

carbon coolers

Millions of years before the dinosaurs and the Wollemi pine, there was a tall, slender tree that looked a bit like a tree fern. At around 385 million years old, it's the oldest remains of a tree scientists have ever found. The 10m-tall tree, called wattleza, is extinct but some of its features live on in today's tree ferns, say researchers in the journal *Nature*. Fossilised remains found in upstate New York show it

had shallow roots, a tuft of fronds at the top and that it reproduced by spores. The Earth was a warmer place when the wattleza was around, and it turns out that it played a part in cooling the climate, sucking tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, reducing temperatures to what we know today.

Anna Evangelou, ABC Science Online, www.abc.net.au/science



treasures to touch

Engaging with nature and the joyous sights a garden offers to us each day is something most of us take for granted. But if you are visually impaired, this isn't so easy. Now children at the Vision Australia Education Centre in Burwood, NSW, can enjoy the delights of a garden in a different way. Volunteers from the National Australia Bank have been working over the last few months to transform a wasteland into a sensory garden planted with fragrant herbs, tactile succulents and native shrubs – a space where these children can truly relate to nature. For more information or to support Vision Australia, visit www.visionaustralia.org.au

wicked wellies

Good-quality, sturdy wellies with a fun, fresh look are the perfect way to celebrate spring rain in the garden! Fashionable and functional is what Rosie Roo Designer Wellies are all about, with funky and fabulous designs that change each season. Available in three heights: ankle, mid-calf and knee-high, these all-rubber gumboots are completely waterproof and cotton-lined with inner soles for comfort. Plus, every pair of Rosie Roo Designer Wellies comes with a free re-usable carry bag. For stockists, phone (07) 5667 7169 or visit www.rosieroo.com.au

We have five pairs of Rosie Roo Wellies (Amy) valued at \$90 each to give away. To enter, write a haiku about spring rain on the back of an envelope with your name, phone number and address, and send it to Gardening Australia/Rosie Roo, Locked Bag 5030, Alexandria, NSW 2015 by August 31.

win
DESIGNER
WELLIES



the ga quiz

How much do you know about plants and gardening? Test yourself with this quick quiz.

- 1 What were "beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze"? **1 point**
 - 2 We're told to call a spade a spade but how do you know if you've got a spade or a shovel? **2 points**
 - 3 *Coleonema pulchellum*, which flowers from late winter with a mass of small pink flowers, is better known as what? **1 point**
 - 4 What do kiwi fruit, asparagus, holly and some pawpaws have in common? **2 points**
 - 5 Cowslips have some odd common names, such as St Peter's keys, golden drops, titsy totsy or cowslop, but which part of the cowslip is traditionally used to make wine? **2 points**
 - 6 Eureka, Earliball and Sugarloaf are varieties of which winter vegetable? **2 points**
- Now find out how you rated. Search for the answers hidden in the Directory section, from page 83. Maximum score: 10 points.**