Skylarking

Getting ready for the Christmas Season

The clocks have gone back, Hallowe'en has been and gone and so, yes, it's that time of year again! But don't panic, Teasel and Skylark Books is here to help you get ready for another Christmas season with plenty of gift ideas, lots of book recommendations, additional shopping opportunities, speedy and friendly service and sackloads of festive fun!

Here's some of what we have planned ...



- **Our Christmas Book Catalogue**

You may have already seen a copy, but if not, please do make sure you grab a copy the next time you're passing. It's free and contains loads of the latest books as well as a selection of literary highlights from 2026 to make gift buying that little bit easier. If we don't happen to have a copy of any of the books contained within the catalogue, please just ask and we'll order it in as quickly as possible for you.

- **Late Night Shopping and Sunday Opening**

We'll be staying open until 8.30pm on Thursday 3 December to give you an extra chance to do some Christmas shopping. Also, we will be open from 9.30am to 4.30pm on Sunday 13 December - the Christmas Cracker Day across Dorchester. And just like last year, we'll have chocolates and mince pies for our lovely customers!

- **Our Great Big (slightly Christmassy) Bookish Quiz for Mencap**

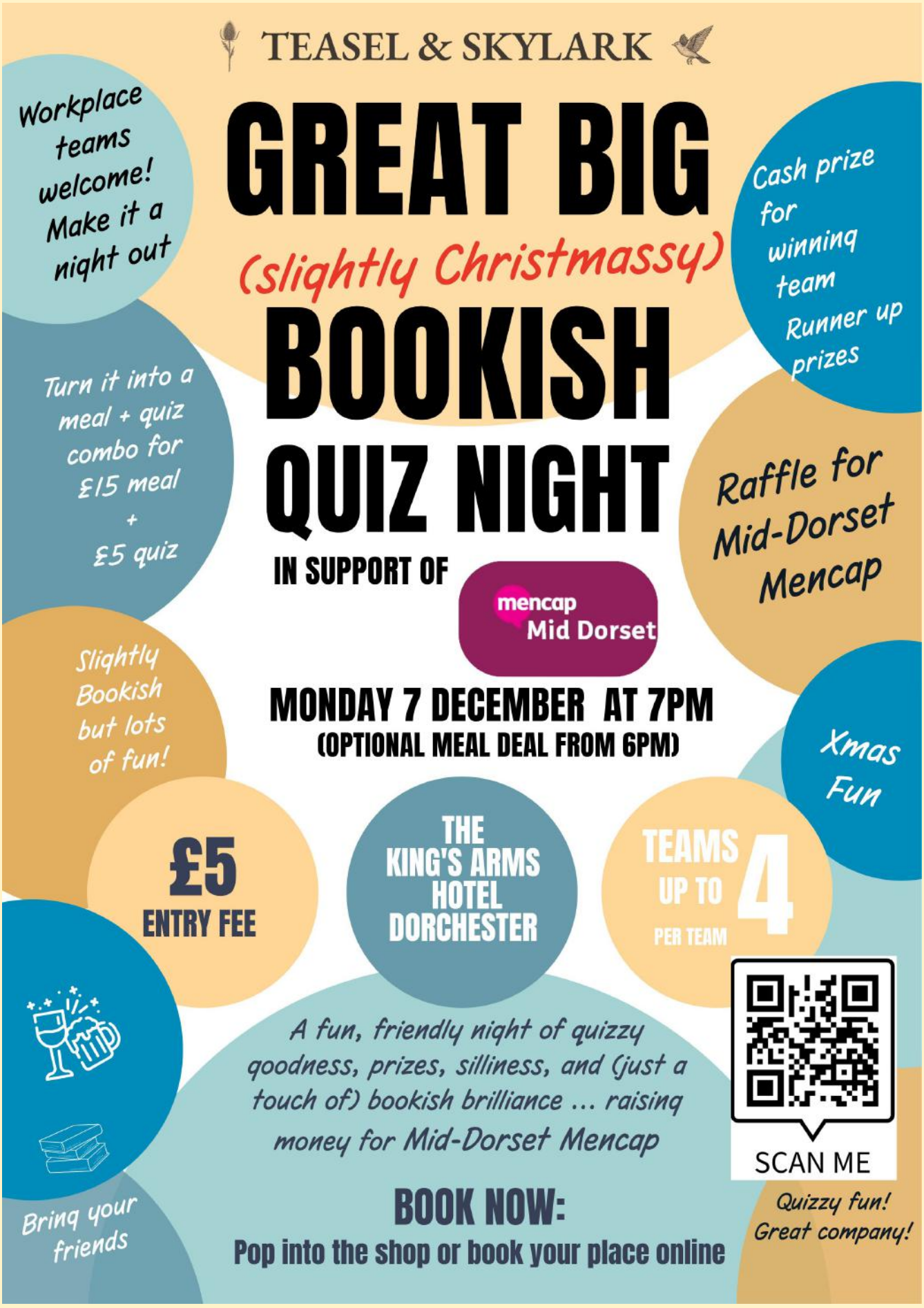
We're bringing back our fiendishly fun bookish quiz by popular demand and this time we're giving it a festive twist. You don't need to have an English degree to enjoy, just come along, have fun with friends and help raise money for a great cause. Tickets are only £5 per person and teams can be up to 4. Cash prize for the winning team as well as a raffle with loads of amazing prizes. Plus - The King's Arms have kindly given us a special meal deal; get a main course for only £15 in their restaurant before the quiz begins at 7pm. Details on our website.

- **Live Audiobook: 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens**



And finally, also back by popular demand, local actor and musician, Alastair Braidwood, will be reading the whole of this Christmas classic to help you really get into the festive mood just before the big day. This is being held in Tom Browns on Wednesday 16 December and starts at 6pm - tickets available now from our website or just pop in the shop and ask us.

COMING SOON



Don't Miss Out!

Book Your Place Now!

What have we been up to ...? Act I

Wowsers, it's been a busy month and we have a bumper crop of news to report - over 2 pages - so read on, MacDuff!

A History of England in 25 Poems

At the beginning of the month we were enthralled by Professor Catherine Clarke who gave us a impassioned talk about some of the poems that feature in her book, a fascinating journey through history and how poets, modern and ancient, have reflected the events, moods and culture of the nation in their poetry. From a distraught miner mourning the loss of his daughter, to



a deeply personal glimpse into life below stairs, Catherine presented a unique perspective on England's history, and we can't wait to have her back!

Great British Architecture



The following week, social media star and architectural historian, Daniel Wilson, gave us a a great taste of his sumptuous book, Great British Architecture, which takes a very personal look at some of the fascinating examples of building design to be found in Britain, from Georgian Gothic to modern interpretations of classical design.

Daniel's passion also came across, as the audience gained a new perspective on the bricks and mortar which add to the natural beauty all around us.

Dorchester Literary Festival Children's Programme

The middle week of the month saw us deliver an amazing 800+ books to the children's literary festival, brilliantly coordinated by Jenny Stevens, librarian at The Thomas Hardye School. More than 3200 children and young people aged 5 to 15, from 16 schools in the local area, attended over the course of the full-on week, and were thoroughly entertained and engaged by 6 inspiring authors, from Jim Beckett and his hilarious Buzz Sausage Wolf books, to the dystopian world of Fake, by Ele Fountain.

We were supremely delighted to be invited to be official book supplier for this event, which perfectly embodied our own passion for children's literature in all its forms. Thanks Jenny!



What have we been up to ...? Act II

Wild Pavements



In the middle of October we hosted a very unique event, when urban naturalist, Amanda Tuke, took an eager group of guests on a nature-based safari around Dorchester, pointing out the amazing variety of species growing and living right under - or over - our noses.

Amanda then took us on another whistle stop tour, of her informative and eye-opening book, Wild Pavements, further demonstrating the incredible range and tenacity of nature to exploit - literally - every nook and cranny. Huge thanks to Amanda who no doubt will be back!



Dark Dorset

And lastly, but not leastly, Jeni and Karen, of 111 Places fame, treated a packed Casterbridge room to some of the weirder, spookier and darker places they had unearthed in Dorset. From the legend of Roy Dog, haunting the seas off Portland, to the mystery of what actually happened to Thomas Hardy's heart, Jeni and Karen cast a deliciously Halloweeny spell over us! Guests were then invited to offer up their own tales of mystery, including the infamous Portland (again!) mer-chicken ... do you have any skeletons or ghosts in your closet, perhaps .....?!



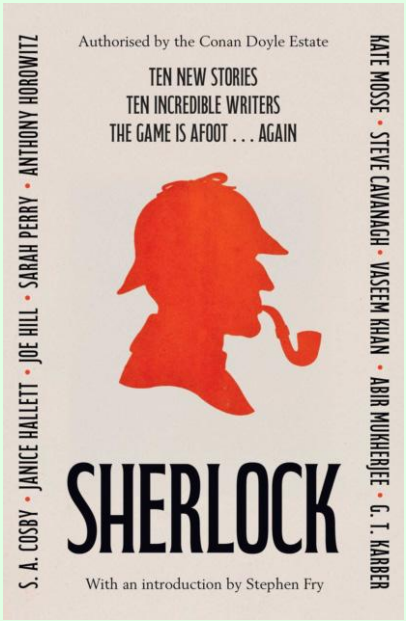
Our Top 10 Selling Books for October 2026

1. Great British Architecture by Daniel Wilson
2. A History of England in 25 Poems by Catherine
3. Wild Pavements by Amanda Tuke
4. Craftland by James Fox
5. The Stray Dogs by Ruth Hogan
6. Great Things: Hardy's Hostelries by Tracy Hayes & Syd Braham
7. The Correspondent by Virginia
8. The Swell by Kat Gordon
9. Perilous Enchantment by Sarah Clegg
10. Dungeon Crawler Carl by Matt Dinniman



David's Fiction Review of the Month

'Sherlock: Short Story Anthology' by Various Authors



In a similar vein to *Marple*, an anthology of 12 new stories featuring Agatha Christie's super-sleuth written by well-known authors, comes another collection of short stories, this time featuring another ever-popular and timelessly appealing sleuth, Sherlock Holmes.

