



# Philatelic Society of Trinidad & Tobago

(Founded May 1942)

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## NEW ISSUE NEWS

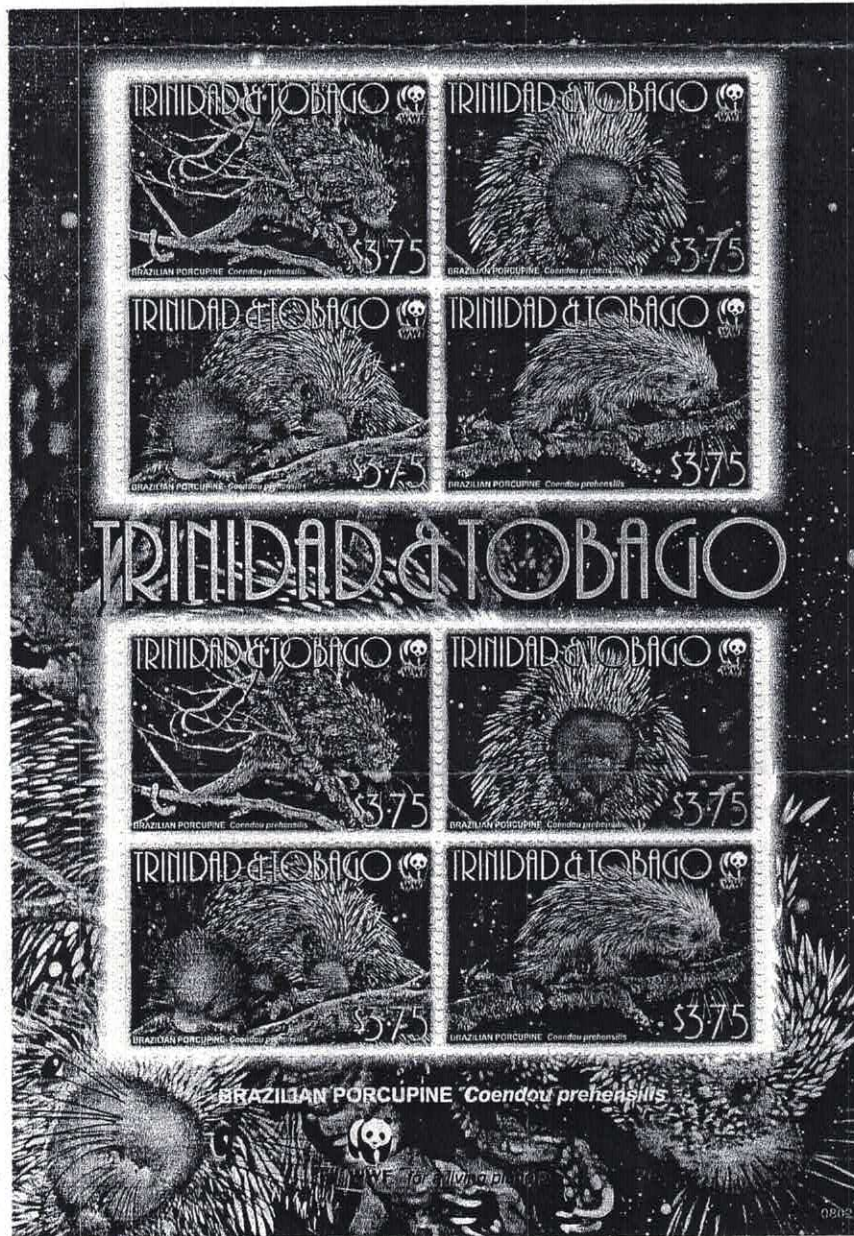


FIG.1: BRAZILIAN PORCUPINE MINI-SHEET OF 8

The first issue released in 2009 was the Brazilian Porcupine. The issue was dispatched from the National Mail Centre to the retail outlets on the 12th January. Therefore, we estimate the first day on sale in T&T as the 13th January. This issue was marketed by the Inter-Governmental Postal Consultants (IGPC) based in New York City and they placed it on sale on the 10th November 2008. The brochure does not state the first day of issue. TTPost did not produce any FDC's.

