

The Weekly Avocet - #510

September 11th, 2022

Hello to our Poets and Nature-lovers of The Avocet community:

**Lawn sprinkler swishes
As sun-parched grass, thankfully,
Soaks up every drop**

Dawn McCormack - Plainfield, CT - djohnson8251@yahoo.com



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

On a Summer Wind

He hears this afternoon's music
the melodious cacophony of cicada
repeats the word carefully
new notes falling from his tongue
as their chorus swells then diminishes
to a pregnant silence waiting for
first raspings to tremble leaves
anew of sycamore and locust

Nearby a house wren hops
through the herb boxes
thyme and pineapple sage
oregano beneath lemon grass
bruising scents as he dances
onto patio brick upturned tail
a tiny semaphore of happiness
as he warbles his mezzo scales

The spell broken as chickens cackle
in raucous celebration of another egg
warm and brown in fresh straw
and for a moment there is only this
summer symphony better than the old
vinyl stacked on turntables
the digital new WAV the MP3

This music uncharted no ratings
no hit parades just SATB wrapped
in dappled sunlight shimmering leaves
like glossy labels video outtakes
so mesmerizing that perhaps
tonight, he'll dream it all again

Raw joy inscribed on his three-year-old face
as he listens to tumbling notes
streaming kaleidoscopic waterfalls
causing him to tip his head search out
sonatas' swells: ravens cawing
brown thrashers trading medleys
as he points up at the trees seeking
the origin of these newly discovered sounds
borne to him on a summer wind.

Pat Anthony - Fontana, KS - metpvan@gmail.com

Like Iguanas

Heat rolls from wheat tumbling in combines
men heading into fields day gone
on 8 o'clock as sun slips into woods
in this searing summer dusk
framing golden wheat like the dark
edge of a jigsaw puzzle everyone rushing
to put the pieces together against
next night's forecast when rain and wind
might lay down the crop

we build fence panels to machinery's whine
hay being mown rakes spinning and the clank
of round bales spilling from the red and yellow
IH Case and green John Deere's air redolent
with just plain *hot* and those
sweet scents so purely summer: purple bush clover
blue alfalfa orange trumpet vine looping utility poles
pocked by woodpeckers bases wreathed
in black eyed Susans spiking upward from snowfields
of fleabane daisies mirrored in oases shimmering
out front across the two-lane where gravel yields
rubbery blacktop across the Flint Hills trail

here in barn's shade petunias' heavy perfume
wafts with the more subtle sweet alyssum
and on the porch shamrocks stand like
green folded umbrellas sheathed and dry
so that you remember as you bend wire
how hours earlier the three-year-old waved
the hose scrawling droplets across afternoon sky
air almost sizzling as you both giggled
and shook like wet hounds each drop
like spilled mercury riding down the green
spears of Stella d'Oro daylilies' small suns

yet cupping heat and trembling from the touch
of a child's probing finger questioning
such a present as a bunch of flowers
on a summer day the both of you
celebrating its warmth like iguanas
hoarding it in their very blood: wheat, whine
water, wire, sun and sunset as combines quiet
clicking like crickets as they cool.

Pat Anthony

Dixie

After they trailered the forty
year old horse deaf and half-blind
absence stalked the field

for twelve years it had been
just the two of them although
they roamed their respective pastures

his bleached mane over a coat
of cheap champagne where bubbles
rose to burst in brown freckles

his one good eye under long white lashes
watching for apples and carrots she'd bring
flakes of hay in winter to brighten his day

his strident neighs of greeting as she worked
in the blackberries his nose on her shoulder
as he leaned over the barbed wire to nuzzle

and now a girl had taken him to other pastures
where he might amble with aging friends
where children might come and pat his head

exclaim over his height and proud bearing
as the girl came to groom him spend an hour
or two away from the cares of her other world

but the woman left behind draws
drapes at night and opens them at dawn
to a gaping hole in the south fence line

where his white head should be like a beacon
amid the cedars, imagines his side still holding
her handprint as she guided him into the trailer.

Pat Anthony - Fontana, KS - metpvan@gmail.com

Melodious songs
Interspersed with high-pitched mews
Catbirds' nest nearby

Dawn McCormack - Plainfield, CT - djohnson8251@yahoo.com

“A true civilization does not destroy mountains, defile rivers, tear apart villages or murder people.” - Tanaka Shozo (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

under the high bridge
fast running water, green and cool
heartbeat of summer

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

Marmaduke

The hall light that glows all night
must comfort the big marmalade cat
that's come to own the front porch

battle-scarred and mostly feral
he heaves his massive orange girth
onto the old settee for a few hours

disappearing in the heat of the day
only to reappear when the porch light flicks on
or to greet the dawn as it dries dewy porch boards

feeds by darting into his bowl of kibble to eat hurriedly
only to lope away down to the highway
where he'll cross through the drainage culvert

setting his own rules, he brooks no petting
his silent meows marking his gratitude
as he stretches against the door glass

his choosing to return reward enough
as we count him with our two other 'rescues'
Marmaduke, the front porch cat.

