

1990 THIRD DEFINITIVE ISSUE

Issued 2nd January 1990

The third definitive issue comprises of eighteen stamps based on three distinct themes – natural resources; culture and artefacts; and transport and communications.

(Extracts from Philatelic Bureau Bulletin No 1 of 1990)²

Natural Resources

This is a poorly named section as the stamps are all of animal life. Three of the values illustrate wildlife that were included in the last two special issues. This is pity as other wildlife could have added to the collection

1c: Tiger Fish — *Hydrocynus forskahlii*

The Tiger fish is a voracious predator and is renowned throughout the world as an excellent game-fish. Weights of over 15 kilograms have been recorded in Lake Kariba. They occur in most warm waters in Zimbabwe but mostly in the Zambezi River. They are active carnivores taking almost any prey including bream, sardines, insects and shrimps.

2c: Helmeted Guineafowl — *Numida meleagris* This is a common species of bird found mainly in thorny scrub savanna areas. The Guineafowls are widespread throughout Southern Africa. They reproduce by laying eggs usually between October and March

3c: Scrub Hare — *Lepus saxatilis*

Cape Hare. This species is mainly nocturnal and solitary and exists in scrub and bush areas. The female gives birth to one to three young ones.

4c: Pangolin — *Manis temminckii*

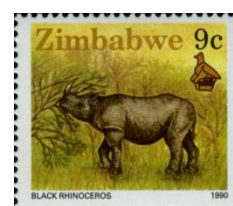
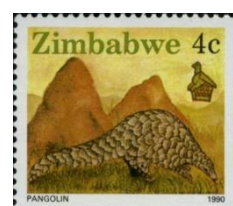
This specially protected species is a mammal with large brown overlapping scales covering the body. Pangolins are nocturnal, solitary animals found in dry woodland in Zimbabwe. They feed on termites and ants. Females give birth to a single young one.

5c: Greater Kudu — *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*

This is one of the larger antelope species easily recognised by the spirally twisted horns in males. They move about in small herds, consisting of several females with their young and at certain times one or two males. They are browsers and exist in all types of woodlands. Breeding takes place between January and March.

9c: Black Rhinoceros — *Diceros bicornis*

The Black Rhino, also called the hooked-lipped, is smaller than the White Rhino. This specially protected species is common in thick savanna bush and grassland mainly in the Zambezi Valley, Hwange National Park and the Lowveld. The Rhino is facing severe persecution from poachers. In Zimbabwe, it is the centre of the special "Save the Rhino" conservation campaign.



Culture & Artefacts

“Zimbabwe has a wide range of traditional crafts like tools, pottery, basketry etc.” The descriptions of the artefacts shown also have their Shona and Ndebele names respectively.



15c: Head-rest (Mutsago / Ungibe)

This piece of artistry is a treasured possession used for a siesta during resting periods mostly during the day. The use of Mutsago in Zimbabwe stretches back a very long time and is part of our heritage



20c: Hand axe (Gano / Imbemba) & Adze (Mbezo / Isancele)

Common in most households, a Gano is a traditional tool used for various domestic purposes which can include the cutting of smaller items. An Adze is a handy domestic tool used by many families for making wooden handles, plates, mortars, knob-kerries etc.



23c: Gourd (Mukombe / Inkezo) & Water pot (Chirongo / Imbiza yamanzi)

Edible when it is still tender, a Gourd is a hard-shelled dried pumpkin-type vegetable which assumes several shapes whose pulp is removed by cutting and opening on the bulb. It is used for fetching and drinking water, beer and other liquid foodstuffs. A Water Pot is a vessel moulded from clay mixed with water which is later sun-dried and burnt with grass, twigs or cow dung. It is commonly used for storage of water and beer.



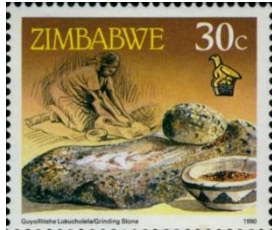
25c: Snuff container (Nhekwe / Imfuko)

A Snuff Container is the pointed horn of an animal sealed with wax at the base. It can also be made from wood, ivory or animal hide. It is used for storage of snuff.



26c: Winnowing basket (Rusero / Ukhomane) & Basket (Tswanda / / Isitsha)

This broad and flat shaped basket is woven from trimmed roots of a special tree species (*Combretum zeyheni*) (Muruka) which is common in Zimbabwe. It is used for fanning out chaff from grain or cereals. A Tswanda is a basket made from the same materials. This has a marked depression at the base from which a string is attached for suspension. The Basket is used as a container for grain and such other cereals.



