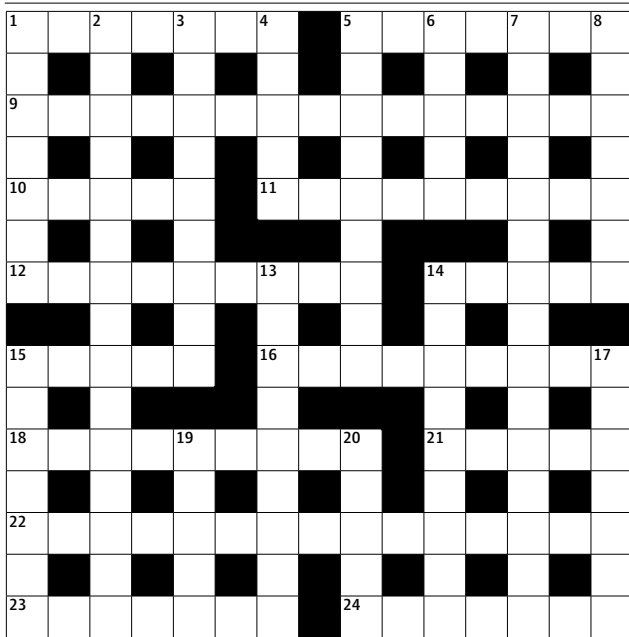


Guardian cryptic crossword



No 25,282 set by Araucaria

Across

- 1 Starting for club and a fight? About time! I'll get you a taxi (3-4)
- 5 Bird of the quickest relative speed (7)
- 9 Oratory fought fight, beat beast, missing bus at random (3,4,2,3,3)
- 10 Head of operations with a knowledge of wood (5)
- 11 Half a pint? (5,4)
- 12 Mexican actor on day one away from insurgent body (9)
- 14 Poor quality drinking water in river (5)
- 15 Smith's fake (5)
- 16 Grandma's shot at milk producer (5,4)
- 18 React badly in a number of fruit (9)
- 21 Explorer's name and number for unfinished course (5)
- 22 Auxiliaries inland, first to call (11,4)
- 23 Sea, it's said, as religious article (7)
- 24 Changed agreement performed as reported (7)
- 3 You get nothing for nothing in French pictures to align (9)
- 4 Arch-emperor? (5)
- 5 Unofficial thumping for most of party in Ireland (Northern) (4,5)
- 6 Where some African countries are off the leash (5)
- 7 Teased Tory leader to provoke left-wing philanthropist (6-9)
- 8 Free range item cooked by litre (7)
- 13 Unofficial financiers, one body (3,2-4)
- 14 Unofficial effort to prove missing one false? (6,3)
- 15 Cooler part of house, say, for extreme enthusiast (7)
- 17 Couple looked unlike Cyclops (3-4)
- 19 A bit of 8 first line of defence (5)
- 20 Life in Rome after English musical (5)

Down

- 1 Copper couple with jolly caterpillar (7)
- 2 Doing better than before in destruction of 78s? (8,7)

Solution No. 25,281

B	E	N	E	F	I	T	E	X	C	E	R	P	T
A	O	L	O	A	O	E	A						
N	O	R	S	E	W	I	S	E	C	R	A	C	K
D	M	A	E	Y	K	P	E						
I	N	A	C	C	U	R	A	C	Y	U	P	T	O
T	N	I											
D	S	C	I	I	A	R	R						
E	N	C	O	U	N	T	E	R	E	D			
A	R	S	I										
N	O	E	S	E	G	O	C	E	N	T	R	I	C
S	E	H	I	I	T	O	E						
H	O	N	E	Y	M	O	O	N	I	N	N	E	R
I	E	M	U	C	M	T	U						
P	E	D	A	N	T	S	H	O	E	D	O	W	N