



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Jan. 23, 2012

Contact: Mark Saunders  
mark.r.saunders@usps.gov  
202.268.6524  
[usps.com/news](http://usps.com/news)  
Release No. 13-009



## Tufted Puffins Take Flight on Stamps

*Aquatic Bird's Habitat Ranges from California to Alaska*

A high-resolution image of the stamp is available for media use only by emailing [mark.r.saunders@usps.gov](mailto:mark.r.saunders@usps.gov)

SEWARD, AK — The Tufted Puffin, an unmistakable foot-and-a-half tall bird that hunts to 200 feet underwater and is found on the U.S. coast from California to Alaska, can now be seen nationwide when it takes flight on a new stamp today. The 86-cent Tufted Puffin stamp is good for mailing domestic First-Class letters weighing up to 3 ounces.

The stamps can be purchased at [usps.com/stamps](http://usps.com/stamps) or by phone at 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724) and at Post Offices nationwide in preparation for the Jan. 27 price change.

The stamp artwork features a painting of two tufted puffins by artist Robert Giusti of Bridgewater, CT, under the art direction of Derry Noyes of Washington, DC. Both birds sport the striking tufts of long, yellow feathers that give the tufted puffin its name, plumage that only appears during breeding season.

Puffins, also known as sea parrots because of their large bills, are diving birds in the auk family. The tufted puffin is the largest of the three puffin species, standing roughly 15 inches tall. Found on the open ocean, islands and coastal areas of the North Pacific, the tufted puffin's true home is the sea, as it hunts underwater and spends most of its life far from land. The birds have adapted to an unusually broad range of ocean habitats, raising their young anywhere from southern

California to arctic Alaska. In the U.S., tufted puffins can be also found in Oregon and Washington.

### **Deep Water Diners**

Tufted puffins catch their meals underwater. They dive to a maximum depth of 200 feet, and then use their wings to propel themselves through the water, looking as if they are flying through the sea. In addition to squid and crustaceans, most tufted puffins dine on bottom fish, indicating that they spend some time searching the seafloor for food. Once the birds have caught their prey, they consume it underwater as well.

During breeding season, male and female tufted puffins congregate in a breeding colony, usually located on an offshore island or cliff edge. Each pair works together to dig a burrow that can reach more than 5 feet long. The female then lays one egg, which both parents incubate. The chick hatches after about six weeks, transforming the parents into a fish delivery service. Tufted puffins travel up to 60 miles in search of food for their young, carrying a line of up to 20 small fish tucked crosswise in their bills at a time. After six or seven weeks, the young birds announce their independence by flying or walking into the sea. They may not return to land for several years. With breeding season over, the parents also leave the colony for the open ocean. Some 800 tufted puffin breeding colonies can now be found in North America.

Customers may view the Tufted Puffins stamps, as well as many of this year's other stamps on Facebook at [facebook.com/USPSStamps](https://www.facebook.com/USPSStamps), on *Twitter* [@USPSStamps](https://twitter.com/USPSStamps) or on the website *Beyond the Perf* at [beyondtheperf.com/2013-preview](http://beyondtheperf.com/2013-preview). *Beyond the Perf* is the Postal Service's online source for information on upcoming stamp subjects, first-day-of-issue events and other philatelic news.

### **Ordering First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks**

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase new stamps at their local Post Office, at [usps.com/stamps](http://usps.com/stamps), or by calling 800-STAMP-24. They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes to themselves or others, and place them in a larger envelope addressed to:

Tufted Puffins Stamp  
507 Madison Ave.  
Seward, AK 99664-9800

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by March 23, 2013.

### **Ordering First-Day Covers**

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog, online at [usps.com/shop](http://usps.com/shop) or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

U.S. Postal Service  
Catalog Request  
PO Box 219014  
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

### **Philatelic Products**

There are seven philatelic products available for this stamp issue:

- 115006, Press Sheet with die cuts, \$103.20 (Print Quantity of 2,500).
- 115008, Press Sheet without die cuts, \$103.20 (Print Quantity of 2,500).

- 115010, Keepsake (Pane & Digital Postmark Set), \$19.95.
- 115016, First-Day Cover, \$1.30.
- 115021, Digital Color Postmark, \$2.01.
- 115031, Stamp Deck Card, \$0.95.
- 115032, Stamp Deck Card w/Digital Color Postmark, \$2.36.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

# # #

**Please Note:** For broadcast quality video and audio, photo stills and other media resources, visit the USPS Newsroom at <http://about.usps.com/news/welcome.htm>.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation — 151 million residences, businesses and Post Office™ Boxes. The Postal Service™ receives no tax dollars for operating expenses, and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With 32,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, [usps.com](http://usps.com), the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 35th in the 2011 Fortune 500. In 2011, Oxford Strategic Consulting ranked the U.S. Postal Service number one in overall service performance of the posts in the top 20 wealthiest nations in the world. *Black Enterprise* and *Hispanic Business* magazines ranked the Postal Service as a leader in workforce diversity. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for six years and the sixth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

Follow the Postal Service on [www.twitter.com/USPS](http://www.twitter.com/USPS) and at [www.facebook.com/USPS](http://www.facebook.com/USPS)