

**GREAT AMERICAN STAMP SHOW** The ESU will meet 11 am, Saturday, 14 August. Open to all.

# EUROPA NEWS



BULLETIN OF THE EUROPA STUDY UNIT  
<http://www.europastudyunit.org/>



Europa Philately in all of its aspects:  
CEPT/PostEurop, EU Agencies, European Cooperation, NATO, Norden, sepac, EuroMed

## Europa 2021



## Wolves and Weasels and Bears, oh my!

### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE

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New Issues  
**Europa 2021**  
**Endangered National Wildlife**

For all of these write-ups, I'll refer often to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), whose Red Book is the bible for endangered species classification.

Although the series designation is Endangered National Wildlife, it appears that many countries didn't quite get the memo, and decided to present just European wildlife, whether threatened or not. Many countries also picked the same animal. The European Lynx is a series favorite. I'll try not to duplicate my descriptions, but won't guarantee it.

**ESTONIA 2v**

Issue date 6 May 2021



**Lady's Slipper**  
*(Cypripedium calceolus)*



**Eurasian Hoopoe**  
*(Upupa epops)*

The **Lady's Slipper** is the orchid with the largest flower in Estonia and Europe. Blooming from late May until early July, the faint vanilla scent of the flowers attracts small insects. However, the flower is a trap for pollinators because the only way out of the shoe-shaped labellum is by climbing past the anthers and stigma. It usually grows on wooden meadows and forest edges.

The **Eurasian Hoopoe** is a bright and colorful bird about the size of a pigeon. It is afraid of men but not of man-made structures. The bird tries to reuse its nest for several years. They do not clean the nests which is why they tend to smell. The Eurasian hoopoe mainly eats insects, particularly beetles and their larvae.

— from *Omniva (Estonia Post)*

**LITHUANIA 2v**

Issue date 23 April 2021



**Grey Seal**  
*(Halichoerus grypus)*



**Eurasian Lynx**  
*(Lynx lynx)*

The **Grey Seal** is found on both shores of the North Atlantic Ocean. After being hunted extensively for oil, meat and skins, the seals' numbers rebounded after conservation efforts were enacted; it is now listed as *Least Concern*.

The **Eurasian Lynx** is featured on Poland's stamp, and is discussed there (ref. EN# 463-6).

— from *Wikipedia*

**LATVIA 2v**

Issue date 23 April 2021



**Freshwater Pearl Mussel**  
*(Margaritifera margaritifera)*



**Black Stork**  
*(Ciconia nigra)*

The **Freshwater Pearl Mussel** is an *Endangered* species. It is capable of making fine-quality pearls, and was historically exploited in the search for pearls from wild sources.

Unlike the closely related white stork, the **Black Stork** is a shy and wary species. It is considered to be of *Least Concern* by the IUCN, but its actual status is uncertain. Despite its large range, it is nowhere abundant, and it appears to be declining in parts of its range.

— from *Wikipedia*

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**IRELAND 2v**

Issue date 6 May 2021



The **White Prominent** (*Leucodonta bicolorialis*) is a moth from the family *Notodontidae*. It is found in the northern part of Middle Europe, Northern Europe and Russia to the Amur region. In the western parts of the range it is a local and rare species. It is likely extinct in Britain but a population was recently rediscovered in Ireland.



The **Freshwater Pearl Mussel** (*Margaritifera margaritifera*) is an aquatic bivalve mollusk and an *Endangered* species. This mussel is one of the longest-living invertebrates in existence; the oldest known specimen in Europe was caught in 1993 in Estonia when it was 134 years old.

Once the most abundant bivalve mollusk in ancient rivers around the world, numbers of the freshwater pearl mussel are now declining in all countries and this species is nearly extinct in many areas. The freshwater pearl mussel is completely protected in all European countries.

