation.

Rs. 17.00 — Sloth Bear (Melurens Ursinus Inornatns).

The Sloth Bear is the only member of the bear family to be found in Sri Lanka. It is a moderately large animal with a large head and powerful forequarters tapering down to weaker hindquarters.

It is easily recognised by its shaggy coat of long black bair, a white crescentic mark on its chest and a somewhat long pointed mobile snout. Its feet are fairly large and broad with naked soles and heels, with well developed toes on each foot equipped with powerful non retractile claws, which are especially long on its fore-feet.

These claws are capable of inflicting terrible injuries when a bear attacks. In fact the bear is one of the most feared animals to be encountered while on foot in the Sri Lanka jungles. In reality it is a timid animal with poor eyesight and sense of smell. When surprised it attacks through fear.

Rocky outcrops and ridges scattered throughout the jungles are the favourite haunts of the Sloth Bear.

The Sloth Bear is primarily vegetarian - revelling on the fruits of Palu, Mora, Weera etc. when in season. It will also feed on a carcass when the occasion permits. Termites too are a favourite food.

Technical Details

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| <i>Date of issue</i> | : 24th November, 1994 |
| <i>Denomination</i> | : Rs. 1/-, 2/-, 10/- 17/- |
| <i>Designer</i> | : P. A. Miththapala |
| <i>Format</i> | : Horizontal |
| <i>Stamp size</i> | : 29.85m.m. x 40.80 m.m. |
| <i>Perforation</i> | : 13 1/2 |
| <i>Printing process</i> | : Offset Lithography |
| <i>Sheet composition</i> | : 100 stamps per sheet |
| <i>Printers</i> | : Secura Singapore Pte. Ltd. |
| <i>Colours (used)</i> | : 4 Process Colours |
| <i>Paper</i> | : 102 gsm. Stamp Paper |
| <i>Gum</i> | : PVA |
| <i>Quantity printed</i> | : 1,000,000 each denomination |
| <i>Miniature sheet</i> | : 12 x 9 cm Rs. 30/- |
| <i>Quantity Printed</i> | : 25,000 |

Terms of Sale

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