

Fronds

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens
Number 110 August 2025



Friendly Chatter (cont.)

Nature Journaling

Nature Journaling is in recess until September. The group usually meets on the first Monday of the month at 10.00 am at the Visitor Centre.

If you would like to join us, please contact lespage26@gmail.com

This issue's contribution from Nature Journaling is a poem by Lynlea Roger.

Lesley Page

"I use drawing as a way of switching the brain into creative mode and then I write.

In early November I came to the Gardens restless and wearied from the commentary enveloping the US election.

In the Gardens, oblivious in sun and wind, I came across a fecundity of flowering accompanied by massed insect swarming, pollination and procreating."

Repose

While across the globe hot breath's words

pour from retribution's jug,
here an older story stands.

In stillness watch and wait
and guarded be,

lest ears dulled and hardened eyes
steal mercy from this place.

Brushed heads bow
with fecundity's weight
gently wrought in fevered energies
and sun-bright swarms and
flight of scores

an older story testifies.

Behold a greater heft

Born by the earth

In windswept tranquillity

Lynlea Rodger



J Hamilton

Left: Flash Hou, dog tired after guiding Lindy Hou OAM on the low-vision tour.



J Hamilton

Right: The 'touchy feely' table of botanical samples.

Volunteer Guides

Low-vision tour a first for the ANBG

Losing your eyesight shouldn't mean losing access to the Gardens. So when Vision Australia asked about a walk for people with low vision, a group of Volunteer Guides created a tour to give Visitors that non-visual experience.

First, some terms: 'low vision' can include people who are blind from birth, have become blind later in life or can see some items if they are held close or magnified. People with low vision are 'vision-impaired' not 'visually impaired'.

With valuable insights from the Canberra Blind Society's Lindy Hou OAM and Debra Quinnell, we developed a walk to suit participants using canes, guide dogs and carers.

We chose features such as raspy Sandpaper Fig and velvety Emu Bush; the cool of the mist and the smell of humus in the rainforest; the gush of the Friends' Cascades; the story of the Eastern Koel chick begging from its foster parents; the citrusy scent of crushed Lemon Myrtle leaves.

Our inaugural tour started with a very popular 'touchy feely' table of botanical specimens for the Canberra Blind Society group to touch and smell.

The guides who led the tour felt privileged to help our vision-impaired visitors reconnect with the Gardens.

This tour is now available as a booked walk for anyone who wants to experience the Gardens in a new way.

**Julie Hamilton and
Glenys Agnew**

**"Thank you both so much for
organising a really lovely visit.
It was special and I hope we can
do it again soon."**

**Julia
Low-vision walk
participant**