

Hungarian Stamps 2010

FAUNA OF HUNGARY IV - 2010 YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY



Magyar Posta in keeping with its traditions presents the flora and fauna of Hungary on a special souvenir sheet and set of stamps. As part of the 2010 issue the souvenir sheet records for posterity that the United Nations has declared 2010 the Year of Biodiversity.

Biodiversity means the abundant variety of life on earth, which is the result of natural processes formed by evolution over several billion years. The events of the year seek to draw attention to the pollution of the environment destroying species and the need for sustainable development.

The **bearded iris** is a herbaceous perennial and a specially protected species of plant in Hungary. It is found in dry meadows, on rocky grassy slopes and occasionally in scrubby flatland. It grows 10 to 30 cm tall. Its leaves gradually widen, arching outwards. The surface of its straight, cylindrical stem is smooth and green. Its flowers blooming in April and May are violet blue or purplish red. • The **European souslik** is a ground squirrel of a genus belonging to the Marmotini sub-family. There are two species in Europe, the European souslik and the spotted souslik. It is a protected animal in Hungary. It eats plants, mainly grasses and seeds but it also robs birds' nests. It lives in colonies and hibernates. • The **blue tit** is a tiny, well-known and popular bird of the tit family in the passerine order. It is essentially a European bird. It gets its name from its blue crown, wings and outer tail. Although it is quite common in the Carpathian Basin, it is protected in Hungary. • The **golden egg bug** usually occurs in Mediterranean countries. It was only discovered in Hungary a few years ago. Its appearance makes it one of the most bizarre species of bug as it is covered in huge spikes. Its unusual characteristic is that when danger threatens its whole body starts to shake, resembling a piece of dried leaf fluttering in the wind. It is a protected insect. • The **Hungarian meadow viper** only occurs in Hungary and is an extremely rare poisonous snake sub-species, the most endangered species in the Carpathian Basin. It is specially protected. It used to be found from Austria to Bulgaria

but today it only occurs in Hungary. The base colour of the sub-species is greyish or yellowy brown with a dark brown zigzag pattern running along its back. (Source: hu.wikipedia.org; Tamás Vásárhelyi's description)

In the design of the selvage area of the numbered souvenir sheet and the stamp there is a graphic composition evoking the immense variety of flora and fauna. The main motif is the bearded iris. In the designs of the set in order of ascending value the European souslik, the golden egg bug, the blue tit and the Hungarian meadow viper are shown featuring motifs referring to their natural habitat and their environment in the background. The graphic composition of the first day cover is decorated with butterflies. An emblematic design referring to biodiversity is featured in the special postmark.

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Set: 2010140050411 – 2010140060012 (set FDC)

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Printed by Pénzjegynyomda

Designed by Kálmán Székely

The imperforated size of the souvenir sheet is 90 x 70 mm and the perforated size of the stamp in it and the denominations of the set is 40 x 30 mm. There are 50 stamps in each sheet.

120,000 copies of the souvenir sheet and 500,000 copies of the set, the final denomination of which is HUF 215, will be issued.

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