Pat Anthony - Fontana, KS - metpvan@gmail.com

arctic ice melts fast
so polar bear lost footage--
stop the melting ice

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

save others, and save us
before polar bear and others
gone forever from Earth

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

September Sunrise on Lake Rosseau

Pines tower over the cottage,
our temporary haven.

Sun paints the shadowed western shore
in mottled red and yellow hues
as it rides its arc to clear the trees.

Amid wisps of mist,
a solitary loon glides
leaving barely a ripple.

An osprey launches off
the east shore rock face,
hailing all with a high-pitched cry.

Wolf tracks in soft sand
forty feet from the porch
near an inverted red canoe.

A whitetail buck steps into view,
assesses the alien in his world.
Steam rises from my coffee cup.

John Rowland

hear the rage of smoke
from the burning trees and houses
they resign no more

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

“Come forth into the light of things, let nature be your teacher.” - William Wordsworth

when nowhere to go
forest and lake always there for us
sweet scent of nature

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

Blue Crabs and Rivers

Dad bounced the '50 Ford
down the rutted two-track
out to Long Dock
south of the Ferry Yard.
A bucket of chicken guts,
bait for the crab traps,
rattling in the trunk.

Bushels of Blues
Mom in the kitchen
pots boiled; lid knocked off
by giant blue claw
Mom screamed; Dad cussed
big crab tried to get away.

Platters of crabs
filled the sideboard.
Family and friends
filled the dining room.
Beer and penny ante
on Saturday night.
Eight years old,
snug and safe.

John Rowland

skittish crane flies over
the creek in the sunny afternoon
wish she's here forever

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

“In a world where you can be anything, be kind.” - Dr. Seuss

The Open Sea

Fifteen knots
across the beam
yields a steady seven
down the rhumb line.
A gentle six-foot sea
follows under a crystal sky.
Occasional white caps
dot the azure plain
horizon to horizon.
No other ship
nor any island
provides perspective
or mitigates my insignificance.

On land
I convince myself
I am the Master
of all I imagine.
In the open sea
I cannot hide the truth,
not even from my ego.
My puny boat,
my simple skills
inadequate.
My only protection the
benevolent power
of the Universe
allowing me to savor
this sacred moment,
bathing in my irrelevance.

John Rowland

“Nature brings beauty to every time and season.” - Author unknown

chemicals sprayed on plants
Monarch butterflies alight
their numbers dwindle

Sara McNulty - Staten Island, NY - sablonde49purple@gmail.com

“URGENT ACTION NEEDED: Endangered monarch caterpillars are losing their only food source!

Monarch butterflies rely on milkweed to reproduce and lay their eggs, and it’s also the **ONLY** food source for their offspring. But these valuable plants have been vanishing at rapid rates over the past two decades, and along with it, we’ve lost **90% of the North American monarch butterfly population.**

A key driver in the eradication of milkweed is the most widely-used pesticide called glyphosate, the active ingredient in Roundup. The manufacturers of Roundup, Bayer-Monsanto, must be held accountable for being a major factor in driving these vulnerable pollinators toward extinction. **Please take action NOW to demand that Bayer-Monsanto STOP selling this butterfly-harming pesticide before we lose monarchs forever.**

Known for their vibrant orange and black wings, monarch butterflies are critical pollinators that many of our ecosystems rely on. However, profit-driven Big Ag is more concerned with their bottom line than preserving this beloved species.

A recent scientific study found that **EVERY SINGLE SAMPLE** of milkweed tested was contaminated by harmful chemicals -- with 1/3 of the samples containing pesticides at levels known to be *deadly to monarchs.*

Meanwhile, **a whopping 300 million pounds of glyphosate are used every year,** and unless we do something immediately to rein these mega-corporations in, they will not stop putting profit above pollinators. Thanks for taking action to save monarch butterflies.” - Friends of the Earth



“Habitat degradation, insufficient food and water and climate change have led to a decline in their numbers.” - Columba González-Duarte

a monarch butterfly
on the brink of extinction
they don't need to go

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

The survival of the endangered monarch butterfly depends on conservation beyond borders

Chicory, as Summer Ends

Chicory, as summer ends,
Your name tastes of grit and mint chewing gum,
The way it palatizes the tongue
In subtle ascent
To a heaven your blues
Subvent.

