

The Weekly Avocet - #595

April 28th, 2024

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

**I hang out with clouds,
pines, robins, and pink roses
the trees and I talk**

Carol Bezin - Arkdale, WI - angelbezin@gmail.com



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

the queen of the berries

she can spot blueberries at a hundred paces
she's the queen of the berries
the quintessential berry aficionado
in pursuit of blackberries and raspberries
blueberries and juneberries and mulberries
and once she locates their glorious source
there's a feast to be had
a feast to end all feasts

there's no patience for gathering
carrying away for later
there's living only for those moments
of fructosic rapture
explosions of flavor
gastronomic bliss

i join her in her quest
revel in the spoils
and after ... we journey on
with satiated bellies
stained sticky fingers
and smiles on our faces

Lloyd Abrams

in the realm of the cormorant

a double-crested cormorant
is perched atop a wooden pile
sunk into the middle
of the milburn boat basin

it's sun-drying its feathers
with wings folded
like an f35 lightning
tied down onto an aircraft carrier

with a deceptively leisurely liftoff
it swoops down
dives underwater
and soon emerges
with its wriggling prey

Lloyd Abrams - Freeport, NY - lbabrams@gmail.com

worrying about the birds

we'll be away for two weeks ...
every single day for the past year
we've fed the birds
filled the suet cage
poured quarts of seeds into a lucite feeder
strewed handfuls of peanuts
for the blue jays and cardinals
for the red-headed woodpecker and
of course...
those incorrigible squirrels
they all certainly have a good thing going

so to salve my conscience
i put out *two* bricks of suet
tossed out *fifteen* handfuls of peanuts
and dropped an extra quart of birdseed
next to the feeder
i wonder how they'll manage
of course everything we gave them
will be gone the first day--
that's how quickly they'll scarf it all down

i worry about them
hope they'll be okay

Lloyd Abrams - Freeport, NY - lbabrams@gmail.com

Mother Earth

I'm Mother Earth.
The sun is my daughter.
The moon is my son.
The planets and stars are members of my family.
Everyone in the solar system protects me, earth.
I'm proud of my family.
It's the subjects within my planet
That aren't always on my side.
Why is that?
Why should I fear my own people?
We should be working together for
our planet, Our people, our environment, our wildlife.

Trish Hubschman - Lancaster, SC - plutzhub@gmail.com

Renewal

They cross the street slowly,
twelve of them,
tiny heads up,
flat feet planted firmly on the pavement.
Mother Goose leads the parade.
Father Goose guards the rear.
Cars stop.
Drivers relax.
Everyone smiles.
A tiny moment in a busy day.
A reminder of why we're here.

Life renewing life.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey

The Deer and me

I live with a herd of twenty-three deer.
They wander our streets and back yards
as if they own the neighborhood,
because they do. They were here first.

When I moved here, I declared supremacy
over the marauders, vowing to save
my flowers and vegetables inside
wire cages and behind high fences.

It took a couple of summers to succumb
to their superior skill and determination.
Tomatoes and petunias disappeared, wire
cages no match for hungry bucks with horns.

That winter, we had days of snow and ice.
When the snow melted, I discovered the ivy
beds around my deck had been eaten bare.
I rationalized leaves would return in spring.

They did and one day, I discovered a newborn
fawn, sleeping peacefully in the ivy bed, while
the new mom trustingly nibbled nearby.
We exchanged gazes. I happily surrendered.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

My Secret Garden

(When I read story books to my grandchildren about fairies and magical places, I must admit I sometimes wish for one of those secret hideaways where I could escape the complications and responsibilities of adulthood. One evening, a friend took me on a tour of her springtime garden. Beneath the trees was a perfect circle of Lady Slippers. The only thing missing was fairies dancing in the moonlight.)

I have a secret hiding place,
a spot untouched by time and space.

It's hidden underneath the trees,
and carpeted by last year's leaves.

My favorite time is in the spring,
when Lady Slippers form a ring.

The scent of damp moss is perfume,
that permeates my outdoor room.

Wild birds become my loyal pets,
resting among the violets,

and when the moon is full and bright,
the fairies dance all through the night.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

Spring Arrives on Hummingbird Wings

Whirring green wings helicopter around my head,
pausing for lunch amidst the Linton roses I'm watering.
I hold my breath, hoping my guest won't fly away.
The ruby-throated sprite steals a drink from the
hose spray, then settles into a large, water-filled leaf,
fluttering up and down, shaking droplets from tiny
feathers. She buzzes me one more time, as if to say,
"Thanks for the shower,"
before disappearing into the pink azalea bushes.
Spring has arrived.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

A Song to Spring

(Can be sung to the tune of "London Bridge is Falling Down")

Yellow pollen fills the air,
fills the air, fills the air.

