

Charles Darwin A special issue celebrating



THE THIRD SPECIAL ISSUE of 2009 pays homage to the naturalist Charles Darwin, who was born in Shrewsbury 200 years ago on 12 February 1809.

Six stamps, a miniature sheet and a prestige stamp book go on sale at Post Office branches, and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 12 February, the actual anniversary of Darwin's birth. The stamps feature Darwin and different aspects of his studies: 1st class, portrait of Darwin (from Natural History Museum, photographer unknown); 48p, marine iguana (zoology); 50p, finches (ornithology); 56p, atoll (geology); 72p, bee orchid (botany); and 81p, orang-utan (anthropology). These self-adhesive stamps will be of particular appeal to collectors who like unusual formats in that they are perforated to resemble pieces of a jigsaw which can be fitted together.

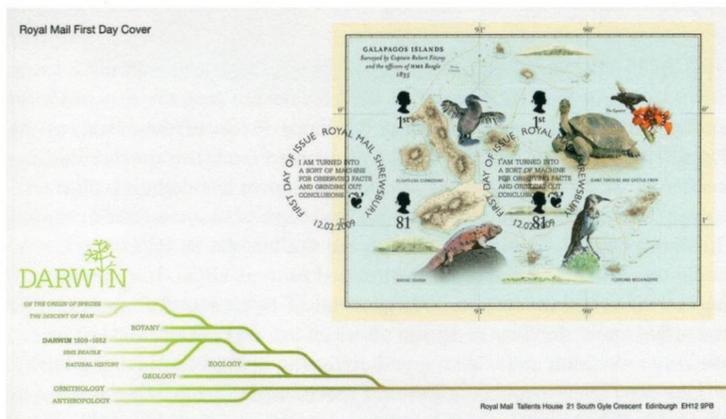
The miniature sheet contains four additional stamps: 2 × 1st class showing a Flightless Cormorant and Giant Tortoise and Cactus Finch, and 2 × 81p, a Marine Iguana and Floreana Mockingbird – all set against the background of a map of the Galapagos Islands, surveyed by Captain Robert Fitzroy and the officers of HMS *Beagle* in 1835. The miniature sheet measures 115 × 89mm.

The stamps were designed by Hat-trick design group of London, and the miniature sheet by Howard Brown, who needs little introduction to collectors of modern British stamps having several issues since 1991 to his credit. Both sheet stamps (gravure) and the miniature sheet (litho) were printed by De La Rue.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES The FDC, designed by Hat-trick, features a graphic design representing the different strands of Darwin's scientific endeavours. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the date 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 (Shrewsbury postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FD0905' or 'FD0906'.

For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House. For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

the 200th birthday of a great British scientist



Prestige stamp book A new book, titled *Charles Darwin 1809-1882*, contains four panes of stamps: Darwin 48p, 50p, and 56p stamps; Darwin miniature sheet; Darwin 1st, 72p, and 81p stamps; Top row 5p, 10p, and 48p definitives, middle row two 1st class definitives separated by label showing Darwin, bottom row 48p, 10p, and 5p definitives.

The Darwin stamps in the book are gummed, as opposed to the sheet stamps which are self-adhesive. The panes containing Darwin stamps are printed in gravure, the miniature sheet and definitive panes in litho. First day covers will be serviced bearing the label pane.

The portrait of Darwin featured on the label pane is from the Natural History Museum, London. It was reproduced from a photograph, taken in 1874, which was bound together with Darwin's correspondence in the Museum's General Library. Colour was added to the photo electronically. The book was designed by Howard Brown and printed by De La Rue.

Illustrations of the book will be included in a future issue of the *Bulletin* ●

Charles Darwin prices

Set of stamps	£ 3.43
Miniature sheet	£ 2.34
Miniature sheet press sheet	£37.90
Presentation pack (stamps and miniature sheet)	£ 6.30
Prestige stamp book (PSB)	£ 7.75
First day cover (FDC) envelope	£ 0.30
Serviced FDC stamps (UK customers)	£ 4.51
Serviced FDC stamps (overseas customers)	£ 3.84
Serviced FDC miniature sheet (UK customers)	£ 3.23
Serviced FDC miniature sheet (overseas customers)	£ 2.75
Serviced FDC PSB pane (UK customers)	£ 2.80
Serviced FDC PSB pane (overseas customers)	£ 2.39
Stamp cards set (11 cards)	£ 4.40
Theory of Evolution coin cover	£19.95