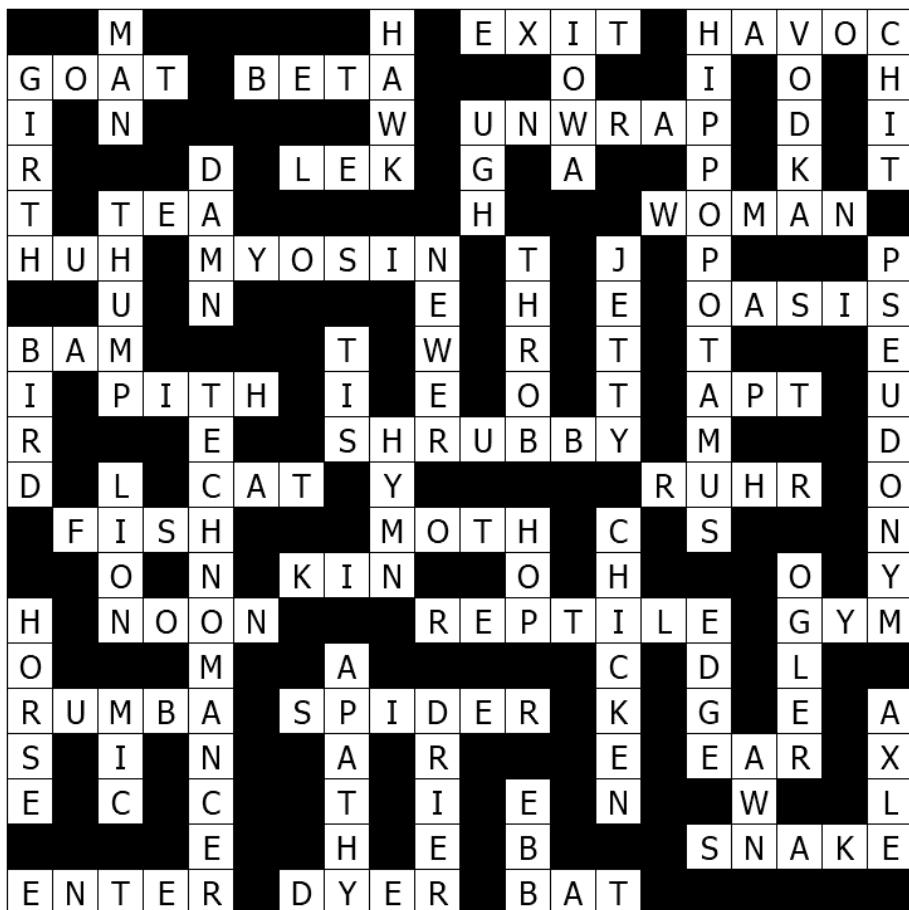


## Minotaur (solution)

by Sim Hong Jhun

Solvers are first presented with a fairly simple criss-cross puzzle, which can be filled in like this:



Solvers may notice that there are three smaller “islands” of words that are disconnected from the larger group of connected words, which is atypical of a criss-cross.

Solvers may also notice that there are a number of creatures (e.g. BIRD, SNAKE, etc.) in the grid. Most of these are isolated from other such words, but there are 4 pairs that intersect: GOAT x MAN, FISH x LION, CHICKEN x REPTILE, and HIPPOPOTAMUS x WOMAN. The 4 intersecting pairs of creatures each clue a certain hybrid creature (like the Minotaur), namely: SATYR, MERLION, COCKATRICE and TAWERET/TAWARET. These 4 creatures are able to be checked with the answer checker.

These 4 creatures can be placed in the grid, spanning across black squares and without creating any new entries, as shown below in yellow:



Finally, solvers should also notice that ENTER and EXIT are also part of the grid. The shortest path from ENTER to EXIT (highlighted in green) will intersect the 4 hybrid creatures, and these intersections, in order, will spell the final answer **COWS**.

Constructor's notes:

The very first version of this puzzle had blank cells where the hybrid creatures should be, but was later revised to require solvers to find where the hybrid creatures were “hiding”.

Hopefully this newer mechanic was fun to solve!