

NEW ZEALAND NATIVE SEASHELLS

[Ed. Note: This article is from an official release by New Zealand Post.]

New Zealand's geological isolation and unique environment has allowed for thousands of fascinating endemic species to thrive. In this New Zealand Native Seashells stamp issue, New Zealand Post takes a look at just five species of seashells that live in the local waters.

The species featured on the stamps are Silver Paua (*Haliotis australis*), Scott's Murex (*Rolandiella scotti*), Golden Volute (*Provocator mirabilis*), Fan Shell (*Talochlamys gemmulata*) and Opal Top Shell (*Cantharidus opalus*). The fan shell and opal top shell hold a special place in New Zealand history. Each of these species is endemic to New Zealand waters. The scientific name is printed alongside their image.



The set of five stamps was issued nationwide on 6 May 2015.

Seashells are a familiar sight on New Zealand shorelines. More than 2,000 native seashell species thrive in local waters.

“This stamp issue follows on from our very popular New Zealand Native Ferns stamp issue,” said Simon Allison, Head of Stamps and Coins at New Zealand Post. “We were lucky enough to work with some real seashell experts and enthusiasts in bringing this issue together.

“Two of the shells that feature on the stamps hold a special place in New Zealand history. The fan shell that appears on the \$2.50 stamp was collected from the wreckage of the *Wahine* perfectly intact, which is remarkable as the shell is quite fragile. The opal top shell on the \$3.00 stamp was the first New Zealand animal to be scientifically recorded and illustrated.”

Included in the issue is a Limited Edition, containing further information on these gorgeous seashells. The Limited Edition contains exclusive products and has been produced in limited numbers. Each one is individually numbered and contains a booklet written by Kerry Walton, who is completing his Master of Science at Victoria University and has been doing research on shells and other mollusks in association with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa for a number of years.

