

FROGS OF ZIMBABWE

and their habitats

Issued 9th December 2014

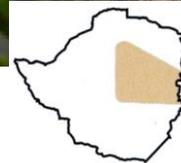
(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 5 of 2014)²

Of the frogs found in Zimbabwe, some have a wide distribution while others are more localised. In this set of four stamps the order Anura is represented by three families: Brevipectidae (Rain Frogs), Hyperoliidae (Reed Frogs) and Pyxicephalidae (River Frogs and Bullfrogs).

30c: Swynnerton's Reed Frog

(*Hyperolius swynnertoni*, *broadleyi* form)

Description. A stocky body with rounded snout. Upper body has broad dark paravertebral stripe and lateral bands. Between are pale bands, each with a thin red line in the centre. Inner surfaces of limbs, legs and fingers have reddish tinge. Maximum size is 38mm. **Habitat.** Forest-savanna of Eastern Zimbabwe, in emergent vegetation at margins of rivers and streams. **Habits.** They retreat into trees and foliage away from water during the day and return to call sites at night. **Reproduction.** Occurs during the rainy season. Eggs attached to submerged/emergent plants. **Status.** Not threatened.



75c: Giant Bullfrog

(*Pyxicephalus adspersus*)

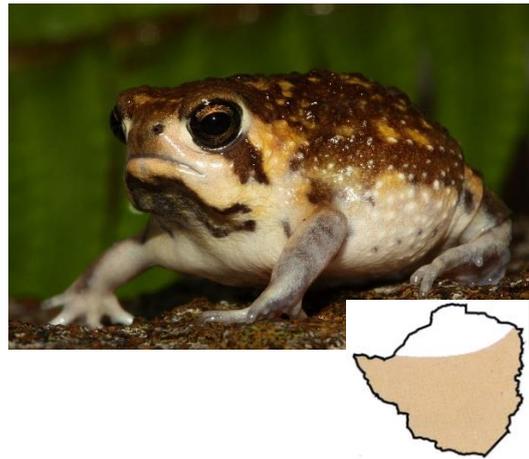
Description. The largest frog in southern Africa, with a large, stout body. Maximum size is 245mm and weighs up to 1.4kg. **Habitat.** Hibernate in burrows for most of the year in deep sandy or clay soils, often some distance from breeding sites. **Habits.** Carnivorous. Forage in open grassland for insects, other frogs, lizards, snakes, rodents etc. **Reproduction.** Shallow, rain filled depressions warmed by the sun stimulate development of tadpoles. Females lay up to 4000 eggs at a time, which are then guarded by the male. **Status.** Near threatened. Urbanisation has resulted in declines of 80% in some areas.



85c: Bushveld Rain Frog

(*Breviceps a. adspersus*)

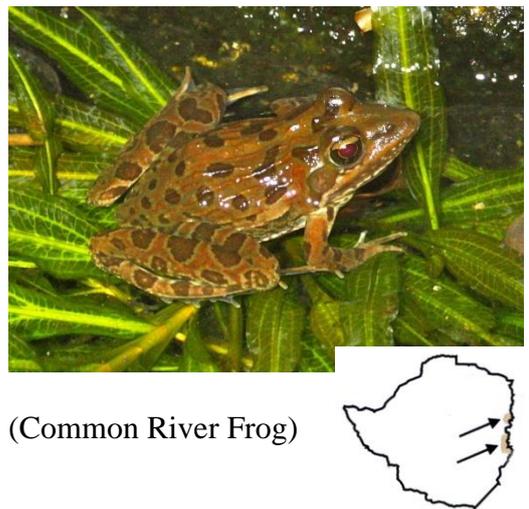
Description. Stout toad-like body which inflates when alarmed. Short legs. Flattened face with narrow downturned mouth. Maximum size is 60mm. **Habitat.** Sandy to sandy loam soils in savanna and grasslands. **Habits.** Spend most of the time underground. When coming to the surface they walk or run, unlike most other frogs which hop. **Reproduction.** Breeding takes place at the beginning of the rainy season. About 45 eggs are laid in a burrow below ground, covered by a mass of yolkless capsules. The female remains nearby until the froglets are ready to leave the nest. **Status.** Not threatened.



