

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS



SLITHERING TO A POST OFFICE NEAR YOU!

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL STAMP COLLECTING MONTH!

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON STAMP COLLECTING AND FUN ACTIVITIES, VISIT THE AMERICAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY AT WWW.STAMPS.ORG — THE KID'S PAGE.



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MAKE YOUR OWN

CREEPING THINGS ALBUM

WE WANT TO GIVE YOU TIPS on how to construct your own personal thematic stamp collecting album. A theme is a central idea, or a design which is illustrated with stamps and other philatelic documents. The central idea is important in that it gives the collection a framework by providing structure and also allows the use of short concise text to complement your display.

In selecting a theme pick something you like, or that represents those philatelic items you already have, in this case we will focus on the new stamp issue of Reptiles & Amphibians. A thematic collection does not require a complete set of all items issued on a subject. You can pick and choose what you like and what you want to represent your collection. There are numerous stamps, postmarks, first day covers, and other relevant items that can easily translate into a Creeping Thing collection.

Reptiles and amphibians should be used as the overall theme, but you can define the theme in other ways, examples might be:

- Amphibians (frog, toad, salamander)
- Creeping Things
- Herpetology (a field of science that delves into 2 different groups of cold-blooded vertebrates – reptiles & amphibians)
- Reptiles (snake, turtle, lizard)

With all of these areas, be careful to make sure that you select a theme with the central idea in mind, and it does not end up as simply a chronological series of stamps and other material. An exciting, individual, original album, both in the theme and in the presentation, is desired.

There are no rules in thematic collecting stating that the stamps and other materials should be postmarked or in mint condition. But the picture on the stamp should be of prime importance. The picture should not be obscured or distracted from by the postmark. And other materials used should be visually appealing as well.

Related text to your theme and your layout plan will play an important role in exhibiting your theme. Text will enhance the actual stamps and other materials by linking or connecting the theme with the visual aids.



YOU HAVE MADE YOUR THEME SELECTION, now gather your stamps and other stamp materials, and get your thoughts together on how you want to present your collection with text and the visuals you have. You are now ready to work out a plan of organizing and laying out your album pages.

Start with an outline plan for building up the collection. Then later you can consider the finer details. The outline divides the collection into various logical sections using titles, sheet headings, and subtitles. It is important that everything within

a section follows in a logical order too. Avoid leaps from one idea to another. Try to bring order into the collection and sufficient detail for a smooth and continuous development of the theme.

The outline should be one of the first things that you do, so that you get an overview of the area you have chosen. This outline can be enlarged or modified later. Don't start putting your collection together blindly, or you will never reach your goal of completing an album.

YOUR OUTLINE MIGHT LOOK LIKE:

In relating the text throughout each of your album pages, use stamps or related stamp material to visually describe your text or what you are talking about.

The order of the outline and collection is very subjective and not everyone has the same logic.

Now, look at your collection as a whole. Are the titles and subtitles in the same place on each page? Are the stamps and other philatelic items on each page displayed with prominence?

CREEPING THINGS

1. What are the differences in reptiles and amphibians?
 - A. Research the differences
 - B. List the differences in bullet points, or other ways of listing
2. Types of reptiles and amphibians.
 - A. Show examples of amphibians
 - B. Show examples of reptiles
3. Where do reptiles and amphibians live?
 - A. Research the areas in a zoo where the reptiles and amphibians live and describe their environment.
4. What are some unique facts about reptiles and amphibians?
 - A. Research information and set out the facts learned.



BEFORE ASSEMBLING YOUR COLLECTION ON ALBUM SHEETS, CONSIDER THE FINER DETAILS — what comes under the headings. It is at this stage you can show your individuality. Indicate why individual pieces in the collection are there, and why they are under a particular heading in the collection. The text should not be lengthy to read nor difficult to understand. Be concise as possible and convey the minimal amount of information about the visual.

You can write a short text under each visual, or under a grouping of visual materials. It is a good idea to draw the attention of the reader to certain details but the philatelic items should remain the most prominent part of the collection.

