

## Insects The next Action for Species stamps:



TEN 1ST CLASS STAMPS featuring insects go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 15 April – the second in the Action for Species series, which began with the Endangered Birds stamps last September. The stamps depict: Adonis Blue butterfly, Southern damselfly, Red barbed ant, Barberry carpet moth, Stag beetle, Hazel pot beetle, Field cricket, Silver-spotted skipper, Purbeck mason wasp, and Noble chafer beetle. They were designed by Andrew Ross, his second set for Royal Mail, using photography from the Natural History Museum, London. The stamps are printed in litho by De La Rue, size 35mm square. Sheets of 30 will be issued to Post Office branches; sheets of 60, with gutter margins, will be available from Post Office philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House.

**FIRST DAY FACILITIES** Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to the nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Crawley postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FDO811' or 'FDO812'. For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, *British Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

**PHILATELIC PRODUCTS** A well-illustrated presentation pack (opposite) has been written by Richard Lewington, designed by Iris Associates, and printed by Walsall Security Printers. ►

# ten of the UK's rarest insects fight for survival

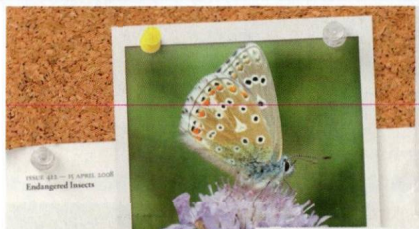


**Insects prices**

Set of stamps	£3.40
Presentation pack	£3.90
First day cover envelope	£0.30
Serviced first day cover (UK customers)	£4.47
Serviced first day cover (overseas customers)	£3.81
Stamp cards set	£3.00



Talents House (FD0811) and Crawley (FD0812) postmarks.



The presentation pack, left, has been written by Richard Lewington, and designed by Iris Associates.

**ADONIS BLUE**  
**SMALL BUT IN DANGER**  
*The UK's rarest insects fight back*



*"In the last fifty years or so, the sheer number of individuals has declined dramatically, causing a knock-on effect to birds and animals which rely on insects for food."*

WRITER  
 Richard Lewington

Insects, in all their diversity, are the most successful animals ever to have evolved on Earth, occurring in virtually every habitat. They play an essential role in our environment, helping as pollinators, breaking down vegetation, dung and animal corpses, thus returning vital nutrients back into the soil. They also provide food for vast numbers of other creatures higher up the food chain: without them the Earth would be unrecognizable, as we know it. Around a million species of insect have been described, with probably several million more yet to be discovered, and it is estimated there are 200-300 million to every human being on Earth. The greatest number and diversity occur in the tropics, but even in temperate regions large numbers

**INSECTS**  
*UK Species in Recovery*

Royal Mail First Day Cover



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occur, and few people would imagine, for example, that in Britain alone there are more than 6,000 species of fly.

However, despite these impressive statistics, many species are struggling to survive as the over-increasing human population continues to make demands on land for agriculture, roads and building development. Some species have become extinct, and, from records submitted over the years from a huge number of naturalists, it is clear, in the last fifty years or so, that the sheer number of individuals has declined dramatically, causing a knock-on effect to birds and animals which rely on insects for food.

WRITER  
 Richard Lewington





**Insects stamps** Previous issues on this theme include the 1981 Butterflies set, 1985 Insects, 1998 Endangered Species, 2000 Mind & Matter 2nd class and 2001 Pondlife 65p. An Emperor Dragonfly was shown on the cover of a 50p stamp book issued in May 1986 •



Small Tortoiseshell



Large Blue



Peacock



Chequered Skipper



Buff Tailed Bumble Bee



Seven Spotted Ladybird



Wart-Biter Bush-Cricket



Emperor Dragonfly



65



Decline in sightings

43 **ENDANGERED SPECIES**  
Mole cricket  
*Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*



Millennium 2000/03  
Wildscapes at Bristol  
2nd

