

## Unfolding Sri Lanka's avian heritage in postage stamps



Stamps showcasing avian diversity in Sri Lanka.

Stamps celebrating resident birds in Sri Lanka.

The conservation of forests and wildlife is crucial for maintaining ecological balance and preserving biodiversity (Shyam & Joshi 2006). However, human activities such as habitat destruction and urbanization pose significant threats to these precious resources (Mandol & Rastogi 2004). The aim of this article is to showcase the avian representation in the postage stamps of Sri Lanka through time.

### Stamps Showcasing Avian Diversity in Sri Lanka

The bird stamps of Sri Lanka offer a glimpse into the remarkable avian diversity of the country. The 1979 stamps feature five endemic species, including the vibrant Sri Lanka Blue-Magpie *Urocissa ornata*, Sri Lanka Hanging-Parrot *Loriculus beryllinus*, Sri Lanka Whistling-

Thrush *Myophonus blighi*, Sri Lanka Spurrow *Galloperdix bicalcarata*, and Yellow-fronted Barbet *Psilopogon flavifrons* are all bird species found in Sri Lanka.

The 1987 stamps highlight species such as the Orange-billed Babbler *Argya rufescens*, Layard's Parakeet *Psittacula calthrapae*, White-throated Flowerpecker *Dicaeum vincens*, White-faced Starling *Sturnornis albofrontatus*.

### Celebrating Resident Birds in Sri Lanka

The "Resident Birds of Sri Lanka" stamps from 2003 depict the diverse avian species found within the country, including the Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, White-throated Kingfisher *Halcyon smyrnensis*, Black-crowned Night-



Stamps of national parks.

Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax*, Orange Minivet *Pericrocotus flammeus*, White-rumped Shama *Copsychus malabaricus*, and Malabar Trogon *Harpactes fasciatus*.

## National Parks and Avian Wonders

The collection of stamps consists of a series featuring diverse bird species found in national parks across Sri Lanka and Thailand. The stamps portray remarkable avian creatures such as the White-bellied Sea-Eagle *Haliaeetus leucogaster*, showcased in a 2006 set from Wilpattu National Park, and the Sri Lanka Whistling-Thrush *Myophonus blighi*, depicted in a 2010 set from Horton Plains National Park. The Black-necked Stork *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*, a magnificent wading bird, appears in a 2013 set from Yala National Park and a 2013 sheet from Thailand. Additionally, the Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* is presented in a 2014 set and sheet from Pigeon Island National Park, while the Painted Stork *Mycteria leucocephala* is featured in a 2016

set from Kumana National Park. These stamps celebrate the natural beauty and avian diversity found within these protected areas, providing a delightful tribute to these captivating bird species.

## Highlighting Wetland Birds

The 2016 “World Wetlands Day” stamps emphasize the importance of wetlands and their diverse birdlife. Species like the Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus roseus* and the Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* symbolize the beauty and grace of these vital ecosystems.

## Preserving Endemic Species

This set of stamps from 2021 features a selection of endemic bird species found exclusively in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Woodshrike *Tephrodornis affinis* is showcased in a mesmerizing stamp, highlighting its unique characteristics. The Spot-winged Thrush *Geokichla spiloptera* is presented in a captivating stamp, showcasing its distinctive spotted wings. The Sri Lanka Grey Hornbill *Ocyrocus gingalensis* is depicted in a remarkable stamp, capturing its striking appearance. The Sri Lanka Swallow *Cecropis hyperythra* is featured in an exquisite



Stamps highlighting wetland birds.



Stamps on preserving endemic species.

stamp, showcasing its graceful flight. Lastly, the Crimson-fronted Barbet *Psilopogon rubricapillus* is portrayed in a stunning stamp, displaying its vibrant colors. These stamps pay homage to the endemic avian treasures of Sri Lanka, providing a glimpse into the country's rich birdlife and conservation efforts.

Postage stamps serve as powerful tool for raising awareness about nature and wildlife conservation. The showcased collections from Sri Lanka not only celebrate avian diversity but also convey messages of preserving national heritage and protecting biodiversity. These small but impactful pieces of art have the potential to inspire individuals to take action and contribute to the sustainability of our planet.

## References

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