



**Posta Stamps**  
Faroe Islands

No. **30**  
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- Natural Dye
- Common Eider
- Lakes in the Faroes: Leitisvatn
- River: Skorá
- Stamp of the year 2016
- End Sale of the Year

**Posta**   
FAROE ISLANDS



FO 847-852

Test proof



## Natural Dye

One of mankind's most distinctive features is that we are able to change and improve our appearance. This characteristic has a multitude of quite different expressions, most of which have to do with our clothes, the materials, design and colours.

From archaeological excavations in Europe, we know that the Neanderthal and Cro Magnon cultures used ocher, among other things, to sprinkle on the dead. Later, about 17,000-15,000 years ago, our distant ancestors used variants of ocher, colouring the cave paintings in France and Spain. Along with colourful jewelry of various natural materials and minerals, we assume that our ancestors used colours, first for body decorations, then decorations on clothes and dyeing.

Dyeing of clothes, as we know it today, has its origin thousands of years ago. Given that we started to manufacture textiles from natural materials, which in itself has different shades of natural colours, it was not a long step to dye the spun yarn or woven clothes.

Even in the Faroe Islands, home-dyeing of

wool and clothes was a common practice. It was mostly natural dyeing with local plants, but later on people also imported dyes like for instance Cochineal, a sessile parasite that lives on cacti in South America, for bright red – and indigo for the bright blue colours.

Natural dye from plants does not give bright colours, but enough to make it worthwhile. On the stamp sheet, the artist Edward Fuglø presents some colour examples based on the book "Plantulitning" (Plant Dyeing), written by the handicraft teacher and weaver, Katrina Østerø, known as Katrina av Trøllanesi, born in 1897. Katrina was especially interested in wool dyeing – and besides her own knowledge and experiences on the subject, she also collected recipes from other women on the Faroe Islands.

**The colour samples on the stamps are :**  
Smæra – White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), which give pale yellow hues.

Klökkulyngur – Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), which gives light green hues.



Bell Heather

Photo: Marita Gulckett

Korki – Ochrolechia (*Ochrolechia tartarea*), a lichen that grows on rocks and stones and gives purple hues.

Steinamosi – Salted Shield Lichen or Crottle (*Parmelia saxatilis*), also a lichen that grows on rocks and stones, which gives brownish hues.

Kattarklógv – Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), gives more dusty yellow hues than White Clover.

Mjaðarurt – Meadowsweet or Mead Wort (*Filipendula ulmaria*), which gives a slightly brighter purple than the Ochrolechia.

### The Dye Process

The process of plant dyeing was largely this: The plants were washed and soaked for a day. If it was heather, it was cut into pieces before soaking. Then the plants were boiled for an hour in the same water (one to three hours in case of heather or bryophytes). Then the water was sieved and the liquor set to cool. When it had cooled down to 35 degrees Celsius, the wool yarn was put into the dye and boiled for another hour. After that, the

wool yarn had to stand in the liquor for a day, after which it was washed several times, first in cold water, then in a mild soap solution and then again in clean water. The yarn should then be left in the last rinse water for a few hours, before it was taken up and dried.

### Red and Blue

As mentioned before, there were no natural dye in the Faroes for the bright red and blue colours. Instead red was dyed with imported cochineal. The process was virtually the same as described above – one should, however, consider that the clothes could shrink when dyed with cochineal.

There are no indications of blue dye in the Faroes before indigo was available for import. The dye required a special approach, which most people probably did not care for, namely a lye of fermented urine. We shall not describe the process here as it is slightly off topic, but the price for the beautiful blue colour is said to have been a rather nasty smell of urine, which was difficult to wash out of the clothes again.

Anker Eli Petersen



FO 853-854



Test proof



## Common Eider

The Faroes are a seabird country. Magnificent bird cliffs where fulmars, guillemots and similar birds whirl before landing on narrow ledges, provide excellent and dramatic images. This is the country of puffins with grassy hillsides sloping towards the sea, where clumsy but charming puffins dig their holes - or the Mykines islet which in summer is white with large nesting gannets - these images describes almost perfectly the outside world's view of Faroese nature.

