

FLOWERING INDIGENOUS TREES OF ZIMBABWE

Issued 24th January 1996

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 1996)²

A set of postage stamps depicting six of the over 1100 species of trees and shrubs indigenous to Zimbabwe. They cover a wide cross-section of the country from the dry west to the damp eastern border areas, showing the differences and beauty of colouration throughout the country.

45c: *Fernandoa*

(*Fernandoa magnifica*)

Chimoto: umlilo.

A graceful upright tree confined to our eastern borders, grows up to 15 to 20m. One of our most attractive trees when flowering, with its large orange to crimson blossoms. The flowers usually appear before the new leaves between August and October. This is a tree well worth growing if space permits. They are easily propagated from seed and quite fast growing. This species belongs to the Bignoniaceae (Jacaranda) family and is quite rare.



\$1.00: Round Leaf Mukwa

(*Pterocarpus rotundifolius*)

Mumhungu: umdlandlovu

The generic name is derived from the Greek *pteran* meaning "a wing" and *karpos* meaning "a fruit". A medium to large spreading tree reaching up to 10m in height, occurring in most areas of the country. This tree is particularly beautiful in flower, and has a long flowering period, usually from November to January.

The bright yellow sweetpea-shaped flowers are borne on long sprays and, having a sweet scent, are a great attraction to bees. Propagation of this species can be done from seed, but it must be carefully selected as they are often parasitised. It is a slow growing tree but well worth the effort and patience. The wood is light coloured with an attractive grain, but is of an inferior quality. It is however used for the manufacturing of household articles. This species belongs to the pea subfamily, Papilionoideae (Legume family.)

\$1.50: Luckybean Tree (*Erythrina lysistemon*)

Mutsodzo: musinzana

The generic name is derived from the Greek word *erythros* meaning "red" and refers to the flowers. A medium sized tree, usually about 6m in height, but can reach 10m. It covers a wide range of altitudes and habitats but in Zimbabwe favours the forest conditions in the eastern districts. However, it is also found in the drier southern end of the country.



The striking red/scarlet flowers appear in July and carry on into October, usually before, but sometimes with the new leaves. These trees are easily propagated from seed, cuttings or large truncheons. They are fairly fast growing but can be sensitive to cold in their early stages. The wood is soft and without heartwood but can be used for small household objects and drums. The seeds are often strung together as necklaces and bracelets and sold as curios. This species belongs to the pea subfamily, Papilionoideae (Legume family.)



\$2.20: Winter Cassia

(*Senna singueanna*)

Munzungu: isihaqa esincinyane

The generic name has been changed recently from Cassia, however, the common name is still used widely and is very appropriate. This is a small tree growing up to 3 to 5m, often misshapen as it is browsed by game. It is frequently associated with termite mounds. It has a very wide distribution and grows in all types of soil.

This tree starts flowering in April and can be found still in bloom in October, making it one of our longest flowering species of indigenous trees. The flowers are borne in large sprays, deep yellow and slightly scented. A very useful tree for gardens, it can be pruned and when treated well, can flower for most of the year. Propagation can be done from seed. The bark and roots are used medicinally. This species belongs to the cassia subfamily Caesalpinioideae, (Legume family)

\$2.50: Sausage Tree (*Kigelia africana*)

Mumvee: umvebe

This is a large tree growing up to 18m in height. It occurs at low altitudes and along rivers and streams. However, it is quite adaptable and can be grown at high altitudes. It is generally hardy and frost resistant. The flowers are rather striking, large, dark maroon, bell shaped, and are borne on pendulous sprays. They appear with the new leaves between August and October. The sausage shaped fruit can weigh up to 10 to 12 kg. These trees are easily propagated from seed picked out of the ripe fruit that has fallen to the ground. The unripe fruits are said to be poisonous but in times of food shortage, the ripe seeds are often roasted and eaten. They are used widely for medicinal purposes. The wood is soft but tough and used for planking and the making of boxes and dugout canoes. This species belongs to the Bignoniaceae (Jacaranda) family.



\$3.00: Sweet Thorn

(*Acacia karroo*)

Mubayamhondoro: isinga

A small to medium tree growing up to 15m in height. It occurs over most of Zimbabwe, covering a wide range of altitudes. This tree can be a splendid sight in full bloom. The flowers are golden yellow powder-puffs, sweetly scented and appear several times during the summer.