\$1: Inyanga River Frog

(*Amietia inyangae*)

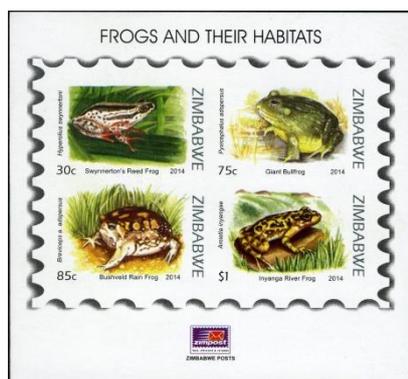
Description. The body is streamlined with a narrow pointed head. The hind limbs are relatively short. Maximum size is 59mm. **Habitat.** Inyanga Mountain and Chimanimani National Park, near rocky, fast flowing streams, often close to waterfalls or rapids, among grass, ferns and small bushes. **Habits.** Live in close proximity to water. **Reproduction.** Eggs are laid in individual jelly capsules and deposited in shallow water. Status. Endangered. Size of habitat is declining due to clearing of natural forest for timber plantations, overgrazing by domestic livestock and more intense human settlement.



(Common River Frog)

The Stamps





(reduced to 50% of size)

Catalogue Listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1382	783	30c	Swynnerton's Reed Frog
1383	784	75c	Giant Bullfrog
1384	785	85c	Bushveld Rain Frog
1385	786	\$1	Inyanga River Frog
MS1386	MS34		Imperforate miniature sheet with stamps in se-tenant block

Technical details

Stamp size:	Sheet stamps:	42 x 28 mm
	Miniature sheet	116 x 98 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet	
Artist:	Joan Soriano	
Paper:	ZSC paper type J: paper described by Zimpost as "Chancellor Litho PVA Gummed Postage Stamp Paper". This paper is produced by Tullis Russell Coaters of Glenrothes, Fife, Scotland. Under UV there is no fluorescence either front or back, the stamp appears to be very dark	
Print colours:	Cyan, magenta, yellow & black	
Perforations:	SG 14½; ZSC 14¼	
	Sheet stamps	
	Top margin:	Perforated through
	Other margins:	Imperforate
	Miniature sheet	Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe	

Printer's Imprint:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom Margin, below Row 10 Column 3. Imprint printed in black			
Cylinder numbers:	Sheet stamps only - Top margin above R1/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black			
Colour register:	Sheet stamps only - Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R1/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black			
Sheet Value:	T Sheet stamps only - top margin, above R1/5, printed in black			
Sheet Number:	Sheet stamps only - Type SN 7 with printed 'ZIMPOST' prefix, right margin opposite R1/5 reading down			
Bar codes:	Sheet stamps only - Opposite R9 & 10/5, printed in black, numbers: All values 2 009113 000158 (Note: for an unknown reason all values contained the same bar code number)			
Print numbers:	30c	400,000	75c	10,000
	85c	10,000	\$1	10,000
	Miniature sheet	2,000		
Issue date:	9 th December 2014			

Miniature sheets

Miniature sheets started to be produced without perforations. This is due to the age of the perforating combs. Apart from the new perforating comb purchased in 1988/89 for the definitive issues, as far as we are aware the combs have not been replaced. They were originally purchased in 1966 for the printing of the 1966 Rhopex and 1966 Mardon printing of the definitive issue. It is not surprising that the perforating combs are difficult to handle.

Seconding the technique of perforating the miniature sheets since the sheetlets was a laborious process of perforating with the head and teeth of the comb separately. For more details on this process see the section of the Encyclopaedia headed "the Local Printing of Rhodesian & Zimbabwean Stamps". As a result of this perforating process, with the need to take the sheets through the perforators twice, variations in the positioning of the perforations have been prolific.

Representations were made to return to the method of perforating the miniature sheet for the 1980 Rotary and POSB, but this has not been taken up.

Listed varieties

No listed varieties have been reported.

Unlisted Varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds which are more noticeable with the solid colours

First Day Cover

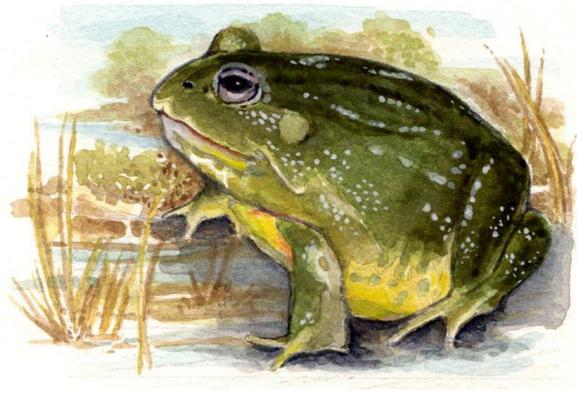
No first day covers were made available by the Philatelic Bureau, covers can, however be found with the Harare First Day of Issue canceller on plain covers and Bureau manila stationery.

Related Material

Artwork by Joan Soriano

Below are copies of the original artwork prepared by Joan Soriano.

(Courtesy of Rod Kantor)



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, and is now published on the Rhodesian Study Circle website.
2. Zimbabwe Post, Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 5 of 2014