It is therefore no wonder that viewers tends to overlook one of the most common bird in the islands. Everywhere, in the fjords along the coasts and in port facilities, you will see large and small flocks of eiders gently swaying on the waves in all kinds of weather - the males in their beautiful black and white pairing suits, with a hint of pale green at the back of their cheeks and neck, sometimes with a touch of pale red on the chest, and the females with their discrete gaudy plumage in light and dark shades of brown, the perfect camouflage when they hatch in nests.

The Faroese eider is a subspecies of *Somateria mollissima* (*Somateria mollissima faeroensis*), found only in the Faroe Islands. It is a non-migratory bird, seen along coastal areas in the islands all year round, being the Faroes' most widespread and largest wild duck (size up to 58 cm).

The eider's hatching period stretches from the end of April until early September. Due to its relatively docile nature, it most often builds its nest by the shore - while sometimes also laying its egg in the outfield. Generally, however, the eiders brood in colonies, so-called "varp" where they are better protected against predatory birds. The nest consists of torn grass and moss, and when the female has laid its 4-5 eggs, it lines them with down, plucking it from its breast. When the parent bird leaves the nest to forage, it covers the eggs with down to keep them warm.

Traditionally eider down has been a valuable resource, being used as stuffing in duvets. In some areas of the islands islets and skerries where eider brooded have been protected in



Flock of eiders

Photo: Óli A.R. á Geilini

order to reap the down. It helped that the eider is unusually tame - there are stories of reapers effortlessly lifting the bird from the nest, gathering the down and putting the bird back on the eggs, causing no further drama. The eider then plucks its breast, wadding the nest anew.

As soon as the young are hatched, they are ready for life at sea and leave the nest with their mother. Eiders and their young gather in flocks along the coasts where they feed on isopods (*Idotea*), crustaceans, small crabs and fish. The eider is an excellent swimmer and can dive to a depth of between 3 and 20 meters. The adult eider may seem rather ungainly in flight, flying low above sea level, sometimes touching the water with its feet in order to pick up speed. However, I know from personal experience that the eider can fly with an impressive speed. Years ago I was driving along the coast of Skálafjørður, where an eider took off from the water and flew a few kilometers parallel to the car. All the way it kept pace with vehicle at a speed of 80 km per hour, using only a few meters to land next to another eider.

In summer, the males lose their splendid plumage for a short period and start looking more like the females. But at the end of the summer, they regain their colourful plumage. You will then be able to distinguish between the sexes as the chest of the young males gradually becomes white.

As stated above, the Faroese eider is a sedentary bird found in the Faroes all year round. It has no need of migrating to warmer countries since the warm Gulf Stream keeps the waters along the coasts at a fairly constant temperature. You will therefore be able to see this beautiful bird in all seasons. Even in stormy weather flocks of eiders can be seen swaying in turbulent seas, almost as a symbol of the calm, almost phlegmatic temperament needed to survive out here in the powerful grips of the Atlantic Ocean.

*Anker Eli Petersen*



FO 855-856



## Lakes in the Faroes: Leitisvatn

It goes without saying that a country, where it rains as much and frequently as it certainly does in the Faroes, must have a number of freshwater lakes. Due to the islands' geological configuration, its steep hills and mountains, most of the rainwater makes its way directly into the ocean. Water also gathers in natural hollows, especially on larger islands, forming lakes and ponds - slightly above sea level in the lowlands, as well as in higher-lying mountain valleys and on the plateaus.

The largest lake in the Faroe Islands has two local names. It is situated on the island Vágur, close to Vágur Airport. In the towns of the southwest the lake goes by the name of Leitisvatn while the inhabitants of Sørvágur, northeast of the lake, call it Sørvágsvatn.

Leitisvatn lies in an altitude of 32 meters, in a wide valley between the mountains in the south of Vágur. The lake covers an area of 3.56 km<sup>2</sup>. It is about 6 km long and has a maximum width of approximately 800 meters. The average depth is 27.5 m, its deepest point being 59 m.

To the south the lake drains into the short

Bøsdal-river, which ends abruptly in the steep waterfall Bøsdalafossur, directly over the sea cliff. The southern side of Vágoy is heavily eroded, distinctive for its steep rock faces, among them the Trælanípan cape, just south of Bøsdalafossur. If the area erodes more and the narrow strip of land forming Leitisvatn's southern end plunges into the ocean, large parts of Leitisvatn will be drained of water.