Clogs our nose and gums our hair.
Falalalalala.

Then the rain comes falling down,
falling down, falling down.

Softens up the winter ground.
Falalalalala.

Makes the green grass grow and grow,
grow and grow, grow and grow.

Forces us to mow and mow.
Falalalalala.

Now I need to end this song,
end this song, end this song.
Glad you all could sing along.
Falalalalala.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

Springtime Battle

Mountains cry in spring,
giving up their icy crown
for humble blossoms.

Tears fill rocky creeks,
home to largemouth bass, catfish,
bound for spring's table.

Sun warms dark hollows.
Lady slippers grace the crown.
Spring triumphs once more.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

Being Indian

Being Indian is not just a percentage of bloodline.
It is a feeling in your heart, connecting
you to Mother Earth, to the ancestors.

It's sitting beneath an ancient oak,
listening to the wind whisper to the leaves,
thanking the Great Spirit for his blessings.

It's marveling at the grandeur of a canyon,
the quiet whir of tiny hummingbird wings,
lightning dancing across a darkening sky.

It's shedding tears for concrete landscapes,
polluted air, and plastic-filled oceans.
Maybe that's not just being Indian.

Maybe that's being human.

Sharon Canfield Dorsey - Williamsburg, VA - shargypsy@aol.com

They go Home with You

Pine forest, they welcome you; and,
no feet, go with you home;
listen to the wind,
smell the world,
shiver in joy, sorrow, laugh, or muse
in angst of trees.
They welcome your visit,
with open arms of rough and soft
boughs; absorb and give out scent; fill
the lung with earthly breath, sweet and grand
of winter and summer.
They go with you when you leave,
share the heavenly dinner,
thought-free, comfy bed.
unbeknownst you, stay in your room and
soak into your blood and soul.

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

Buds

some buds
are ready
some not
like
human

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

The Tulip

She began her day in April,
green and ambitious; the only survivor
of the five. What happened to the others?
Frozen by the April snow.
This March, with barmy days, she is
confused if it is May; balmy March,
can she see the world this early?
What if her tender greens would freeze
by the capricious wind, like an impatient
daddy bird chipping away the eggshell, only
to expose the unready one to its end.
She touches her finger above the soil;
feels the warmth of the sun! wonders if
climate change is real; this March's like May!
can she sprout this early and still bloom?
Under the dry leaves, her tender greens
waits for May, just to be safe. Then
she would bounce to bloom; shout
at the world;
may climate change be benign!

Byung A. Fallgren

Crocuses

new crocuses
eaten by a deer
wait for
next
spring

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

Mother Nature

Look at what we've done?
We tarnished your beauty Mother Nature!
We turned a blind eye to you.

Your rivers no longer run clear.
Now, they look brown with excessive sediment,
or bright green from algae brought on by excessive fertilizer.

Your lush forests are denuded,
due to uncontrolled cutting, or naked because of acid rain.

We choke on air that is polluted with toxic gasses.
Our eyes burn and our cities have disappeared, due to dense smog.

Your wildlife is in peril because their habitat is gone.
The climate is changing, forcing them to scatter for survival.

But we know better now!
We realize that the environment isn't free for us to do as we choose.
He gave us dominion, but that comes with responsibility.

We've become environmentalists and work to restore what we destroyed.
We educate so everyone knows about cause and effect.
We planted new trees that turn vivid colors in the Fall.
Our rivers are alive with fish and wildlife dwell in places other than a zoo.
We can take a deep breath and drink clean water.

The bluebird has returned, and eagles populate the sky.
The night is abuzz with the sound of crickets and fireflies light up the night.

Energy is conserved, so we don't have to burn fossil fuels to generate it.
Clean energy has become a buzz word; we insulate and turn off unneeded lights.

But we still have much to do!
For one, we have to convince those
that take our environment for granted or pretend the obvious isn't so.
We won't mortgage the future for our children!

Welcome back Mother Nature!

Michael J. Brinkac - Charlottesville, VA - mnbrinkac@comcast.net

Walking in Fireweed, a Remembrance

When we climbed the hill together
my old friend and me,
tawny grass close-covering the fields
rippled like a horse's mane.
We eager hikers clambered up the steep path
through the orchard
passing pickers taking apples in sacks
stripping the trees
of Paula Reds and Jersey Macs.

These were early season apples, as you knew.
Leaning upon the lower branch
you observed how
the saplings shot their middle stems
to the sky
as if they had something to prove.