This species is very attractive to bees and also provides excellent fodder. It is a very adaptable tree; frost and drought resistant, fast growing and easy to propagate from seed. The wood is hard and heavy and can be used for furniture but is often badly damaged by borer and other insects. It is used medicinally for treatment of a variety of ailments. This species belongs to the mimosa subfamily, Mimosoideae (Legume family)

The Stamps



Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
918	345	45c	Fernandoa
919	346	\$1.00	Round Leaf Mukwa
920	347	\$1.50	Luckybean Tree
921	348	\$2.20	Winter Cassia
922	349	\$2.50	Sausage Tree
923	350	\$3.00	Sweet Thorn

Technical details

Stamp size:	All values	28 x 42 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (5 rows of 10 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
Right margin: Perforated through.
Other margins: Imperforate

Printer: NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe

Printer's Imprint: Bottom Margin, below Row 5 Columns 5 & 6. Imprint printed in black

Cylinder numbers: Bottom margin below R5/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Colour register: Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R5/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black

Sheet Value: Bottom margin, below R5/10, printed in black.

Sheet Number: Type SN 4a with 'PTC' prefix, right margin opposite R5/10, reading down

Print numbers:

45c	2,000,000	\$1.00	190,000
\$1.50	190,000	\$2.20	200,000
\$2.50	190,000	\$3.00	200,000

Issue date: 24th January 1996

Withdrawal from sale:

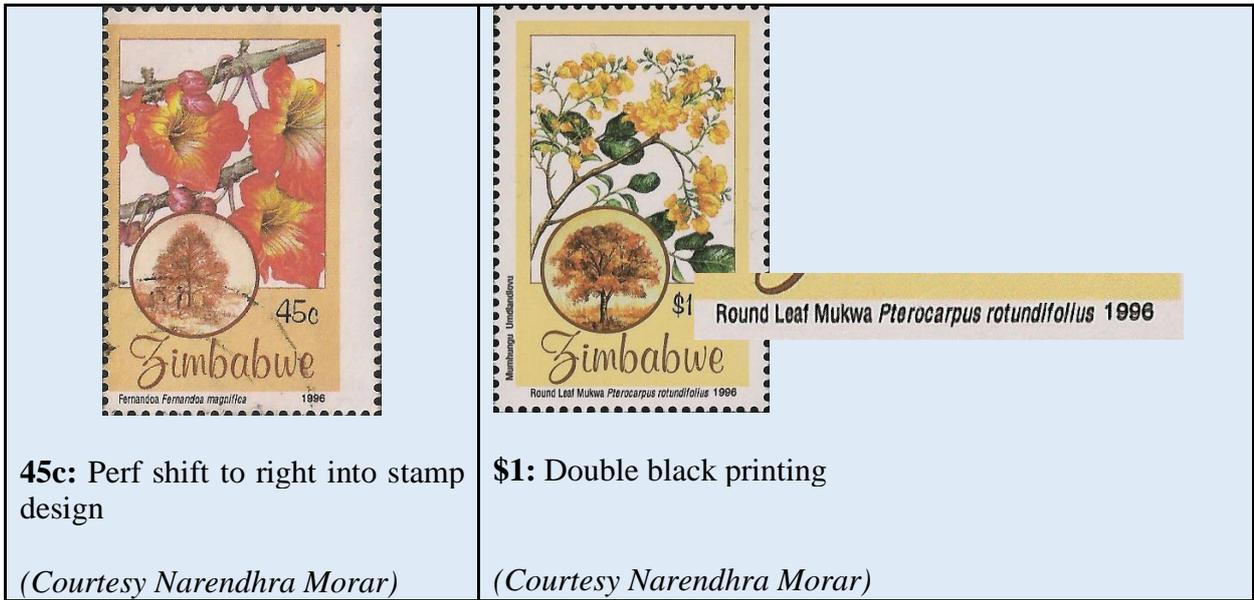
Demonetarisaton: 25th October 1999

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.



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:

1. "The Zimbabwean Concise Postage Stamp Catalogue", published by Harare Stamp Company, edited by Ken Allanson, Mike Amos and Geoff Brakspear. The catalogue continues to be updated and expanded by Geoff Brakspear
2. PTC Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 1996.