INSECTS OF ZIMBABWE
Series II
Issued 4th April 1995

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 2 of 1995)²

Insects belong to the Phylum Arthropoda, meaning "joint footed". Their main features are the three parts to their body - head, thorax and abdomen, three pairs of legs joined to the thorax and usually two pairs of wings.

35c: Spider-Hunting Wasp
(Hemipepsis hilaris)

Wasps, bees and ants form an enormous order of over 100,000 species, known as Hymenoptera - or membranous - winged insects. The Spider Hunting Wasps form a very large family, the Pompilidae, which is well represented in Africa. The Hemipepsis female, hunts down the formidable baboon spiders, or large ground spiders, Palystes.

She boldly attacks her prey, and once the fight is over, cleans herself and then goes to look for a dry, sheltered hole or crevice. Once found, she returns to the paralysed spider, and then, walking backwards, drags it back to the hole. The spider is deposited in the hole and then she lays her large, oval white egg on its abdomen. She then flies out of the hole and covers it up by scraping sand into it. The egg hatches in about 10 days and the larva feeds on the spider until it is fully grown. The larva then spins a dense cocoon of brownish silk in which it lies, all through the winter. The warmer weather that follows, triggers pupation, which lasts 2 to 3 weeks, and then the adult wasp emerges.

$1.15: Emperor Dragonfly
(Anax imperator)

Dragonflies and damselflies belong to the order Odanata, with dragon-flies belonging to the sub-order Anisoptera. Odanata means "toothed" and seems to refer to the sharp teeth on the jaws of these voracious insects. This is a very ancient group and a fossil dragonfly recently discovered, dates back to 300 million years.

The Emperor Dragonfly belongs to the family Aeshnidae of which there are 5 genera and 15 species known in Southern Africa. Mating takes place on a perch and not in flight as in many other dragonflies. The adult female lays her eggs by flying along the surface of the water, washing the eggs off the tip of the abdomen as she goes. The eggs sink to the bottom and rest in the mud until they hatch. Nymphs spend some time in the water, feeding voraciously, then climb out onto a twig or rock, split down the back and the adult struggles out.
$1.75: Foxy Charaxes
(Charaxes jasius saturnus)

Butterflies and moths are members of the order Lepidoptera meaning scale-winged. The number of known species of butterflies in the world is probably in excess of 14 000 and new species are continually being described. Zimbabwe is well represented with well over 400 species.

The Foxy Charaxes belongs to the subfamily Charaxidinae. These are large, strong fliers, occurring chiefly in forested areas. They feed on animal droppings, carrion and decaying fruit. The female lays her yellow eggs, singly, on the leaves of the food plant, which is usually Bauhinia or Burkea. The eggs hatch in 7 days and the caterpillar moults four times over about 6 weeks before it is fully grown.

$2.30: Antlion
(Tomatares citrinus)

Antlions are the most common members of the order Neuroptera, meaning "nerve-winged" and referring to the network of so-called veins or nerves on their wings.

Tomatares citrinus belongs to the family Myrmeleontidae, characterised by short, clubbed antenna. Eggs are laid singly in dry soil. The larvae of this particular genus does not construct the typical "antlion" pit into which prey fall, but are free-living in sand. The larval lifespan is long compared with that of the adult; sometimes lasting up to 3 years. Approximately 40 genera and 130 species are thought to occur in Southern Africa.

The Stamps
Catalogue listings

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<th>SG</th>
<th>ZSC</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>904</td>
<td>331</td>
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<td>Spider-hunting Wasp</td>
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<td>905</td>
<td>332</td>
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<td>907</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>$2.30</td>
<td>Antlion</td>
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</tbody>
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Technical details

Stamp size: All values 42 x 28 mm
Sheet Size: 50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist: Janet Duff
Paper: ZSC paper type D – HS8, fluorescent front and back, with cream PVA gum.
Print colours: Black, magenta, cyan & yellow
Perforations: SG 14½, ZSC 14¼
Top margin: Perforated through
Other margins: Imperforate
Printer: NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Printer’s Imprint: Bottom Margin, below Row 10 Column 3. Imprint printed in black
Cylinder numbers: Top margin above R1/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Colour register: Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R1/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Sheet Value: Top margin, above R1/10, printed in black.
Sheet Number: Type SN 4a with ‘PTC’ prefix, right margin opposite R1/10, reading down
Print numbers: 35c 1,000,000 $1.15 190,000
$1.75 190,000 $2.30 190,000
Issue date: 4th April 1995
Withdrawal from sale: 8th February 1999
Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been noted

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds. Some dots and specks shown below are a bit more distinctive, some may be constant.

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35c: Double black printing

$1.15: Double black printing

$2.30: Double black Printing

*Courtesy Narendhra Morar*

First Day Cover

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

A pictorial first day of issue canceller was produced for this issued and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.
Bibliography: