

# Burundi: Overprinted Native Mammals Stamps of Ruanda-Urundi, 1962

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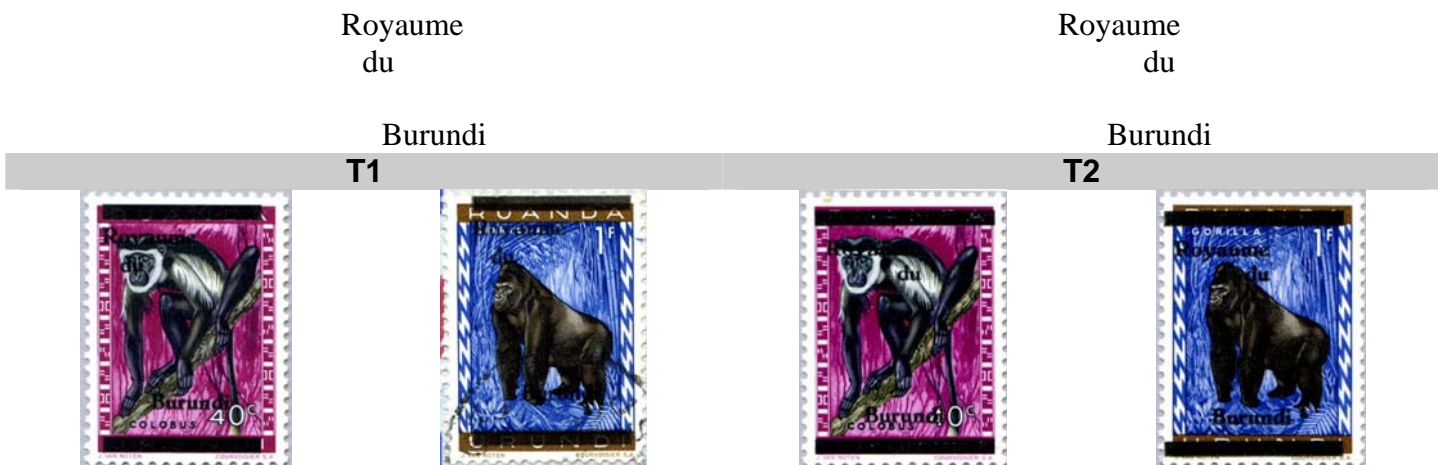
The Kingdom of Burundi became independent on July 1, 1962, as constitutional monarchy, after being part of a Belgian Trust, Ruanda-Urundi, formed from areas won from German East Africa during WWI. In early June 1962 a United Nations Commission recommended that Burundi be granted full sovereignty on July 1, 1962. With little time to prepare a new issue to commemorate independence, the Government Printing Office overprinted their stock of Ruanda-Urundi stamps. The issues overprinted were 8 of the 19 values of the 1953 'flowers' issue and all values of the 1959 native mammals issue. A new issue, which included a portrait of King Mwami Mwambursa, was finally released on September 27, 1962. The overprinted stamps remained valid.

The overprint, **Royaume du Burundi**, is in three lines with a separate obliteration bar(s). The overprinted 'flowers' issue appears to have been done with only one overprint setting and no errors are known. The 'native mammals' issue was overprinted with several different settings. This led to several striking variations and errors.

The 'native mammals' issue was comprised of stamps in a both vertical and horizontal formats; further the two highest values, 20F and 50F, were a larger size. Thus, a minimum of three overprint settings were required. In addition some of the 10F stamps were surcharged 4F requiring an additional setting.

## Vertical Format

The four vertical format stamps were the 10c, 40c, 1F and 2F stamps. These stamps had Ruanda at the top and Urundi at the bottom requiring two obliteration bars. Two of the values, the 40c colobus and 1F gorilla exist with two different settings of the overprint. In the first, T1, the word 'du' is under the 'oy' of **Royaume** while in the second the word 'du' is shifted to the right and is under 'me'. The reason for this change in settings is quickly evident when one views the stamps; in the first setting, T1, 'du' falls on the face of the colobus or gorilla and is hard to see.



I believe T1 was the first overprint used on the vertical format stamps. This is based upon the observation that after two decades of collecting these stamps I have seen only one example of the T1 overprint on the 1F gorilla stamp (used on cover to Cairo, Egypt) and none on the other two vertical format stamps, the 10c gorilla and the 2F colobus although, in a footnote, Scott notes the T1 overprint exists on all four vertical format stamps.

There are also minor variations in the overall height of the T2 overprint; 32 and 33 mm have been noted. The examples of T1 have all been 32 mm.

**Horizontal Format** (20c to 10F)

The 10 stamps in this group have a number of varieties and errors. The most egregious error occurs on the 3F50 Loxodonta Africana (elephant) stamp. Originally a 3F stamp it had been previously surcharged for Ruanda-Urundi; 3F50 was added in the upper left quadrant and the original value of 3F had two thin bars crossing it out. One sheet of 100 had the **Royaume du Burundi** overprint inverted.