The issue consisted of four stamps portraying the Brazilian Porcupine (*Coendou prehensilis*) with the World Wildlife Federation panda logo. All four stamps are in a denomination of \$ 3.75 . The four stamps are arranged in two sets on what TTPost described incorrectly as a Souvenir Sheet. It is accurately described by the IGPC as a mini-sheet of 8. The PSTT will describe it as a mini-sheet of 8. The mini-sheet of 8 was sold at \$ 35.00 each.

Roger Ramoutar advised us that the four stamps were arranged also in four sets to produce a mini-sheet of 16 (Fig. 2). This mini-sheet is not available from TTPost, only the IGPC. Other related stamp products such as FDC's and maximum cards (enlarged images of the stamps with the stamps affixed and cancelled) may have been produced by the IGPC. Roger will have more information in the next Bulletin.

The name " Brazilian " porcupine is not used in Trinidad. Selwyn Gomes informed us that there is only one species of porcupine in T&T and therefore the common name is simply " The Porcupine " . In countries near T&T, where more than one species of porcupine exists, the common name is the " Prehensile Tail Porcupine " . The porcupine was previously illustrated on the 40¢ stamp of the 1978 Wildlife issue (SG#523/Sc#294). On this stamp the common name was stated as " The Porcupine " .

Roger Ramoutar has provided us with these details of the porcupine:

Kingdom: Animalia Phylum: Chordata Class: Mammalia Order: Rodentia  
Family: Erethizontidae Genus: *Coendou* Species: *C. Prehensilis*

The Brazilian Porcupine (*Coendou prehensilis*) is found in the tropical forests of Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, the Guyanas, Bolivia and Trinidad.

The body is covered with short, thick spines which are whitish or yellowish in color, mixed with the darker hair, while the underside is grayish. The lips and nose are fleshy. The tail is prehensile, with the tip curling upward so as to get a better grip on tree branches. This porcupine can grow up to one metre long, but half of that is tail. It weighs approximately 4 kilogrammes. No spines are found on the tail, which is long (330-485mm) and prehensile. Its feet are reflective of their arboreal lifestyle, well-adapted for gripping branches, with four long-clawed toes on each.

#### BEHAVIOUR

This shy, nocturnal porcupine is solitary or lives in pairs in the branches of trees. During the day it rests in a cavity in a hollow tree or in a well-shaded area of the canopy, 6 to 10 meters above the ground. It rarely descends to the ground, but it shows little fear if it happens to be caught. It is not aggressive but will defend itself ferociously if attacked. Its diet consists of leaves, fruit, and small fresh twigs and shoots. This creature can easily be tamed enough to be kept in captivity. Intra-specific interactions consist of biting and attempts to injure adversaries with their sharp quills. When excited, porcupines stamp their hind feet. Vocalizations consist of growls and cries. If caught, the porcupine rolls into a ball. The prehensile tail is used to curl around branches when climbing.

#### REPRODUCTION

As a rule the female gives birth to a single young in the spring. The newborn porcupine is covered with red hairs and small spines, which harden shortly after birth.

Reference: Brazilian Porcupine. (2008, September 21). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Brazilian\\_Porcupine&oldid=240016191](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Brazilian_Porcupine&oldid=240016191)

We do not expect much activity in new stamp issues in the first half of 2009 as the proposed issues are in their early stages. Here are some issues under consideration: Steelpan Pioneers; Centenary of Naval Aviation; World Post Day / TTPost 10th Anniversary; Amerindians; Olympic Achievements; First Annual Caribbean Games; Association of Caribbean States issue; Fresh Water Fish; an issue on children. Also there may be a history series spread over three years.

Below is a summary of the philatelic calendar 2008.

- 1) 24th January. 20th Anniversary Montreal Protocol: Souvenir Sheet with one \$ 15.00 stamp only. No FDC's were produced.
- 2) 29th April. Autism commemorative cover.
- 3) 28th June. Games of the XXIX Olympiad: Souvenir Sheet only with four stamps - all \$ 3.50 denomination. No FDC's were produced.
- 4) 29th July. 100th Anniversary of World Scouting: \$ 1.00, \$ 2.50, \$ 3.75 and \$ 4.50. Souvenir Sheet with one \$ 15.00 stamp.
- 5) 3rd October. 60th Anniversary of the University of the West Indies: \$ 1.00, \$ 2.50, \$ 3.75, \$ 4.50 and \$ 5.25. Souvenir Sheet with one \$ 15.00 stamp.
- 6) 22nd August. Caribbean Festival of Arts (Carifesta X) commemorative cover. Distributed at the Festival in Guyana.



