Who owns the Zebra?

The following puzzle is a fine example of what is called a “detective puzzle:” Based on clues supplied in a narrative, one is to answer a question by applying simple, man-on-the-street logic to the information (not all of it relevant) supplied.

On an odd little street in the town of “Somewhere”, there are five house in a row. Each house is a different color, each is inhabited by a woman of different nationality, and the owner of the houses also have their differences: each owner has a different pet, prefers a different drink and works in a different profession. A detective, charged with the task of discovering who drinks water and who owns the Zebra, gathered the following information, itemized for your convenience:

1. The Englishwoman lives in the red house.
2. The Spaniard owns a dog.
3. Coffee is drunk in the green house
4. The Ukrainian drinks tea.
5. The green house is immediately to the right of the Ivory house.
6. The engineer owns the snail.
7. The diplomat lives in the yellow house.
8. Milk is drunk in the middle house.
9. The Norwegian lives in the first house on the left.
10. The doctor lives next to the owner of the fox.
11. The diplomat lives next to the owner of the horse.
12. The teacher drinks orange juice.
13. The carpenter is Japanese.
14. The Norwegian lives next to the blue house.

Scroll down for the answer
Solution to “Who owns the Zebra”?  

The detective found it useful to number the houses from left to right as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Starting with the fact that the Englishwoman lives in the red house, he inferred that she does not live in the green, ivory, yellow or blue houses. Next, knowing that the Spaniard owns a dog, the detective realized that the Spaniard does not own the snail, the fox, the horse or the zebra. He also realized that the dog owner is not English, Ukrainian, Norwegian, or Japanese. As well, he came to the conclusion that the woman who lives in the red house does not own the dog.

The detective continued in this manner until he had deduced the following facts, drawn up in tabular form:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House</th>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Nation</th>
<th>Pet</th>
<th>Drink</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>fox</td>
<td>water</td>
<td>diplomat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>blue</td>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>horse</td>
<td>tea</td>
<td>doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>red</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>snail</td>
<td>milk</td>
<td>engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ivory</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>dog</td>
<td>o.j.</td>
<td>teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>green</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>zebra</td>
<td>coffee</td>
<td>carpenter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, the Norwegian woman drinks water and the Japanese woman owns the zebra.