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Scott's to the rescue!

More on the Guyana Northern Lapwing surcharges

In truth, this wee update really ought to be entitled, "Gilly to the Rescue," because she actually found this material and is the fortunate owner of the Scott catalogue that has helped clarify a little further the mysterious Guyana Lapwing surcharges. But perhaps that would have sounded like the title of one of those gymslip tales by Angela Brazil and terribly fifties; not at all right, so Scott's it has to be.

And there is no denying that Gilly has worked wonders in unearthing more information here, proving yet again what I always thought, that the philately of the America's is better handled by Scott's than Stanley Gibbons as additional commentary to the first Lapwing blog confirmed. Scott's scores even for a philatelic, "Wallpaper" country like Guyana.

So what can we now add to the original piece? Firstly, all the Guyanese 1995 Birds of the World singles can be given Scott numbers in addition to SG ones. These are detailed in Table.1 below.

Table 1: - 1995 Long format Birds of the World Issues

Date	Value	Design/Species	Scott No	SG No.
1995	\$5	Northern Goshawk	2931	4329
1995	\$6	Northern Lapwing	2932	4330
1995	\$8	Long-wattled Umbrellabird	2933	4331
1995	\$15	Slaty-headed Parakeet	2934	4332
1995	\$19	Regent Bowerbird	2935	4333
1995	\$20	Egyptian Goose	2936	4334
1995	\$25	Two-barred Crossbill	2937	4335
1995	\$30	Bohemian Waxwing	2938	4336
1995	\$35	Ruff	2939	4337
1995	\$60	Eurasian Hoopoe	2940	4338
1995	\$100	Superb Starling	2941	4339
1995	\$500	Great Jacamar	2942	4340

Secondly, the Scott catalogue reveals that at some point during, or more likely some years after 1995, but certainly before 2010 - even they hedge their bets - the smaller/squarer \$6 Northern Lapwing was indeed issued. Same value but different shape, although still a mystery when this new \$6 version emerged.

Scott gives the amended version the catalogue number 2942A. Logic tells you that it ought to be 2932A given the original numbering for the taller format, but there we are, Scott suffixes appear to work differently! That new number is important as we shall see. Figures 1 and 2 below provide illustrations of both versions.



Fig.1 - 1st \$6 version (Sc2932) Fig.2 - 2nd \$6 version (Sc2942A)

In 2010 - again, there is no precise date - a batch of surcharges appeared. They were a mixed bag of issues clearly assembled and issued due to a shortage of stamps as mentioned in Blog six. There were five in this issuance taken from different sources - not just the Birds of the World set - but all given the value of \$20. That sounds high, but to put things into context at the current rate of exchange, twenty Guyanese dollars equates to only about 7 pence. Effectively, it was the then local postal rate.

The different stamps make interesting bedfellows as Table. 2 below hopefully shows. Note the other bird species that were also overprinted.

Table 2: - 2010 Provisional surcharged issues

Date	New Value	Base Value	Design/Species	New Sc. No	Old Sc. No
2010	\$20	\$6	Northern Lapwing	4020K	2932
2010	\$20	\$6	Northern Lapwing	4020L	2942A
2010	\$20	\$8.90	Welcome Trogon*	4020M	2316
2010	\$20	\$17.80	Catasetum discolor **(Orchid)	4020N	2363
2010	\$20	\$19	Regent Bowerbird	4020O***	2935

*Also referred to as Eared Quetzal - part of large 1990 bird set (27 issues)

**Part of a huge floral set (104 issues)

***"O" makes for an unfortunate suffix, particularly after a zero

Now the eagle-eyed will note that the Northern Lapwing actually appears twice, with both the long format (Sc2932) and the smaller/square (Sc2942A). That's two bites of the cherry for this species. A quick check of the issue dates for the originals indicates that they were all selected from stamps of either 1990 or 1995. The Long format version (Sc4020K) tends to have the new value placed towards the top close to "GUYANA," while the squarer format (4020L) has the new value placed in the bottom left corner. See figures 3 & 4 for comparison.