— from Wikipedia

**TURKEY 2v**

Issue date 9 May 2021



**Mediterranean Monk Seal**  
*(Monachus monachus)*



**Montagu's Harrier**  
*(Circus pygargus)*

In ancient times, and up until the 20th century, **Mediterranean Monk Seals** had been known to congregate, give birth, and seek refuge on open beaches. In more recent times, they have left their former habitat and now only use sea caves for these activities. Scientists have confirmed this is a recent adaptation, most likely due to the rapid increase in human population, tourism, and industry. Thanks to conservation efforts, as of 2015 their status was raised from *Critically Endangered* to simply *Endangered* by the IUCN.

The **Montagu's Harrier**, named after British naturalist George Montagu, is a long distance migrant. Birds from Eurasia spend the winter in sub-Saharan Africa, while those from the eastern part of the range migrate to the Indian subcontinent. They travel over a broad front, crossing the Mediterranean at various points. In western Europe, an estimated 70% of breeding pairs nest in agricultural farmlands, especially cereal crops. This makes the Montagu's harrier a very vulnerable species; because of their wide distribution however, they are classified as *Least Concern*.

— from Wikipedia

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**VATICAN** 2v

Issue date 25 May 2021



Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)



Common Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Condensed from the Vatican Post website:

For the realization of the Europa 2021 series, our attention focused on the Vatican Gardens, a natural habitat of 23 hectares located mainly on the Vatican hill, where we observe the protection of the environment and the landscape to safeguard the local fauna and flora. Despite this, wild avifauna represents the most fragile class in this small ecosystem, as it is inserted in a larger environment, such as the city one, where alien species have found a massive settlement at the expense of native ones.

Among these, the **Wren** is difficult to detect in the wooded area of the Vatican Gardens, finding a safe shelter and food among the fountains and the eroded cavities in the deposits of the golden clays from the Vatican hill. This small passerine with the color of the soil, called the "elf of the woods", camouflages itself among the roots of the trees, hopping abruptly in search of worms and insects.

From the smallest exponent of wild avifauna we pass to the greatest present, the **Common Kestrel**, which due to the urbanization of the countryside finds in the Vatican City an ideal ecosystem. Unfortunately, its offspring are sometimes preyed upon and food resources, mainly small passerines and rodents, are less and less available

**CYPRUS** 2v, also issued se-tenant in booklets of 4 sets as shown, with straight edges on some sides

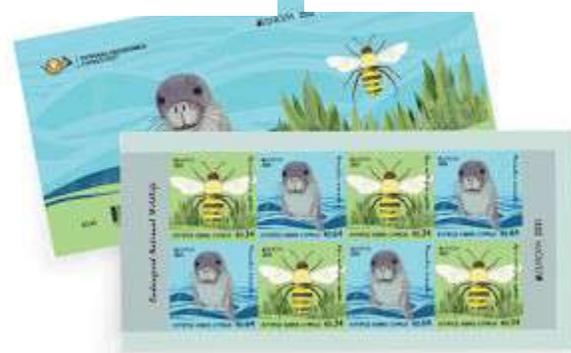
Issue date 6 May 2021



Cypriot Bee (*Apis mellifera cypria*)



Mediterranean Seal (*Monachus monachus*)



The **Cypriot Bee** is an endemic species of Cyprus. Pollinating over 70% of man-made plants, the bee is perhaps the most important pollinator for the human species and its environment. The low rainfall, the few and short flowering periods and spray treatments of wild flowers and crops, the construction in forest areas and the pollution of the environment threaten the survival of the Cypriot Bee and that is why we must protect it.

