

CALL FOR PAPERS: Literature and the Wilderness

Critical Imprints Volume No XIV

Full name / name of organization:

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Contributions on varied dimensions of Literature and the Wilderness are invited for Volume XIV of Critical Imprints (ISSN: 2319-4774), the annual peer-reviewed journal of the Department of English, Loreto College, Kolkata.

The history of wilderness and mankind's complex relationship with it has often been used as a trope in literature. From powerful Biblical conceptions of the wilderness to Old English and medieval texts where the wilderness is an entity to be feared and restricted; from Romantic assertions about the benevolent forces and elemental powers inherent in nature to contemporary ideas of the 'wild' influenced by conservationist and environmentally informed views centering on the value of wilderness with regard to biodiversity, the concept of wilderness holds a distinctly moral and culturally complex value. With the advent of exploration and empire, imperial agents sought to conquer the wilderness while also finding the freedom to express their true selves outside the restrictions of civilisation. In the Anthropocene the realisation has dawned that wilderness and human civilisation are not two extremes of a binary but two strands of life woven together. Moreover, as Elaine Showalter has contended, the wilderness has traditionally been the realm of the masculine, and women writers and critics must make a home in the wilderness of male-dominated theory in order to make a lasting impact. In a similar vein, the wilderness also plays a significant role in disrupting grand narratives: in literature about and from the margins, the nourishing as well as treacherous aspects of the relationship between humankind and nature become more apparent. Indeed, the disconnection of human society from the wilderness has been blamed for the rise in mental health issues so much so that 'touching grass' which was a derogatory term has paradoxically become a clarion call.

Critical Imprints invites articles which analyse the representation of the wilderness in literature of various genres and across different time frames. The articles may be situated within the frameworks of ecocriticism, plant humanities, feminism, post colonialism and any other relevant theory.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- * Wilderness in Western adventure/exploration novels
- * Women's spaces and the wilderness

- * Wilderness as teacher
- * Civilisation and its other
- * Wilderness as a state of mind
- * Nostalgia and wilderness
- * Wilderness as sanctuary
- * Plants and animals in literature
- * Representation of landscapes in literature
- * Insanity and wilderness
- * Isolation, escape to the wilderness
- * Feminist reinterpretation of exploration and adventure
- * Postcolonial resuscitation of jungles
- * Forest folklore and oral tradition

Deadline for submission of abstracts (300 words): **20 July 2026**

Selected contributors will be informed by **3 August, 2026**

Deadline for submission of full-length articles: **9 October, 2026**

Submission Guidelines:

1. The article must be sent as an MS-Word document, with all citations following the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th Edition.
2. Full articles must be no longer than 7,000 words, including endnotes and references. Please send two separate .docx files: one including all author information and one with all identity markers removed.
3. Any images to be included with the text must be sent in JPEG format only, with a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. Any permissions required for images must be obtained by the author before the deadline for sending in the completed article.
4. The completed article must also be accompanied by a 300-word abstract, 4–5 keywords, and a brief bio-note of the contributor/s.

Disclaimer: The editors of the journal reserve the right to edit the bio-note if required. The copy-editing of the text will also be at the discretion of the editorial board.

Please mail your abstracts to lcengjournal@gmail.com by **20 July 2026**

For any queries please mail: smukherjee@loretocollege.in