

Stamps featuring uninhabited islands and albatrosses

No.74 “Ryukyu stamps: Ocean Series No. 3 (Sea Bird, Sea and Island).” (Stamp sheet and the first-day cover) April 14, 1972

FY2017/P31

Overview

Stamps issued by the Government of the Ryukyu Islands before the reversion of Okinawa on April 14, 1972 (*1)

The explanation enclosed in the first-day cover states that, in Okinawa, “some sea birds are still found in uninhabited islands within the Ishigaki area” of Yaeyama. Considering that those islands are uninhabited islands belonging to Ishigaki City and have albatrosses living on them, as well as considering the composition of the picture, the islands depicted on the stamp are assumed to be Minamikojima Island and Kitakojima Island of the Senkaku Islands. As stated above, the official name of the stamp is “Sea Bird, Sea and Island,” but it may also have commonly been called “Albatrosses, the Sea of Senkaku, and Minamikojima Island.”

*1 Administrative authority over Okinawa was returned to Japan on May 15, 1972. (Refer to p.135.)

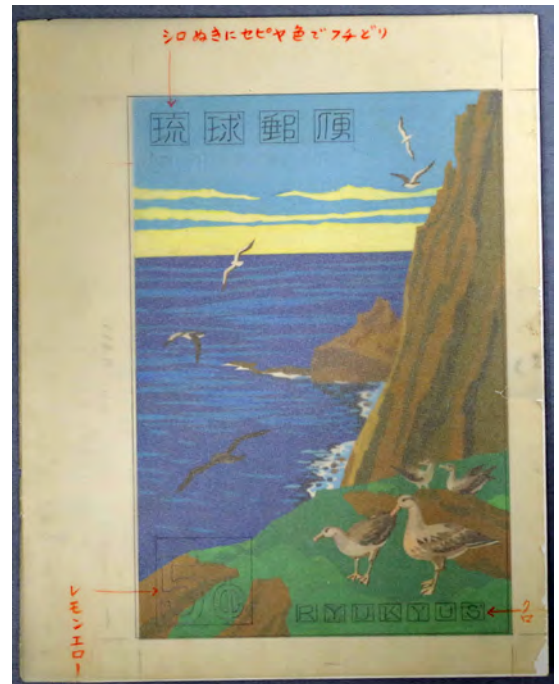
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Author(s) & Editor(s)	Chosho ASHITOMI (Design)
Publisher	Government of the Ryukyu Islands
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Reference & Information	Follow the instruction at Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum





Design original plate

Repository: Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum



Repository: Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum

Excerpt [English translation]

Ocean Series No. 3
(Sea Bird, Sea and Island)

The Government of the Ryukyu Islands will issue a 5c special postage stamp on 14 April 1972, depicting a Sea Bird, Sea and an Island as the third of the Ocean Series.

The Albatross, Booby Gannet, Scray, etc., are well known as sea birds living in the Okinawa area. Ancient literature and legends disclose that these sea birds inhabited the coastal areas of Okinawa in olden days.

However, as the islands became populated the birds gradually disappeared from the main islands. Today we can see some of those birds living in flocks in remote, uninhabited islands. Although flocks of some sea birds are still found in uninhabited islands within the Ishigaki area other species have disappeared altogether because of man's harvesting of eggs, feathers and guano. We may say that even the uninhabited islands have ceased to be a safe haven for these sea birds.

Date of Issue: 14 April 1972
 Denomination: 5 c
 Design: Sea Birds, Sea, and Island
 Color: Multi-color
 Type of Printing: Photogravure
 Size: 22.5 mm × 33 mm
 One Sheet: 20 stamps (4 × 5)
 Designed by: Mr. Chosho Ashitomi
 Quantity of Issue: 2,500,000



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海洋シリーズ第3集(海鳥と海と島)

琉球政府では、1972年4月14日に“海鳥と海と島”を意匠とする海洋シリーズ第3集郵便切手を発行する。

沖縄で棲息する海鳥としてアホウドリ・カツオドリ・アジサシ・オオミズナギドリなどがよく知られている。それらの海鳥も古くは沖縄の各地の海岸に棲息していたことが、文献や言い伝えによって明らかであるが、それも人文の発達により、次第に主要島から遠ざかり、現在はへんびな無人島でしか、その群棲を見ることができない。沖縄で海鳥群の見られるところとして、八重山石垣市に属する無人島などが上げられるが、そこにおいても卵や羽毛、鳥糞の乱獲によりほとんどその姿を見せなくなった海鳥もあり、無人島と言えども安住の地ではないと言えよう。



発行日 : 1972年4月14日
額面 : 5セント
意匠 : 海鳥と海と島
刷色 : 多色
版式 : グラビア
印面寸法 : たて33×よこ22.5(ミリ)
シート構成 : たて5×よこ4の20枚
図案者 : 安次富長昭
発行枚数 : 250万枚