

Fill in the gaps with the words from the box:

inquisitive cajoled sought-after blunt capitalising sustainable forage

Ferret electricians



“Ferrets are, if you want to be polite, 1) _____; if you want to be 2) _____, they’re nosy little devils,” says James McKay of the National Ferret School. Their curiosity, shape and flexibility mean they can get to places and do jobs no human could manage. Ferrets wriggled under the floor of St Paul’s Cathedral to enable TV transmission of the royal wedding in 1981 and cabled the Millennium Dome. How does the cabling work? The ferret wears a special harness attached to a long, light nylon line. Once it has threaded the line through a pipe, the line is attached to a heavier pull rope to thread the cable. Although there is some training involved, it is really a case of 3) _____ on the ferrets’ natural inclination to investigate holes. A bit of salmon oil at the far end of a long pipe as a reward can help them find their way. The furthest one of McKay’s ferrets has travelled is about 250 metres.

Winemaking ducks



South Africa’s viniculture [*ˈvɪnɪ,kʌltʃə*] industry employs around 270,000 people, producing some of the world’s most 4) _____ wines. But not all jobs are best left to humans. Inspired by ducks used to remove pests from rice paddies in Asia, the winery [*ˈwaɪn(ə)rɪ*] calls on the services of some 1,600 ducks as part of its effort to make wine production more 5) _____. The Indian runner duck is flightless, with a peculiarly upright stance and highly developed sense of smell. The duck troops are 6) _____ on a 14-day outing through the vineyard, eating aphids, snails, small worms and fertilizing the ground as they go. The ducks’ “annual holiday” takes place during the harvest – they’d eat the grapes. During this time, they 7) _____ on open farm pasture, swim in a nearby lake and undergo selective breeding. Duck eggs are consumed in the vineyard restaurant, but never the ducks themselves – that would be like eating a colleague.