The lakefront is composed mostly of rock and loose pebbles, but at Leitisvatn's northern end there is a sandy beach. There you will also find Vatnsóyrar, the only inland settlement in the Faroes.

Leitisvatn and its surroundings form an area of great natural beauty, attracting many a tourist. An optical illusion at the lake, when it is seen or photographed at a certain angle from the south, has attracted worldwide attention. Although the lake only lies at an altitude of 32 meter, the rugged south coast sloping down to the lake creates an illusion of the lake being located several hundred meters higher than it actually is.

As mentioned above, Vágur Airport is located



Leitisvatn/Sørvágsvatn  
Foto: Ólavur Frederiksen

to the west of Leitisvatn. Before the British occupation forces constructed this airport during World War II, Leitisvatn was used as a runway for military seaplanes patrolling the waters around the Faroe Islands, transporting men and material to the air base.

Traces and ruins dating back to the British military activities in the area can still be found around Leitisvatn.

As with most other major lakes in the Faroes Leitisvatn has, according to popular belief, its own water spirits, called necks or nixies. The nixie was a mythological shapeshifting creature living in lakes and rivers. According to legend the nixie of Leitisvatn appears in the shape of a horse or a young handsome man - children and young girls being its favourite victims. If you touched the nixie in its horse like form, you would stick to it and be pulled into the lake to drown. Obviously, the nixie's main social function in the days of old was to prevent children to go to the lake unsupervised, as well as warning young girls against associating with young strangers.

According to legend, the renowned priest

Rasmus Ganting (1578-1642) conjured the nixie into a large rock, Leiðisteinur, on the banks of Leitisvatn. The rock is gone now, but the place name has survived. This same Ganting is also said to have stayed overnight with trolls on the Biskupsheygur hill close to the lake, whereupon he preached and sermonized over the rock so that it closed for good.

However, in spite of all trolls and spirits, Leitisvatn is worth a visit. As aptly evidenced by the stamps it is a beautiful natural area, spiced with cultural relics and activities handed down through generations.

*Anker Eli Petersen*



FO 857



## Skorá

Things tend to find different rhythms of their own out here in the Atlantic Ocean. The sober and quiet, sometimes seemingly phlegmatic pace characterizing the islanders and their environment, can without further ado turn into frantic action-packed activity. A phenomenon conditioned by the islands' location on the ocean currents and the crossroads of high and low pressures.

For the native Faroese this is a part of life. In the morning lazy waves roll quietly and rhythmically against the coast - in the afternoon violent surf breaks on the same shore, leaving white foam and turquoise whirlpools in its wake. On the way to the grocery store white cumulus clouds drift lazily across the blue-grey sky - on the way home torrential rain falls from a thick dark carpet of clouds - and, believe me, in the Faroes it always rains sideways.

These contradictions, or rather dualism, becomes quite clear in Saviour Mifsud's' photograph on which this postage stamp is based. The lovely little cottage, built for relaxation and days of "easy living", stands close to the foaming waterfall in Skorá River by Mjávøtn in the centre of Streymoy. Here it seems as if the frail and the delicate are shown in contra-

distinction to the tremendous and the violent - a house of dolls against the awful forces of Nature.

On a daily basis Skorá is not quite as impressive - a rather prosaic river on a mountainside, no different from most other rivers found in the islands. It's easy to be fooled by the running stream, its murmur and whispers in the silence of the summer night, bringing sweet dreams to guests sleeping in the summer house.

But even in its mild mood, Skorá reveals it's potential. The alert viewer observes immediately the traces it has left in the landscape. The black rocks in the green mountain side serve as a traffic sign warning of temporary violent activity.

There is practically no groundwater in the Faroe Islands. Naturally enough, since the islands' foundation consists of solid rock - the result of millions of years of volcanic activities, which with steady outbreaks stacked layer upon layer forming the Faroes' basalt plateau. The ravages of time, the mighty and constant glacial digging, water erosion and millennia of wind and weather, left the rocky islands of the Faroes as we know them today.