Fig.3 - \$20/\$6 Long format version (Sc4020K) Fig.4 - \$20/\$6 square format version (Sc4020L)

At some other point during 2010 a further version of the \$20/\$6 appeared, again based on Sc2942A. Scott gave this the new catalogue number 4020P. As the first blog outlined, I knew that there were two versions of the Northern Lapwing surcharge - although technically there are three given the longer format Sc2932 - but which is which?

The ordering is confusing. The Scott catalogue gives 4020L as the first version. This is the crudely hand stamped one, with 4020P following as the more professional appearing printed version. And that all makes sense, except Steve Zirinsky's notes (written in 2011) seem to contradict this chronology. He says that originally the stamps were machine overprinted locally but the printing machine then failed and the Post Office needed to handstamp each stamp instead. In other words, 4020P came first and then 4020L became the necessary subsequent version.

As we have no precise dates - or even year - for either, so I am uncertain about the correct sequencing of these issues.

Usefully, Zirinsky does point out that, being labour intensive, the hand stamping of stamps meant that quantities became variable as, "...there is no press set up time required...so one sheet or ten sheets or 100 sheets could be done." So, there is some uncertainty over numbers actually produced, let alone acquired by collectors.

You can see the unevenness of the hand stamped surcharging and obliterations by viewing blocks of these values, as per figure 5 below:-

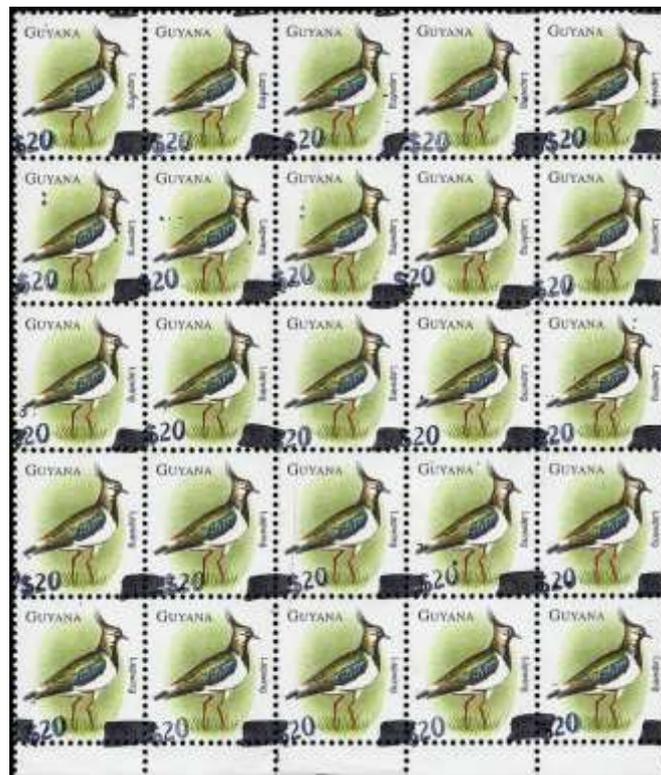


Fig.5 - 5x5 Block of hand stamped surcharged issues (Sc4020L)

What we do know is that the un-surcharged \$6 (Sc2942A) is the scarcer issue as Scott is unable to give it any value, which implies it is not often found. What we also know is that the printed surcharge is rarer than the hand stamped one. Scott gives the former a catalogue value of \$150 mint or used (£109) and \$40 for the hand stamped also mint or used (£29). And to my mind that would appear to support Zirinsky's sequencing with more stamps being made available through greater flexibility with stamping the surcharge by hand. You certainly see more of the cruder version.

Zirinsky implied that all the surcharges were listed not only by Scott but also by Stanley Gibbons in their then latest edition for Guyana, but that publication is no longer in print, so who can say? In addition, his own listing does not give any SG numbers for these issues, and I therefore remain unsure whether there are any at all. There might be, but I don't know. What is certain is that Scott wins this one.