

"2014 Hong Kong Definitive Stamps"

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Hong Kong is an international metropolis of skyscrapers. On the outskirts of this bustling city, however, there lies a great expanse of countryside with opulent bio-diversity and a charming natural environment. Apart from providing habitats for our myriad wildlife, this verdant countryside is also rich in rare rock formations and world-class geological landscapes. Having exceptional geological environments and a wide variety of rocks, Hong Kong enjoys spectacular terrain with high conservation and appreciation value.

Amidst the growing concern over geo-conservation worldwide in recent years, Hong Kong Geopark was established to promote geo-conservation and landscape protection. Hong Kong Geopark was officially designated a member of the National Geopark of China in 2009 and was accepted as a member of the Global Geoparks Network in 2011, renamed Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. Occupying a total area of around 150 km², the Geopark is divided into two regions, namely, Sai Kung Volcanic Rock Region and Northeast New Territories Sedimentary Rock Region. The former region comprises four Geo-Areas, i.e. High Island, Sharp Island, Ung Kong Group and Ninepin Group, while the latter also encompasses four Geo-Areas, i.e. Tung Ping Chau, Double Haven, Tolo Channel and Bluff Head-Port Island. Sai Kung Volcanic Rock Region is characterised by extensive polygonal acidic (mainly pentagonal or hexagonal) volcanic rock columns, and Northeast New Territories Sedimentary Rock Region features a range of sedimentary rocks from different periods and rare landforms created from different geological processes.

To deepen public understanding of the landscape features of Hong Kong and the importance of geo-conservation, Hongkong Post issues the Hong Kong Definitive Stamps 2014, a new set of definitive stamps showcasing the distinctive landforms and landscape of Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. There are altogether 16 denominations, namely: -

10¢ - North Ninepin Island	Situated in the open sea in the Ninepin Group Geo-Area, North Ninepin Island is an island made up basically of acidic volcanic rock formed about 140 million years ago. Over millennia, wind and wave erosion have created a variety of enchanting coastal landforms. There are stunning hexagonal rock columns on the island, some of
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	which have a diameter of over two metres.
20¢ - Basalt Island	One of the islands in Ung Kong Group, Basalt Island is comprised of hexagonal rock columns formed around 140 million years ago. Continuous wave action against the well-developed columnar joints of the rock columns on the island caused them to erode into sea caves. When the caves eventually enlarged and cut through, a rock bridge known as a “sea arch” was formed.
50¢ - Tai Long Wan	Tai Long Wan (Big Wave Bay) located in the High Island Geo-Area comprises four large adjoining beaches: Tung Wan, Tai Wan, Ham Tin Wan and Sai Wan. In a wide stretch of open water, the distinctive sandy beaches in Tai Long Wan, which are exposed to strong winds all year long, were formed by the deposition of fine sand and shell fragments transported to the inner bay by waves and currents.
\$1 - Po Pin Chau	Situated in the High Island Geo-Area, Po Pin Chau consists of hexagonal rock columns formed about 140 million years ago. Originally a headland of High Island extending to the sea, Po Pin Chau was eventually separated from the main island by sustained coastal erosion, becoming an enormous sea stack towering above the shore. The hexagonal rock columns on Po Pin Chau stand in an almost upright position, resembling a giant pipe organ.
\$1.70 - High Island Reservoir East Dam	The High Island Reservoir East Dam is nestled in the High Island Geo-Area with groups of distinctive S-shaped rock columns, which were formed about 140 million years ago when hot volcanic materials cooled and contracted. Affected by the movement of the earth’s crust, the semi-molten columns became deformed before they completely cooled down and solidified. Subsequently, basaltic magma intruded into the columns, forming a dark grey dyke.
\$2 - Port Island	Port Island in the Port Island-Bluff Head Geo-Area was formed from mostly reddish coarse sandstone and conglomerate about 70 million years ago. As the Chinese name Chek Chau implies, it is made up of red earth. The ferric-rich deposits, which were extensively oxidised in the hot, dry and high oxygen depositional environment, turned reddish brown, eventually forming the red sedimentary rocks seen on Port Island today.
\$2.20 - Wong	Wong Chuk Kok Tsui is located in the Port Island-Bluff Head

