

NOTES ON INSECT MOTIF PATTERN PAPERS

So far Peter Ford has made nine patterned papers with an insect design as a repeated motif. He began the first one, *Ladybird*, in 1994. They are all printed with oil-based ink, many by hand burnishing, most from two or more linocut blocks, though the *Ladybird* required four blocks to produce each ladybird motif.

The papers used are either Nepalese, Japanese or Peter's own handmade paper.



Antwork in particular and some others, exploit the potential of a design to spread the linkage of the pattern beyond the edges of a single unit to create a larger rhythmic flow across the whole page.

Several of these designs - the single unit - were first developed as part of his *Insect Pattern Book*. Etching was used for this as well as linocut and the papers were Japanese, Nepalese and English. At that time he was studying the Russian language and used Cyrillic and English lettering to name the various creatures.

Some patterned papers have been made by repeated printings from a design cut on the surface of a pencil eraser or 'rubber'. The *Cockroach* is one example of this method and *Moth with Kanji* another. (*Kanji* are Japanese written symbols.) This is another example where each finished rectangle required several blocks overprinted to produce the small creature.

An example of the design with the weevil motif is now part of the collection of decorated and decorative papers in the Department of Word and Image at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

These and other insect inspired works - such as Peter's '*Book of Small Changes*' - are part of Off-Centre Gallery's UK Touring exhibition, **ALL CREATURES SMALL**. Since 2000 this exhibition has been shown in Hereford Museum and Art Gallery; Inverness Museum and Art Gallery; Methil Heritage Centre (Fife); Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery; Saffron Walden Museum; and it will be at Bede's World, Jarrow, N.E. England, in the summer of 2007.