

The best crime fiction of 2025 so far — July's top new books

This month's picks range from bad vibes in the Belize jungle to the search for a long-lost father



Q: What was the popularly given title of the member of the movement whose was 'deeds, not words'?

Test your knowledge

July's picks

The Night Lagoon by Jo Morey



A birthday party in Belize is the setting for Jo Morey's luscious first novel. Ellis is an elderly professor, an expert on orchids, who lives in a lodge in the rainforest. His daughter Laelia and her new partner, Aid, have flown from the UK to attend a surprise birthday celebration organised by her elder sister. Laelia met Aid on a previous trip to Belize, but she has barely had time to introduce the two men when her father is rushed to hospital. She decides to take Aid to stay in Ellis's isolated home, hoping to keep everything running until her father returns, but it's not an easy environment for someone who is deaf and needs to charge hearing aids. Jo Morey's descriptions of the rainforest are extraordinarily vivid, conjuring up suffocating heat, unfamiliar vegetation and ravishingly beautiful orchids. But it turns into a sinister environment as hostile neighbours issue threats, Aid's behaviour becomes erratic and rumours about smuggling start to circulate. It's hard to believe this accomplished piece of crime fiction is Morey's debut. *Joan Smith*

HarperCollins £16.99 pp416

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The Wasp Trap by Mark Edwards