Penned by some very famous contemporary writers, including Horowitz and Mosse, these little vignettes are perfect for fans of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle who want some new, atmospheric and puzzling mysteries to dip into, complete with all the typical clues and ingenious deductions that Holmes is famous for.

I really enjoyed the variety of writing styles of the different authors, combined with the familiarity of the characters and setting, and I think it will delight both fans of the Victorian crime solver, and newcomers alike.

Do you run a local book club? Could we help you get what you need?

If you run a book club and regularly wish to buy 5 or more copies of the same book, we could help. We could order them in quickly (often by next day), offer your members a 10% discount on the RRP, and even deliver to your club venue for free. If this sounds interesting to you or your members, just get in touch today.

Quiz Corner - It's quiz time again!

October's Quiz Answers!

The connections are:

1. The Unexpected Guest, Ring for Jeeves and Peter Pan (J M Barrie) = **were plays before they were books (SORRY - NOT GIGI!! 🥺)**
2. New Boy, Chasing the Stars, Desdemona and I, Iago = **all based on Shakespeare's Othello**
3. Black Beauty, Remarkably Bright Creatures, War Horse and The One and Only Ivan = **all narrated by animals**

November's Quiz

Name the book titles from these emojis!

1. 💈🔪☠️🥧
2. ☠️🔪🩸🚂🌨️
3. 🍽️🦟🦖🦕🏝️
4. 👍📕🪐🌍🚜🐬
5. 👦🐯🛶🌊🥧
6. 🤫🏠🌷🌳🌺

And if you like our quizzes, why not come along to our **'Great Big (slightly Christmassy) Bookish Quiz for Mencap - Monday 7 December, 7pm**
Lots of relaxed quizzing, fun with friends, cash prizes, raffle and raising money for a great cause. Tickets £5 per person and teams up to 4 people. £15 meal option available in hotel from 6pm - ask us for details.

T&S Pets' Corner



David's family said goodbye to their beautiful pups at the end of October, a bittersweet moment as we had obviously grown very attached to them, but knew they were all going to fabulous families who no doubt give them wonderful lives!

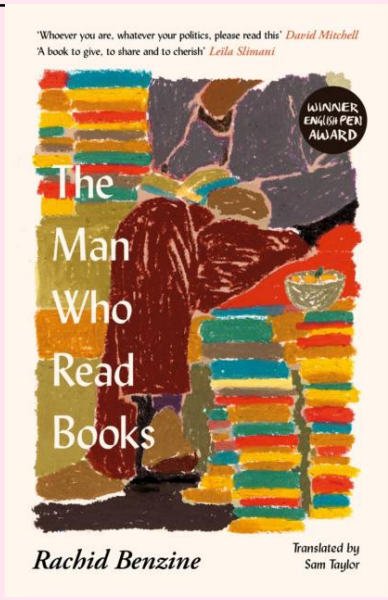
Can't find what you want?

We love selecting books for our shelves ... but our 'bijou' space means we can't stock everything we'd like.

However, because we order books in most days, we are able to **order any book for you** - and as many of you know - we get books in **very quickly**.

Simply ask us at the counter or send your order by phone, email or WhatsApp ... we usually get them for **next day** or within **2 working days**. Let us help you find your next great read!

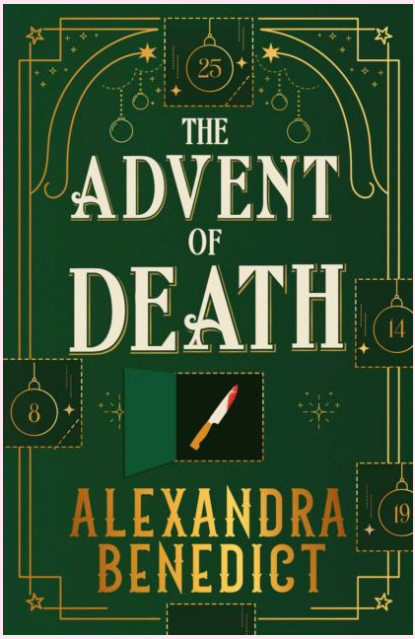
Richard's Fiction Review of Month: The Man Who Read Books by Rachid Benzine



Set in Gaza, 'The Man Who Reads Books' tells the story of a young photographer who meets an elderly bookseller and listens to his remarkable life story. Through memories of displacement and loss, we discover how books have helped him to survive and find comfort and even to find hope in the darkest of times.

