

# Un-manned Satellites on Postage Stamps

## 39 – The Sputnik-3 Satellite

Don Hillger SU-5200 and Garry Toth


*This is the thirty-ninth in a series of articles about un-manned satellites on postage stamps. This article features the Sputnik-3 satellite. Sputnik-3 was launched on 15 May 1958. It was the third in the Russian Sputnik series, as an upper-atmospheric, ionospheric satellite.*

**Q**uestion: Why are we covering Sputnik-3 when we have not yet covered either Sputnik-1 or 2? Sputnik-1, being the first of earth's artificial satellites, has been featured on probably more postal items than any other un-manned space item. To cover that satellite, would be a tremendous task, one which the authors choose not to confront at this time. Also, Sputnik-2 was a biological spacecraft, which holds less interest for the authors than Sputnik-3, a physics/research satellite, more in line with the theme of most of the articles in this series.

Sputnik-3 was the last in a series of four satellites launched as part of the Sputnik program of the former Soviet Union and as a planned contribution to the International Geophysical Year (IGY, 1957-1958). The three satellites that reached orbit were Sputnik-1, 2, and 3. The fourth satellite was a failed first launch of Sputnik-3 that took place on

27 April 1958, not long before the successful launch of Sputnik-3.

As a scientific satellite, Sputnik-3 contained 12 instruments providing data on pressure and composition of the upper atmosphere, concentration of charged particles, measurements of cosmic rays and magnetic and electrostatic fields, as well as meteoric particles. Sputnik-3 also detected the outer radiation belts and remained in orbit for about 2 years.

Sputnik-3 is shaped like a cone, and about 3.5 m long. Distinguishing features include paper-clip-like antennas on its sides, as well as extending from its base. Most of the postal items showing Sputnik-3 show these features. This early Soviet spacecraft was not held in secrecy, like some of the other early missions, where the look of the satellite was not known and purposely disguised by a propaganda image that can be found on several postal items. 

### Checklist of Sputnik 3 Satellite Postal Stamps and First Day Covers

Country	Catalog No.	Type of Item	Issued	Notes
Albania	622 (Mi662)		1962	Sputnik-3 (not Sputnik-2) <sup>1</sup>
Albania	624a (BL9) 624b (BL10)	SS1, changed colors on imperforate		Sputnik-3 (not Sputnik-2) <sup>1</sup>
Altai Republic	Local	Image of unknown source <sup>2</sup> overprinted on 4x Russia 5723	1996 <sup>3</sup>	
Altai Republic	Local	Image of unknown source <sup>4</sup> overprinted on 4x Russia 6069		
Bosnia and Herzegovina (Serb Admin.)	100 (Mi151-156)	On (lower) selvedge of booklet pane of 6	1999	Possible Sputnik-3
Bulgaria	C76 (Mi1094A) iC76 (Mi1094B)		1958	

*Continued on page 91*

A checklist of postal items showing the Sputnik-3 satellite is available on the Website (<http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/dev/hillger/satellites.htm>) developed by the authors for the un-manned satellites featured in this series of articles at <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/dev/hillger/Sputnik-3.htm>. The Website includes images of the Sputnik-3 satellite, as well as images of launch covers and other postal items that feature this satellite. E-mail correspondence with the authors is welcome. Don Hillger can be reached at [hillger@cira.colostate.edu](mailto:hillger@cira.colostate.edu) and Garry Toth at [garry\\_toth@hotmail.com](mailto:garry_toth@hotmail.com).



