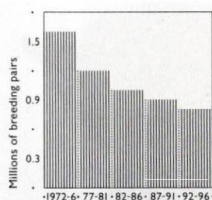




## stamps, by Robert Maude



**Song thrush** Widespread but declining throughout the UK, especially birds on lowland farmland; agricultural changes have reduced its food supply and nest sites.

The search for images began among the illustrated volumes at the Natural History Museum, where the uncertain work of identifying species was greatly aided by the librarians.

Two sets of designs were then submitted: the conventional approach opposite, and another relying on two-sided printing to communicate more effectively the reason for the issue. A visual of this alternative is shown above left, at this stage including dates in the chart. Detailed information supporting the chart was to appear on the reverse, as shown above right. When sufficient assurances could not be obtained regarding the safety of printing over the gum, the reverse printing was abandoned, but detailed charts were incorporated in the presentation pack, right, and first day cover filler card.

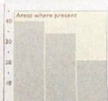
Beyond simply locating illustrations, initial design work was determined by the goal of engaging the public with the reasons for the stamp issue: an attractive set of appealing illustrations, while a not unworthy aim in itself, would in this case be a missed opportunity. To achieve this goal, I proposed to combine each illustration with a bar chart, an immediate and graphic representation of the extreme perils faced by each species, along with supporting text. Both sides of the stamp would be employed to accommodate the resulting complex package of information. As well as allowing a more complete story to be told, the added public interest to be generated by this unusual step would, importantly, focus attention on the stamps' message.

Realizing this proposal may have proved impractical, I also submitted a set of conventional single-sided designs, without additional text or graphic elements. Royal Mail preferred the two-sided option, and work began to gather the data for translation into graphic form, alongside the process of selecting the final set of species which would comprise the set.

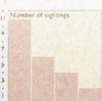
As well as the obvious requirement that each illustration be of the highest quality, other priorities influenced the selection process. Some species were excluded due to their relative security, while others were preferred for their appeal. The design approach also imposed certain restrictions: each subject would be cut out, so excluding illustrations with overlapping elements, and each had to be oriented so as not to obscure the background

## Last chance to see...

The wealth of animals and plants, their genetic material and the interactions between them make up the Earth's living resources: its biodiversity. Humans are part of this, dependent on it for our survival and prosperity. Yet the push towards increasing our prosperity threatens wildlife as habitats are destroyed, degraded and polluted, and rare species hunted to extinction.



**Shiloh reeds** have small. Lies in ditches on grazing marshes; pollution, drainage and other agricultural changes are probably responsible for contraction of the population.



**Made arifolia** Once widespread wet meadows and pastures throughout the UK; drainage, building and other land-use changes have reduced species to a single known colony.



**Devil's bolete** Recently found at only six UK sites, probably Europe's largest population; loss of suitable beech trees, with which it grows, may have contributed to the decline.

**Devil's bolete** Glaucous  
Weissia multicapsularis  
mugwort Mossy stone  
green feather-moss Sh  
weed Ribbon-leaved w  
Green shield moss Cre  
wort Starfruit Lady's s

**Floating water plantain** Schismatomma graphic  
dock Early gentian Young's helleborine orchid S  
Fen orchid Three-lobed water crowfoot Killarr  
cotoneaster Eyebrights Western ramping-fumf  
path moss Holly-leaved naiad Mountain scurvy  
marsh saxifrage Derbyshire feather moss Actior

**The author** Robert Maude moved to England from the USA in 1974 and stayed to attend art college. Following an education at Pentagram Design, he began his own practice in 1985, and has since worked for a wide variety of corporate and individual clients, including Reuters Limited, Ove Arup, the RIBA, WH Smith and WWF.

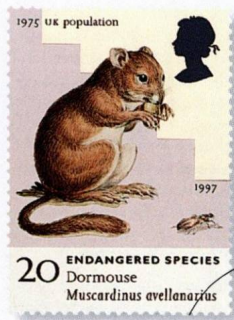
His own publications of photography and illustration have been exhibited in Europe, the USA and Japan, and have been purchased by the Tate Gallery for their permanent collection.



**Win signed first day cover**

Robert Maude has agreed to sign 25 Royal Mail first day covers bearing his Endangered Species stamps.

For a chance to win one of these signed covers send your name and address on a post-card (or back of an envelope) to: Robert Maude FDC, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL. The draw will be made on 20 February.



The pipistrelle bat (top, by Archibald Thorburn, 1920) is relatively secure, while the dormouse was favoured for its public appeal. William Jardine's illustration (centre, 1838) satisfied all the criteria of the design approach, unlike Thorburn's dormouse shown on page 144. Above, Jardine's original illustration and a visual prepared from it.

chart. To reflect the wide diversity of life at risk, each stamp was to represent a different kind of species: initially a mammal, bird, fish, insect and plant, and later, a fungus. When fish proved impossibly troublesome, they were replaced by molluscs, a decision which brought its own difficulty: some action plan molluscs are too small to have been seen in detail before modern times, so few antique illustrations exist. The shining ram's-horn snail is therefore a newly-commissioned illustration, its 3mm diameter shell having been photographed under a microscope for the illustrator's reference.

Eventually, six species were selected, and essays were produced for the face of each stamp. Successful trials were produced of the reverse, printed over the adhesive. At this point however, in an unforeseen turn of events, sufficient assurances regarding the safety of the reverse printing could not be obtained, and this aspect of the design was to proceed no further.

Although the stamps were of course designed to communicate independently of the reverse detail, without this additional information the full meaning of the background charts may be less complete than originally envisaged. Even so, if the design functions as intended, in counterpointing an immediate recognition of the placid illustrations with a later realization of the disturbing message behind them, it will achieve its purpose and successfully express the reasons for the issue ●