

Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

# Get to know

## Horatio Clare



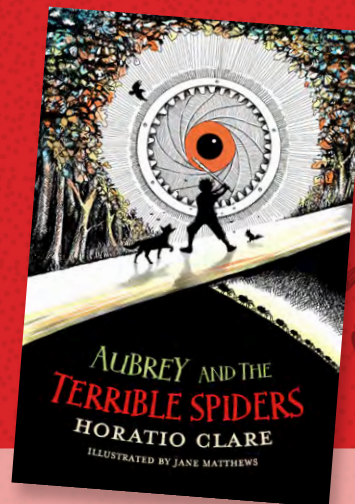
**Horatio Clare's** first book, *Running for the Hills*, an acclaimed account of a Welsh childhood, won a Somerset Maugham Award, was longlisted for the Guardian First Book Award and saw Horatio shortlisted for the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year.

His subsequent books include *Truant*, *A Single Swallow* (shortlisted for the Dolman Travel Book of the Year), *The Prince's Pen*, *Down to the Sea in Ships* (winner of the Dolman Travel Book of the Year), *Something of his Art* and *The Light in the Dark*. His first book for children, *Aubrey and the Terrible Yoot* won the Branford Boase Award 2016 and the sequel *Aubrey and the Terrible Ladybirds* was nominated for the CILIP Carnegie Medal 2018. His essays and reviews appear regularly in the national press and on BBC radio.

### Summary:

*Aubrey and the Terrible Spiders* is the third book in the award-winning Aubrey series featuring a passionate and entertaining environmental storyline about how much is expected from children in this era of climate change.

When the animals start rebelling, and Aubrey is stung by a very polite wasp, he realises there is something weird going on in the valley below Rushing Wood. And as he's the only boy he knows of who can talk with animals, he is determined to find out what.



With help from his friends Ariadne the house spider, Silvio the silverfish and Lupo the Husky pup, the young warrior sets out to find the terrible Terrible Spiders and their genius creator Big B and, just maybe, save the world.

Illustrated by Jane Matthews. Published by Firefly Press 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023. Suitable for ages 8-12.

'A heartening reminder that while the world may be puzzling and fraught is also full of beauty and magic.' **The Independent**

### Tell us a little about *Aubrey and the Terrible Spiders*...

Well there's this wasp. And it stings our hero, which is not so odd, except that before it flies away it apologises and says it was ordered to do it. And things rather escalate from there. Our hero, Aubrey, named after my son but very much his own man, as it were, and aged about 9, can understand what insects, birds and mammals say. Having believed his whole short life that he was the only one who could do this, he now discovers someone else can too! And this person apparently wants him stung...

### What would be some advice you would give to your younger self?

It'll be fine, and if it's not fine now it will be soon. Don't worry so much, and when you turn into a loony or a perfectionist or a slob or a hooligan or a Dad or whatever - don't show off about it too much or get too miserable. Keep working away, hold fast, trust people.

### What books are currently on your bedside table?

My bedside table is currently banished to behind the bed by the wall because

I think it is trying to fall apart. So, light ones and ones I have been reading with our son: *The Eagle of the Ninth* by Rosemary Sutcliffe, *Far And Away* by A A Gill, *The Hobbit* by J RR Tolkien, *The Turning Tide* by Jon Gower and *Sarn Helen* by Tom Bullough. Some we read together and some I read to us.



### In what way have libraries influenced you during your lifetime?

I loved the little one at the Primary School in Llangattock, which had all sorts of books and a quiet place to look at them - and in those days we also had

shelves of books in the classrooms, and I loved them for Willard Price books and Enid Blyton and Agatha Christie and all sorts... We had a mobile library that came to Cwmdau sometimes which was magic - a cool old van of lovely books! ... Since becoming a writer I have loved them again: you can talk in them if you're invited! And if you are writing a book which requires you to know things, as opposed to just feel them, you really can't do it with a library - a really good one. So libraries have given me more than I can say, that's for sure.



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