

## Flights of fancy For the first time, Post and Go

**1st Class**  
up to 100g



002010 9 51840 01

Almost any garden with a peanut feeder will attract blue tits. In winter they form flocks with other tit species and a garden with four or five at a bird table at any one time, may be feeding 20 or more

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Smaller than blackbirds, with a short tail, pointed head, triangular wings, starlings look black at a distance but are very glossy with a sheen of purples and greens

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The UK's largest and commonest pigeon is shy in the countryside but can be tame and approachable in towns and cities. Its cooing call is a familiar sound in woodlands

**1st Class**  
up to 100g



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The house sparrow is noisy and gregarious and has colonised most of the world. The ultimate opportunist is now struggling to survive in the UK along with many other once-common birds

A LITTLE COLOUR HAS BEEN INTRODUCED to the 'self service' Post and Go stamps with the new illustrated issue, launched on 17 September. Birds have long been one of the most popular themes issued by Royal Mail and this set takes its inspiration from the birds most commonly seen in UK gardens, as revealed by the results of the RSPB's Great Garden Birdwatch: the blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*), robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Each stamp will be vended from the Post and Go machines in the Crown Offices listed on page 7.

**Key creatives** Kate Stephens has designed more stamps than any other female designer. To date she her work has included the 2005 Yearbook, 2004 Woodland Animals stamps, 2004 RSA Presentation Pack, 2003 Coronation stamps, the Golden Jubilee stamps of 2002, and the RSA presentation pack, 2009 Kew Gardens Miniature Sheet.

The illustrator Robert Gillmor is an ornithologist, artist, author and editor. He is a founder member of the Society of Wildlife Artists (SWLA) and he has also contributed to more than a hundred books.

**A favourite theme** There have been many previous issues of GB stamps featuring birds, and they are popular among thematic collectors the world over. For anyone who is beginning a thematic bird collection and everyone who enjoys recalling special issue stamps from different eras, here is the full list, guaranteed to take you on a philatelic flight

### Post and Go Birds of Britain (1) details

Number of stamps	Six
Design	Kate Stephens
Illustration	Robert Gillmor
Stamp Format	Landscape
Stamp Size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	Walsall Security Printing
Print Process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss die-cut simulated perforations
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive

## stamps are sporting illustrations, of Birds of Britain (1)



Male and female robins look identical, and young birds have no red breast. They sing nearly all year round and are aggressively territorial. They also sing at night next to street lights



A highly coloured finch with a bright red face and yellow wing patch. Sociable, often breeding in loose colonies, they have a delightful liquid twittering song and call

back in time. Birds first popped up in 1966, the year that the Beatles' *Eleanor Rigby* topped the charts, and the British Birds issue portrayed the black headed gull, blue tit, robin and blackbird. The next birds on stamps appealed to the children of the Beatles generation in 1980, by focusing on conservation: the Centenary of Wild Bird Protection Act stamps showed the kingfisher, dipper, moorhen and yellow wagtail. Two years later a couple of Galapagos finches appeared to commemorate the Centenary of the Death of Charles Darwin, and the 1983 Christmas stamps showed various birds including doves.

**Europe, conservation, Christmasses and science** Since 1985, when Sea Pictures depicted a gull's wing, birds have made frequent appearances on stamps: the 1986 Europa Nature Conservation, Endangered Species issue had a barn owl on the 17p stamp. Then, in 1989, came the modern classics of the Centenary of the RSPB, featuring a puffin, avocet, oystercatcher and gannet. 1990, the 150th Anniversary of the RSPCA had a duckling, and 1992 saw the 33p Wintertime stamp with a redwing and the Protection of the Environment 39p with a bird of hope. 1993 was a bumper year with the 600th anniversary of Abbotsbury Swannery, Greetings with Long John Silver and his parrot, Europa Contemporary Art showing St Francis and the birds, and a turkey for Christmas stamps. 1995's Christmas stamp featured robins.

In 1996, the year of the birth of Dolly the Sheep and the heyday of the Spice Girls, Centenary of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust stamps showed muscovy duck, lapwing, white-fronted goose, bittern and whooper swan. The 1998 Endangered Species issue showed a song thrush on the 31p; a hummingbird on *The Settler's Tail* 63p and Galapagos finch on the 26p *The Scientist's Tale* stamp. The 2000 Millennium Projects issue had a barn owl on the 19p and gannets and the 64p. In 2001, the Weather issue showed a goldfinch on the 65p), and Christmas had robins. 2002's *Birds of Prey* featured a kestrel and barn owl, and the 2003 *Pub Signs* had a black swan. 2004 saw a duck on the *Occasions* issue and *Khaki Campbell* ducks, *Light Sussex* chicks, *Norfolk Black* turkeys, *Emden* geese on the *Farm Animals* issue. 2007 *Action for Species Birds* showed a set of birds. 2009 *Charles Darwin* stamps and *Miniature Sheet* featured five more species ●

### Post and Go Birds of Britain (1) prices

Set of stamps	£2.46
First Day Envelope, unstamped	30p