30c: Grinding stone (Guyo / Ilitshe lokucholela)

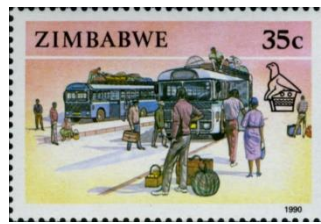
This is a stone with a flat surface upon which grain is crushed using a smaller grinding stone (Huyo) which is held by both hands.

Transport & Communications



33c: Bicycles

Bicycles are one of the most common modes of transport in Zimbabwe used for pleasure, business and sport



35c: Buses

Buses are a common means of transport in both rural and urban areas for carrying passengers and their baggage, which can include perishable produce - to and from rural service centres and city depots and markets.



38c: Passenger Train

This provides a regular means of transport between Zimbabwean towns and cities as well as neighbouring countries



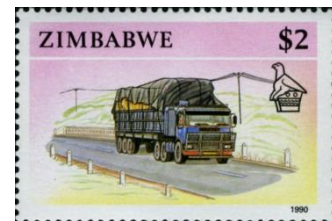
45c: Motor Cycles

Motor cycles are a common means of transport used for travel and deliveries of light goods. They are also very popular in racing sport.



\$1,00: The Boeing Aircraft

These newly acquired aircraft provide flight services that cover local, regional and international destinations.



\$2,00: Trucks

Trucks are used for the haulage of larger consignments of agricultural, mining, industrial, domestic appliances and household goods.

Catalogue listings

SG	ZSC ¹	Value	Description
768	195	1c	Tiger Fish, perf 14
	a.		Perf 14½
769	196	2c	Helmeted Guinea fowl, perf 14
	a.		Perf 14½
770	197	3c	Scrub Hare, perf 14
	a.		Perf 14½
771	198	4c	Pangolin, perf 14
	a.		Perf 14½
772	199	5c	Greater Kudu, perf 14
	a.	b.	Perf 14½
	b.	a.	Imperforate pair
773	200	9c	Black Rhinoceros, perf 14
	a.		Perf 14½
774	201	15c	Headrest
775	202	20c	Hand axe and adze
776	203	23c	Gourd and water pot
777	204	25c	Snuff container
778	205	26c	Winnowing tray and basket
779	206	30c	Grinding stone
780	207	33c	Bicycles
781	208	35c	Buses
	a.		Extra row of perforations through centre of stamp
782	209	38c	Passenger train
783	210	45c	Mail motor cycle and trailer
784	211	\$1	Air Zimbabwe Boeing 737 aircraft
785	212	\$2	Truck

Low value perforations

The perforations for the six low values stamps, 1c to 9c, continued with the mixed use of the two perforation combs as occurred with the late printings of the 1985 definitive.

Mike Amos in his 2002 RSC Journal article³ on the perforation of Zimbabwe's stamps, although he had gone into some detail on the 1985 definitive, simply stated that the low values of the 1990 definitive appeared with both perforations but hadn't had the opportunity of analysing the printings.

In preparing this section of the Encyclopaedia, four collections have been examined, with two elements in mind. Firstly, the need to ascertain which printings had which perforations (14 or 14½) for each value. Secondly to test the statement of Mike Amos' statement that in the 1985 definitive one of the sheet panes was perforated with the perf 14 comb and the other with the perf 14½ comb.

Unlike the 1985 definitive there is no method of distinguishing which printing a cylinder/colour indicator block came from, principally due to the same paper being used throughout the issue. However, it was possible to examine a number of complete sheets from many of the printings, where

it was found in all cases that where there were complementary 1A and 1B sheets they had the same perforation gauge.

The table below shows the findings of the examination of those collections. Number/value blocks were found for all printings of each of the values, save for the R2 printing of the 5 cents.

Value	Original		R1		R2		R3	
	14½	14	14½	14	14½	14	14½	14
1c	#	✓	✓		✓			✓
2c	✓		✓		✓			✓
3c		✓	✓		✓			✓
4c	✓	##	✓			✓		✓
5c		✓	✓					✓
9c	✓		✓			✓		✓

The conclusions were:

Original printing: 3 of the values perforated 14½ (2c, 4c & 9c), while the other three values were perforated 14, but see notes below
First reprint: All values were perforated 14½
Second reprint: 3 values perforated 14½ (1c, 2c & 3c), and two values 14. Only the 5c has not been ascertained.
Third reprint: All values perforated 14

Narendhra Morar has reported that with the 1c original printing he has a few complete CTO sheets between sheet number PTC 94706 to PTC 94736 perf 14½, instead of the usual perf 14. All sheets are Cyl 1B. The CTO has the Gokwe postmark and is dated 4 February 2000.

