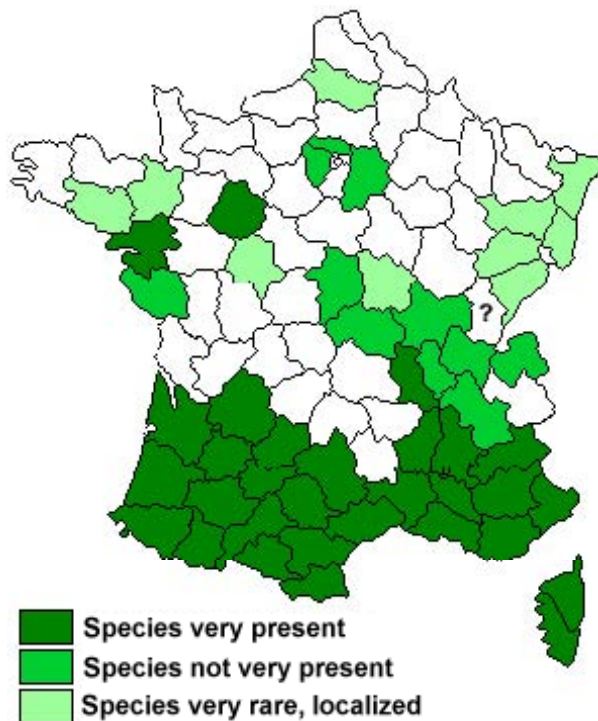


The great capricorn beetle

by Patrice BONAFONTE*

The Great capricorn beetle, or *Cerambyx cerdo* Linné 1758, is a large beetle of the family Cerambycidae, or Longhorn beetles. It is a totally protected species at the national level (decree of 22-VII-1993) and at the European level: it is listed in Appendix II of the Bern Convention, and in Appendix II (species of community interest whose conservation requires the designation of special areas of conservation) and IV (species of community interest that require strict protection) of the Habitats Fauna-Flora Directive. The European Directive "Habitats, Fauna, Flora", more commonly known as the Habitats Directive, has applied to the European Union since June 5th 1994. Its purpose is to ensure the maintenance of biological diversity through the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. The Habitats Directive provides for the establishment of a network of protected areas called the Natura 2000 Network.

Cerambyx cerdo lives in all environments where old oaks are present. It is a species mainly of plain which can meet in altitude in Corsica and in the Pyrenees. This Cerambycid can be observed in all types of environments with relatively old oaks, forest environments of course, but also isolated trees in environments sometimes very anthropized (urban parks, roadside alignment).



The development of the species is spread over three years. The larvae of *Cerambyx cerdo* are xylophagous. They develop on oaks. They consume senescent and decaying wood. Adults have been observed feeding on sap in fresh wounds. They are often observed feeding on ripe fruit.

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Stamps issued

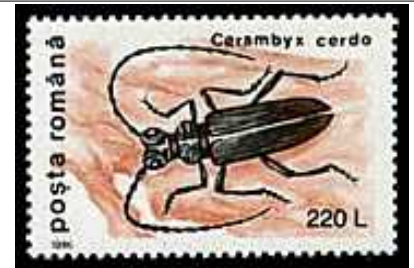
Nine countries (plus the United Nations) have issued a stamp featuring *Cerambyx cerdo*.



