

LADYBIRDS OF ZIMBABWE

Issued 15th October, 2018

(Extracted from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 2 of 2018)²

Ladybirds (Coccinellidae) belong to the Order of Coleoptera. This highly successful order are said to be the most diverse containing 250 000 species of beetle worldwide. Ladybugs, as they are also known, are found in all climates and at every latitude. Built robustly they can survive rough conditions, however, the pesticides destroy good insects as well as pest insects. The cover depicts the ladybird as a carnivorous predator, its main prey being aphids.



40c: Seven Spotted Ladybird

The common seven spotted ladybirds are the gardener's ally. A ladybird can consume 5000 aphids in its lifetime. Not only are they carnivorous but also pollinators flying from one flower to the next carrying the yellow pollen on their bodies. They feed on plant nectar as it is nutritious with carbohydrates and protein to contribute in the manufacturing of eggs. When the eggs hatch after a few weeks the larvae, spiky in appearance with six legs tucked in to the aphids which are close by.



75c: Black and Yellow Ladybird

Ladybirds defence system is not necessarily one of mimicry, their bright coloured elytra (the outer casing) is a sign of warning to predators. If threatened they exude a yellow substance which is their blood. It is very toxic to some attackers. Some of their predators are parasitic wasps, birds and certain beetles. The ladybird is harmless to humans and these pretty, endearing little beetles are considered a sign of good fortune in some cultures.



85c: Twenty Spotted Ladybird

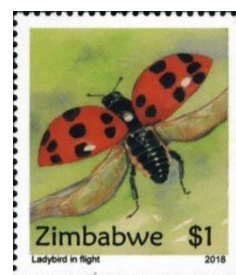
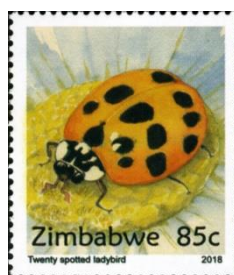
The ladybirds exhibit a variety of spotted designs and the colours red or yellow on the elytra. The ladybird on this stamp shows a yellow background with black spots which is found in Southern Africa not only Zimbabwe. Their antennae are short and the mandibles, the biting mouth parts, are fatal to a key garden pest: the aphid. Once ladybirds have mated after winter they lay their eggs under a leaf near an aphid colony. Larvae hatch from the eggs and feed off the aphids before metamorphosing into pupae and emerging as the beetle to repeat the cycle. This can take three to eight weeks. An adult ladybird can live one to two years.



\$1: Ladybird in flight

Successful fliers, ladybirds' top speed is 24km per hour. They use their compound eyes to track the colonies of aphids in vegetable and flower gardens. The colourful fore wings, the elytra meet in the middle when closed. This outer case protects the soft hind wings that double up under it when not in flight. Their six short legs are used for moving small distances.

The Stamps



(reduced to 50% of actual size)

Catalogue Listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
1448	843	40c	Seven Spotted Ladybird
1449	844	75c	Black and Yellow Spotted Ladybird
1450	845	85c	Twenty Spotted Ladybird
1451	846	\$1	Ladybird in Flight
MS1452	MS40		Imperforate miniature sheet with set in se-tenant block

Technical details

Stamp size:	Sheet stamps: 30 x 35 mm Miniature sheet 90 x 117 mm
Sheet Size:	50 stamps (5 rows of 10 stamps), two panes per printed sheet
Artist:	Cindy Stamps
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 x 14; ZSC 14¼ x 14 Left margin: Perforated through Other margins: Imperforate
Printer:	NatPrint, Harare, Zimbabwe
Origination:	Terrie Lue Graphics
Printer’s Imprint:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom margin, below Row 5 Columns 5 & 6. Imprint printed in black
Cylinder numbers:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom margin below R5/1. Colours from left – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Colour register:	Sheet stamps only - Type TL 4– round boxed – left margin opposite R5/1. Colours reading down – cyan, magenta, yellow, black
Sheet Value:	Sheet stamps only - Bottom margin, below R5/10, printed in black
Sheet Number:	Sheet stamps only - Type SN 7 with printed ‘ZIMPOST’ prefix, right margin opposite R5/10 reading down
Bar codes:	Sheet stamps only - Opposite R1/10, printed in black, numbers: 40c 2 009113 000745 75c 2 009113 000752 85c 2 009113 000769 \$1 2 009113 000684
Print numbers:	40c 500,000 75c 10,000 85c 10,000 \$1 10,000 Miniature sheet 2,000

Issue date: 15th October, 2018

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. No significant varieties have been reported.

First Day Cover

ZimPost produced a First Day Cover, which was postmarked by the Philatelic Bureau with a postmark reading “First Day of Issue/Harare”.



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 2 of 2018