



## *The Wonder of Whiffling*

And other extraordinary words  
in the English language

*Adam Jacot de Boinod*

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'You'll never be lost for words again. Truly enlightening!' **MARIELLA FROSTRUP**

A delightful tour of the extraordinary words in the English language  
from Anglo-Saxon to Trailer Park Slang

*The Wonder of Whiffling* is a hugely enjoyable and surprising journey through the English language, revealing interesting and unusual words from Old and Middle English and Tudor-Stuart, through the rural dialects collected by Victorian lexicographers, the argot of 19th century criminals, slang from two world wars, right up to our contemporary jargon that has grown from activities such as darts, working in an office and texting.

Discover words we have lost or never knew existed, such as a **blatteroon**, a person who will not stop talking, and **crambazzled**, to be aged prematurely through drink; words with meanings that have changed, such as **racket**, originally the palm of the hand, and **constipate**, to crowd together in a narrow room; together with a wealth of words from around the globe, like **shubi** (Australian), someone who buys surfing gear but doesn't actually surf; and those that have developed very recently, such as **ham**, a legitimate email (as opposed to spam).

Delving passionately into the English language, Adam Jacot de Boinod reveals why it is you wouldn't want to have dinner with a **vice admiral of the narrow seas**, why Jacobites toasted the **little gentleman in black velvet**, and why a **Nottingham Goodnight** is better than one from anywhere else.

And as for **whifflers**, whether you prefer yours whistling lightly, examining degrees, constantly changing their mind, morris dancing, crying out in pain or descending in a formation of geese, you'll find them all, and more, in here...

**Adam Jacot de Boinod**, hunter of perfect and obscure *bon mots*, is a true linguistic **bowerbird** (a person who collects an astonishing array of - sometimes useless - objects). He trawled the languages of the world for exotic specimens in his bestselling book *The Meaning of Tingo* and has now turned his attention to the beauties, oddities and downright hilarities of the language that began his love affair with words - English.

Visit [www.thewonderofwhiffling.com](http://www.thewonderofwhiffling.com)

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