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**FEATURE ARTICLES**


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## MARINE TURTLE STAMPS

### PROMOTING CONSERVATION

Few people may realize that there are now some 175 postage stamps and souvenir sheets depicting 7 species of living marine turtles.

While the first of these stamps was issued nearly 50 years ago, almost half of them were produced within only the last 5 years. The green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) and the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) are, by far, the species most commonly depicted.

Whereas many of the older stamps portrayed sea turtles as secondary designs, most of the recent issues depict these animals prominently. It appears that many issuing countries are now using postage stamps to call attention to the endangered status of marine turtles. A few examples include Italy, the Maldives, Guyana, the Philippines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Whether or not sea turtle conservation was the immediate purpose for the issues, the increase in the number of stamps is welcome news to those concerned with promoting the conservation of these animals. These stamps certainly make millions of people aware of the animals. This is an important first step in the conservation effort. The curious and concerned will make an effort to learn more about these subjects. However, the effort would greatly benefit from more publicity. Those with adequate knowledge and in a position to do so should write articles about sea turtles, whether for the popular mass media or for the technical journals. In this way a wider public will be reached and conservation promoted.

For anyone concerned with sea turtle conservation, or involved with philately of stamp collecting, the following list of all known stamps depicting marine turtles should be of interest. The order of this list is alphabetical by country and chronologically within each issuing authority. Dates of issues are provided, followed by catalog numbers according to Scott (American) and Stanley Gibbons (British). The denomination of the stamp is given in the next co-

lumn. Next is the designation of the stamp in Scott's Catalog (1983), where listed, and finally the description printed on the stamp and/or our own notes in parentheses.

The Cayman Islands has issued nearly one-third of the stamps, and was the first to issue ones with marine turtles on them. The first dozen stamps featured Kings William IV and George V prominently and also show a small green turtle and a small hawksbill. The higher denominations of these stamps are now quite rare and consequently expensive. It should be noted that the Coat of Arms of the Cayman Islands includes a marine turtle and several stamps portray this emblem. The same is true for the Solomon Islands. As on this writing (March 1983) the most recent marine turtle stamps are from the Solomon Islands.

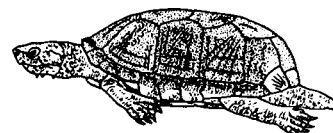
Some of the stamps show highly stylized marine turtles. Prominent among these are ones from French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Sarawak. Other unusual issues include stamps from Tuvalu and the Cayman Islands that bear coins engraved with marine turtles. A set of three stamps issued by Ascension in 1973 are the only ones with a triangular format. Both the Cayman Islands and the Solomon Islands have issued stamps showing marine turtles reprinted on another stamp.

The Maldive Islands has the distinction of being the only country to portray all seven species of sea turtles. No other country has depicted the flatback, *Chelonia depressa*, or Kemp's ridley, *Lepidochelys kempi*, on a stamp. The black turtle, *Chelonia agassizi*, which is sometimes considered as a separate and eighth species, has never been shown on a stamp.

Two of these appear in Captain Cook Voyage series: Ascension and Gilbert Islands. Green turtles provided the famous explorer with food on parts of his long expeditions. The sole Cuban issue shows a turtle being pursued by a diver with a spear. One stamp of Dominica depicts a diver grasping a sea turtle. In this same vein, an issue from the Turks and Caicos Islands depicts a cartoon scene with the Disney character, Goofy, being pulled by a sea turtle.

Whereas the older stamps showed engravings of sea turtles in monochrome, the more recent issues are usually true-to-life colored images of the turtles. The identifications are also generally accurate, but there are exceptions. The first Indonesian issue (1966) shows a hawksbill which is labeled *Chelonia mydas*. The second North Vietnam stamp (1975) labeled *Dermochelys coriacea* shows a turtle with a strange carapace not shaped like a leatherback. A 1977 stamp of Djibouti shows a hawksbill labeled as *Chelonia mydas*.

By and large, the stamps and souvenir sheets are interesting and attractive. The amateur collector can make a substantial collection without too much effort, since the majority of the stamps are relatively recent and inexpensive. The more serious collector will be challenged to find some of them, especially the reissues of several countries. Of course, only the ambitious and affluent can afford to complete the collection since the catalog value of the entire list runs into more than two thousand U.S. dollars.



The utilitarian aspect of marine turtles is illustrated on several

LIST OF MARINE TURTLE STAMPS OF THE WORLD  
By  
Edgardo D. Gomez and George H. Balazs  
March 1983

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
Anguilla	20 May 1975	160	144a	\$10	Green-back turtle	(Turtle underwater)
	1976	246	240	\$10	New Constitution 1976 No. 160 overprinted	"
Ascension	2 July 1934	24	22	1p	Map of Ascension	(Small stylized turtle)
	"	26	24	2p	"	"
	"	29	27	8p	"	"
	"	31	29	2 sh. 6p	"	"
	19 Nov. 1956	70	65	7p	Young green turtles	Young turtles (Two stylized turtles)
	28 Aug. 1973	170	171	4p	Green turtle	Chelonia mydas (Juvenile underwater--triangular stamp)
	"	171	172	9p	Loggerhead	Caretta caretta (Adult on a beach--triangular stamp)
	"	172	173	12p	Hawksbill	Eretmochelys imbricata (Adult underwater--triangular stamp)
21 May 1978	229c	235	25p	Green turtle (in SS)	(Stylized in the shape of a bookend)	
8 Jan. 1979	237	244	12p	Green turtle	<u>Chelonia mydas</u> caught by Cook's crew on Ascension Island for nourishment (Adult underwater)	
Bahamas	1971	316	362	4c	Hawksbill turtle (w/w 314)	(Juvenile underwater)
	21 Sept. 1971	318	364	6c	Hawksbill turtle (w/w 314)	"
	2 Nov. 1976	400	468	25c	Hawksbill turtle (w/w 173)	"
	June 1978	439	521	25c	Hawksbill turtle (no watermark)	"
	1979		468a	25c	Hawksbill turtle (chalk-surfaced paper)	"
Bermuda	19 Feb. 1979	378	402	\$3	Green turtle	<u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Juvenile grazing on sea grass)
Cayman Islands	5 Dec. 1932	69	84	1/4p	King William IV, King George V	(Small stylized hawksbill and green turtle)
	"	70	85	1/2p	"	"
	"	71	86	1p	"	"
	"	72	87	1 1/2p	"	"
	"	73	88	2p	"	"
	"	74	89	2 1/2p	"	"
	"	75	90	3p	"	"
	"	76	91	6p	"	"
	"	77	92	1sh	"	"
	"	78	93	2sh	"	"
	"	79	94	5sh	"	"
	"	80	95	10sh	"	"
	1935-1936	90	105	2 1/2p	Hawksbill turtles	(5 turtles crawling down a beach)
	"	92	107	6p	"	"
	"	95	110	5sh	"	"
	5 May 1938	104a	119	2p	Hawksbill turtle (perf. 11.5 x 13)	(4 turtles crawling down a beach)
	"	107a	122	6p	"	"
	"	111	126	10sh	"	"
	16 July 1943	104	119a	2p	Hawksbill turtle (perf. 14)	"
	"	107	122a	6p	"	"
"	111a	126a	10sh	"	"	
8 July 1947		122b	6p	Hawksbill turtle (perf. 11.5 x 13) (brownish olive)	"	
2 Oct. 1950	124	137	1p	Green turtle	(Unusual adult and 3 carapaces--King)	
"	131	144	1sh	Turtle "crawl"	Turtle in "crawl" (6 small turtles--King)	
7 July 1954	137	150	1p	Green turtle	(Same as Scott 124, but Queen)	
21 Feb. 1955	145	158	1sh	Turtle "crawl"	(Same as Scott 131, but Queen)	
6 Jan. 1959	149	161a	1l	Elizabeth II and turtles	(Small marine turtle carapace)	
4 July 1959	151	163	2 1/2p	Arms of Cayman Islands	(Stylized turtle in Coat of Arms)	
"	152	164	1sh	"	"	

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
	28 Nov. 1962	159	171	4p	Green turtle	(Adult on a beach)
		166	178	10sh	Coat of Arms	(Stylized turtle)
	1 Dec. 1967	194	206	6p	Skin diving	(Juvenile by scuba diver)
	5 June 1969	223	235	10sh	Coat of Arms	(Stylized turtle)
	8 Sept. 1969	240	251	\$1 on 10sh	"	"
	8 Sept. 1970	275	286	\$1	"	"
	28 Jan. 1971	284	295	7c	Green turtle	<u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Adult on a beach--diamond format)



Ascension 170

Bermuda 378

Cayman Is. 69

Cayman Is. 159

	28 Jan. 1971	285	296	12c	Hawksbill turtle	<u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u> (Adult underwater--diamond format)
	"	286	297	20c	Turtle farm	(Small turtles in tanks--diamond format)
	10 Jan. 1972	297	309	2c	Underwater cable, turtle and telephone	(Green turtle by underwater cable)
	"	298	310	10c	"	"
	"	299	311	40c	"	"
	20 Nov. 1972	304	317	12c	Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Philip, hawksbill turtle and conch	(Small hawksbill)
	"	305	318	30c	"	"
	15 Jan. 1973	308	321	15c	\$10 note and 10c coin	(Stylized turtle on coin)
	"	309a	MS323	15c	" (in SS)	"
	1974-75	335	350	6c	Blackbeard on Grand Cayman and green turtle	(Blackbeard with his foot on a green turtle)
	"	344	358	\$1	Coat of Arms (w/w 314)	(Stylized turtle)
	19 Oct. 1977	344a	418	\$1	Coat of Arms (w/w 373)	" (but smaller stamp)
	30 July 1980		450	\$1	"	"
	15 Aug. 1979	428	491	20c	Rowland Hill and Cayman Islands No. 149	(Same as Scott 149)
	19 Dec. 1980	461	524	\$2	Cayman Islands Arms	(Stylized turtle)
Chile	5 Sept. 1974	452a	730	200e	Easter Island turtle	Manutara Isla de Pascua (small stone turtle image--translation of "Manutara" is sooty tern)
Colombia	25 Apr. 1980	879a	1525	\$4	"Learn to write"	Tortuga (Partial view of a green turtle)
Comoro Islands	20 Dec. 1965	65	51	20fr	Turtle	Tortue a ecailles
Cuba	1967	Not listed	1533	20c		(Diver pursuing a green turtle)
Djibouti	14 Sept. 1977	467	714	70fr		<u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Hawksbill underwater)
Dominica	10 Mar. 1969	253	257	48c	Diver and turtle	(Diver holding a small turtle)
	6 Sept. 1970	297	303	6c	Giant green turtle	<u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Turtle underwater)
		300a	MS307	6c	" (in SS)	"
Dominican Republic	30 Aug. 1980	C317		45c		Carey/Eretmochelys imbricata

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
Fiji	3 Dec. 1962	164	299	1p	Queen Elizabeth II, turtles in bottom panels (w/w 4)	(2 small stylized turtles)
	14 Jan. 1964	176	311	1p	" (w/w 314)	"
French Polynesia	24 June 1976	289	219	18fr		<u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Stylized)
Gilbert Islands (Kiribati)	15 Jan. 1979	322	81	20c	Green turtle	<u>Chelonia mydas</u> caught by Cook's crew on Christmas Island for nourishment (Same as Dominica Scott 297)
Grenada	20 Jan. 1976	694	763	2c	Hawksbill turtle	<u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u> (Underwater)
Grenadines of St. Vincent	20 July 1978	Not listed	135	5c		Green turtle-- <u>Chelonia mydas</u>
	"		136	40c		Hawksbill turtle-- <u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u>
	"		137	50c		Leatherback turtle-- <u>Dermochelys coriacea</u>
	"		138	\$1.25		Loggerhead turtle-- <u>Caretta caretta</u>
Guyana	15 Feb. 1978	268	686	15c	Giant sea turtle	Wildlife conservation (Green turtle underwater)
Indonesia	20 Dec. 1966	B206	1139	6r + 1r	Hawksbill turtle (incorrectly inscribed <u>Chelonia mydas</u> , green turtle)	Penju (Turtle underwater)
	17 Oct. 1979	1066	1561	150r	Leatherback turtle	Penyu belimbing-- <u>Dermochelys coriacea</u> (Turtle underwater)
	17 Oct. 1979	1066a		200r	" (in SS)	"
Italy	3 Apr. 1978	1318	1547	170 1	Leatherback turtle	il mare deve vivera-- <u>Dermochelys coriacea</u>



Cuba SG-1533

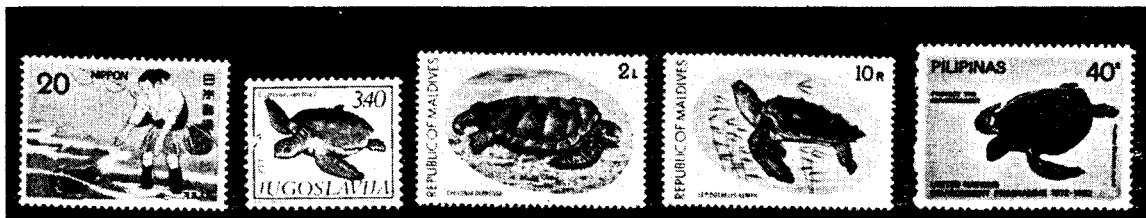
Dominica 297

Indonesia B206

Italy 1318

Jamaica	25 Feb. 1980	487	496	50c	Hawksbill and green turtles	(Stuffed specimens)
Japan	28 Jan. 1975	1204	1378	20y	Taro Urashima releasing turtle	(Folklore fisherman releasing turtle)
Jugoslavia	24 May 1980	1474	1878	3.40d	Loggerhead turtle	<u>Caretta caretta</u> (Incorrect number of scutes)
Kenya	27 June 1980	174	390	5sh	Hawksbill turtle	Marine life-- <u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u>
Malaysia	31 Jan. 1972	95a	95	30c	Southeast Asian tourist attractions	(Small stylized leatherback with eggs)

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
	4 Jan. 1979	179	194	\$1	Leatherback turtle	<i>Dermochelys coriaca</i> [sic] (Adult on a beach)
Maldivé Islands	17 Feb. 1980	841	852	1 1	Leatherback turtle	<i>Dermochelys coriaca</i> (Whole fish in mouth)
	"	842	853	2 1	Flatback turtle	<i>Chelonia depressa</i> (Male on a beach--incorrect number of scutes)
	"	843	854	5 1	Hawksbill turtle	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> (Adult on a gravel beach)
	"	844	855	10 1	Loggerhead turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i> young (Hatchling underwater)
	"	845	856	75 1	Olive ridley	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i> (Adult on a beach--incorrect number of scutes)
	"	846	857	10r	Atlantic ridley	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i> (Turtle underwater--incorrect number of scutes)
	"	847		4r	Green turtle (in SS)	Save the turtles (Turtle crawling down a beach) <i>Chelonia mydas</i>
	29 Dec. 1980	897		90 1	Ridley turtle	(Hawksbill underwater)
Malta	10 Oct. 1979	564	631	5c	Loggerhead turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i> (Turtle underwater)
Mauritania	1982			1 um		Tortue de luth-- <i>Dermochelys coriaca</i> [sic]
	"			3 um		Tortue verte-- <i>Chelonia mydas</i>
	"			4 um		Tortue a ecaille-- <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>
Mexico	1982			1p 60		Fauna de Mexico--tortuga de carey <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>
Mozambique	3 Mar. 1981	735		5mt	Loggerhead turtle	Animais Protegidos-- <i>Caretta caretta</i>



Japan 1204    Jugoslavia 1474    Maldivé Is. 842    Maldivé Is. 846    Philippines 1590

New Caledonia	20 May 1978	437	599	30fr	Stylized turtle and globe	Protection de la tortue
	1980	452	629	23fr	Map of Pine Tree Island, fishermen with nets	Ile des pins (Small stylized turtle)
New Hebrides (British)	11 Feb. 1974	185	186	70c	Green sea turtle	Green sea turtle
New Hebrides (French)	11 Feb. 1974	204	F201	70c	Green sea turtle	Tortue verte de mer (Same as Scott 185, but in French)
Nicaragua	1979	Not listed	2230	90c		Tortuga "loggerhead" (Turtle underwater--fish in mouth)
	"		2231	\$2.00		Tortuga Corroso (Leatherback underwater)
	"		2232	\$2.20		Tortuga "Ridley" (2 turtles underwater)
	"		2233	\$10.00		Tortuga Pico Halcon (Hawksbill underwater)
	"			\$5.00 and \$15.00		(Leatherback and green turtle--in SS)
	1980			\$5.00		(Green turtle--in SS)

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
Pakistan	20 June 1981	547	560	40p	Green turtle	Green turtle <u>Chelonia mydas</u> (Turtle on a beach)
Philippines	5 June 1982	1590		40c	Turtle	Protect the environment--Pawikan Chelonia mydas, United Nations Environment Programme 1972-82
Pitcairn Is.	29 Sept. 1980	194	207	9c	Wooden turtles	(2 carved turtles)
Redonda (dependency of Antigua)	1980	Not listed		50c	Green turtle	Chelonia mydas (Turtle underwater)
Ryukyu Islands	20 Jan. 1966	137	172	3c	Hawksbill turtle	
El Salvador	1981		1665	60c		Tortuga Carey <u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u> (2 swimming hawksbills)
Samoa (Western Samoa)	18 June 1973 14 Apr. 1978	378A 471	399A 507	\$2 \$1	Green turtle Hawksbill turtle and Wildlife Fund emblem	Chelonia mydas (Adult on a beach) <u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u> --World Wildlife Fund (Adult on a beach--Scott 470 shows hatchery but no turtles)



Ryukyu Is. 137 El Salvador SG-1665 Western Samoa 471 Sarawak 204 Solomon Is. New

Sarawak	1 Oct. 1957	204	195	15c	Turtles (w/w 4)	(2 stylized turtles)
	17 Aug. 1965	220	209	15c	Turtles (w/w 3/4)	"
Senegal	31 Jan. 1981	543	731	85fr	Turtle and crab, Madeleine Island	Tortue marine (Small stylized turtle)
		545c	MS733	85fr	" (in SS)	"
Seychelles	6 Feb. 1978	389	405A	10c	Hawksbill turtle	Tortue caret (Turtle underwater)
	14 Mar. 1980		405B	10c	"	(Same as Scott 389, but with 1979 at foot)
	16 Oct. 1978	420	436	5r	Green turtle	Tortue de mer--World Wildlife (Turtle underwater--incorrect scutes)
Seychelles Outer Islands (Zil Eloigne Sesel)	1980		2	10c	Hawksbill turtle	(Same as Seychelles Scott 389)
Solomon Islands	5 Nov. 1958	105	96	L1	Coat of Arms	Stylized turtle in Coat of Arms
	15 June 1970	208	195	18c	British Solomon Islands Coat of Arms	"
	16 Dec. 1974	276	262	4c	Solomon Islands No. 208	" New Constitution 1974
	"	279	265	35c	"	"
	"	279a	MS266	4c, 35c	" (in SS)	"
	7 July 1978	372	363	45c	Coat of Arms	"
	16 Aug. 1979	395	386	35c	Rowland Hill and Solomon Islands No. 372	"
	20 Sept. 1982			\$10		Hawksbill turtle, <u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u>

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
	5 Jan. 1983			18c		Leatherback turtle, <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>
	"			35c		Loggerhead turtle, <i>Caretta caretta</i>
	"			45c		Pacific ridley turtle, <i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>
	"			50c		Green turtle, <i>Chelonia mydas</i>
Spanish Guinea	23 Nov. 1954	335	393	15c	Swimming turtle	(Green turtle underwater)
		831	391	5c + 5c	"	"
Surinam	1982	591		5c	<u>Caretta caretta</u>	caretta caretta
	"	592		10c	<u>Chelonia mydas</u>	chelonia mydas
	"	593		20c	<u>Dermochelys coriacea</u>	dermochelys coriacea
	"	594		25c	<u>Eretmochelys imbricata</u>	eretmochelys imbricata
	"	595		35c	<u>Lepidochelys olivacea</u>	lepidochelys olivacea



Surinam 591

Turks and Caicos 98

Virgin Is. 348

Yemen 120

Tonga	15 Dec. 1978	446	692	25a	Green turtle	Preservation of endangered species (Turtle on a beach--incorrect number of scutes)
	"	C251	697	31a	"	"
	"	C0152	0186	1p 10a	"	"
Trinidad and Tobago	7 July 1981	346	586	55c	Marine preservation	Environmental preservation--Our seas must live (Small stylized turtle)
		347a	MS588	55c+	(in SS)	"
Turks and Caicos Islands	14 Dec. 1948	98	214	2sh	Victoria and George VI	(2 small stylized turtles similar to Cayman Scott 69-80)
		99	215	5sh	"	"
		100	216	10sh	"	"
	29 May 1979	381	535	20c	Green turtle	Endangered species (Turtle underwater--incorrect number of scutes)
	2 Nov. 1979	402	578	2c	Goofy riding turtle	(Disney character on stylized turtle)
Tuvalu	21 Apr. 1976	22	29	35c	\$1-coin and green turtle	New coinage (Turtle on coin and turtle underwater)
	1 July 1976	23	30	1c	Map of Niulakita, leathery turtle (w/w373)	Leathery turtle
	Sept. 1977	58	58	1c	" (No wmk.)	"
Vietnam (North)	1965	Not listed	N434	40x		Eretmochelys imbricata (Stuffed specimen)
	1975	"	N831	12x		Rua mui khe Dermochelys coriacea (Not a leatherback--stylized carapace)
Virgin Islands	10 Feb. 1979	348	399	22c	Hawksbill turtle	Conservation (Turtle laying eggs)
	"	349a	MS401	22c	Hawksbill turtle (in SS)	"
Yemen (People's Republic of Southern Yemen)	2 Sept. 1972	120	121	15f	Turtle	(Stylized turtle underwater)

Addendum.—Issues that are in need of verification, and issues in which marine turtles only appear in the border of sheets and not on the stamp itself.

Country	Date issued	Catalog No.		Denomination	Description given in Scott	Wording on stamp and/or authors' brief description (in parentheses)
		Scott	Stanley Gibbons			
Antigua and Barbuda	1982			\$5		(SS of flora and fauna commemorating centenary of Charles Darwin's death--turtle in the bottom right border)
Cayman Islands	29 May 1979	372		10c	American Bicentennial	(Turtle in border)
	"	373		15c	"	"
	"	374		20c	"	"
	"	375		25c	"	"
	"	376		30c	"	"
	"	376a			"	" (in SS)
Grenadines of Grenada		Not listed		2c	Hawksbill turtle	(Listed by Riemer and Allen 1983 as an overprint of Grenada Scott 694--not verified)
Nicaragua		Not listed		90c		(Listed by Riemer and Allen 1983 as the same as Nicaragua Stanley Gibbons 2230-2233, but without 5 red Olympic circles--not verified)
				\$2.00		
				\$2.20		
				\$10.00		

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