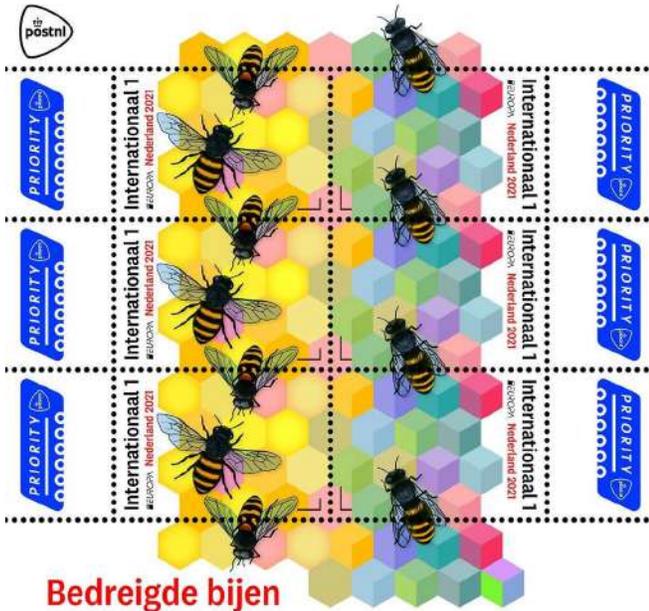
The **Mediterranean Seal** is the most endangered marine mammal in Europe. Their population is only 700, of which 19 live in Cyprus. It is one of the largest seal species in the world, with a length of 8 feet and a weight of 660 lbs and can live up to 40 years. From 2011 onwards it seems that the species is recovering in the Cypriot seas and has now created a local, small, but breeding population. It is classified as *Endangered* by the IUCN.

— from Cyprus Post

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**NETHERLANDS** 2v se-tenant in sheets of 3 sets as shown

Issue date 10 May 2021



In 2018 verscheen de nieuwe Rode Lijst van Nederlandse bijen. Van de 388 toen bekende bijensoorten staat 55% op deze lijst. Maar liefst 46 soorten komen niet meer in ons land voor en 72 soorten staan als (ernstig) bedreigd te boek. Bijensterfte is een serieuze bedreiging voor het milieu. Bijen produceren niet alleen honing, ze bestuiven ook wilde bloemen, fruit en andere landbouwgewassen. Zonder die bestuiving zou de opbrengst van de landbouw veel lager zijn. Het verdwijnen van bijensoorten brengt bovendien de biodiversiteit in gevaar.

Op dit postzegel is de bedreiging van de bijen verbeeld. Op de postzegels links staat een honingraatmotief dat op de postzegels rechts verandert in een patroon dat verstedelijk illustreert. Juist die verstedelijking is een van de belangrijkste redenen dat bijen steeds minder vliegen. Daar kunnen we zelf iets aan doen! Bijvoorbeeld door parken en plantsoenen bijvriendelijk te maken en bermen in te zaaien met bloemen. Maar ook door bijenhoeven te plaatsen en betegelde tuinen te veranderen in groene tuinen met veel bloemen.

Artikelnummer 410561 Ontwerp: Karen Polder



The **Endangered Bees** stamp sheet contains 6 stamps in 2 designs by graphic designer Karen Polder. The 3 stamps on the left show 7 moving bees crawling around against the background of the hexagonal structure of a yellow honeycomb. The 3 stamps on the right show 4 sitting bees, with different colored cubes in the background as a representation of the urban environment.

— from PostNL

*Editorial note: While some studies indicate that bees are in danger of becoming extinct, other studies indicate that some species (e.g. bumblebees) are actually increasing. Common sense conservation should rule the day.*

**HUNGARY** 2v se-tenant vertically in ms of 2 sets as shown

Issue date 5 May 2021



Wildlife in Hungary is protected by law. All forms of cruelty to, and disturbance, endangerment and destruction of them or damaging their habitats are strictly forbidden.

One of the stamps of the Hungarian miniature sheet features a songbird and the other a mustelid species. The **European Stonechat** (*Saxicola rubicola*) is a migratory passerine species which nests in Hungary from March until October. It was chosen the bird of the year in 2021.

The **Steppe Polecat** (*Mustela eversmanii*) is a small predator which occurs mainly on the fringes of the grasslands and agricultural areas of Transdanubia and the Hungarian Great Plain. It has a lighter coat and is more aggressive than the European polecat.