Fig.2: BRAZILIAN PORCUPINE MINI-SHEET OF SIXTEEN

## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 11th February 2009 at St. Mary's College, Frederick Street, Port-of-Spain. Nominations are required for all posts for the 2009/10 sessions. Please respond and nominate any member whom you believe could serve well, but please have you nominee sanction their acceptance.

### GENERAL NEWS

Members are warned about the packaging material used by TTPost in their presentation packs and the FIFA Collectors Pack. The packaging material of concern is the black cards with clear pockets. These are made in Trinidad and we are unable to determine if archival quality materials were used. Further, the adhesive used to affix the clear plastic strip on the black card is another problem. The quality / type of adhesive used is questionable and it was definitely applied 'crudely', resulting in some cases, in the adhesive getting on the stamps. The adhesive cannot be removed without damaging the stamps. If collectors wish to keep the stamps in the black cards, they must use stamp mounts such as Hawid or Showgard to protect them.

The Philatelic Arts Exhibition, part of Carifesta X, is the subject of an article in the British West Indies Study Circle Bulletin No. 219 - December 2008 written by Lennox J. Hernandez. The mandate of the Exhibition was 'Celebrating Guyana's Heritage through stamps'. The exhibit consisted of seventeen large screens. No original stamps were used, only enlarged images. The PSTT exhibit used original stamps. The article is available at our meetings to view.

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

All ordinary members are reminded that the 2009 dues were due by the 31st December 2008. The 2009 dues for local members are adults \$ 30.00 and juniors \$ 20.00. Please send early. Your dues can be paid either at the meetings or mail it to P.O. Box 596, Port-of-Spain. For our overseas members, the dues are UK £6.00 and all others US \$ 10.00. Please make cheques payable to the Philatelic Society of Trinidad & Tobago. Ordinary members can pay two or more years at a time based on the annual given above. Life membership is TT \$ 500.00 for local members or US \$ 150.00 for overseas members. Due to bank charges in T&T, we ask our overseas members to send payment via a bank draft (manager's cheque) or a personal cheque drawn on a USA bank. Please do not make any payment using a Postal Order.

1935 DEFINITIVE STERLING BROMIDES



TOP ROW (left to right):  $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d & 4d.

BOTTOM ROW (left to right): 6d, 1 shilling, 5 shilling and 1 pound BROMIDES

The 1935 definitive consisted of nine stamps and it was the first stamps of T&T with denominations stated in decimal currency. Previously, stamps issued by the Postal Service were in Sterling currency. From the time of its first stamp, Trinidad always used decimal currency and when stamps were purchased at a post office, the Sterling amount had to be converted to decimal for payment. At that time, the exchange rate remained fixed at \$ 4.80 equivalent to one pound Sterling (240 pence).

Above are illustrated black and white photographic reproductions (bromides) of the artwork for the 1935 definitive in Sterling currency. This design was not approved. When the decimal currency change was done, the artworks were redrawn. Therefore, the above designs are slightly different to the issued stamps.

The nine bromides and the issued stamps are: 1/2 pence/1¢ - First Bocas; 1 1/2 pence/3¢ - Mt. Irvine, Tobago; 3 pence/6¢ - Discovery of Lake Asphalt by Raleigh 1595; 4 pence/8¢ - Queen's Park Savannah; 6 pence/12¢ - Town Hall, San Fernando; 1 shilling/24¢ - Government House; 5 shilling/48¢ - Memorial Park; 1 pound/72¢ - Blue Basin. The set is SG # 230-238 or Scott # 34-42. The five shilling and one pound denominations represented a considerable sum of money at that time, \$ 2.40 and \$ 4.80 respectively, and fortunately the stamps were not done in those denominations.