This is a short but powerful novel and, despite the often heartbreaking and difficult subject matter, it is packed full of warmth and humanity and is ultimately uplifting. It is a timely reminder of how much books and stories can mean to us. This is a memorable and thought-provoking novel that deserves to be read widely and would make a perfect read for anybody who loves books and reading.

David's Fiction Review of Month: The Advent of Death by Alexandra Benedict



With a decidedly unhealthy obsession with festive fatalities, Alexandra Benedict is back with another fabulous Christmas mystery, waiting to be solved by her brilliant puzzle-loving creation, Edie O'Sullivan.

She takes the classic advent calendar trope and turns it on its head, setting Edie puzzles to solve that ramp up over the usually exciting countdown to Christmas which is a great device for keeping the pages turning, really making the reader want to see what the next door on the calendar brings.

It's a great combination of classic whodunnit, seasonal but sinister goings on, and plenty of puzzles and clues for the crime-solving reader to decipher before the big day – Happy Murderous Christmas everyone!

New Books for November

For more information on publication dates and how to pre-order, see page 8

New Non-Fiction



New Fiction

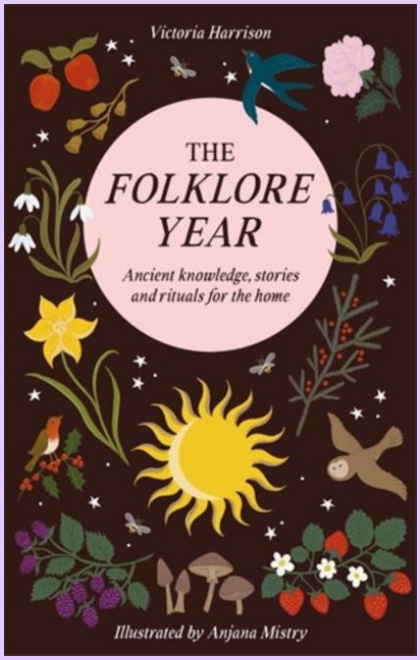


New Children's Books



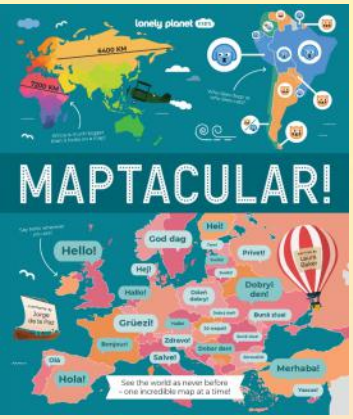
View these on our shelves or, if you can't call in, on our pages on bookshop.org

Richard's Non-Fiction Review of the Month 'The Folklore Year' by Victoria Harrison

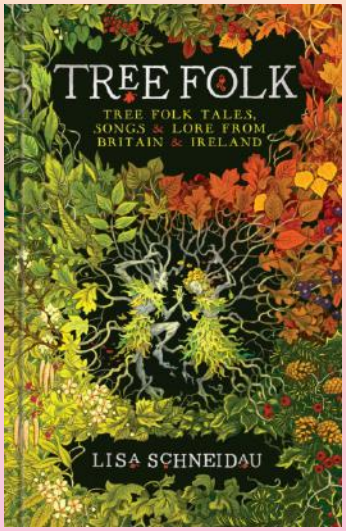


A fascinating journey through the folklore and forgotten traditions that have shaped life in the British Isles for centuries. Month by month, Victoria Harrison explores the changing seasons through ancient rituals, weather wisdom, moon lore and the natural world. From wassailing and tree blessings to hedgerow foraging and solstice celebrations, this engaging and accessible almanac combines folklore with practical ideas for bringing seasonal traditions into modern life.

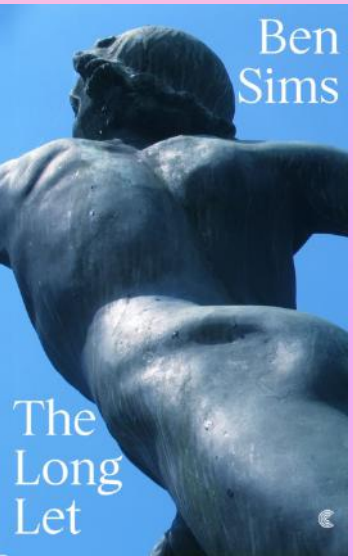
An inviting introduction to the magic and mystery of the everyday world around us that is recommended for lovers of British folklore, nature writing, seasonal living and anyone interested in reconnecting with the rhythms of the natural world.



