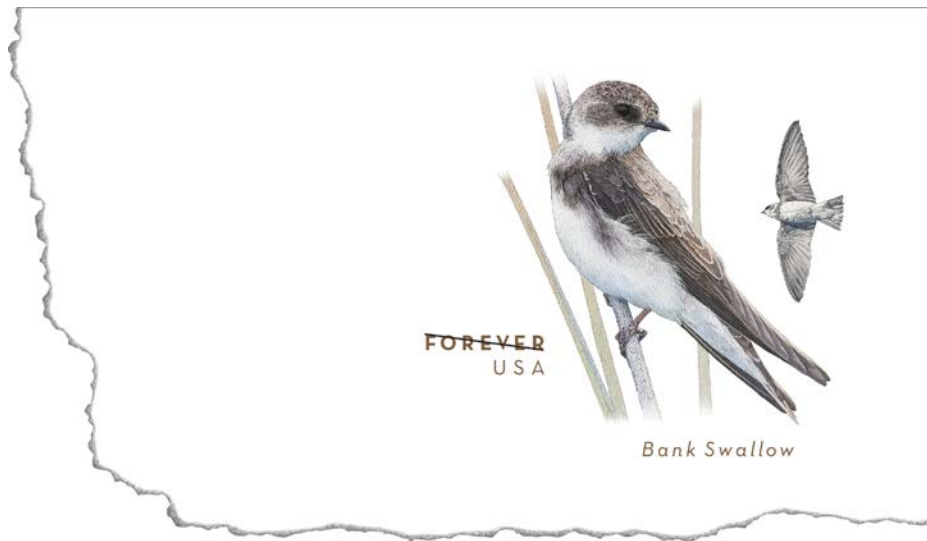




POSTAL NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 1, 2013

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Release No. 13-031



Bank Swallow Stamped Envelope Takes Flight Today

A high-resolution image of the stamped envelope is available for media use only by emailing: mark.r.saunders@usps.gov.

SACRAMENTO, CA — Nature lovers will be aflutter now that the U.S. Postal Service is releasing the Bank Swallow Forever Stamped Envelope today.

The 58-cent Forever stamped envelopes (46-cent Forever stamp and 12-cent envelope surcharge), good for mailing 1-ounce First Class letters anytime in the future regardless of price changes, are only available at usps.com/stamps or by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724).

The product is available in #10 regular and window envelopes; #9 regular and window envelopes; and, #6 ¾ regular and window envelopes.

The highly realistic stamp art is the work of illustrator Matthew Frey of Annapolis, MD, under the direction of Bill Gicker of Washington, DC. Frey's work is based on photographs which show a large illustration of the swallow perching and a smaller illustration of the bird in flight.

An accomplished illustrator and a graphic designer, Frey's work has appeared in *National Geographic*, *Smithsonian*, the National Air and Space Museum, the National Museum of Natural History and the Field Museum. A licensed Master Falconer, Frey is an officer of the Potomac Falconers Association, the oldest falconry organization in the United States, and is a founding officer of the West Virginia Falconry Club.

Seen on Six of Seven Continents

The bank swallow (*Riparia riparia*) is the smallest swallow in North America and can be found on every continent except Antarctica. About five inches long, the slender bird digs nesting burrows in riverbanks, gravel pits and even highway cuts. Both males and females help dig the tunnel, first pecking out a shallow hole with their beaks, then using their feet to kick out the dirt.

Like all swallows, bank swallows are agile songbirds that specialize in catching insects in midair. A typical bank swallow colony can have anywhere from ten to nearly 2,000 nests. A sandbank riddled with holes, especially one near a river or lake, is likely to be the home of a colony of bank swallows.

Customers may view the Bank Swallow Forever Stamped envelope, 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. *Beyond the Perf* is the Postal Service's online site 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 local Post Offices, at 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:

Bank Swallow Stamped Envelope
Sacramento Post Office
2000 Royal Oaks Drive
Sacramento, CA 95813-0008

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 May 1, 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 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

Thirteen philatelic products are available:

- 210916, [#10 Regular Water Activated Gum \(WAG\) First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 210016, [#10 Window WAG First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 211116, [#9 Regular WAG First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 211216, [#9 Window WAG First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 265616, [#6 ¾ Regular WAG First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 265716, [#6 ¾ Window WAG First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 231316, [#10 Regular Pressure Sensitive Adhesive \(PSA\) First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 231416, [#10 Window PSA First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.

- 231516, [#9 Regular PSA First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 231616, [#9 Window PSA First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 270716, [#6 ¾ Regular PSA First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 270816, [#6 ¾ Window PSA First-Day Cover](#), 70 cents.
- 231334, [Bank Swallow #10 Regular PSA 10pk. with Seals](#), \$9.95.

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

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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>.

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>.

A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation: 152 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 more than 31,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, *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 42nd in the 2012 Fortune 500. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for seven years and the fourth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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