HUNGARY 1953



POLAND 1962



ROMANIA 1996



YUGOSLAVIA 1997



MACEDONIA 1998



LITHUANIA 2003



MALTA 2008



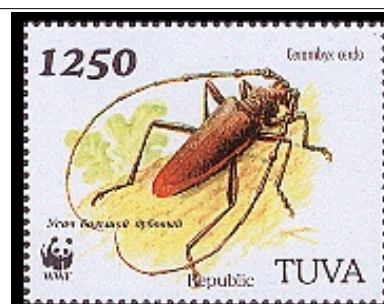
UNITED NATIONS 2009



BELARUS 2014



BOSNIA SERBIAN
REPUBLIC 2023



TUVA (Russia).
Unofficial issue

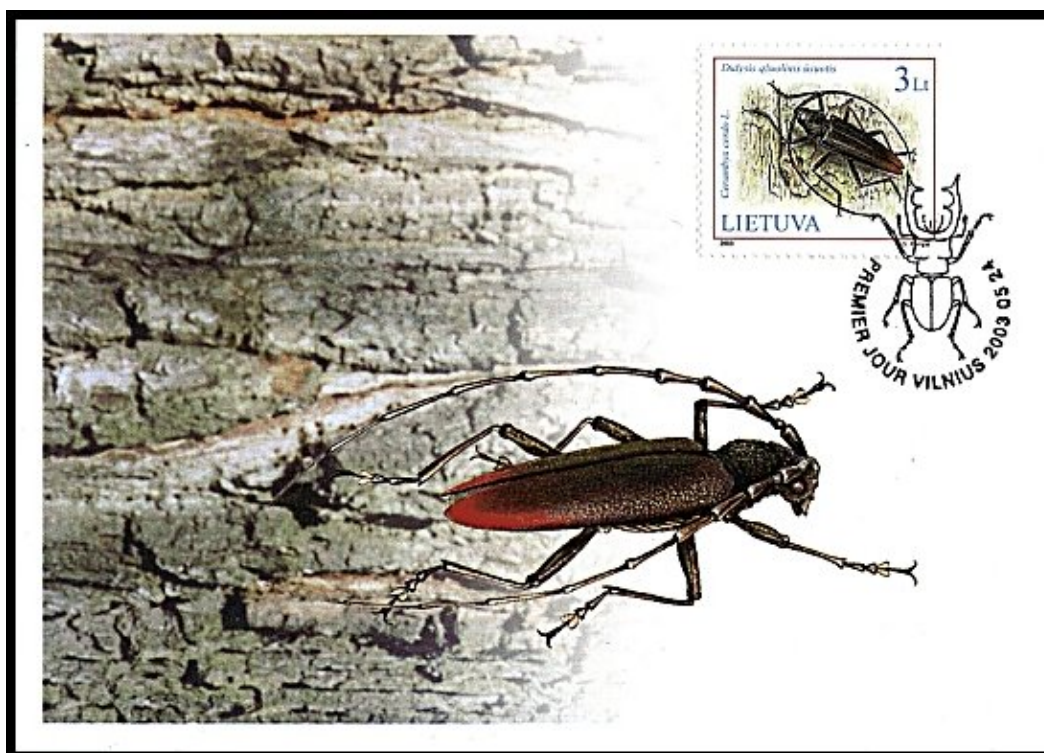
All these countries have issued corresponding First Day Covers that I will not illustrate here.

One can also find illegal issues, generally made to deceive collectors, like for example this issue of the Republic of TUVA above, or two blocks of Congo and Timor below. There is no doubt that the same printer made these two blocks...

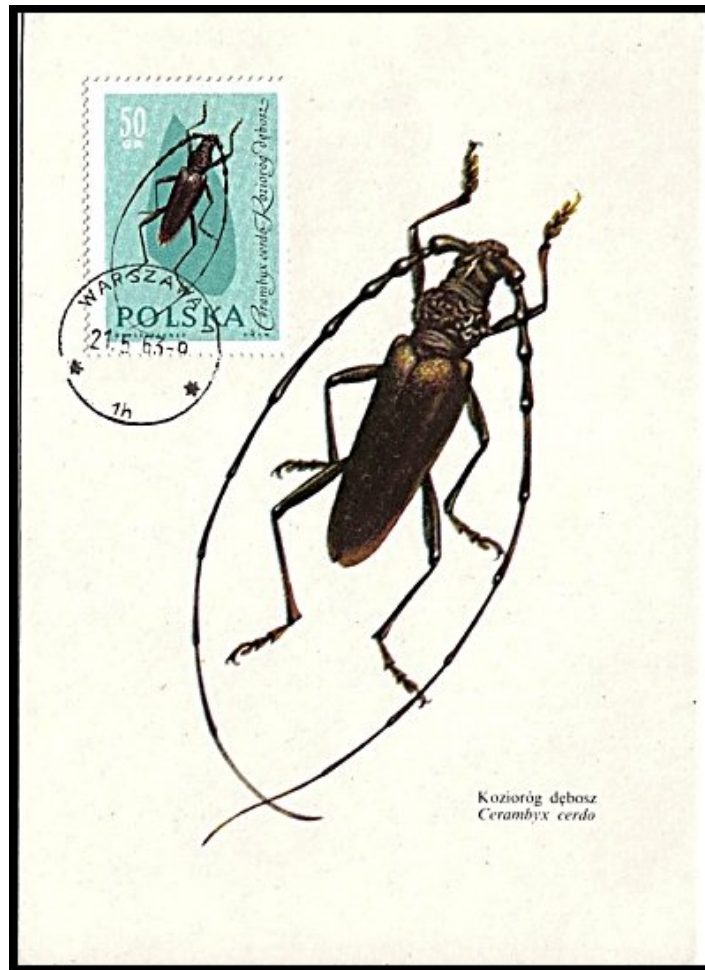


The First Day Covers and the Maximum cards

Here is a maximum card of Lithuania, on the occasion of a program on the Red Book of threatened species.