Chicory, as summer ends,
In blue bouquets strewn over the summer fever's
Molten demise, retracting in descent
Into the terrene profound,
At the gateway of the dew's last gleaming
Double down.

Chicory, as summer ends,
In a twilight of clinging hours
Garrulously spent, biting gingerly into a word that tells
What simply living it can't,
Blue coins of heaven spangling the befogged, diminishing
Unbound.

Mike Rydock - Middletown, PA - mrydock@gmail.com

on the swollen river
five ducks swim, chase one another
just for love and play

Byung A. Fallgren - Wyoming - pyogool65@gmail.com

Meadowlark

Its song rings out over the lake
on a sunny, cloudless Wyoming afternoon,
as our boat glides through smooth waters.

Dad and younger brother fish
while Mother and I enjoy the gentle breeze
that carries with it the scent of pine trees,
whiff of worms used for bait.

At the age of thirteen,
knowing little about the meadowlark,
I delight in the bird's cheerful tune,
and the boat's gentle motion,
observe, with my limited vision, the lake, grass, trees, sky,
happy in summer.

Abbie Johnson Taylor - Sheridan, WY - abbietaylor945@gmail.com

After a Summer Cold Front

The sun finally shines in a blue sky filled with white clouds.
A gentle breeze blows, as I sit in my back yard.
Birds flit about in branches above me.
With my limited vision, I can't see them,
but I hear their wings and joyous songs.
A fly circles my head--I wave it away.
In distant places, forest fires rage.
But here, they're momentarily forgotten.

Abbie Johnson Taylor

Summers in My Younger Years (A Zip Ode)

I loved summers in my hometown,
ice cream,
band concerts, swimming at the park,
picnicking and hiking in the mountains.
Joy!

Abbie Johnson Taylor - Sheridan, WY - abbietaylor945@gmail.com

“Plant seeds of happiness, hope, success, and love; it will all come back to you in abundance. This is the law of nature.” - Steve Maraboli,

fragile green offshoots
held in elephant feet hollows
sycamore stands proud

Sara McNulty - Staten Island, NY - sablonde49purple@gmail.com

Nature Hike

As I walk down the Braille Trail,
I must hold onto the rail
when it's steep or else I'll fail.

As I walk, the moisture stops
dripping from all the treetops.

Since there is no more spray,
I no longer need to pray
for that glorious sunshine ray.

I know I have nothing to fear,
but I listen with one ear

for the lumbering sound of a bear
or a moose with more than one ear.

Onward I boldly tread
till I come to a sign I can read.

It's in Braille and print, and I feel
the dots that are unlike an eel.

I look for a place to stop
when I climb to the very top

of a hill where the view will arrest,
and there, I sit down and rest.

Abbie Johnson Taylor - Sheridan, WY - abbietaylor945@gmail.com

If we fail the sky will be empty in the next century...

“If you will stay close to nature, to its simplicity, to the small things hardly noticeable, those things can unexpectedly become great and immeasurable.” - Rainer Maria Rilke

Respect and protect that which gives you your life!

Between Shadows

A lone bee hums and kisses blue salvia
as I water the garden,
fill the birdbath.

Routines tie to earth,
keep us grounded.

The morning enters like a lady-in-waiting,
fluffs her golden skirts.
One butterfly
breakfasts in pinky winkies.

Bee, butterfly where are your brothers, sisters?

Neglect and loss teach us
how to live within ourselves.

Like the moon -- just a white sphere in blue.

The sun crisps leaves
of sweetgum and sourwood.

Haze
enfolds juniper and bay bushes.

We want to drink the day's nectar,
not swallow promises forgotten.

Wrens frenzy around the feeder
as I leave behind outside worries--
fate--
enter the house of shadows
and light.

Helga Kidder - Chattanooga, TN - helga.kidder@comcast.net

Campfire!

We hear the calls of "Campfire!"
We rally around the ring
We come from around the country
We gather from around the globe
We are stunted by timber & stars
We hear out the rangers
The rangers' stories range
From bear to John Muir
To gnomes that live in The Dome
Their anecdotes hold like smoke in our clothes
Like sticky marshmallow fingers
We sing silly songs
We sing songs that bring us in sync
Sparks fly with handsome campers
This camp has us fired up!