Other animal species characteristic of Hungary are shown in the frame of the miniature sheet: the blind rodent living in loess and sandy areas of the Great Plain, the Hungarian lesser mole-rat; the black and yellow, specially protected lacewing species *Libelloides macaronius*, which feeds mainly on flying insects, and the yellow wagtail, named after its bright plumage, feeding mainly on flies and mosquitoes.

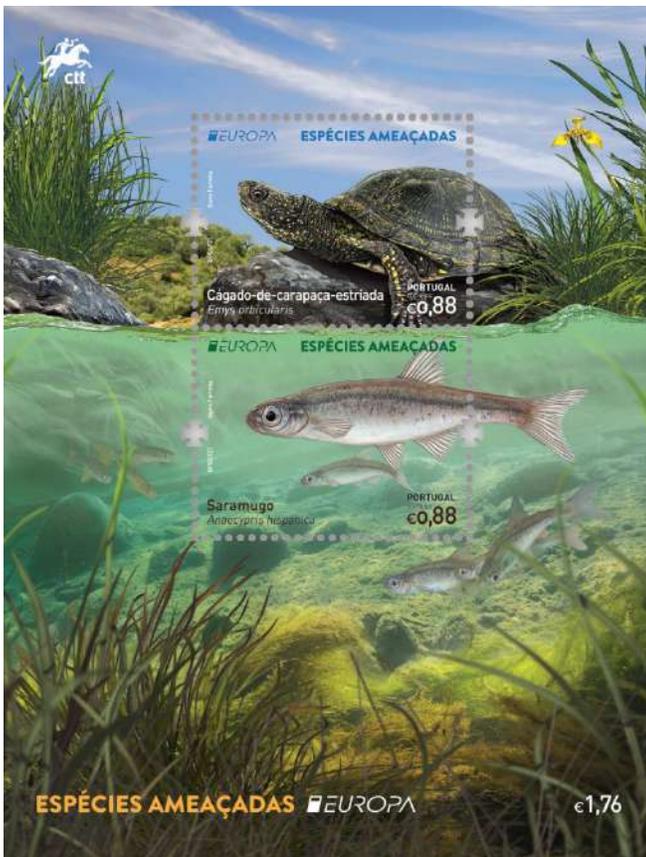
— from Magyar Posta

**New Issues**  
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**PORTUGAL 1v + ss**

The single stamp is the same as that on the bottom of the ss.

Issue date 7 May 2021



The **European Pond Terrapin** (*Emys orbicularis*) is easily identified by its dark color, speckled with yellow spots that form streaks on each shell plate. It prefers slow-moving or still waterways with good quality and abundant aquatic vegetation where it can hide, since it is a discreet creature that dives at the slightest sign of danger.

This animal has a widespread distribution in Europe and North Africa, but has highly dispersed and fragmented populations, particularly in Portugal, where it is considered a rare and *Endangered* species. Its main threats are water pollution and the destruction of natural wetlands, as well as the introduction of exotic freshwater turtles, which are very popular among aquarists.

The **Saramago** aka **Spanish Minnow Carp** (*Anaecypris hispanica*) is a small freshwater fish that is 2-3" in length, with a small head and large eyes, and silver to pinkish color with numerous small dark spots along its flanks. It prefers shallow waterways with low to moderate current and clean oxygen-rich waters, with abundant aquatic vegetation.

It is endemic to the Iberian Peninsula and is found in the basin of the Guadiana River in southern Spain and Portugal. With extremely fragmented and severely declining populations, it is *Critically Endangered*, essentially due to water pollution and the destruction of its native habitats (e.g. due to water abstraction or aggregate extraction).

— from *Philatelic Pursuits* and *Wikipedia*

Just a few EUROPA and SEPAC issues left, which we hope to wrap up in the next Europa News. By then we may have more info on EuroMed issues for this year. Look also for an article or two from Grenzenloos, and the resumption of the Luster Chronicles. And of course, lots more new issues too!

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