“Not me!

I'm as ancient as the cider trees
near the fireweed
down here.” you said,
but I blocked my ears.

In winter you passed on, missing this clear
Fall air, these tawny fields
that wave in ripple
patterns like a sorrel pony's mane
over my dog cruising for quail.
I inhale the fragrance of windfall
apples and think of you leaning
on your branch, pointing
to the apples in the fireweed.

Thousands of purple blossoms
titillated by the wind,
spring up like armies.
This is the plant that covers
burnt-out land, bringing the balm of green
to desolation, - it gives back the seed
of what was lost.
This is how I'll remember you, my friend,
sturdy as old cider trees,
blessed, among the fireweed.

Margaret Bobalek King

on early spring day
Lake Petenwell calm and still
mirrors the sky

Carol Bezin - Arkdale, WI - angelbezin@gmail.com

Sanctuary

When the sandpaper roughness
of human striving
bloodies and bruises
my fragile skin
and my eyes dull
to the chaos around me,
I quietly seek
the eternally open arms
of the natural world.
Where solitude
is no longer loneliness
and hope for renewal
survives
the harshest winter storm.
Where cool, gentle breezes
playfully lift my unkempt hair
and brilliant,
long-traveled sunlight
glows red
through closed eyelids,
bathing my battle-weary face
in comforting warmth.
Where birds alight upon
sheltered branches
singing ancient melodies,
dwells a deep, abiding peace;
a sacred stillness
within nature's motion.
Living, breathing present moment,
immersed within
a landscape of kinship and truth.

Torie Cooper - Tempe, AZ - Torie.Cooper4@gmail.com

Kindness is a currency, having greater value than money...

“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” - Jane Goodall (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

eleven years old
new hampshire, 1965
pup tent, silence
so many stars overhead:
my last whippoorwill

~ ~ ~

her last day
holding on for one more
strawberry

~ ~ ~

hyacinth
not knowing
what meant love to you

~ ~ ~

inching my way
across the icy porch--

crocuses!

~ ~ ~

flower pressed
into a book
still whispering:
forever

~ ~ ~

a night apart--
you email pictures
of turkeys
fanning their tail feathers
the females aren't impressed

Kelley White - Philadelphia, PA - kellywhitemd@yahoo.com

stepping out the door
chickadee sits on the feeder
both of us stand still

Carol Bezin - Arkdale, WI - angelbezin@gmail.com



Louisa Reid - Barboursville, VA - holdfastvivasco@gmail.com

“Study nature, love nature, stay close to nature. It will never fail you.” - Frank Lloyd Wright (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

Telling the Bees

(A villanelle titled “Telling The Bees” about bees and how important they are to our world. Its inspiration was found in the Celtic custom of making certain to respect the beehive by informing them of the death of a family member, lest they swarm and leave in grief.)

Lovely bees, golden bees--your master now numbers as one of the dead,
Leaving me, leaving you, this blithe garden sprinkled in diamonds of dew;
While the sun shone on the tears of white daisies weeping in their beds.

Pretty bees, please stay, don't fly away--I will keep you safe in his stead,
Sowing clover in green pastures, seeding them full of flowers of blue.
Lovely bees, golden bees--your master now numbers as one of the dead.

Busy bees all a-buzz--I bring you this news before his rites have been read,
Draping black ribbons of grief over your hive--the shade of sad truths;
While the sun shines on the tears of stunned daisies weeping in their beds.

Worker bees toiling--breeding plants that will make our daily bread;
I pledge full faith in your Queen every day that dawns fresh and new.
Lovely bees, golden bees--your master now numbers as one of the dead.

Joyful bees--your amber sweet honey tastes of pure hope unsaid,
A stockpile of summertime when cold wind blows through the yews;
While no sun shines on the tears of dried daisies weeping in their beds.

Dear bees--leave and Earth's dead, a waste land from which all colors have bled;
Please stay, seize the day, lest this world turn barren and nude as the Moon.
Lovely bees, golden bees--your master now numbers as one of the dead,
While the sun shines on the tears of white daisies weeping in their beds.

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“There's a whole world out there, right outside your window. You'd be a fool to miss it.” - Charlotte Eriksson (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

no buds in morning
honeysuckle leafing out
in the afternoon

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shoots of green leeks up
tiger lilies six inches
sit in melting snow

Carol Bezin - Arkdale, WI - angelbezin@gmail.com

Blue Crows

...and how like beings of a much higher order are these gay deceivers! - John James Audubon

Woven within spring's opera of birdsong echoing through a bandshell of forest,
The single note of a blue jay trumps all other cascading arpeggios and textures,
Building into a complex canon performed by a joyous avian chorus.
But with a second raucous outburst, silence reigns after a throb of agitated wings.
Every bird stills, frozen under tented leaves... and the red-tailed hawk King
Glides soundlessly overhead, backlit in blue as he seeks his breakfast.