Chuk Kok Tsui	Geo-Area. It has the oldest rocks in Hong Kong, including sandstone and conglomerate formed around 400 million years ago. These rock strata have been tilted and compressed into a more or less vertical position. Further coastal erosion resulted in the formation of a peculiar rock structure, such as the “Devil’s Fist”.
\$2.30 - Bride’s Pool	Nestled in the Double Haven Geo-Area, Bride’s Pool is made up mainly of sedimentary rocks dating back to about 100 million to 130 million years. The name actually refers to the Plunge Pool at the bottom of the Bride’s Pool Waterfall. Water falling from the top of the waterfall eroded the rocks at its base, forming depressions. Further erosion by abrasion and hydraulic action formed the deep plunge pool at the base of the waterfall.
\$2.90 - Lan Kwo Shui	Lan Kwo Shui, located in the Tung Ping Chau Geo-Area, is composed mainly of sedimentary rocks dating back some 55 million years. After continuous erosion by destructive waves, the base of the vertical sea cliff gradually receded, leaving behind a narrow flat area, gently sloping and extending into the sea, called a “wave-cut platform”, which is covered in water at high tide but exposed at low tide, allowing it to be reached by foot. Lan Kwo Shui is so named because it is difficult to reach much of the time.
\$3.10 - Lung Lok Shui	Situated on the central west bank of Tung Ping Chau, the renowned scenic spot Lung Lok Shui is a wide layer of unusual siliceous rock 100m long and about 0.8m thick, tilted towards the sea. From a bird’s eye view, the exposed siliceous rock visible above ground on the shoreline looks like a giant dragon rising from the water, hence earning its name, which means “dragon diving into the sea”. This landform demonstrates typical differential weathering and erosion.
\$3.70 - Kang Lau Shek	Located in the easternmost corner of Tung Ping Chau, Kang Lau Shek is made up primarily of thinly laminated siltstone, formed about 55 million years ago. Affected by constant coastal erosion, the sea-arch once situated here eroded gradually and finally collapsed, leaving behind two sea stack formations, known as Kang Lau Shek (Watchtower Stones) because they look like the watchtowers of an ancient village.
\$5 - Ap Chau	Featuring a diverse range of wave-cut landforms, Ap Chau in the Double Haven Geo-Area offers a vista of red breccia, rare in Hong

	<p>Kong, formed 70 to 90 million years ago. Duck’s Eye, a famous sea arch on the island, was formed by differential erosion – the difference in resistance or susceptibility of various rock types to wave erosion.</p>
\$10 - Sharp Island	<p>Sharp Island is an elongated island, formed some 143 million years ago. Various types of volcanic rocks including volcanic breccia, quartz monzonite and rhyolite, can be found on the island. A natural sand bar connects Sharp Island with the neighbouring Kiu Tau Island at low tide. At high tide this is submerged, leaving Kiu Tau as a small isolated island. In geology, this coastal deposition is known as a “tombolo”.</p>
\$15.50 - High Island	<p>High Island, in Sai Kung East Country Park, is made up primarily of acidic volcanic rocks. About 140 million years ago, an extremely violent volcanic eruption occurred in the area, which resulted in the deposition of a hot volcanic mass that slowly cooled and condensed, forming the enormous hexagonal rock columns we see today. Other geological features observable on High Island include faults, folds and dyke intrusions formed by condensation of magma which penetrated into the joints.</p>
\$20 - Lai Chi Chong	<p>Composed mainly of volcanic sedimentary rock, Lai Chi Chong in the Tolo Channel Geo-Area was formed about 150 million years ago and features the most characteristic geological setting in Hong Kong. Tectonic movements caused the sedimentary rock strata here to become compressed and deformed, creating a breathtaking, surrealistic landscape, like a painting.</p>
\$50 - Pak Sha Tau Tsui	<p>Lying in the Double Haven Geo-Area, Pak Sha Tau Tsui is a sand spit below Wong Fong Shan, resembling an exposed ink brush pointing to the southwest at low tide. Tidal flow has deposited sand and shell fragments at the headland, where the currents meet. It is one of the famous “six treasures of Double Haven” – the “Ink Brush”.</p>

This is the fourth set of definitive stamps issued by Hongkong Post since the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China.

Acknowledgement:

Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department

Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong

Stamp products include mint stamps, stamp sheets, souvenir sheets, presentation pack, definitive stamp booklets, reel stamps and postcards. Maximum cards and serviced first day covers are also available at the philatelic offices on the issue day only.

Source: HongKong Post