



STAMP ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Feb. 14, 2014

Mark Saunders
202-268-6524

mark.r.saunders@usps.gov

usps.com/news



Winter Flowers Forever Stamps Begin Blooming in the Mail Today

To obtain high-resolution images of the stamps for media use only, email mark.r.saunders@usps.gov.

LITTLE ROCK, AR — The U.S. Postal Service celebrates the blooms that brighten the gray days of winter today by issuing the Winter Flowers Forever stamps. Pictured clockwise from upper left, the four featured plants — amaryllis, cyclamen, Christmas cactus and paperwhite — bring a hint of spring indoors during the coldest months of the year.

Available in booklets of 20, the Forever stamps were issued during the [American Philatelic Society AmeriStamp Expo 2014](#) at the Statehouse Convention Center in Little Rock. Customers may purchase the stamps at usps.com/stamps, at 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), at many Post Offices nationwide and on eBay at ebay.com/stamps.

Art director Ethel Kessler, of Bethesda, MD, chose four winter-blooming flowers with colors that worked together as a group yet stood out individually. Potted plants served as stamp artist William Low's models. To keep the images fresh, he photographed the flowers at their peak, capturing details in close-ups that accentuate the plants' foliage and blossoms.

Low created the digital paintings in Photoshop. Using a cordless pen or stylus, he "painted" his brushstrokes on a pressure sensitive screen, adding dabs of color and weaving layers of texture into the paintings.



A native of South America, the amaryllis (*Hippeastrum*) produces 2-to-3-foot stalks topped by large single or double trumpet-shaped flowers in colors that include red, salmon, orange, pink, rose and white. There also are varieties that are striped or multicolored, usually combining white with shades of pink or red. The amaryllis is a dramatic potted plant and can be “forced” — a process that mimics the plant’s natural growth cycle indoors causing it to bloom in winter rather than in spring when planted outside.



The approximately 20 species of cyclamen are native to the Mediterranean region. Florist’s cyclamen (*Cyclamen persicum*) has gained popularity in the United States as a winter-blooming potted plant. Produced on long, leafless stems, the sweetly scented flowers have five petals, four up and one down, that are held upright above the foliage. The flowers come in shades of white, pink, purple and red with green foliage mottled with silver.



A favorite tradition at the holidays, the Christmas cactus (*Schlumbergera bridgesii*) is a long-lived plant native to the jungles of South America. Easy to grow indoors, the plant, which is naturally winter-blooming, has flattened stems that bloom with flowers in yellow, salmon, pink, fuchsia and white or sometimes in combinations of those colors. Though it differs slightly in appearance, the Thanksgiving cactus is a member of the same botanical genus.



The paperwhite (*Narcissus tazetta*) is native to the Mediterranean and is the most fragrant type of daffodil. Like the amaryllis, the paperwhite can be induced to bloom indoors where its sweet floral scent will permeate a room. The small, star-shaped flowers can be pure white, while others have white outer petals with pale yellow “cups” in the center.

Customers may view the Winter Flowers Forever 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 [USPSstamps.com](https://usps.com/stamps).

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 local Post Offices, at The Postal Store at usps.com/shop, 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 larger envelopes addressed to:

Winter Flowers Stamps
 Little Rock Main Post Office
 ATTN: Station Manager
 600 E Capital Ave.
 Little Rock, AR 72202-9998

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 up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, the price is five cents each. All orders must be postmarked by April 19, 2014.

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 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

Six philatelic products are available for this stamp issue:

- 689106, Press Sheet w/Die Cuts, \$78.40 (Print Quantity of 2,500).
- 689108, Press Sheet w/o Die Cuts, \$78.40 (Print Quantity of 2,500).
- 689110, Keepsake (Booklet & Digital Color Postmark Set of 4), \$16.95.
- 689116, First-Day Cover Set of 4, \$3.72.
- 689121, Digital Color Postmark Set of 4, \$6.56.
- 689131, Stamp Deck Card, \$0.95.

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>. Please credit sources if using the Shirley Chisholm promotional video for broadcast purposes.

For reporters interested in speaking with a regional Postal Service public relations professional, please go to

<http://about.usps.com/news/media-contacts/usps-local-media-contacts.pdf>.

Follow the Postal Service on twitter.com/usps and like us at facebook.com/usps. For more information, go to usps.com and usps.com/postalfacts.