## Checklist of Sputnik 3 Satellite Postal Stamps and First Day Covers – *Continued*

Country	Catalog No.	Type of Item	Issued	Notes
Cambodia	1101 (Mi1179)		1990	
Cambodia	1147 (Mi1225)	1101 overprinted	1991	
Chad	Unknown (Mi?)	On label3 of MS3 (a-c + 3 labels)	2010	
China	380 (Mi408)		1958	
China	381 (Mi409)		1958	Symbolic Sputnik-1 (round), 2 (pointed cylinder), and 3 (pointed cylinder) in orbit
Cuba	864 (Mi923)	One of block of 5 (867a [863-867 + label]), or four of MS20 (867b [4x 863-867])	1964	
Cuba	971 (Mi1033)		1965	
Cuba	1177 (Mi1247)		1966	
Cuba	1178a (BL29)	On one of imperforate MS3 (1176-1178)	1966	
Czechoslovakia	1032 (Mi1253)		1961	
Fujeira	Mi624A		1971	
Fujeira	Mi624B		1971	Possibly Spunik-3 (not Soyuz-8, as in text)
Fujeira	Mi744	Mi624 overprinted in red	1971	Possibly ISpunik-3 (not Soyuz-8, as in text)
Gabon	937h (Mi?)	One of MS12 (937 (a-l))	1999	
Gagouzia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprinted on 4x Russia 4517	1996?	
Gagouzia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprinted on 4x Russia 4520		
Gagouzia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprinted on 4x Russia 4526		
Gagouzia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprinted on 4x Russia 5984		
Gagouzia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprinted on 4x Russia 6061		
Germany (East)	634c (Mi928)	One of MS8 (634 (a-h))	1962	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Hungary	1218 (Mi1577)		1959	1st anniv. launch
Hungary	C239 (Mi1910)	Stamp-on-stamp: China (PR) 380	1963	
Hungary	C241 (Mi1912)	Stamp-on-stamp: Poland 875	1963	
Laos	782 (Mi989)		1987	Sputnik-3 (not Soyuz-8, as in text)
Lithuania	N/A	New Year's cachet	1963	possible Sputnik-3
Maldiv Islands	2894f (Mi4539)	One of MS6 (2894 (a-f)), also one of imperforate MS6 (i2894)	2006	
Marief	Local (700 value)	Image of unknown source overprinted on Russia 4517	1994	possible Sputnik-3
Mongolia	554 (Mi570)		1969	
Poland	875 (Mi1127A)			
	i875 (Mi1127B)		1959	
Poland	1295 (Mi1557)		1964	
Qatar	104f (Mi145)	One of strip of 5 (104A (104f-j + 5 labels)), or from MS15 (104K (3x (104f-j) + 5 labels))	1966	Sputnik-3 (not Mercury capsule)2
Qatar	121f (Mi269)	One of strip of 5 (121A (121f-j + 5 labels)), 104A surcharged new currency	1966	Sputnik-3 (not Mercury capsule)2
Romania	C56 (Mi1733)		1958	
Romania	C119 (Mi2086)	Stamp-on-stamp: C49, C51, C56	1962	
Romania	C122a (BL53)	Imperforate MS4 (C119-C122), stamp-on-stamp: C49, C51, C56, C73, C74, C75, 1200 or 1201, C58, C88, C104, C109, C110	1962	
Romania	1698a (BL59)	Imperforate SS1	1964	
Romania	5024 (Mi?)		2008	
Russia (USSR)	2077 (Mi2096)		1958	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Russia (USSR)	2083 (Mi2101)	Stamp and label	1958	
Russia (USSR)	2160 (Mi2192)		1959	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Russia (USSR)	2519 (Mi2570)	Stamp-on-stamp: 2160	1961	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Russia (USSR)	2732 (Mi2747)	One of block of 6	1963	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Russia (USSR)	2732a (Mi2748)	One of block of 6 – 2732 changed color	1963	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3

## Checklist of Sputnik 3 Satellite Postal Stamps and First Day Covers – Continued

Country	Catalog No.	Type of Item	Issued	Notes
Russia (USSR)	2883 (Mi2895)		1964	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
Russia (USSR)	4594 (Mi4651)		1977	
Russia (USSR)	5547a (Mi5700)	In lower margin of MS8 (8x 5547)	1987	
St. Thomas and Prince Islands	Unknown ss (BL?) Unknown iss	SS1	2005	Sputnik-1, 2, and 3
St. Thomas and Prince Islands	Unknown (Mi?)	One of MS4 (a-d)	2007	
Tanzania	2536c (BL?)	On stamps and in (right) margin of MS4	2009	
Tanzania	i2536c	2536c - 2x 2536 (a-b)		
Tanzania	2542 (BL?)	SS1		
Udmurtia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprint on Russia 4520, 1997 also overprint template		
Udmurtia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprint on Russia 5733, 1997 also overprint template		
Udmurtia	Local	Cambodia 1101 overprint on Russia 5984, 1997 also overprint template		
Umm Al Qiwain	Mi1072	One of MS16	1972	
Umm Al Qiwain	sMi1072	One of small MS16	1972	
Union Island (St. Vincent)	Unknown ms (BL?)	MS6 (a-f)	2008	
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi316		1963	
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi333	Mi316 overprinted in black	1964	
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi406	Mi316 overprinted in red	1965	
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi904 Mi911	Changed colors on imperforate.	1969	
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi910	In margin of imperforate		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi911	On stamp and margin of imperforate sheet		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi912	In margin of imperforate minisheet		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi913	In margin of imperforate minisheet		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi914	In margin of imperforate minisheet		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi915	In margin of imperforate minisheet		
Yemen Arab Republic	Mi916	In margin of imperforate minisheet		
Yemen Mutawakelite Kingdom	Mi801-804	In margin of minisheet	1969	
Yemen Mutawakelite Kingdom	BL167a	In upper-right margin of SS1	1969	

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

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

- 1 Kosmos-318/381 (Ionosfernaya-1/2) were similar to Nadezhda, but lacked the omni-directional antenna for COSPAS/SARSAT.
- 2 A depiction of a Nadezhda conical/omni-directional antenna is seen as a detail of a Venera satellite on a 1978 Togo stamp (Scott C344).
- 3 COSPAS/SARSAT = Search And Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking.



# SPACE COVERS

Mercury . Gemini . Apollo . Shuttle . Skylab  
Apollo-Soyuz . Beck . Goldcraft . Space Craft  
Prime Recovery Ships . FDC . X-15 . Satellites . Pioneer  
Discoverer . Mariner . Ranger . Atlas . Vanguard . Viking  
and many, many others.

1000's in stock  
24 hours a day

[www.spacecoverstore.com](http://www.spacecoverstore.com)