Narendhra Morar has also reported that with the 4c original printing he has a few mint sheets between sheet numbers PTC 75797 and PTC 75799 perforated 14 and not 14½. All the sheets are Cyl 1A.

Most collections have number blocks from the Philatelic Bureau with sheets numbers tending to be within the first few hundred. But Narendhra's evidence indicates that towards the end of the run the perforation combs were changed, either or both. More evidence is required.

Technical details

Stamp size:

1c to 9c	30 x 26 mm
15c to 30c	35 x 30 mm
33c to \$2	42 x 28 mm

Sheet Size:

1c to 9c	84 stamps (12 rows of 7 stamps),
15c to 30c	60 stamps (10 rows of 6 stamps)
33c to \$2	55 stamps (11 rows of 5 stamps)

Each stamp with two panes per printed sheet

Artist:	1c to 9c	Janet Duff
	15c to 30c	Rose Rigden
	33c to \$2	Nancy Abrey
Paper:	Only one paper used through issue period	
	ZSC paper type D – HS8, another type of lithographic paper, fluorescent front and back, PVA cream gum. Paper appears to be creamier to the front when compared to type B	
Print colours:	All values - Black, magenta, cyan, yellow	
Perforations:	1c to 9c	SG 14½, ZSC 14½
	15c to 30c	SG 14½ x 14, ZSC 14¼ x 14
	33c to £2	SG 14½, ZSC 14¼
	All values	
	Top margin:	Perforated through.
	Other margins:	Imperforate
Printer:	Natprint., Harare, Zimbabwe	
Printer's Imprint:	All values bottom margin,	
	1c to 10c	below R12 C3 to 5
	15c to 30c	below R10 C3 & 4
	33c to \$2	below R11 C3
Cylinder numbers:	Bottom margin below	
	1c to 9c R12C1; 15c to 33c R10C1; 33c to \$2 R11C1	
	All values reading from left – cyan, yellow, magenta, black	
Colour register:	Type TL4– round boxed – left margin opposite:	
	1c to 9c R12C1; 15c to 33c R10C1; 33c to \$2 R11C1	
	Colours reading down. All values – cyan, yellow, magenta, black	
Sheet Value:	Bottom margin, below:	
	1c to 9c R12C7; 15c to 33c R10C6; 33c to \$2 R11C5.	
	Printed in black	
Sheet Number:	Type SN 4a with 'PTC' prefix reading down, right margin, opposite:	
	1c to 9c R12C7; 15c to 33c R10C6; 33c to \$2 R11C5	
	Reprints prefix reading "R1 PTC" for first reprint or second printing, "R2 PTC" for second reprint or third printing and so on.	
Print numbers:	Unknown	

No. of Printings:	1c	4	2c	4	3c	4
	4c	4	5c	4	9c	4
	15c	2	20c	7	23c	1
	25c	5	26c	1	30c	4
	23c	3	25c	3	26c	1
	33c	1	35c	2	38c	1
	45c	1	\$1	1	\$2	1

The details of the reprints are scarce, no dates or sizes of printings are available. Notes produced at the time for the various printings show no evidence of the 5c R2 printing, this is either very scarce or non-existent.

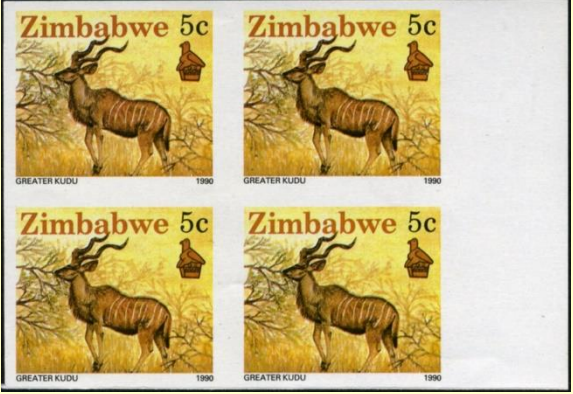
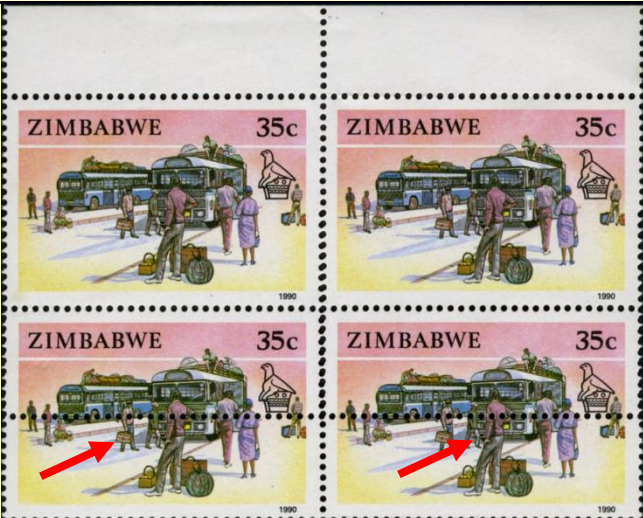
Issue date: 2nd January 1990