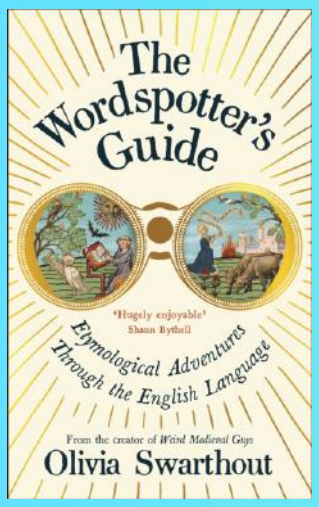
Maptacular! by Lonely Planet - Maps, but not as you know them. 'Maptacular!' by Lonely Planet books is a visual treat which takes rather sophisticated ideas and turns them into bright, accessible graphics. The book contains over 70 maps that take you around the world via favourite ice cream flavours, most popular pets, epic train journeys and all manner of brilliantly odd facts. Designed to show the world in a new light, one map literally flips the map upside down to give a brand new perspective to something we often take for granted. This would make a great gift for curious kids, fact collectors or anyone who appreciates vibrant and fascinating infographics. Richard



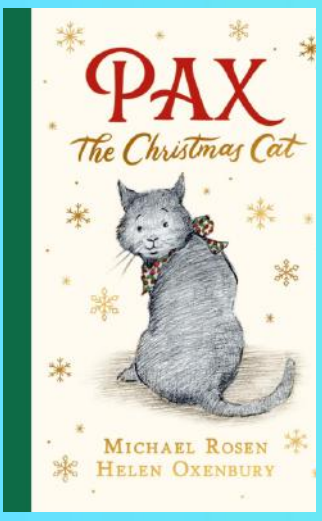
Tree Folk by Lisa Schneidau - The trend and interest in folklore has another advocate in the highly engaging Tree Folk, by Lisa Schneidau, which delves deep into the forest to explore the rich songs, stories and legends surrounding the trees of Britain and Ireland. Lisa's grounding in storytelling and ecology put her in the perfect position to reveal the way that trees are not just static and silent monoliths, they've inspired storytellers throughout history, keeping guard of all of the ancient wisdom that they have witnessed. The combination of traditional folklore and science makes this a particularly engaging read which I really enjoyed dipping into, and would make a great gift for any nature-lover, treeaholic, or fan of a little mystery and magic in the woods. David



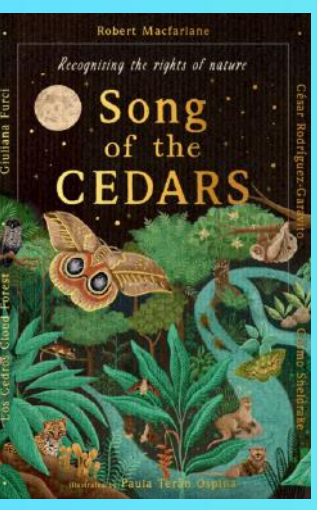
The Long Let by Ben Sims - When literature professor Hugh Clore moves into the London home of the wealthy and boyishly handsome Arthur Rose, he becomes increasingly fascinated by his new landlord. But as Hugh's feelings grow stronger, the arrival of Arthur's girlfriend, Georgia Groad, sparks a dangerous game of jealousy and manipulation. The tension between the characters quickly builds as we find out just how far people will go to get what they want. I found it to be a gripping read with plenty of surprises to keep you interested throughout and I thought the characterisation was particularly strong. A clever, funny, and deliciously twisted debut novel for readers who enjoy dark humour and psychological intrigue. Richard



The Wordspotter's Guide by Olivia Swarthout - 'The Wordspotter's Guide' is right up my street as it explores the weird and wonderful origin stories of some of the seemingly very ordinary words we use in everyday life, a topic of endless fascination and delight. Who knew that the name orchid derives from the Greek word orchis, meaning testicle, this being reminiscent of the globular roots of said plant ... or that to unfriend actually has its origin in the 17th Century ... or that ducks are called ducks because, well, they duck below the water ...! This book is perfect for lovers of Suzy Dent and anyone who loves knowing the wacky and fascinating origin of words! *David*

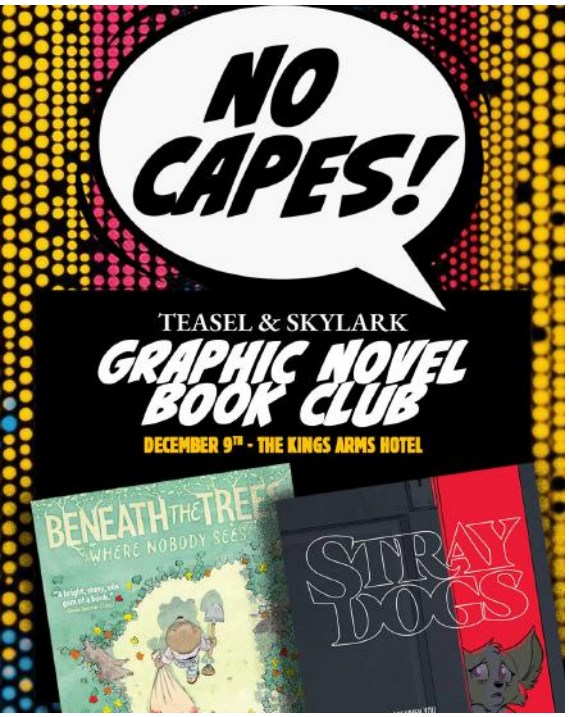


Pax The Christmas Cat by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury - A young girl called Evie searches for her beloved cat, Pax, who goes missing shortly before Christmas. What follows is a charmingly told tale of a fractured family coming back together during the festive season. This short story from the creative team behind 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt' was originally published in The Big Issue magazine and is now being released in a gorgeous cloth-bound edition, with 50p from each sale being given to Big Issue to help end poverty in the UK. Heartwarming, but never sugary, and at times genuinely moving, this is Rosen and Oxenbury at their warm and wonderful best. A perfect stocking filler for Christmas! *Richard*



