

The Cover Story

It's almost Halloween - What are you scared of?

by Phil Fettig

As we approach Halloween you might think of some of the things that scared you as a child. What about things that still make your heart miss a beat? Figure (1) shows a first day cover of Scott 1548, the Legend of Sleepy Hollow stamp which shows the headless Horseman chasing Ichabod Crane. This represents some of the old fashioned lore and a few more of the other fictitious types will be shown later. Now let's look at some stamps that may illustrate things that can scare you anytime, not just at Halloween.

You probably have been scared by the sight of many things that crawl, slither or lumber around us. In fact, just thinking about these creatures may be enough to elicit a shriek worthy of Halloween out of some of you! Figure (2) is Scott 3814-18, a strip of 5 stamps that shows us a snake, salamander, lizard, frog and turtle. None of these varieties pose a threat, although the Scarlet King snake often is mistaken for the more deadly Coral Snake. Black Bears, figure (3) - Scott 2299, are a common sight here in Central Florida. While they certainly are to be considered dangerous, seldom do they attack humans. Actually, it is the humans who are mostly at fault for moving into houses on the edge of the bears home (a forest) and inviting them in for a meal (unsecured garbage cans). Alligators and crocodiles are real threats to humans and small pets. Figure (4) is Scott 3105d, showing an American Crocodile. Once again we are our own worst enemies, feeding the gators and then being naturally upset when attacks against people and pets occur. Both the American Crocodile and the Florida Panther, figure (5) - Scott 3105m are on the endangered species list and they should be more scared of us than we are of them!

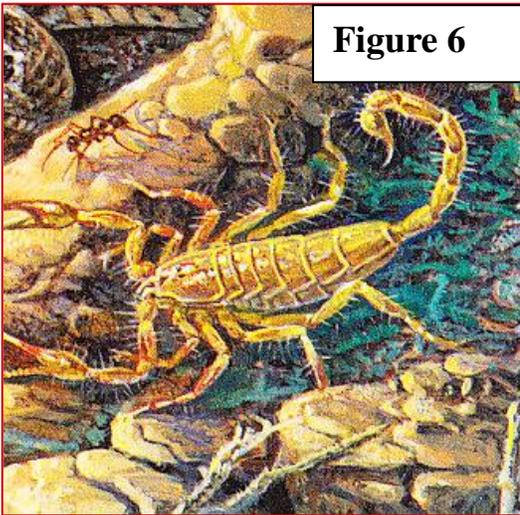


Figure 6

Now, how about some really small things to be afraid of? How many of you don't want to be around ants? Look at the two small fellows in figures (6) & (7), shown in

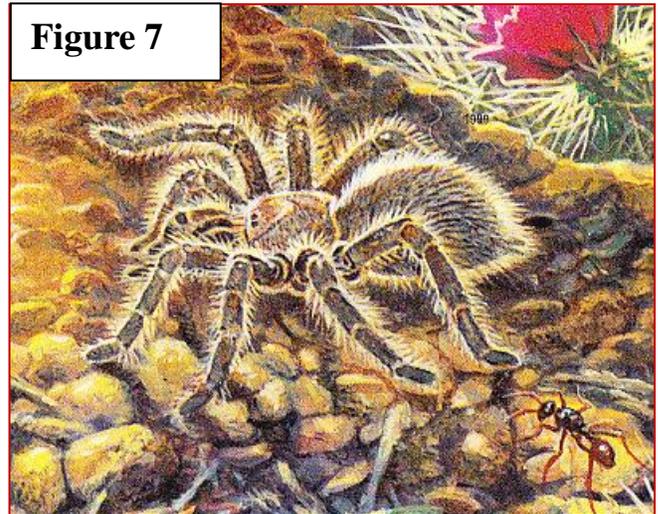


Figure 7

the margin of the design in Scott 3293. Come on now --- these poor little ants are not going to hurt you....What's that you say? Oh, so maybe it is not the ants, but the tarantula (Figure 6) and the scorpion (Figure 7) that has you a little scared. Ok, now I get it.

We all know that dinosaurs are not around anymore, but if you heard a noise in the woods near your house on Halloween, would you be looking for these big guys shown in Scott 3136, figure (8)? Thankfully buffalo have made a comeback and are still around, as shown in Scott 2320, figure (9). Three years ago, while in Yellowstone, I violated one of the park rules and wandered off the road to get a better photo angle on a small herd. What I didn't see until I was in position for the shot, was a single LARGE buffalo standing off to my left. They are extremely fast and can be dangerous. I departed!