Withdrawal from sale:

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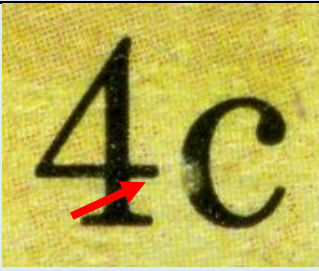
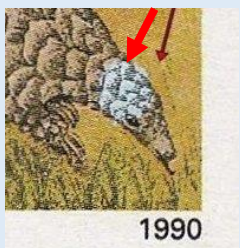
Listed Varieties

No listing of varieties of this issue has been located. Apart from the perforation change, only two other varieties shown in the Zimbabwe Colour Catalogue.¹

5c SG 772b & ZSC199a - imperforate	
35c ZSC208a – Extra row of perforations through centre of stamp. Addition strike of comb perforator through second row of stamps. Note that the vertical perfs above the additional row are slightly larger.	

Unlisted varieties

The number of reportable varieties to this issue is low when one considers the number of stamps in the set and the number of reprints that occurred. It should be be noted that there are significant colour differences through most of the stamps, particularly the middle values, this may be due to the additional printings but differences have been noted with the single printing values.

 2c: Cyan thumb print to centre of stamp, ex block of nine	 2c: Double black printing (Courtesy Narendhra Morar)	 3c: Cyan line between 'Z' and 'I' of Zimbabwe
 9c: Green blob above rhino's head (water on plate/s) and vertical ink smudge through all stamps	 4c: broken 'c' of value  4c: Blue head to pangolin (Source eBay)	 9c: Green vertical line, probably from water on plate/s



9c: Small ink clot of 'c' of value



15c: green patch under arm, probably water on plate.



15c: Yellow/yellow green area in centre of stamp, probably due to water on paper



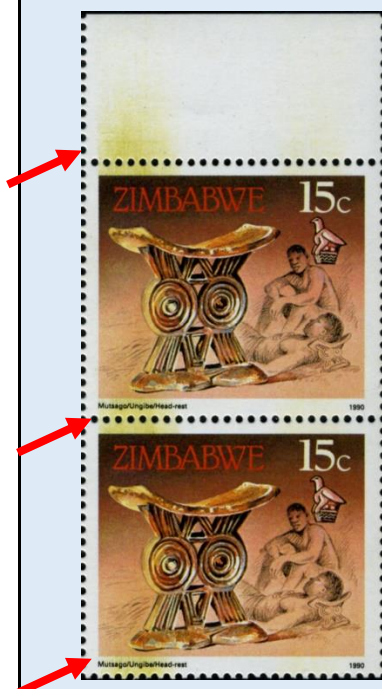
15c: Yellow/yellow green area in centre of stamp, probably due to water on paper
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



20c: Orange ring above head



20c: Ink clot next to value



15c: dirty vertical ink smudge



20c: Right hand stamp is shorter than the stamp to the left, with the early perforation of the row of stamps above.
(Courtesy of Narendhra Morar)



20c: Offset of printing on back of stamp



20c: Orange blob in front of forehead
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



20c: Registered cover from Mount Darwin. All the 20c stamps show a shift of the perforations to the left. Postmaster at Mount Darwin decided to cut the stamps as he didn't want the value to appear as 2c.