Skorá

Photo: Saviour Mífsud

On the solid rocky ground there is a thin layer of soil - and since it only can absorb a fraction of the rain that annually falls in the Faroes, only the law of gravity determines the fate awaiting the water. It can only run down the mountain slopes - and it only takes a few hours of rainfall for the mountains and higher-lying valleys to collect the water and transfer it down in Kollfjarðardalur via Skorá and her frothing sisters. In the valley we find Mjávøtn, two small and not very deep lakes acting as inlet reservoir for the big lake, Leynavatn, further down the valley.

On its good days, after drinking its fill up in the mountains, Skorá tumbles down the hill side, wild and beautiful, with white fluttering skirts woven by impish witches. Down it goes in the valley, down in Mjávøtns' centre lake, on to Leynavatn and from there down towards the sea at Leynars' beautiful sandy beach.

And the small fragile house? Well, it's really just an illusion. It has been there as long as I can remember, and is just as robustly built as all other houses in the Faroe Islands. After centuries of experience it was built on a small mound in the landscape, so neither Skorá,

her sisters nor the swirling winds in the valley can budge it.

Indeed, it would not surprise me if in Skorá's wild cascades you also could hear the voices of children at play. After all these are the Faroe Islands - the land of wild contrasts.

*Anker Eli Petersen*

# Vote for Stamp of the Year 2016

and join the draw to win a sheepskin rug



FO 830



FO 835



FO 836



FO 822



FO 823



FO 822-823



FO 824



FO 825



FO 826



FO 831



FO 832



FO 833



FO 828-829



FO 828



FO 827



FO 837-846



FO 834

- 1st prize: a Faroese sheepskin rug
- 2nd prize: The Yearbook 2016
- 3rd prize: Fish Skin Folder

Cut out the coupon and send it to us or you can vote on [www.stamps.fo](http://www.stamps.fo) The deadline for voting is 15th March 2017!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code/ \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Client no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Stamp of the year 2016:

FO

Yes, please. I would like to register for the e-newsletter from Posta Stamps.

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

# End sale of the year

Please note that 31st December 2016 is the last date of sale for the stamps and articles presented on these pages.

chase the stamps at the nominal value.

The articles can be ordered by completing the enclosed coupon or by visiting our web-shop at [www.stamps.fo](http://www.stamps.fo)

It is therefore your last opportunity to pur-



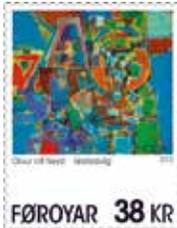
FO 764



FO 767-768



FO 772-773



FO 759



FO 760-763



FO 769-771



FO 765-766



Europa 2013: Postal Vehicles, self adhesive booklet with eight stamps PPN000413

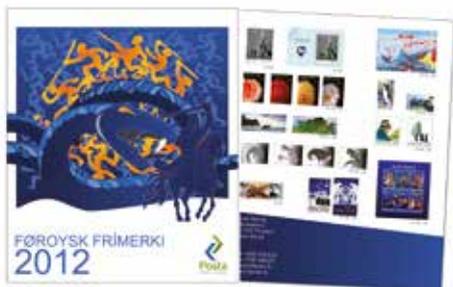


The Christmas Gospel I, booklet with eight stamps PPN000913



FO 774-775

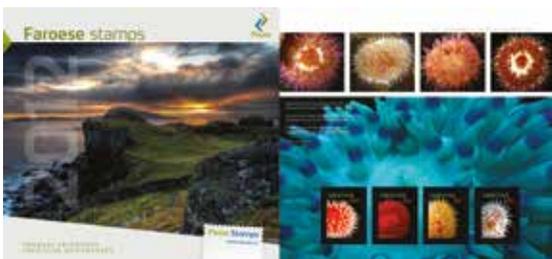
## Year Pack 2012



## Booklet Folder 2012



## Yearbook 2012



## FDC-Folder 2012



# Special cancellations 2016



These special cancellations has Posta Stamps released during this year. They can be ordered by using the order form in the middle of this magazine or via our webshop on [www.stamps.fo](http://www.stamps.fo)

## Postcards:

These two cards are produced for our 40th anniversary exhibition - Nordatlantex 2016 - in Frederiksberg, Copenhagen and the exhibition 2-6 Dec. 2016 in Nanning, China.

