

AZED CROSSWORD 2,707

RATTY

- 1 D. Price Jones:** Thames water vole? One's seen in River Tees and then Wye! (*a in R tt + y; ref 'The Wind in the Willows'*).
- 2 M. Furman:** Mole's associate revealed as turncoat – tense finale for spy (*rat + t + y*).
- 3 R. C. Teuton:** Terms of unpopular Rwanda agreement latest Tory low? (*last letters; low = wretched*).

VHC

- P. B. Alldred:** Short time in therapy abandoned when hospital record is missing (*t in anag. less H EP*).
- M. Barley:** Tories' leader is heading for poll with party horribly fractious (*anag. with T for p*).
- T. C. Borland:** Ready to snap art, touring Tuscany on vacation (*anag. + T, y*).
- W. Drever:** Foremost of Toad's accomplices that you've read about? (*anag. of first letters, & lit.*).
- C. M. Edmunds:** Expressing confounded bile, snarling at liberty (*anag. less anag., & lit.*).
- R. J. Heald:** 'Uptight' has Wonder belting out soul, securing no. 1 for Tamla (*T in ra(ri)ty; ref. Stevie W.'s early hit and record label*).
- L. M. Inman:** Edgy *Tempest* begins and ends in old-fashioned dress (*T, t in ray⁴*).
- M. Lloyd-Jones:** Look transfixed by tails of bright coat – like Hamelin when first seeing Pied Piper's livery? (*t, t in ray; 2 meanings*).
- D. F. Manley:** Reckless Toad strays – making — so sad? (*comp. anag. & lit; ref. 'The Wind in the Willows'*).
- P. W. Marlow:** Volatile tyrant with no end of dissension is liable to snap? (*anag. less n*).
- T. J. Moorey:** Wretched end for Premier, clever but no leader (*r + (n)atty*).
- C. Ogilvie:** Riverboat enthusiast keeping dry in bit of sunshine (*TT in ray*).
- A. Plumb:** Chippy's fish sealing off the sauce (*TT in ray*).
- P. Sant:** Notably unkempt (and regularly errant) Tory found lacking essential requirement (*r, a, t + T(or)y; ref. B. Johnson*).
- P. A. Stephenson:** Try messing about with Toad regularly. He did (*anag. incl. T, a*).
- J. Vincent & Ms R. Porter:** Dirty, foul attic to be treated with small doses of exterminating bait? Possibly, if it could be (*comp. anag. incl. e, b, & lit.*).
- Mrs A. M. Walden:** Untidy? Try a bit of tidying up (*anag. incl. t*).
- Ms S. Wallace:** Annoyed at party floundering about with no early signs of alternative policies (*anag. less a, p*).
- A. J. Wardrop:** What flustered attorney, one being ignored, might become? (*anag. less one, & lit.*).
- R. J. Whale:** Maybe what you'd call Charles, gripping that which has leaked contents? (*t(ha)t in Ray, & lit.; ref. Ray C., and King C.'s leaky pen*).

HC

D. Appleton, I. Archer, N. Aspland, C. J. Brougham, Dr J. Burscough, N. Connaughton, M. Davies, Ms L. Davis, S. Reid Dick (Germany), P. Finan, Dr I. S. Fletcher, H. Freeman, G. I. L. Grafton, S. D. Griew, J. Grimes, R. Gwilt, A. H. Harker, P. F. Henderson (New Zealand), C. Hinton, Ms L. Holroyd, H. M. F. Jenkins, G. Johnstone, J. C. Leyland, M. Lunan, P. McKenna, Rev. Prebendary M. R. Metcalf, S. J. O'Boyle, A. M. Price, W. Ransome, N. Roper, Dr S. J. Shaw, A. J. Shields, K. Thomas, Prof. M. O. J. Thomas (New Zealand), J. D. Walsh, L. Ward (USA).

Comments

128 entries, more than a few with PARAPHRASE for the rarer PARAPHRAST. A handful mentioned that they'd never come across Aphra Behn (d. 1689), the Restoration poet and playwright who's becoming better known and more regularly performed these days. (I have fond memories of seeing a production many years ago of her play *The Rover* at Stratford, starring Jeremy Irons and (I think) Imogen Stubbs. Did anyone else see that?) Another query that some of you raised concerned my clue to GOSS, which exploited the entry in *Chambers* for the word as an informal short form of **gossip**, not a usage I've ever encountered, I must say. I can't imagine my ever using it, and the same goes for the very odd STIMPMETER. One of the joys of setting Azed puzzles comes from stumbling on such rarities.

Fifteen clues were voted as favourite this month, the winner by far being 'Ageless jaunty? He'll surely have them' for SEA LEGS. RATTY proved a popular clue word, largely I think because of its large number of synonyms (some misleading) as an adjective. Many of you were attracted to the idea of references to the character in *The Wind in the Willows*, many of them rather too obvious ('messaging about in boats' and so on). Mr Price Jones's excellent winner shows what could be done with this approach without giving the game away too readily. (Its use of capital initials doesn't bother me.)