(Courtesy of Dick Shurmer)



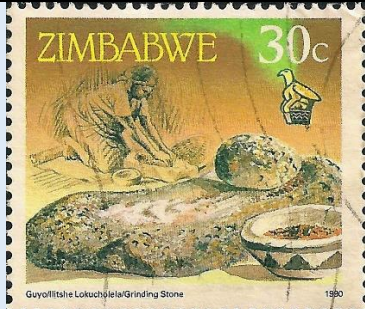
23c: the right side of the pot is missing magenta and black. Probably due to water on plate.
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



25c: remnants of probable water on printing plate



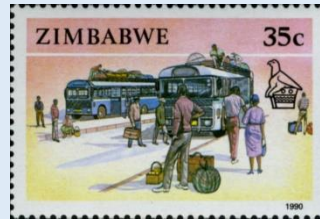
25c: Significant water on magenta plate
(Source Rhodesia.co.za)



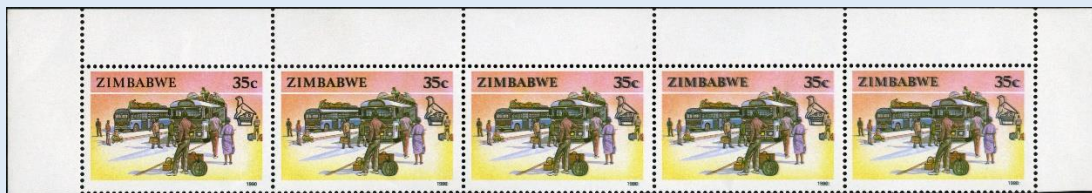
30c: Missing magenta and black to top of stamp. Probably due to water on plate
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



33c: Light patch in value
(Courtesy Narendhra Morar)



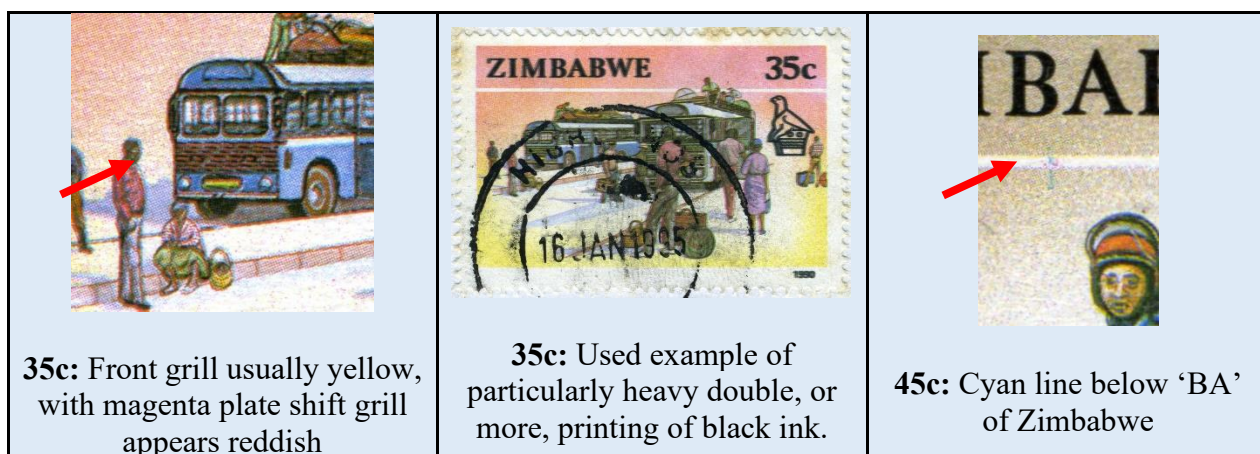
35c: Strip of 5 stamps with reduced height due to early drop of comb. Below is the end stamp of the strip with normal stamp for comparison



35c: Gradual doubling of black ink from left to right. At left is a close-up of part of a stamp from the right of the strip.