They can be ordered both mint and franked/cancelled.



# Stamp Programme 2017

**27/02** **Natural Dye** - sheetlet with six stamps. Dyeing of clothes, as we know it today, has its origin thousands of years ago. Artist: Edward Fuglø. Values: 6 x 9,50 DKK. FO 847-852.

**Common Eider** - Two stamps. Everywhere, in the fjords along the coasts and in port facilities, you will see large and small flocks of eiders gently swaying on the waves. Artist: Edward Fuglø. Values: 18,00 and 27,00 DKK. FO 853-854.

**Lakes in the Faroes: Leitisvatn/Sørvágsvatn** - Two stamps. The largest lake in the Faroe Islands is situated on Vággar island, close to Vággar Airport. Photo: Erik Sørstrømmen. Value: 17,00 and 19,00 kr. FO 855-856.

**Skorá river** - One stamp. The lovely little cottage, built for relaxation and days of "easy living", stands close to the foaming waterfall in Skorá River. Value: 9,50 kr FO 857.

**15/05**

**Royal Golden Wedding** - One stamp. The Queen and the Prince Consort can celebrate their golden wedding in 2017. Value: 50,00 kr. FO 858.

**EUROPA 2017: Castles** - Two stamps and self adhesive stamp booklet (6). Values: 9,00 and 17,00 kr. FO 859-860

**H.C. LYNGBYE: - traveling researcher** - Four stamps. 200 years have passed since the scientific expedition of H.C. Lyngbye in 1817. Design: Kim Simonsen and Ole Wich. Values: 9,50, 13,00, 19,00 and 22,00 DKK. FO 861-864.

**25/09** **SEPAC 2017: The Faroese Knife** - One stamp. Artist and engraver: Martin Mörck. Values: 19,00 kr. FO 865.

**The Faroese Knife** - Mini-sheet with one stamp. Artist and engraver: Martin Mörck. Values: 19,00 DKK. FO 866.

**Reformation 500th Anniversary** - one stamp and one mini-sheet. Value: 24,00 DKK. FO 867.

**Faroese Costumes 2** - Two stamps, a self adhesive booklet (6) and two postcards. Artist: Edward Fuglø. Values: 9,50 and 18,00 DKK. FO 868-869

**Christmas Stamps 2017** - Two stamps and two postcards. Artist: Jóannes Lamhauge. Values: 9,50 and 17,00 DKK. FO 870-871

**02/10** **Franking labels 2017** - Four franking labels. Values: 4 x 9,50 DKK.

**06/11** **Yearbook, Year Pack and Christmas Seals**

# New Issues - 27 February 2017



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Mini-sheet size:  
Stamp size:  
Artist:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Posta use:

**Natural Dye**  
27.02.2017  
6 x 9,50 DKK  
FO 847-852  
156,67 x83 mm  
32 x 47 mm  
Edward Fuglø  
Offset  
LM Group, Canada  
Small letters inland, - 0-50 gr.



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Artist:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Posta use:

**Common Eider**  
27.02.2017  
18,00 and 27,00 DKK  
FO 853-854  
44 x 30,81 mm  
Edward Fuglø  
Offset  
Cartor Security Printing, France  
Large letter, inland - 51-100 gr.  
Medium letters, inland - 101-250 gr



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Photo:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Posta use:

**Sørvágsvatn/Leitisvatn Lake\***  
27.02.2017  
17,00 and 19,00 DKK  
FO 855-856  
56,0 x 21,0 mm  
Eirik Sørstrømmen  
Offset  
Cartor Security Printing, France  
Small letters to Europe and  
countries outside Europe - 0-50 gr.

\* also available as stamps in a self adhesive booklet of six  
(3 of each stamp)



Test proof

New stamp issue:  
Date of issue:  
Value:  
Numbers:  
Stamp size:  
Photo:  
Printing method:  
Printer:  
Posta use:

**Skorá river**  
27.02.2017  
9,50 DKK  
FO 857  
40,0 x 26,0 mm  
Saviour Mifsud  
Offset  
Cartor Security Printing, France  
Small letters inland - 0-50 gr

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