

11 June 2010, Saint Lucia released postage stamps in commemoration of the International Year of Biodiversity, a collaborative venture of the Saint Lucia Postal Services and the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry.

# BIODIVERSITY POSTAGE STAMPS

This year 2010 has been designated as international year of biodiversity by the United Nations and as an activity to commemorate the year, postage stamps depicting four endemic species of Saint Lucia's biological diversity were released for sale from Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2010 by the General Post Office of Saint Lucia.

The photographs for the postage stamps were taken by three gentlemen associated with the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry namely Mr. Adams Toussaint, Assistant Chief Forest Officer, who took the pictures of the White Breasted Thrasher or Gorge Blanc, found only in pockets on the north east coast of Saint Lucia and with less than a hundred pairs existing and the Rhinoceros or Hercules Beetle from the family of

largest beetles; Mr. Matthew Morton of the Durrell Wildlife Preservation Trust who shot the picture of the green Iguana which is also very endangered and currently found only on the north east coast of Saint Lucia and Mr. Roger Graveson, a botanist who shot the picture of the only plant species featured, the lobelia plant restricted to elfin shrubland

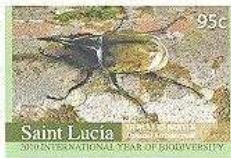
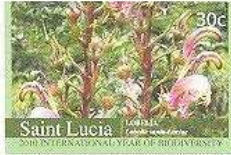
in the Morne Gimie / Piton Troumassee area and thus also very vulnerable.

These species all contribute to the equilibrium of the ecosystems where they reside and help produce services that are invaluable to the wellbeing of humankind in

Saint Lucia. Consequently their habitats should be protected to ensure their continued existence in the island. The Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries and Forestry encourages all inhabitants of Saint Lucia to purchase these stamps from the Postal Services and thereby promote conservation of these important species in Saint Lucia.



# SAINT LUCIA PHILATELIC BUREAU



## 2010 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

Design and Layout	CASCO Studio
Photographs	Matthew Morton (Iguana) Roger Graveson (Lobelia) Adams-Toussaint (Beetle and Thrasher)
Printer	The Lowe Martin Group
Process	Lithography
Stamp Size	28mm x 42mm
Pane	50 (2 x 25)
Perforation	13 per 2 cm
Paper	CASCO Crown watermarked paper
Values	30c, 75c, 95c and \$2.50
Release Date	11 June 2010

## 2010 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

The United Nations declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity to raise awareness about the crucial importance of biodiversity, to communicate the human costs of biodiversity loss and to engage people throughout the world in the fight to protect all life on earth. Consequently, Saint Lucia, a member of the UN, through its National Focal Point for Biodiversity, the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries felt it fitting to focus on critically important endemic species as postage stamps, to help commemorate the year. Working in close collaboration with the Saint Lucia Postal Service, four endemic species were chosen as follows: Lobelia, Iguana, Hercules Beetle, White breasted Thrasher.

### THE STAMPS

30c – The Lobelia plant, one of the prettiest endemic plants of Saint Lucia, is a shrub of very windy, wet and cloudy elfin shrublands in the Mount Gimle-Piton-Troumassée range at an elevation of above 850m in the west to eastern part of the island. It is not under threat because of its inaccessibility but global warming could reduce the long periods of cloudiness which may threaten its existence.

75c - The Iguana is believed to have fewer than 1000 adult animals left in the wild. It has an extremely high risk of extinction on Saint Lucia as a result of sand mining, touristic development and illegal hunting. It feeds on leaves, shoots and fruits and is the largest lizard found on Saint Lucia as tree dwellers but frequently seen on ground. It is restricted to the North East Corridor within an area of about 30 km squared between the northern slopes of Mabouya Valley to the east and Dauphin ravine to the north.

95c - The well known Hercules beetle, has a sub species, *Dynastes Hercules Reici* which is endemic to Saint Lucia. It is the longest and largest living rhinoceros beetle in the world. It can be found all over Saint Lucia. It feeds on wood and such matter. It is seen on a seasonal basis when it is breeding time and for that reason may appear to be rare.

2.50c - The white breasted thrasher locally called "Gorge Blanc" is restricted in geographic range to only two islands of the Lesser Antilles including Saint Lucia. Saint Lucia's variety is a subspecies and is restricted to the East Coast between Petit Anse and Praslin, with a high risk of extinction in the near future. It is a ground hunting bird and found to occupy predominantly riverine forest within the dry areas along its recorded range. A major threat is habitat destruction mainly on privately owned lands which are subject to development.