If the English language is a glorious garden, filled with exotic hybrids and the continuing tradition of heritage specimens, then it is no surprise that we will also find some weeds. Linguistic weeds may have pronunciations we don’t want or constructions that are out of place. We may be trying to hold on to words and usage we should perhaps have said farewell to. But as all gardeners know, what one gardener calls a ‘weed’, another may call a ‘flower’. The same goes for words and their usage in English - sometimes we just haven’t realized their virtues. Kate Burridge follows the international success of her book Blooming English with another entertaining excursion into the ever-changing nature of our complex and captivating language.

- A book for all lovers of the English language

- Focuses on ‘bad’ words, pronunciation and grammar in English and explains how these usages developed and how they became ‘unacceptable’

- Easy and enjoyable to read; genuinely accessible to the non-linguist

**Contents**

1. Introduction to the weedy traits of the English language; 2. Lexical weeds: the world of jargon, slang and euphemism; 3. More lexical weeds: word origins and meaning shifts; 4. Our grammatical weeds; 5. Weeds in our sounds and spelling; 6. The truly nasty weeds of the English language?; 7. W(h)ither our weeds?

**Reviews**

‘... for those who failed to brush up their grammar, hope is at hand from a new book that celebrates slang and poor punctuation.’ The Independent

‘... not all change is good. Burridge is quick to criticise ‘evil weed’ words, such as dishonest euphemisms that try to sound neutral when really they are negative, such as friendly fire and downsize.’ BBC News Magazine

‘... the fact that a book can stimulate such debate is proof positive that the English language is a rude and robust health. We should all celebrate that.’ Daily Express