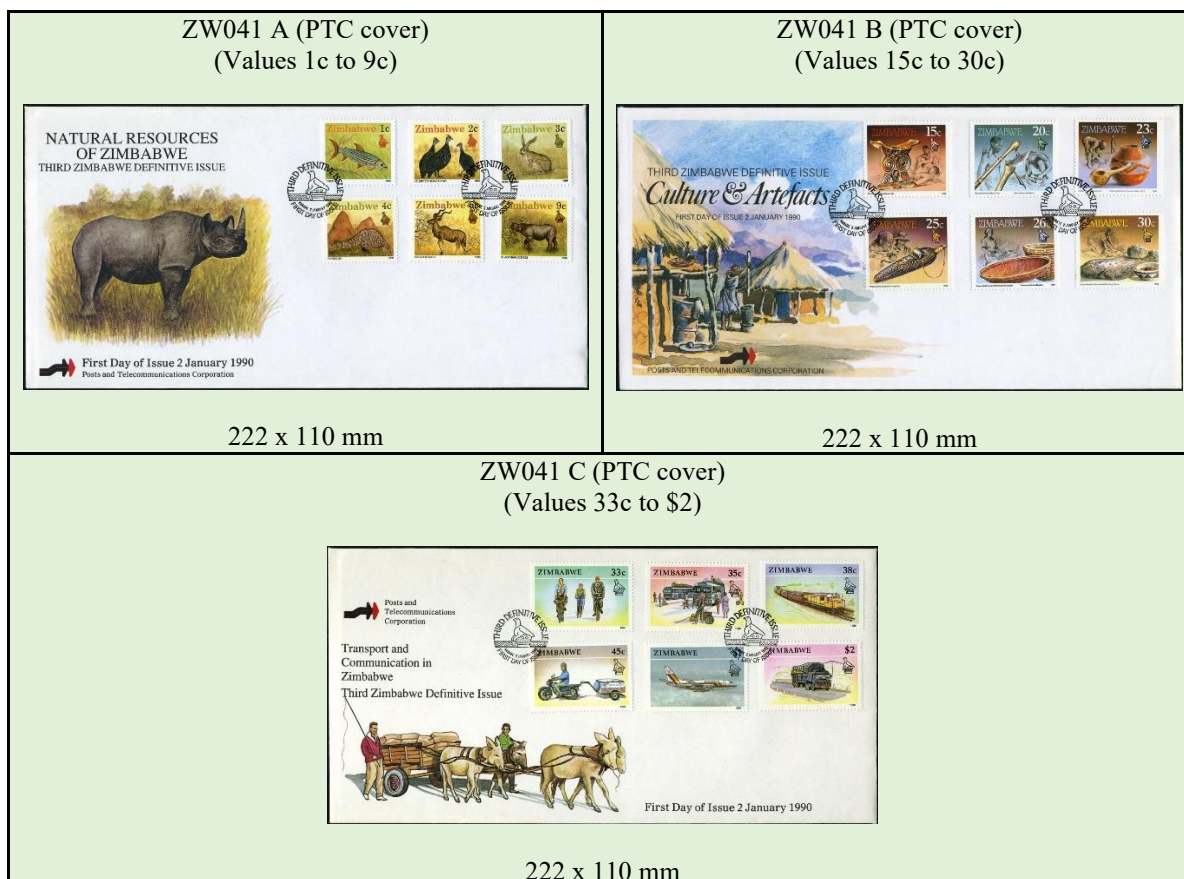
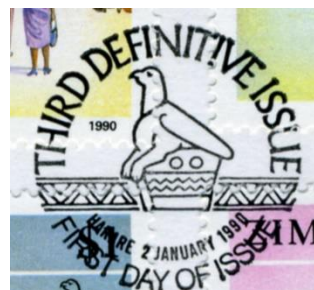
35c: Paper at angle to comb perforator, resulting in perforation shift to right and all perforations at an angle.



First Day Covers

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

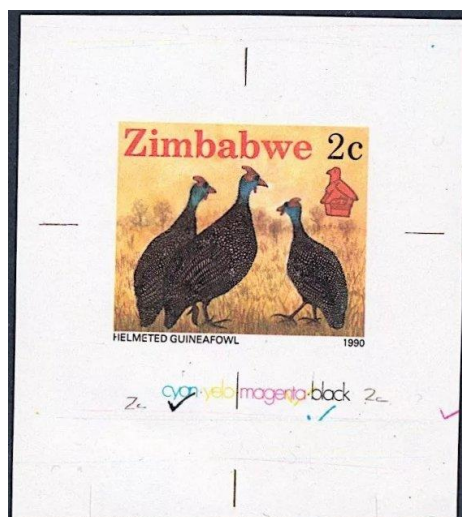
A special first day of issue canceller was produced for this issue for use by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.



Related material

Postcard with guinea fowl picture and 2c stamp.

Stamped postmarked “First Day of Issue/Bulawayo”



Printer's sample proof

2c Guinea Fowl

With print colours

(Source eBay February 2025)

Additions/Changes since December 2020

12-2023	Guinea fowl postcard with 2c stamp
4-2025	Printer's sample proof of 2c stamp
8-2025	25c – significant water on plate

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 2 of 1985.
3. “Perforations on Zimbabwe stamps”, Mike Amos, Rhodesian Study Circle Journal No 203 of June 2002, pages 66 to 68