

# Become an APOCRISIARY with this fascinating collection of OSTROBOGULOUS words!

*Weird and Wonderful Words* is a new book featuring hundreds of entries, not found in any normal dictionary, guaranteed to amuse and astonish. Documenting words from ABOULIA (loss of will or volition) to ZYRIAN (a former term for Komi, a language spoken by a people living in an area of Russia) this book will fascinate you and help bring your vocabulary to life.

Did you know there was a word for fear of rabies, and for a female babbler, and a person who stares at activity on a canal, and even the stretching of the body that accompanies yawning? Well there is, and they are LYSSOPHOBIA, BABLATRICE, GONGOOZLER, and PANDICULATION.

*Weird and Wonderful Words* also contains some interesting alternatives to everyday words. Why call someone bald when you could use PILGARLIC? Why describe a woman as tall and awkward when you can say she's a GAMMERSTANG, a word first used in the late sixteenth century? GRICER is an alternative to train-spotter; it's much more impressive to refer to a POLLINCTOR than to say that someone prepares bodies for cremation and embalming; and it's much more satisfying to refer to someone as a BATIE-BUMMIL rather than just a bungler.

The animal world has generated many weird and wonderful words. For example, did you know that an ANGLETWITCH is a worm used as bait in fishing, or that ONOLATRY is the worship of donkeys?! A ZEDONK is the offspring of a male zebra and a female donkey. The art of bee-keeping was also known as MELITURGY in the seventeenth century, and finally, LIMACOLOGY is the name for the study of slugs.

*Weird and Wonderful Words* will be published on 3 December 2002, priced £9.99.

For further information or if you would like to arrange an interview about *Weird and Wonderful Words* please contact Claire Turner on 01865 353911 or email [turnerc@oup.co.uk](mailto:turnerc@oup.co.uk).

See below for more weird and wonderful words...

ANGLETWITCH - a worm used as bait in fishing  
APOCRISIARY - a person appointed to give answers  
ATRABILIOUS - an adjective meaning 'melancholy' or 'bad-tempered'  
BABLATRICE - a female babbler  
BATIE-BUMMIL - a useless bungler  
CALAMISTRATE - a rare verb meaning 'to curl the hair'  
CARRIWITCHET - a pun, a conundrum  
CLAVUS - a pain in the forehead, as though a nail were being driven into it  
DEGLUTITION - the action of swallowing  
DEIPNOSOPHIST - a master of the art of dining  
ELAQUEATE - to free from a noose or other entanglement  
ERGOPHOBIC - someone who fears work  
ERINACEOUS - like a hedgehog  
FAITOUR - a cheat  
GAMMERSTANG - a tall, awkward woman  
GONGOOZLER - a person who stares at activity on a canal  
GRICER - a train-spotter  
HODMANDOD - any strange person, a scarecrow  
ICONOMACH - one who is hostile to images  
JIFFLE - to fidget or shuffle  
KENSPECKLE - a Scottish word meaning 'conspicuous, easily recognizable'  
LYSSOPHOBIA - a fear of rabies, so extreme that the sufferer actually manifests symptoms of the disease  
MAMMOTHREPT - a spoiled child  
MELITURGY - honey-making or bee-keeping  
OCHLOPHOBIA - extreme or irrational fear of or aversion to crowds  
OCTOTHORPE - the telephone keypad symbol '#'  
ONOLATRY - the worship of donkeys or asses  
OSTROBOGULOUS - bizarre, unusual, or interesting  
OTACUST - eavesdropper, spy  
OXTER - armpit  
PANDICULATION - the stretching of the body that often accompanies yawning  
PILGARLIC - a bald person  
POLLINCTOR - a person who prepares a dead body for cremation or embalming  
POOKING-FORK - a tool used in haymaking  
SIAGONOLOGY - the study of jawbones  
SNOLLYGOSTER - a dishonest politician  
TEMULENT - drunken  
TROKE - to fail, to be unable to do something  
WABBIT - exhausted  
WINEBIBBER - a person who habitually drinks a lot of alcohol