

Geese Evolving into Cormorants



2021



This Pokémon-themed stamp from Japan Post was illustrated by Matsuhiro Arita and depicts a group of Cramorants flying under the full moon.

1949



It appears that the 2021 Cramorant issue was patterned after this classic Moon and Geese stamp from the 1949 Philatelic Week series.

The “Japan Post” phrase and denomination placements are the same on both stamps, and the artwork is nearly identically positioned.

2021

The Cramorant stamp was issued as part of a souvenir sheet announced by Japan Post in July 2021 as part of the Pokémon Stamp Box set that also included trading cards and other materials. There were 100,000 sheets printed, one for each box.



Even though orders had to be made by mail, demand was so overwhelming that it was decided to distribute them by lottery instead.

1833

Both the Cramorant and the Moon and Geese stamps are based on a woodblock print called Wild Geese Flying under the Full Moon, an 1833 *surimono* by Utagawa Hiroshige. He was the last great master of *ukiyo-e*, an artistic tradition focused on showing everyday life in Japan’s Edo period.

The work captures the moment a group of geese pass under the full moon in both poem and image.



Nearly 200 years of history connects modern-day stamp collectors and Pokémon fans with the last great master of *ukiyo-e*.



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