The 8F Loxodonta Africana (elephant) stamp was overprinted both in black (normal) and blue (error). A number of sheets received the blue overprint and it has attained catalog status. The 1.50F Bubalas (buffalo) stamp was normally overprinted in the blue and some of the 8F stamps were probably overprinted right after them. The overprint is some times hard to see since the obliteration bar barely hides the Ruanda-Urundi inscription.



Black op, normal



Blue op, error

The 50c and 6.50F Impala stamps both have the same error; **Royaume du Royaume** rather than **Royaume du Burundi**. This occurs once per sheet of 100 in the third row. Middle bottom stamp below.



There are two variations of the overprint on the 50c Impala stamps; catalogers have named them 'thin' and 'thick'. The 'thin' overprint is the normal overprint used for the horizontal format stamps. The 'thick' overprint is

similar to use of 'bold' in Word; the font appears larger (height is actually the same) and the words are longer (Burundi is 13 mm versus the normal 10 mm). Another key difference is that on the 'thin' or normal overprint the obliteration bar is the width of the stamp while on the 'thick' overprint the obliteration bar is the full width of the stamp, extending onto the perforations.



Thin (normal)



Thick

In the normal overprint the spacing between the words **Royaume** and **du** is 2 mm. The overprint is found with this spacing increased to 4 mm on the 8F and 3.5F surcharged *Loxodonta Africana* (elephant), and 10F, *Hippotigris/Taurotragus oryx* (zebra and oryx), stamps.

In a footnote Scott notes the existence of a similar setting on the 50c Impala and 3F elephant stamps. I have not seen these varieties. Scott does not note this variety on the 8F and 10F stamps illustrated.



2 mm spacing (normal)



4 mm spacing

The value of some of the 10F *Hippotigris/Taurotragus oryx* (zebra and oryx) stamps was changed to 4F by addition of 4F to the upper right quadrant and marking out of the 10F value with 'XX'. Two variations of the letter 'X' were used, narrow and wide; these are sometimes called small and large. The total width of the two narrow 'X' is 4 mm, while that of the wide 'X' is 6 mm. The fonts used are the same height.



4 mm 'xx'



6 mm 'xx'

**Large Horizontal Format** (20F and 50F)

The setting of the overprint for these larger format stamps has the word **Royaume** shifted to the right and a second obliteration bar added. Two varieties seen on the 50F *Felis Leo* (lion), thin and thick obliteration bars. The thin bars are the normal configuration and used on the 20F stamps. The thick bar setting has two variations; spacing between the bars of 17 mm and 18 mm.



Thin bars (normal)



Thick bars

**First Day Covers** (Official)

Two sets of official First Day Covers were prepared. The second set has a violet handstamp reading “AGENPHIL” added to the registration label. The first set mailed to J&H Stolow in NY have New York receivers dated July 19, 1962. The second set, also mailed to Stolow, has New York receivers dated August 20, 1962.

Both types of the vertical overprint, black and blue overprints on the 8F stamps and narrow and wide bars on the 50F stamp are seen on the first set of FDCs. Private FDCs are known.



**Official First Day Cover from the first set**



**Official First Day Cover from the second set (AGENT PHIL on registration label)**

## Summary

Scott No.	Value	Description	Overprint Type	Overprint Height	Overprint Color <sup>1</sup>	Detail
9	10c	gorilla, red background	T2		32	du under me of Royaume
			T1		32	du under oy of Royaume
			T2 inverted			
10	20c	buffalo, green background	T3	15-16.5		
11	40c	colobus, red background	T2	32-33		du under me of Royaume
			T1		32	du under oy of Royaume
12	50c	impala, green border	T3	16-17		
12a			T3a	15.5		Large type
12b			T3	17		error Royaume for Burundi
4 mm between Royaume and du						
13	1F	gorilla, blue background	T2		33	du under me of Royaume
			T1		32	du under oy of Royaume
14	1.50F	buffalo, orange background	T3	15.5	blue	bar 28.5 mm long
			T3	15.5	blue	bar 29.5 mm long
15	2F	colobus, blue background	T2		32	du under me of Royaume
			T1		32	du under oy of Royaume
			T2 doubled			
16	3F	elephants, brown border	T3	15.5-16		
4 mm between Royaume and du						
17	3.50F	elephants, brown border	T3	16		
			T3			
4 mm between Royaume and du						
18	4F	oryx & zebra	T4	19.5		large XX 6 mm wide
18a			T4a	18.5-19.5		small xx 4 mm wide
19	5F	oryx & zebra	T3	15.5-17		
20	6.50F	impala, red border	T3	15.5-17		
			T3	17		error Royaume for Burundi
T3 inverted						
21	8F	elephants, blue border	T3	15.5		
			T3	15.5-16	blue	
			T3b	16		4 mm between Royaume and du
22	10F	oryx & zebra	T3	15.5		
			T3b	16		4 mm between Royaume and du
23	20F	leopard	T5	24		
24	50F	lion	T5	24		2 mm wide bars
			T5a	24		4mm wide bars, 19 mm apart
			T5a	24		4mm wide bars, 18 mm apart

### Color code

	Scott Catalog notes existence in a footnote but does not assign a number
	Scott Catalog notes existence in a footnote but does not assign a number; not seen by author
	Scott Catalog does not mention

<sup>1</sup> Overprint is black unless otherwise noted.