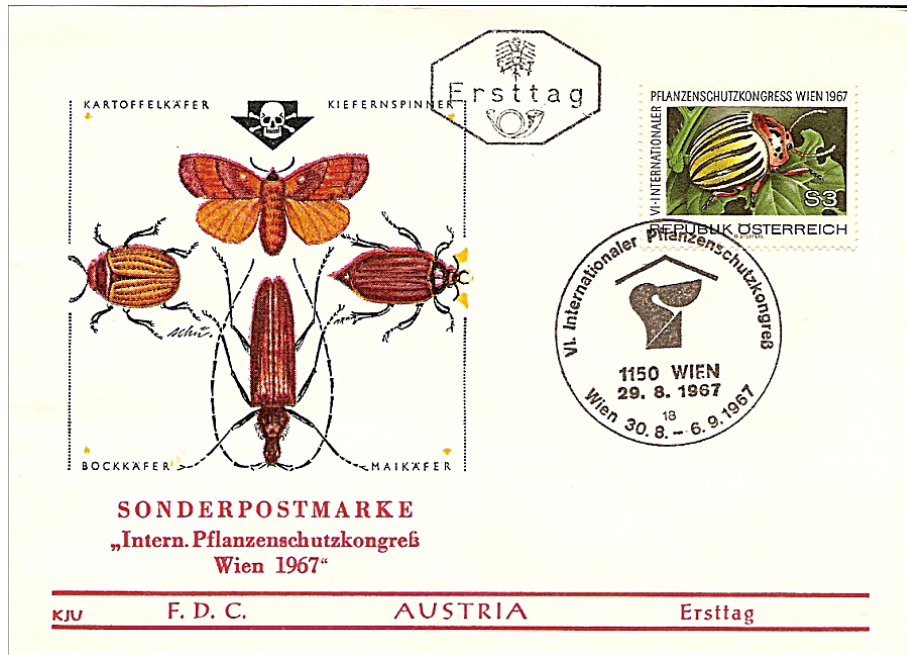
But there are many others, like this card of Poland...



...or as a "guest" on this FDC of Hungary...

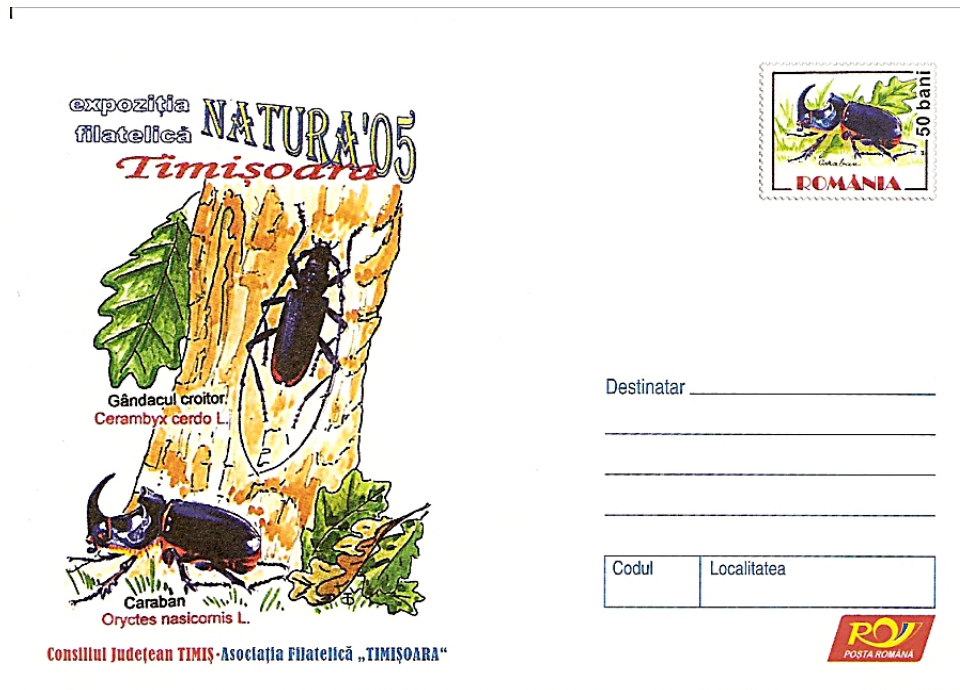


...or on this FDC of Austria issued for the International Plant Protection Congress in 1967, where he is accompanied by a Colorado beetle and a chafer as other beetles.



Postal stationery

It can be seen with another forest pest: *Oryctes nasicornis* (Scarabaeidae), on this envelope from Romania.



Postmarks and meters

A cachet of 1996 and a meter of 1997 from Romania are related to the great capricorn beetle.

