

Un-manned Satellites on Postage Stamps : 25

By Guest Contributors Don Hillger and Garry Toth

Ariel Satellites

This is the twenty-fifth in a series of articles about un-manned satellites on postage stamps. This article features the British **Ariel**-series satellites. Six Ariel satellites were successfully launched, starting with Ariel-1 on 26 April 1962, and ending with Ariel-6 on 2 June 1979. There were no launch failures of Ariel satellites. The Ariel series is also called the **UK** series of satellites due to the British role in their development.

The Ariels were physics and astrophysics satellites, with experiments to study the ionosphere, galactic radio noise, X-rays, and cosmic rays. The satellites had cylindrical bodies with different cones or caps on one end, and were spin stabilized along the cylinder axis. On the other end of the body, Ariel-1 and 2 had various arms and paddles: in this respect they were a bit like some of the early Explorer-series satellites.

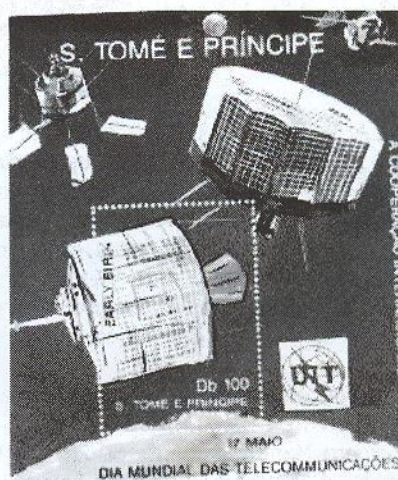
Three of the later-design Ariels (Ariel-3, 4, and 6) had four large "arms" attached diagonally to the spacecraft body. These arms looked somewhat like snowshoes with tubular frames and in fact contained solar panels that looked a bit like webbing. Antennas and instruments were sometimes attached to these arms. For Ariel-6 the arms were perpendicular to the spacecraft body, and the cap on top was hemispherical rather than conical.

Ariel-5 was unlike the other Ariels, being a large cylinder about 1 m in diameter and length, with no significant attachments. The spacecraft looked much like Explorer-54 and 55, and was indeed uncharacteristic of the rest of the Ariel series.

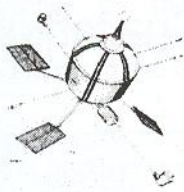
Most of the postal items for Ariel show Ariel-1 or 2, with only a few items showing Ariel-3 or 4. Some of the images show a great deal of detail of the spacecraft. No postal items are known to show Ariel-5, or 6.

A checklist of postal items showing Ariel-series satellites (<http://www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/hillger/Ariel.htm>) is available on the Website developed by the authors for the un-manned satellites featured in this series of articles (<http://>

www.cira.colostate.edu/ramm/hillger/satellites.htm). E-mail correspondence is welcome. Don Hillger can be reached at hillger@cira.colostate.edu and Garry Toth at garry_toth@hotmail.com.



A version of this article first appeared in *The Astrophile* in Jan/Feb 2007



Ariel-series satellites

Below is a checklist of **Ariel-series satellite** postal items (stamps, souvenir sheets, aerogrammes, postal cards, etc.). Catalog numbers, years of issue, and notes on the satellites featured are given when available. For **Ariel** launch information and covers see the **Ariel-series table** on the scientific/research satellites page. If readers know of additional information or images, please contact the authors using the e-mail addresses at the bottom of this page.



Country	Catalog Number*	Type of Item**	Year of Issue	Notes on Content
Dubai	124 (Mi361)		1970	Ariel-3/4
Equatorial Guinea	BLA297 black	In margin of imperforate SS1 (MiA1343), silver foil, black printing	1978	Ariel-3/4
Equatorial Guinea	BLA297 red	In margin of imperforate SS1 (MiA1343), silver foil, red printing	1978	Ariel-3/4
Equatorial Guinea	BLB297 black	In margin of imperforate SS1 (MiB1343), gold foil, black printing	1978	Ariel-3/4
Equatorial Guinea	BLB297 red	In margin of imperforate SS1 (MiB1343), gold foil, red printing	1978	Ariel-3/4
Hungary	1666 (Mi2108A) i1666 (Mi2108B)		1965	Ariel-1
Hungary	2667+label (Mi3459)	Single + label, see detail	1980	Ariel-1/2
Hungary	2667+lab fdc	One stamp on FDC	1980	Ariel-1/2
Mongolia	C33k	One of MS12 (C33a-l)	1972	Ariel-2
Oman State	None b	One of MS8 (a-h)	1974	Ariel-1
Panama	472 (Mi993)		1966	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	472c (BL59) i472c (BL60)	In margin of MS2 (472A-472B), changed colors on imperforate	1966	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	492 (Mi1105a)	472 overprinted in black	1968	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	492 var (Mi1105b)	472 overprinted in gold	1968	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	492B (BL99a) (o/p1) 492B (BL99a) (o/p2) i492B (BL100a)	In margin of MS2 (472c) overprinted in black, changed colors on imperforate	1968	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	492B var (BL99b) i492B var (BL100b)	In margin of MS2 (472c) overprinted in gold, changed colors on imperforate	1968	Ariel-1, Ariel-2
Panama	C365c (Mi1139)	One of MS6 (C365a-f) and on selvedge	1969	Ariel-3
Philippines	BL2	SS1	1968	Ariel-1
Philippines	BL2 (o/p)	SS1 (BL2) overprinted "SNV"	1968?	Ariel-1
Poland	1468 (Mi1372)		1966	Ariel-2
St. Thomas and Prince Islands	906 (BL221)	In margin of SS1	1989	Ariel-1/2
Satellite Beach FL (U.S.)	Local	Set-C4 (blue)	1964	Ariel-1
Satellite Beach FL (U.S.)	Local	Set-C4 (blue) overprinted in gold	1965	Ariel-1
Tonga	None	One of essay strip of 3	1983	Ariel-1/2
Umm Al Qiwayn	Mi81		1966	Ariel-1/2
Umm Al Qiwayn	Mi92	Mi81 overprinted new currency	1967	Ariel-1/2
Yugoslavia	1045 (Mi1409)		1971	Ariel-1

* *Scott* catalog number, unless prefixed with Mi or BL for *Michel*; "i" prefix denotes imperforate version.

**SS# = souvenir sheet, MS# = miniature sheet, where # = number of stamps in sheet, and the numbers in parentheses are the catalog numbers of the stamps in the sheet.