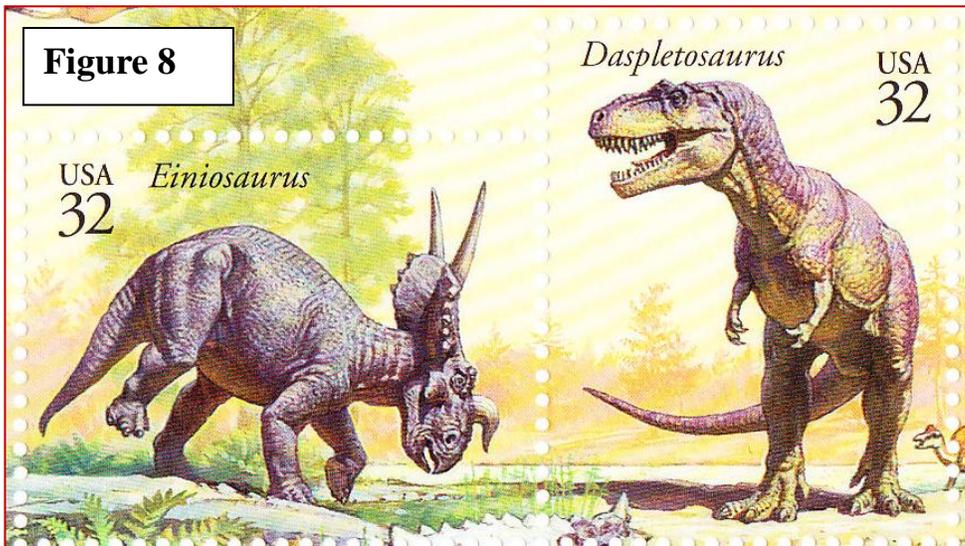


Figure 8

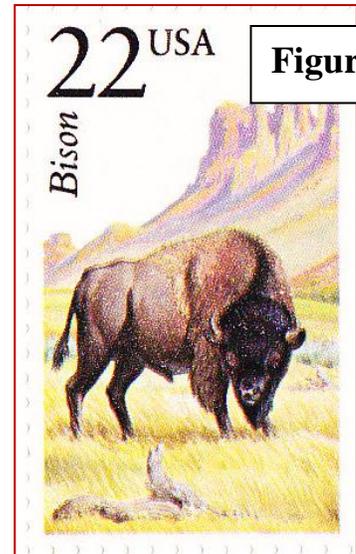


Figure 9

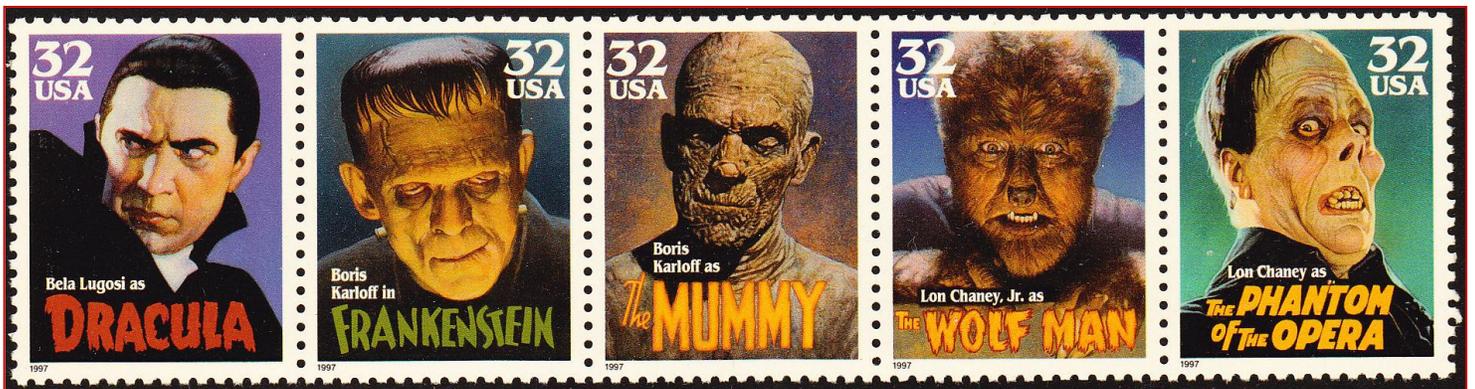
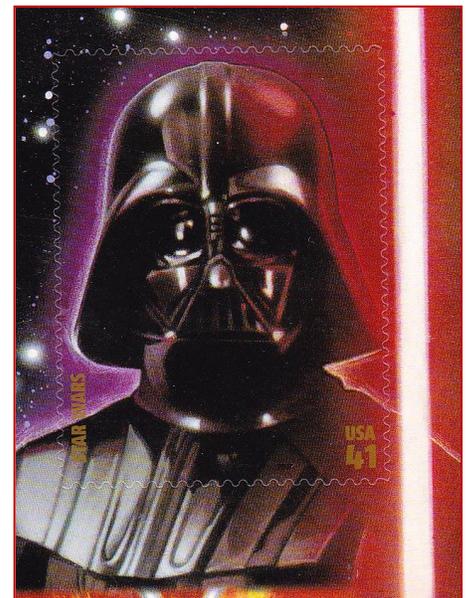


Figure 10

Figure 11

We will end our little fright night with a trip to the movies. Films have provided many fearful moments to us all, especially in our younger days. Sometime in your life, you must admit you were frightened by a “movie monster”, figure (10) - Scott 3168-72 or more recently by Darth Vader, shown in figure (11) - Scott 4143. I grew up swimming in murky Florida lakes and in the Gulf. I will man-up and admit I didn't go in the lakes as easily after watching “Creature from the Black Lagoon” as a teen or in the Gulf as an adult after “Jaws”.



Keep your eyes open out there!