Kristin Ruth Lawrence - Sebastopol, CA - webwalker17@aol.com

"Man is not, by nature, deserving of all that he wants. When we think that we are automatically entitled to something, that is when we start walking all over others to get it."
- Criss Jami

Olmstead Point

We stop at Olmsted Point
Named for the father & son
Of American landscape design
We are sizing up figures big
Rich winds encircle us
Triangles engorged
A Sierra treasure chest
Look for the largest arch parted
Clouds resting on mountains
Tenaya Lake a rectangle electric
This area decorates creation
Eminent men
We desire to feed marmots rotund
But we know this is poor form

Kristin Ruth Lawrence - Sebastopol, CA - webwalker17@aol.com

“Go outside. Don’t tell anyone and don’t bring your phone. Start walking and keep walking until you no longer know the road like the palm of your hand, because we walk the same roads day in and day out, to the bus and back home and we cease to see. We walk in our sleep and teach our muscles to work without thinking and I dare you to walk where you have not yet walked, and I dare you to notice. Don’t try to get anything out of it because you won’t. Don’t try to make use of it because you can’t. And that’s the point. Just walk, see, sit down if you like. And be. Just be, whatever you are with whatever you have, and realize that that is enough to be happy. There’s a whole world out there, right outside your window. You’d be a fool to miss it.” - Charlotte Eriksson

Tuolumne Meadows

We wind the rocky road to Tuolumne Meadows
After a dip frigid in Tenaya Lake
Surpass domes & cones scooped from stone
Old chocolate mountains, peaks topped with cream
The Meadows are sprinkled with sweet
Wildflowers & streams
Trails melt together, beginning, ending
We relish store grill frosties
Our own precipices of pleasure

Kristin Ruth Lawrence - Sebastopol, CA - webwalker17@aol.com

“I think having land and not ruining it is the most beautiful art that anybody could ever want.” - Andy Warhol

There

There is the road & meadow that shimmer in
The rock where I kissed a lad on a fervent evening
There is the lodge where Dad 1st spotted Mom
The ring where he guided me in driving
There is the area where I plucked
An Indian head treasure rusted in the dust
There is where I was bedogged by a bear,
Rode scores of horses
There is the way captivating to The Small Lake
The sign that always says camp is packed
There are the secrets that we keep
The payphone for staying in touch with home
There are our prized sites biding fires shining

Kristin Ruth Lawrence - Sebastopol, CA - webwalker17@aol.com

Please write to each other...

The Burning Question for our generation is:

What are we going to do to stop or even just slow down Climate Change?

Do you feel like there is nothing you can do about climate change? Well, there is, even if we all do small things it will make a great difference. Alice C. Hill (**the David M. Rubenstein senior fellow for energy and the environment at the Council on Foreign Relations.**) states the first thing we all need to do is not shy away from the subject. Talk about, write about, climate change to everyone you know and meet. Write your congressperson and Senators. Let them know what you think and fear!

I want to do another Saving Mother Earth Weekly Avocet issue, so I am looking for poems that address the most important issues of today, so please write about what you think and fear of the coming end of our world as we know it. But if we join together, work together, we can make a difference to Save Mother Earth, the only home we have.

Show you care. There are so many topics to write about when it comes to Climate Change. Please find one you are passionate about and write about it!

If you would like to become a supporting member of The Avocet community, The Avocet is only \$28.00 for 4 perfectly bounded issues and 52 weeks of The Weekly Avocet, every weekend, plus other poetry surprises, with the best Nature poetry by the best Nature poets in America, a steal of a deal. Please

Please make your check out to The Avocet and send to:

**The Avocet
P.O. Box 19186
Fountain Hills, AZ 85269**

We hope we provoked you; that you leave having experienced a complete emotional response to the poetry. I want to thank our Poets for sharing their work with us this week. **And “Thank you for reading, dear reader!”**

Be well, see you next weekend,

Charles Portolano, Editor/Publisher and Vivian and Valerie Portolano, Co-Editors
of The Avocet, a Journal of Nature Poetry and The Weekly Avocet, every weekend.

The American Avocet

I watch unseen this large,
long-legged shorebird,
with its pied plumage
and a dash of red
around its head and neck,
scampering along
the coastline
searching to snatch-up
some aquatic insect
or a small invertebrate
hidden beneath
the brackish waters
of this saltmarsh.

I watch unseen
it swing its odd,
long, up-curved bill
through the shallow,
still waters, catching
a tiny creature,
trapping it in its bill,
racing off to its nest to
feed her four hatchings
with this feast she found.

I watch in awe
as the male
grows protective,
fearlessly fending off
an encroaching
common black raven,
attacking this intruder,
striking at it with its bill.

I watch in wonder
as they swim as a family
just days after
the young ones are born,
then back to the nest to
rest where its kind flocks
together in a community.

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