Song of the Cedars by Robert Macfarlane and Others - This is part book, part work of art, and part act of hope, with a chance to change the world just a tiny bit. It can be read by turning the pages or it can be unfolded into a stunning panorama of Ecuador's Los Cedros Cloud Forest. The gorgeous illustrations by Paula Teran Ospina are teeming with life be it flora, fauna or fungi. Importantly, the creators of this beautiful book include the forest itself, officially recognising the forest's moral rights as the co-creator of a literary work. The book itself is a celebration of the rights of nature everywhere. Lyrical, moving, and just a little bit strange, this is a perfect gift for anybody who appreciates the beauty of nature, gorgeous artwork, or books that challenge our view of the world. This genuinely feels like something special. *Richard*

BOOK CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

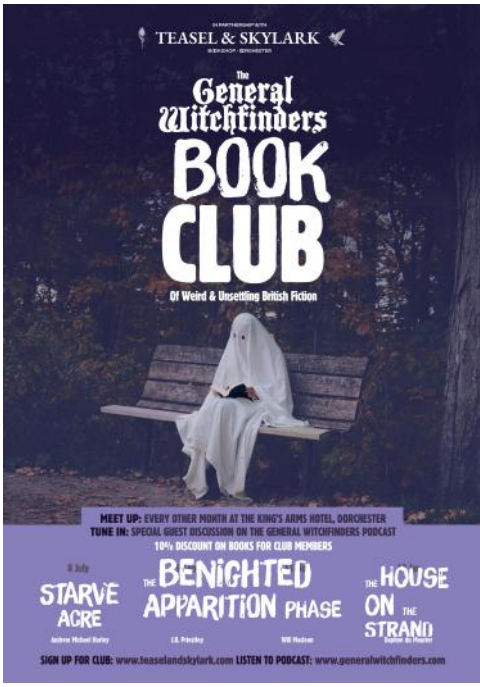


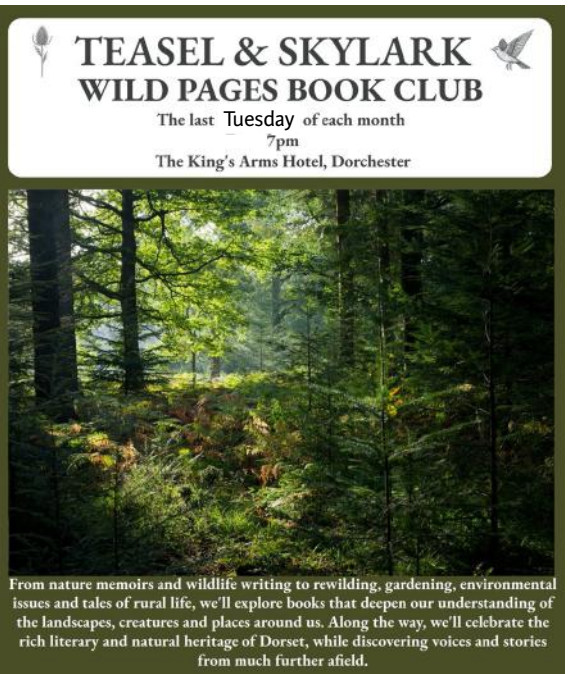
Do you like Graphic Novels?

Following requests from our customers, we are pleased to say that we are setting up a book club focusing on these. Chaired by Ross from our General Witchfinders book club (more below) the club will feature a range of graphic novels, but as the 'No Capes' name suggests, they won't be superhero stories. Meetings will be every other month on the second Wednesday from 7pm. First meeting will be in December and details to follow. Free to join, just let us know as soon as you can.

Folk Horror, Weird and Unsettling Fiction

Our book club focused on all of the above, run in association with the General Witchfinders (podcast team) is still looking for members. It meets every other month on a Wednesday evening (7pm) at The King's Arms Hotel, Dorchester, and the next meeting is on 11 November. It's free to join so just let us know if you would like to sign up and come along to future meetings.





Nature-Writing and Non-Fiction

Our 'Wild Pages' book club meets on the final Tuesday every month at The King's Arms Hotel in Dorchester from 7pm. Books will include nature memoir, wildlife, gardening, outdoors and travel writing - anything about the great outdoors and the natural world. If this sounds like your kind of book and you'd like to join, please just let us know. It's free to join and members get discounts on books.