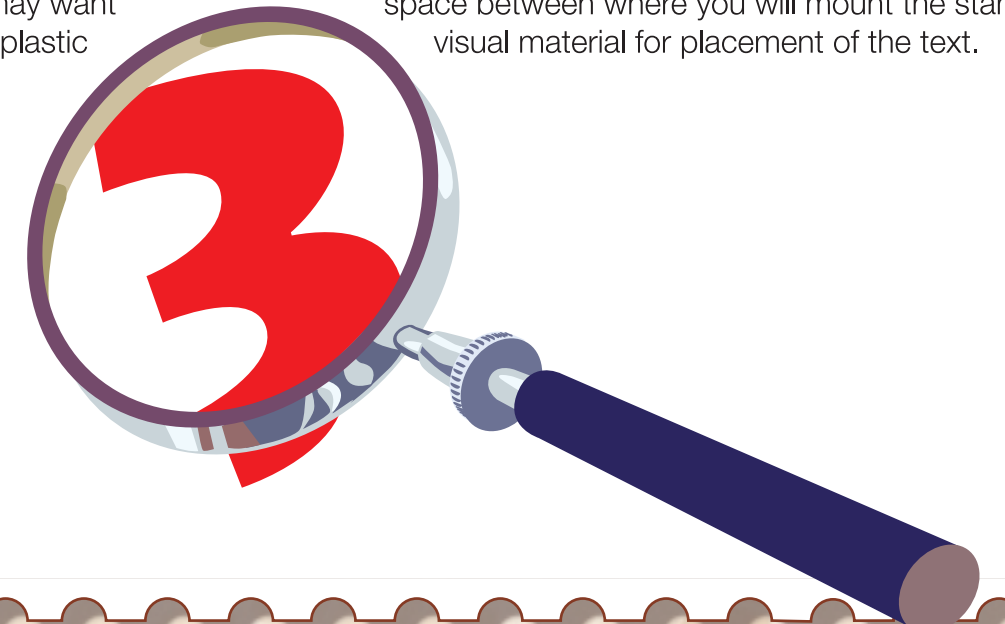
Clearly arrange the material according to your plan with a pleasing display. We recommend that you place your material slightly to the right to allow for holes to be punched on the left side so you can bind the pages. You may want to think about placing your pages in clear plastic sleeves to keep them fresh.

The title page should give exact information about the subject or theme. You can make a page especially for the contents. The layout should vary from page to page as the same arrangement is monotonous.

You can add individuality to your pages by adding borders, a grid pattern to keep your visuals mounted straight, or a rectangle at the top for a title. Do not use pages with a dominating printed border, aim for an imaginative and individual collection. You can also use colored pencils and pens to decorate the pages and text blocks.

The album paper should not be too thin and you should select a friendly color such as white, cream, or light gray.

The size of the paper depends on how you want to bind your album. The usual page size is 8½" x 11". Store your pages in a vertical position to avoid damage to your stamps. Leave space between where you will mount the stamp or visual material for placement of the text.



NOW YOU HAVE YOUR PAGES. How do you take these pages and put them together to create the actual album?

Hole-punching, or, you can use a 3-ring binder.

If you hole-punch, you can hold the pages, or plastic sleeves, together with:

- TWINE
- RIBBON
- THIN ROPE
- YARN
- FASTENERS

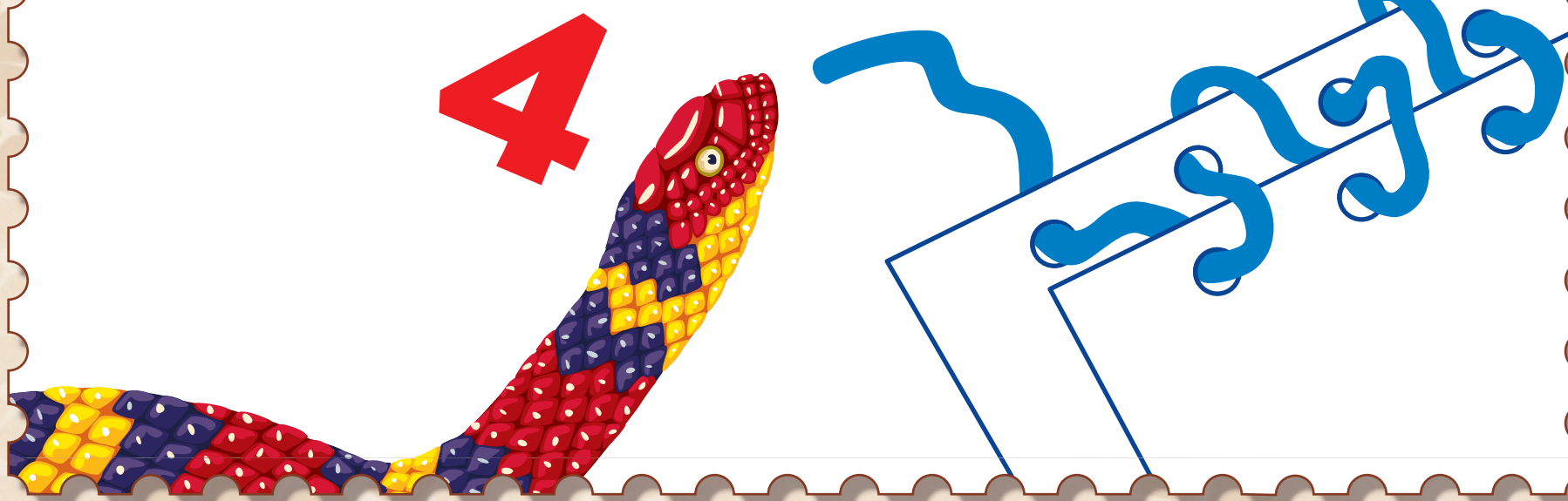
You may think of other ways to bind the album, be creative!

NOW YOU WANT TO THINK ABOUT A COVER AND BACK. With a binder you can create 8½ x 11 inch pages to slip in the plastic on the front of the binder, if it has one; or, you can create a colorful title and make it a cut-out that you adhere to the front and back of the binder.

If you choose to bind your pages, use a slightly heavier paper for your front and back cover and use your imagination to create an interesting front and back cover.

Now you have your completed album — what do you think? It was fun and a learning experience to put it all together. Think about other stamp subjects that you might want to consider for making albums as gifts for others, or start your own personal album collection!

HAVE FUN — THAT'S WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!!!



October 2003

Dear Educators:

The Postal Service, with our partner the American Philatelic Society (APS), is pleased to celebrate National Stamp Collecting Month with you in 2003! This year's highlighted stamps are *Reptiles & Amphibians* and we hope you slither into a post office near you to see for yourselves the beauty and wonder of these exciting animals.

We are taking this opportunity to share with you and your students a wonderfully bright and vivid poster with reverse side panels to be reproduced for the students. This information guides them into making their own "Creepy Things" stamp album. We hope you make this a class project! This information will also be available online at the APS site, www.stamps.org, on the Teacher's Page.

In addition to the enclosed poster, you will also find a supplemental piece from the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), yet another education partner of the Postal Service and you. The stamp issue featured in this material is the Arctic Tundra, part of our Nature of America series. Be sure to note the online address, www.nwf.org, for informative lesson plans that support this stamp subject. We know you will find these useful to add to your current curriculum.

On the NWF site there is also a place for you, the educator, to let us know what you think of the materials; and, what we can do to serve you better. We look forward to hearing from you so we can help make a difference by sharing materials that work!

Thank you for your continued interest in the Postal Service and our partner education pieces. It is our pleasure to share the world of stamps as a teaching tool!

Sincerely,

David E. Fallor
David E. Fallor
Executive Director
Stamp Services

Enclosure

TEACHERS

FIND PRINTABLE LESSON PLANS FOCUSING ON THESE STAMPS AT
WWW.USPS.COM/COMMUNICATIONS/COMMUNITY/NSCM.HTM
CREATED BY DR. JAQUELINE HANSEN OF MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY