

INSECTS DID IT FIRST

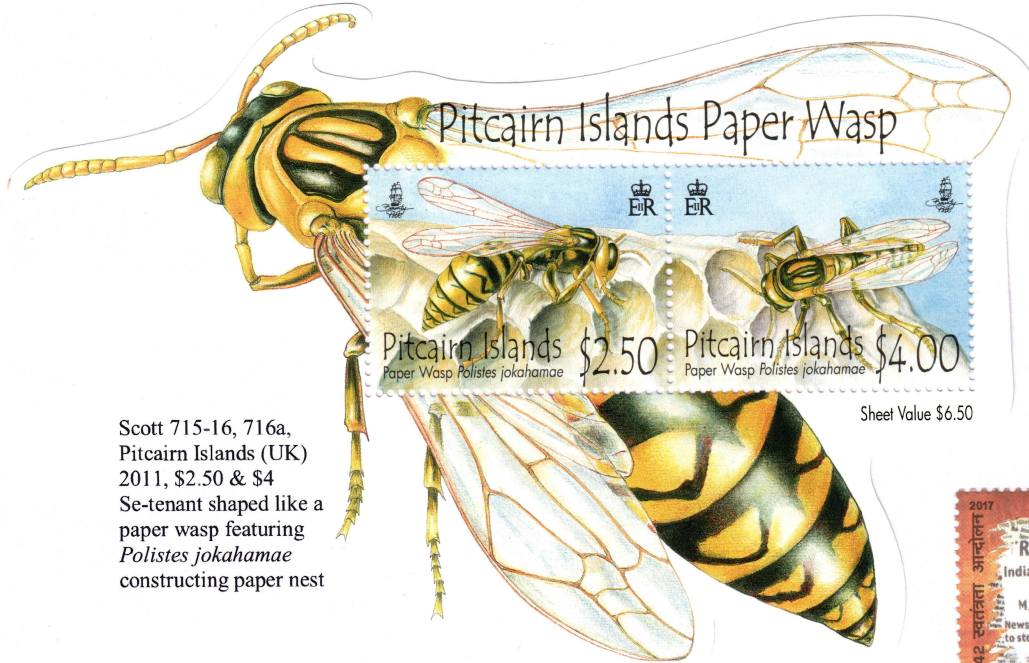
Ramani Srinivasan

Email: ramanisrinivasan55@gmail.com

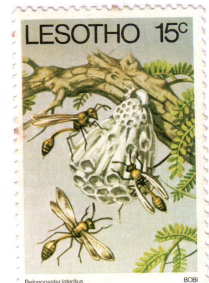
Humans boast of several inventions and discoveries. Some have been dramatic, but man isn't really all that original - **insects predated him by many millenia** in some cases. Presented here are three of man's accomplishments developed first by insects and later replicated by man.

FIRST INVENTORS OF PAPER

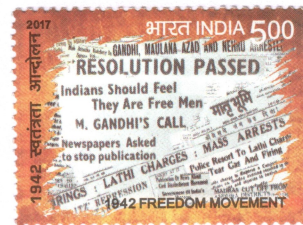
The world's first paper makers were wasps, who made their nests with paper from weathered plant fibres, chewed and mixed with their saliva. The Chinese began making paper 2000 years ago, as myth has it, by observing these wasps.



Scott 715-16, 716a,
Pitcairnis Islands (UK)
2011, \$2.50 & \$4
Se-tenant shaped like a
paper wasp featuring
Polistes jokahamae
constructing paper nest



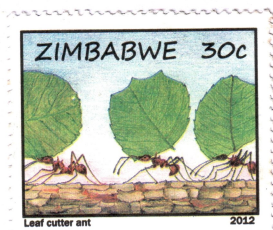
Scott 264, Lesotho,
1978, 15c
Paper wasp,
Belonogaster lateritius



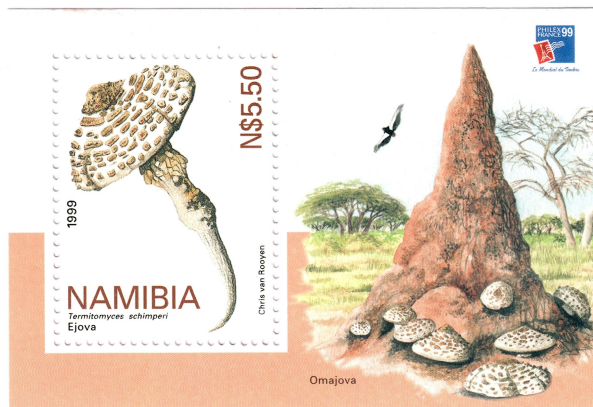
Scott 2946,
India, 2017, Rs 5
Newspaper
headlines

FIRST FARMERS

Leaf cutter ants and termites have been successful farmers growing fungi on leaves and wood for food for nearly 65 million years. Human beings began practicing agriculture only 10,000 years ago. Man is the 4th animal to discover farming after termites, ants and bark beetles.



Scott 1157, Zimbabwe, 2012, 30c
Leaf cutter ants bringing leaves to
grow fungi as food



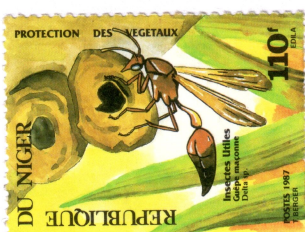
Michel 994, Namibia, 1999, N\$5.50
Mushroom, *Termitomyces schimperi*
growing in termite mound, tended by
termites for food



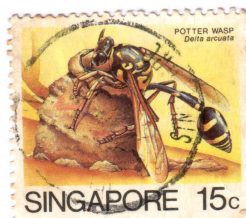
SG 926ab,
India, 1987, 30p
Cultivated crop
being harvested
by humans

FIRST POTTERS - BUT WITHOUT A WHEEL

The potter wasp's nest is believed to be the inspiration for pottery. Man invented the potter's wheel around 6000 BC revolutionising pot making. Wasps had been doing it without a wheel for more than 140 million years.



Scott 749,
Niger,
1987, 110fr
Potter
wasp, *Delta*
sp. on nest



Scott 455,
Singapore,
1985, 15c
Potter wasp,
Delta
arcuata
making nest



SG 3471, India,
2018, Rs 15
Man making
pots on potter's
wheel

Whatever accomplishments man may boast of, he should always remember that nature is the best teacher!!