

MARINE LIFE ISSUE

Date of Issue	10th October 1979.
Values	2c, 5c, 7c and 25c.
Stamp Size	35.016mm × 26.43mm.
Art Designer	Raymond Pitre.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	13.6 × 13.6.
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing upwards.
Paper	Chalked Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

The colour of these stamps was produced by the four colour process.

Designs

Marine Life in the seas around Malta is the subject of this issue. It gives philatelic recognition to the positive interest taken by Malta in many aspects of marine affairs.

The 2c stamp features the single-shell mollusc, known as "Gibbula Nivosa" to the studios, but called "Bebbuxu tal-Borra" by the local fishermen., who at times use them as bait. This is found only in the sea around Malta. Its colouration is fairly variable but its standard pattern includes many white spots giving it its technical name.

The 5c stamp depicts "Caretta caretta", (Loggerhead Turtle and locally known as Fekruna tal-Baħar), which grows up to 60-90 cms long and exceptionally, to over 100cms. Caretta caretta, which spends its whole life in the sea, except when laying eggs, lives in tropical and sub-tropical seas and is very common in the Mediterranean.

The 7c stamp features "Caryphaena Hippurus", (Dolphin Fish or Dorado), very well known in Malta, as the "Lampuka". It is one of the most beautiful fishes with a variety of colours, and is caught in substantial quantities locally, between August and December. This period is traditionally known as the "Lampuki" season. The 25c stamp depicts one of the most unusual molluscs, the "Pinna Nobilis", (Noble Pen Shell), which is the largest to be found in the Mediterranean, (70-80cms long). It has been common in Maltese waters and locally known as "Nakkra", but because of its attraction to underwater fisherman is becoming rarer. Consideration is being given to future protective measures.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Raymond Pitre, the designer, for producing such a beautiful set. Mr. Pitre is a very well known artist and although this is his first contribution to Maltese Philately, we hope to see much more of his work on future Maltese stamps

Colour Checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row. The colours from top to bottom, correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right on all Panes of all four values. With this set, it is the first time that the title of the subject depicted on each stamp, is also printed in the bottom border, between perforations and subject, i.e. outside the picture frame. The printing is in Black and .58mm high.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins of Panes. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in Black. The Printed Sheets of all four values consisted of three Panes, A, B and C. Each Pane has 50 stamps made up of five rows of ten stamps. All stamps are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row.

2c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4.

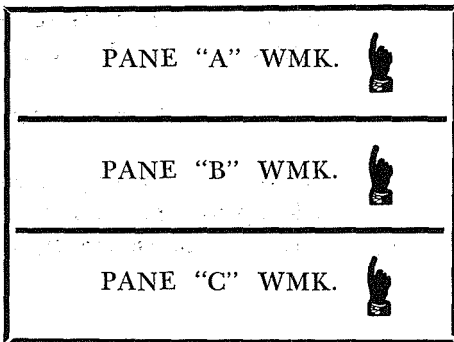
5c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4.

7c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4.

25c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4.

Perforation of Margins

The left hand margins of Panes A, B and C of all four values are imperforate. The top, bottom and right hand margins of Panes A, B and C, of all four values are fully perforated.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheets of all values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown on left. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in individual stamps is also upwards.

Imprint Blocks

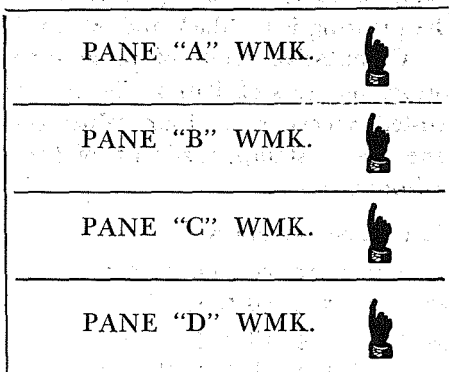
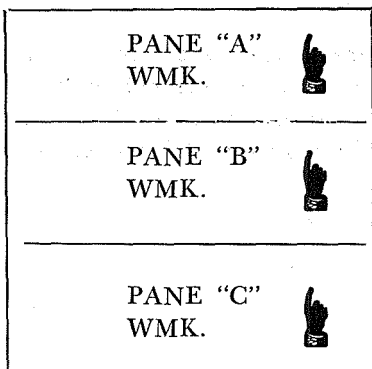
"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in Black. An Imprint Block of four, from an Pane of any value, will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. Up to 4 p.m. on the first day of issue, the sale of these stamps realised the sum of £M53,023. This set will remain on sale up to Thursday, 15th May, 1980 unless stocks are previously exhausted ■

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Perforation of Margins

The left hand margin of Panes A, B, C and D of the 2c value, and the left hand margin of Panes A, B and C of the 7c and 11c values are all imperforate. The top, bottom and right hand margins of all Panes, of all three values are fully perforated.



From a study of the details given, the Printed Sheet before cutting, would look as above right for the 2c value and left for the 7c and 11c values. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps would be seen sideways and hence why watermark is sideways in individual stamps.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in Blue, Dark Pink and Black in the 2c, 7c and 11c values respectively.

An Imprint Block of four, of any value, will also include the colour checks.

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. A total of £M34,353 worth of these stamps were sold up to 4 p.m. on the first day of issue. This set will remain on sale up to Friday, 28th December, 1979 unless stocks are previously exhausted ■



SEASONAL GREETINGS

TO ALL

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AND THEIR FAMILIES