LAST CHANCE TO BOOK YOUR PLACE

TEASEL & SKYLARK
presents

A Christmas Carol

read by Alastair Braidwood

Wednesday 16 December- 6pm

Tom Browns Pub

Treat yourself to a classic this Christmas



£10 **Book your place now**

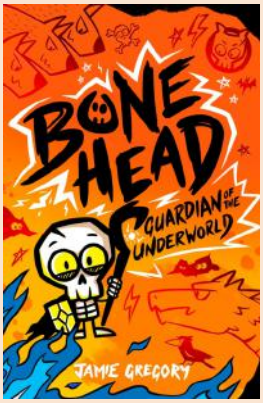
SCAN ME

Book Your Place Now!

The Dancing Mole

The newsletter for our younger readers

Our Young Reviewers' Club Fiction Book of the Month - Reviewed by Finley, 8



Bone Head by Jamie Gregory

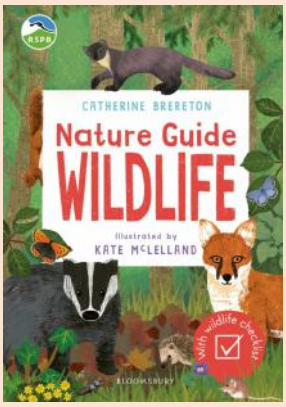
Favourite character: Bone Head ,because he is hilarious. This book is brilliant! I loved that the book is written as Bone Head's diary with really cool pictures to match. It's about his adventures in Hades' underworld and his mission to be promoted to a better job. His supervisor, Mort, scribbles all over the pages to fix Bone Head's mistakes in the diary, which makes it super funny to read!

I recommend this book to anyone who likes silly adventures.

Finley, 8

Our Young Reviewers' Club Non-Fiction Book of the Month - Reviewed by Isla, 6

RSPB Nature Guide: Wildlife by Catherine Bretherton



This is a great information book for finding out about wildlife. Each page tells you about a different animal and where it lives and what it eats. I loved this book because some of my favourite animals were in it, like foxes, hedgehogs, squirrels and rabbits. This book is perfect for children who like animals.

Isla, 6, Manor Park

Top 10 Children's Books: October 2026

1. **Gruffalo Granny** by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler
2. **Songs of the Season** by Patricia Hegarty
3. **The Floofs: Bring the Magic** by Penelope O'Neill
4. **Pablo and Splash: Viking Voyage** by Sheena Dempsey
5. **Dungeon Runners: Hero Trial** by Kieran Larwood
6. **Impossible Creatures: The Neverfear** by Katherine Rundell
7. **Monsterlogica** by Martin Maudsley and Victoria Topping
8. **The Bat Who Didn't Like The Dark** by Steve Small
9. **Bunny vs Monkey: Day of the Heroes** by Jamie Smart
10. **Maptacular!** by Lonely Planet





















The Dancing Mole

The newsletter for our younger readers

Teasel & Skylark's Young Reviewers' Club – September Books

To Wee or not to Wee by Pamela Butchart



I loved it! It is funny versions of Shakespeare plays and I wonder why Shakespeare has so many people dying in his stories. My favourite Shakespeare play was Hamlet.

I would recommend this book to someone who likes murder books, someone who likes romantic stories (but that's only in Romeo and Juliet), or someone who's 10 (because I'm 10 and I like it).

Rosa, 10

Meet the Oceans by Caryl Hart





Lottie, 5, Broadmayne

Fletcher and the Rainbow by Julia Rawlinson



I enjoyed reading this story because I like Fletcher and I like rainbows!

Fletcher was solving the mystery of where the end of the rainbow was and he asked lots of his friends to help him.

I would recommend this book to children that like rainbows.

Isla, 6, Manor Park

Mirabelle and the Party Tricks by Harriett Muncaster

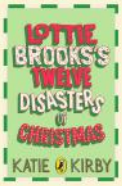


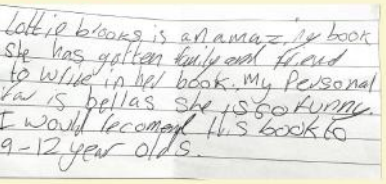


★★★★★

Lyla, 8, Damers

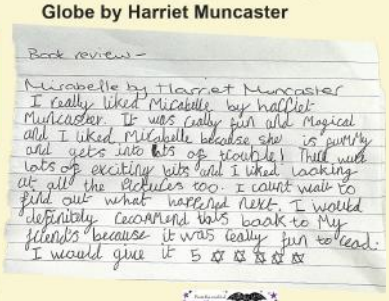
Lottie Brooks's Twelve Disasters of Christmas by Katie Kirby





Molly, 12, DMS

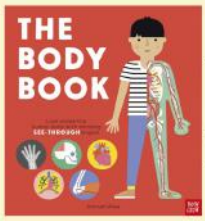
Mirabelle and the Enchanted Sea Globe by Harriet Muncaster



★★★★★

Darcy, 8, Damers

The Body Book by Hannah Alice

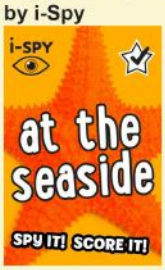


I thought it was interesting to see inside the bodies in this book.

