

Spiders of Kyrgyzstan

On December 29, 2025 the Ministry of Digital Development and Innovative Technologies of the Kyrgyz Republic puts into circulation a series of Kyrgyz Express Post postage stamps: "Spiders of Kyrgyzstan".

Spiders are the central order of the subphylum Chelicerata within the phylum of arthropods. They are widespread across the globe, including in Kyrgyzstan, inhabiting environments ranging from sandy deserts, caves, and lakes to forest canopies and rocky moraines near glaciers. The vast majority of spiders are active predators, hunting primarily invertebrates and using a system of external digestion. Many spiders catch their prey using sticky webs, while other types of silk are used for passive aerial dispersal.

Around 650 spider species from 28 families inhabit the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic. The new issue of KEP stamps is dedicated to three spider species occurring in Kyrgyzstan.

The **Alay trapdoor spider** (*Raveniola alajensis*) – a rare representative of the Nemesiidae family, which is closely related to tarantulas (suborder Mygalomorphae). This species was officially described in 2023. Its narrow relict range covers the western part of the Alay Valley and the gorges of the tributaries of the Kyzyl-Suu (Vakhsh) River in neighboring Tajikistan. This spider digs a burrow where it lives for many years, and during winter or unfavorable conditions, it closes the entrance with a "trapdoor," making its dwelling extremely difficult to spot.

The **Asian sorrowful black widow** (*Latrodectus lugubris*) – a representative of the Cobweb spider family Theridiidae. Black widows (species of the genus *Latrodectus*) are widely known for their sexual dimorphism and potent venom. This species is distinguished from its European counterparts by the completely velvety-black coloration of the adult female, and is distributed in warm and arid regions of Middle Asia and Southern Kazakhstan, occurring almost everywhere in semi-desert and steppe biotopes in Kyrgyzstan. The Asian sorrowful black widow's venom possesses a strong neurotoxic effect. However, with timely medical assistance, a bite does not pose a threat to human life. Despite their ominous reputation, these spiders lead a cryptic lifestyle and rarely exhibit aggression.

The **Tash-Kumyr tarantula wolf spider** (*Karakumosa tashkumyr*) – a large representative of the Wolf spider family Lycosidae. The species was officially described in 2020 and is currently considered endemic to the Cis-Ferganian Kyrgyzstan. Wolf spiders do not build capture webs, they actively hunt on the ground, tracking prey thanks to their excellent nocturnal vision, and surviving the daytime heat in deep burrows. Female Wolf spiders show care for their offspring.

The margin of the collective minisheet features the **Goldenrod crab-spider** (*Misumena vatia*) – a representative of the Crab-spider family Thomisidae. This species is widespread almost everywhere in Eurasia and North America and is known for the wide range of its bright coloration, which camouflages the ambush predator on various flowers and inflorescences. The First Day Cover of the series features the male **Ladybird Spider** (*Eresus kollari*), a member of the Velvet spider family Eresidae. This species sporadically inhabits warm regions of western Eurasia and is notable for its pronounced sexual dimorphism and exceptionally sedentary lifestyle.

KEP expresses sincere gratitude to entomologist Dmitry Milko, Senior Researcher at the Institute of Biology of the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, for his valuable consultation and for providing photographs used in preparing this issue.

Spiders play an important role in the biodiversity of Kyrgyzstan. They play a crucial ecological role by regulating populations of insects and other small animals, forming an integral part of all terrestrial ecosystems. The KEP stamp issue aims to draw attention to these remarkable creatures and to emphasize the importance of preserving Kyrgyzstan's unique natural heritage.

For this series, KEP also issues three postcards, which are used to realize three maximum cards.

No. 259



No. 260



No. 261



Stamps description

No. **259**. 50 KGS. The Alay trapdoor spider (*Raveniola alajensis*)

No. **260**. 150 KGS. The Asian sorrowful black widow (*Latrodectus lugubris*)

No. **261**. 300 KGS. The Tash-Kumyr tarantula wolf spider (*Karakumosa tashkumyr*)

Technical specifications

Paper: coated, gummed, 105 g/m².

Printing method: full-color offset lithography.

Stamps perforation: comb 13 syncopated.

Stamps size: 34 × 34 mm.

Stamps are issued in minisheets of 4 stamps with two labels.

Stamps are also issued in a collective minisheet of 3 stamps (one complete set). **Goldenrod crab-spider** (*Misumena vatia*) is represented on the margins of the collective minisheet.

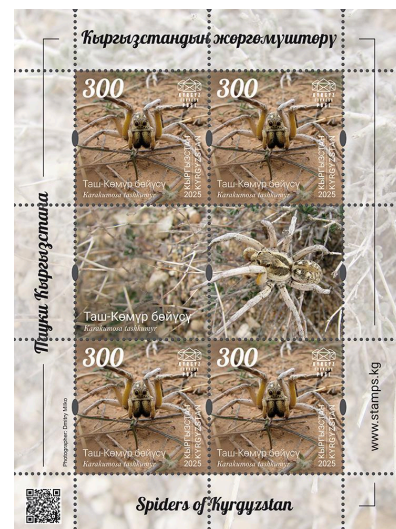
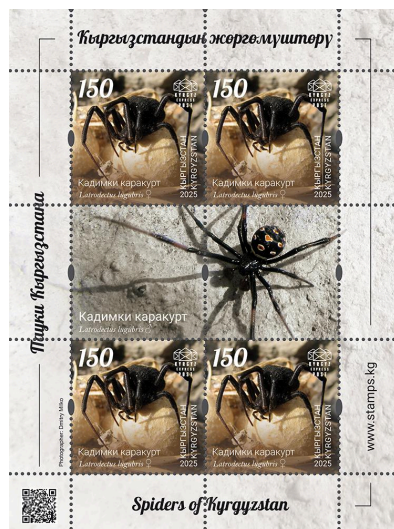
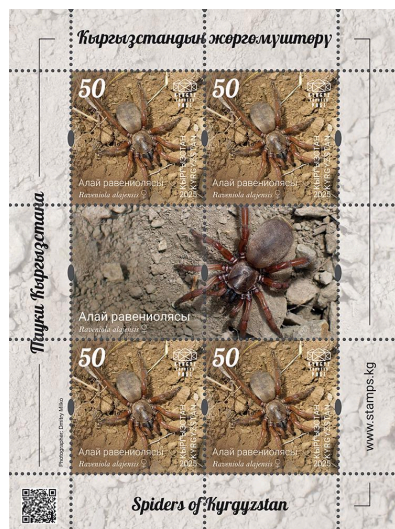
Minisheets size: 100 × 134 mm. **Collective minisheet size:** 100 × 134 mm.

Quantity issued: 7 500 pieces each stamp (5 000 in minisheets plus 2 500 in collective minisheets).

Photographer: Dmitry Milko.

Designer: Daria Maier.

Printer House: "Nova Imprim" (Chişinău, Moldova).



A special cancellation on FDC will be carried out at the Bishkek KEP Office (729001) on the stamps issuing day.



The first day cover, postcards and special postmark are designed by Daria Maier.

Photographer: Dmitry Milko.

Cover size: C6 (162 × 114 mm).

Quantity of covers and postcards issued: 400 pieces each.

Endorsing ink color: black.

