

Water and Coast is the third of 12 sets of Millennium issues



Turning the tide The attractive fields, beaches, wildlife sites and recreation areas of this aptly-named Millennium project have replaced tons of waste that blighted the Durham coastline.

National Pondlife Loved by children and so vital for wildlife, the world of Britain's ponds can be explored at the National Pondlife Centre in Prescot, Merseyside.

Parc Arfordirol Reclamation of the coastal headland at the Millennium Coastal Park, Llanelli, is a heartening symbol of our ability to recover from the ravages of our industrial past.

Portsmouth Harbour The role of this port at the heart of Britain's nautical tradition will be enhanced with a new leisure harbour and maritime arena, and reclamation of historic buildings.

The Water and Coast issue will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 March.

Peter Wood



Nick Turner



Photonica/BBC Natural History Unit



Ken Kirkwood

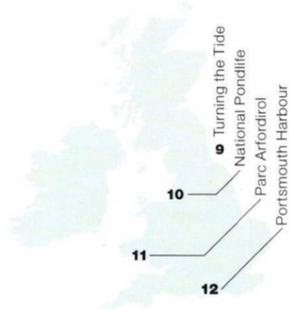


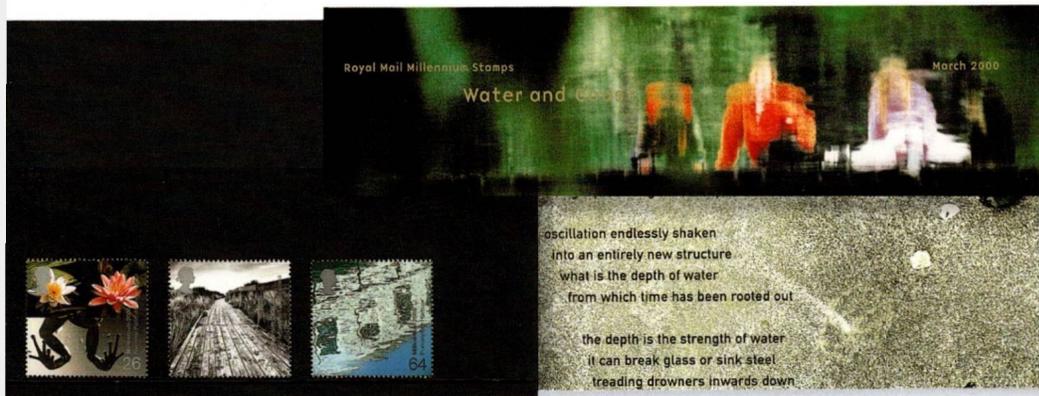
for 2000, inspired by Millennium projects throughout the UK



Two species closely associated with Britain's pondlife: a Variable Damselfly settling on Ragged Robin.

The 19p stamp, *Turning the Tide*, features the Millennium project which is turning back a legacy of industrial waste on the Durham Coast • The 26p represents the National Pondlife Centre at Prescott, Merseyside • Parc Arfordirol, the Millennium Coastal Park in south Wales, is the subject of the 44p value • The 64p stamp depicts Portsmouth Harbour, where a renaissance forging links between past and present is now under way at the historic port.





A well-illustrated presentation pack (above, price £1.90) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.

Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process 44p litho, others gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 19p; two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinders and colours

19p W1 silver ● W1 black ● W1 dull blue ● W1 sage-green ● W1 olive-grey ● W1 orange-yellow ● W1 pale grey

26p W1 new blue ● W1 silver ● W1 black ● W1 greenish yellow ● W1 magenta

44p W1 black ● W1 grey ● W1 silver

64p W1 black ● W1 grey ● W1 deep bluish green ● W1 greenish blue ● W1 cobalt ● W1 grey-green ● W1 brownish grey

The phosphor cylinder W1 was used for all values. The 44p stamp is printed litho, others gravure.

When coal mining ceased along the Durham coast, all that remained were mountainous heaps of coal spoil, rusting conveyor belts, broken concrete and twisted metal. The Turning the Tide Millennium project has changed all that. Attractive promenades and cycle ways have replaced an industrial legacy of a million tonnes of waste. Where fly-tipping and vandalism were common, now families can walk and picnic along reclaimed pathways edged with wildflowers. Coal mining in Durham and Northumberland is recalled by the Thomas Hepburn stamp in the 1976 Social Reformers set.

Over the past century two-thirds of British ponds have disappeared under concrete or tarmac, or have been drained or simply neglected. Set in a newly created wetland environment, visitors to the National Pondlife Centre enter at the bottom of a people-friendly pond before surfacing to interact with a host of aquatic plant and animal life through a series of multi-media displays. Supplementing this activity will be vital research projects into freshwater ecology and unique training workshops and courses on pond conservation. Pondlife featured on the covers of four 50p stamp books issued in 1986-7.

The Millennium Coastal Park is now home to the endangered Scoter duck and an expanding population of one of Britain's most endangered animals – the water vole. The pulverised fuel ash and derelict Victorian steel mills are gone, replaced with parks and open spaces linked by the Sustrans National Cycle Route, a footpath running the length of the park, and train routes taking visitors to many of the attractions on offer in this area of Wales.

A massive facelift of the historic maritime centre of Portsmouth Harbour is under way, with a new leisure harbour and maritime arena, as well as the construction of new promenades and a waterbus network linking Portsmouth and Gosport. Due to this new and improved access, historic buildings are being brought back into use for leisure activities, while the futuristic Spinnaker Tower will provide visitors with an unparalleled view of the enormous naval dockyard, where the *Mary Rose* and HMS *Victory* are reminders of the port's seafaring history. Both of these famous ships have featured on British stamps.

Future Millennium issues

Life and Earth	04.04.00
Art and Craft	02.05.00
People and Place	06.06.00
Stone and Soil	04.07.00
Tree and Leaf	01.08.00
Mind and Matter	05.09.00
Body and Bone	03.10.00
Spirit and Faith	07.11.00
Sound and Vision	05.12.00

ROYAL MAIL MILLENNIUM FIRST DAY COVER



Water and Coast



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FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 March, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Llanelli must reach the Bureau by 7 March. Price £2.22 UK (including VAT) or £1.89 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA (Llanelli postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0005' (Bureau), or 'FD0006' (Llanelli). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Llanelli postmark. A non-pictorial Llanelli postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FD0006 NP'.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 7 March will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. Covers may bear just the 19p Water and Coast stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 7 March.



MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Water and Coast pack and stamp cards will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. Each of the Millennium packs this year includes a specially-commissioned poem. The Water and Coast poem is by Devon-based Alice Oswald who frequently features water in her poetry. As part of her research for the Royal Mail commission she visited the Turning the Tide project on the Durham Coast; her poem is called *Seaham, County Durham* ●

Future Millennium issues The fourth set in the Millennium 2000 series will be issued on 4 April. Entitled Life and Earth, this features the ECOS project on the River Braid flood plain in Ballymena, Northern Ireland; the Web of Life building at London Zoo; the Earth Centre at Doncaster, South Yorkshire; and project suzy (short for sustainability) at Nature's World, Middlesbrough. Details next month ●



Damselilly p163 and p176. Robert Thompson/NHPA