

New Shoots

Seniors Week Botanic Writing Workshop



About New Shoots

Created by Red Room Poetry, New Shoots is a collaboration with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney. The project celebrates, cultivates and collects poems inspired by plants. By connecting with plants we aim to deepen our personal and cultural connections with nature.

About Red Room Poetry

Red Room Poetry's vision is to make poetry a meaningful part of everyday life. We create poetic projects and learning programs in collaboration with a spectrum of poets, schools, communities and partners for positive social impact.

About the Cumberland Plain Woodland and PlantBank

The Cumberland Plain Woodland is a greatly endangered ecosystem in Western Sydney. It provides habitat for many native species of birds, animals, and plants. Having been cleared for farming and to accommodate for population growth, less than 6% of the original bushland now remains.

PlantBank is a science and research facility for the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust. Specialising in horticultural research into the conservation of native plant species, PlantBank is home to over 100 million seeds from almost 5000 plant species, 260 of which are classified as threatened or endangered.



Our Poet

Eileen Chong is a Sydney poet. *Burning Rice* (Australian Poetry, 2012) was shortlisted for the Anne Elder Award, Australian Arts in Asia Award and the Prime Minister's Literary Award. Her other books are *Peony* (Pitt Street Poetry, 2014) and *Painting Red Orchids* (Pitt Street Poetry, 2016).

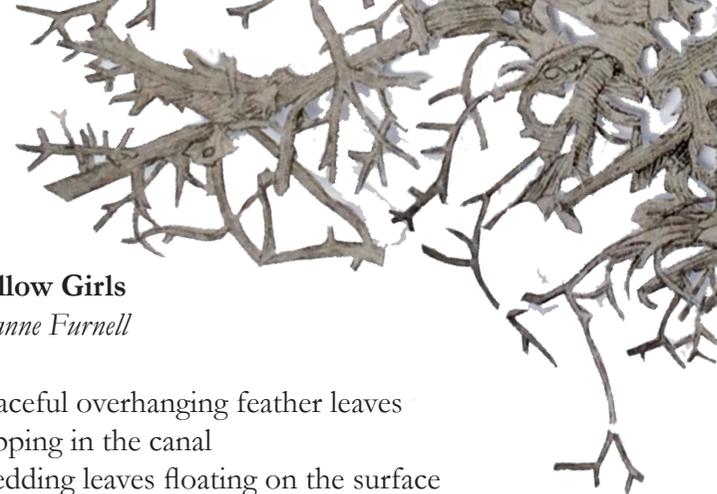




Old man of the Bush

Janet Hall

Misty pain, welcome relief
pungent perfume
beautiful patterns revealed
as protective bark is wisely shed
from the stringy bard
gum leaves crunch under
the feet of the visitor
to the old man of the bush



Willow Girls

Dianne Furnell

Graceful overhanging feather leaves
Dipping in the canal
Shedding leaves floating on the surface
Leaving green stickiness on chubby fingers
Laughter
Cascading rectangles of bark
As barefoot we climb ever higher
Hiding.
Safe.

The Lonely Tree

Brigitte Mergl

The “secret knight in shiny armour”, protector of soul-searching – standing tall amid its surrounding shrubs –
Black thorn you needn’t extend your prick ---

We come to admire your strength even --- beings seek your company – oh giver of wisdom, write out judgement.

You feel more comfortable without humans; trash.

Glowing smooth sun kissed skin- thank you for being part of the “circle of life”.

