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(Note: To obtain a downloadable 300 dpi image of the stamp, visit the 2007 Commemorative Stamp Program release link at <http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2007stamps/>.)

The Four Bs Buzz **Bats, Bees, Birds and Butterflies**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The United States Postal Service will cast a spotlight on the importance of nature's pollinators with the issuance of the 41-cent Pollination stamps tomorrow, June 29. The first-day-of-issuance ceremony will be led by Patrick R. Donahoe, deputy postmaster general and chief operating officer of the Postal Service, who will be joined by Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns beginning at 10 a.m. at the United States Department of Agriculture, Whitten Building patio.

The Pollination stamps are being issued in conjunction with National Pollinator Week. Depicted on the Pollination stamps are four wildflowers and four pollinators. The common and scientific names of the featured flowers are purple nightshade, also known as chaparral nightshade (*Solanum xanti*); hummingbird trumpet (*Epilobium canum*); saguaro (*Carnegiea gigantea*) and prairie ironweed, also known as common ironweed (*Vernonia fasciculata*). The common and scientific names of the featured animal pollinators are Morrison's bumblebee (*Bombus morrisoni*); calliope hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*); lesser long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris yerbabuenae*) and Southern dogface butterfly (*Colias cesonia*).

Artist Steve Buchanan of Winsted, Conn. created the four beautiful stamps using an intricate design that emphasizes the ecological relationship between pollinators and plants and the biodiversity necessary to maintain that relationship. The four different stamp designs are arranged in two alternate blocks that fit together like interlocking puzzles. In one block the pollinators form a central starburst; in the other block the flowers are arranged in the center.

"Just as the Postal Service helps bind the American people together, the pollinators featured on these stamps unite the plant kingdom by distributing the message of life packaged in pollen," said Donahoe.

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“As an environmental leader, the Postal Service is proud to issue this beautiful, interlocking pane of stamps to highlight the importance of pollination in the chain of life,” he added.

“About three-quarters of the flowering plants depend on pollinators, and bees are principal among them,” said Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns. “In agriculture, bees play a vital role in pollinating fruits, nuts, berries, vegetables and alfalfa. They pollinate more than \$15 billion worth of crops. So I think it’s fitting that bees and other pollinators are featured on stamps for the work they do to help protect our ecosystems and produce our food.”

Joining Donahoe and Johanns in dedicating the stamps will be Lee McDaniel, board member, National Association of Conservation Districts; Paul Growald, founder and co-chair, North American Pollinator Protection Campaign; and Laurie Davies Adams, executive director, Coevolution Institute.

Starting June 29, the stamps can be purchased online at the Postal Store on www.usps.com/shop, by calling toll-free 800-STAMP-24, at philatelic centers nationwide and at local Post Offices. For additional information on National Pollinator Week, go to: www.pollinator.org.

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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to cover its operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers nearly half the world’s mail.