I liked the page about the bones and I would give this book 10 out of 10.

Arlo, 5, Manor Park

i-Spy at the Seaside by i-Spy



I liked this book because it had things that I really like – cool rides, sweets and a boat!

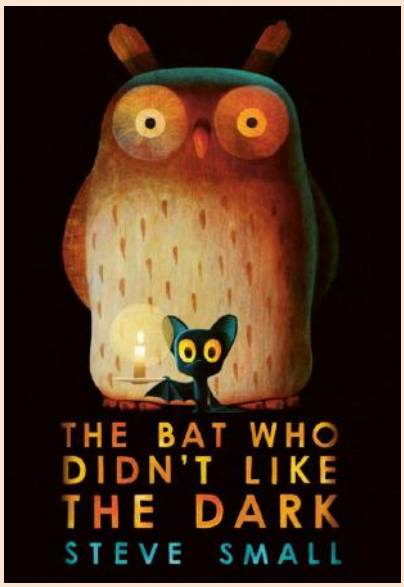
You can take this book to the beach and try to find all the things inside it.

I went to the beach and saw a basking shark and a big crab.

I would recommend this book to children who like spotting things. 10/10

Hunter, 6, Manor Park

Richard's Children's Review of the Month: The Bat Who Didn't Like The Dark by Steve Small



This charming and comforting story about overcoming fears is sure to become a future bedtime favourite with younger readers and parents alike. As the little bat struggles to deal with the darkness each night, he soon befriends an owl who helps him start to see the dark a little differently. Steve Small's sumptuous illustrations make the nighttime feel safe and inviting and add a touch of magic to this beautifully told tale of friendship and courage. Full of wonder, warmth, and heart this picture book is highly recommended. *Richard*



The Big Tease(l)

We have lots planned for the next few months - here are just a few details:

Mon 7 Dec from 7pm: Teasel & Skylark's Great Big (slightly Christmassy) Bookish Quiz for Mid-Dorset Mencap!

The King's Arms Hotel, Dorchester

Wed 16 Dec from 6pm: The Christmas Carol performed by Alastair Braidwood

Tom Browns Pub, High East Street, Dorchester

Sat 20/Sun 21 Feb: The Writing Weekend with novelist and short story writer Elizabeth Cooke

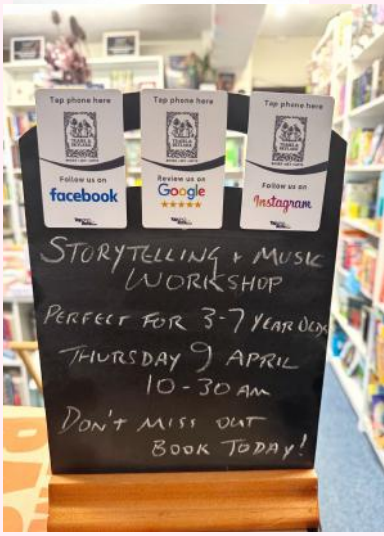
The King's Arms Hotel, Dorchester

Was it good for you? Please give us a review!

We have a small favour to ask of you, the incredible customers of Teasel & Skylark. As with everything nowadays, online reviews can make or break a business like ours - and so please could you consider leaving us a review on google if you are happy with what we do and if you have a couple of minutes to tell others.

This QR code takes you straight to our review page.

And next time you're in the shop, these cards near the till allow you to tap your phone to either follow us on Facebook, follow us on Instagram, or leave us a Google review - any and all of which help us out lots. Thank you so much.



Dorchester's Independent Bookshop

Opening Hours

Tuesday to Saturday 9.30am to 4.30pm
(5.30pm on Wednesdays)

Teasel & Skylark
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Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UB
teaselandskylark@gmail.com
07424 619496
What 3 Words: equipment//fizzled//supporter

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Coming in 2027

TEASEL & SKYLARK

In the
heart of Hardy
country on Dorset's
beautiful Jurassic Coast

THE WRITING WEEKEND

With novelist and short story writer ***Elizabeth Cooke***

Saturday 20 / Sunday 21 February 2027
9.00 am to 4.00pm
in the beautiful surroundings of
The King's Arms Hotel

£175

Includes tuition, refreshments, and lunch on both days
Discounted overnight stay option available

Elizabeth
has 40 years
writing experience
with 18 traditionally
published novels and
2 non-fiction to her name

For more information on Elizabeth,
see her author pages on Bookbub and Amazon

Whether you're halfway through a novel,
have a notebook full of ideas, or simply want
to see where your writing might take you, Elizabeth will
help you develop your ideas, strengthen your work, and find a
way forward in a relaxed, enjoyable and supportive environment

Reserve your place now on our website.

www.teaselandskylark.com/events