The silence draws out, thinner and thinner, a silken thread of breathlessness--
Until a flash of brilliant feathers bursts free of the trees, blue to match the sky,
Announcing the all-clear from danger as the sentinel jay delights in free flight.
Yet most watchers are disappointed that the azure streak does not belong
To an indigo bunting or a sweetly-singing mountain bluebird of happiness,
And disdains the crisp uniforms worn by town-crier jays, male and female.

Based on a longtime reputation for mischief which humans should recognize
As similar to their own knavery, little old ladies wage war on "nasty birds!"...
Perhaps unaware of their talents and intelligence, perhaps out of a jealousy
Born of a secret admiration of the undeniable skills of these master magicians.
Armed with the age-old handy weapon: the witch's broom living on the porch,
A silver-haired brigade tries to rout brazen flocks of jays from feeders,

In favor of less boisterous birds who are just as capable of skullduggery--
Like the doves who are all too eager to put aside peace in favor of tasty treats.
Members of the tribe of Crow, blue jays wear their wizardry on their backs:
Their bright sapphire feathers all an illusion-- a glamorous refraction of light.
They sing notes one to the other so sweet and pure one looks twice,
Seeking a nightingale as the source of such an impossible beauty in song.

Tight-knit families chatter all the news of the forest as they cache acorns,
And many a sacred grove of oaks has been planted by blue Merlin birds,
Who nest there to keep their babies immersed in the power of the trees.
Masters of subtleties, each jay's plumage is different while seeming the same--
Each black neck amulet being as unique as a name.
Crests raised with the curiosity of the clever, they swarm to my feeders

By fives and by tens, and I marvel how quickly spreads word of a bird nerd.
Heads a-tilt, they ponder how to dazzle the cat with sleight-of-wing trickeries,
Listen to the incantatory chants of the warm west wind,
And coven together to share the ways of pure magic with their spells of blue.
What say ye, countrymen, to a jabber of jays?
I say stay--you wizards of the wind and teach me the sorceries of air.

Louisa Reid - Barboursville, VA - holdfastvaviasco@gmail.com

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

There was snow and ice
then rain and sun mixed the dough
earth rises alive

Aimé E Duclos - South Berwick, ME - ajduclos@gwi.net

Again

in the time it takes
for a robin to wrestle and wolf a worm
winter has withered
and spring has sprouted
snow coated everything a sinking memory
feeding flora into verdant view
once folded and frozen lilacs
arise with wisps of green garnish
explode as I watch
while I sip this morning's Sumatran joe
warmed by a bright bountiful sun
aglow through the kitchen window
a scene stolen from past Aprils
revived in renewal
rebirth of green grass
forsythia again creamy butterscotch yellow
squill swimming blue smooths
soothes frosted strands
tendrils of warming hearts
in the time it takes
for a robin to wrestle and wolf a worm

Aimé E Duclos - South Berwick, ME - ajduclos@gwi.net

“The world of life, of spontaneity, the world of dawn and sunset and starlight, the world of soil and sunshine, of meadow and woodland, of hickory and oak and maple and hemlock and pineland forests, of wildlife dwelling around us, of the river and its wellbeing -- all of this [is] the integral community in which we live.” Thomas Berry (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

“We need joy as we need air. We need love as we need water. We need each other as we need the earth we share.” - Maya Angelou (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)

An Interview with a Tree

As I walked through the forest,
I come across a dying tree.
I heard loud and clear,
how are you my friend.
I am by myself,
am I hearing things~I said out loud.
It is me your friend,
a dying oak tree.
Oh my,
a tree is talking to me.
Yes, I am old and at the end of my life span.
I guess as a tree you have seen many changes,
yes--from life to people.
The birds loved to build their nests,
and have their families in my branches.
In the fall the squirrels hid their nuts,
and I kept them warm in the cold winters.
The kids loved to climb me each summer,
and I loved to hear them laugh.
Why are you dying,
are you sick.
I am not sick,
I am worn out.
You see,
some cut my branches for fun and for firewood.
When I was young,
I kept growing.
Then they kept cutting,
more and more each year.
I could not keep up,
now my days are few.
I am dying,
my life has been fulfilled.

Paula Goldsmith - Mesa, AZ - wiinger@aol.com

Please be kind, write to each other...

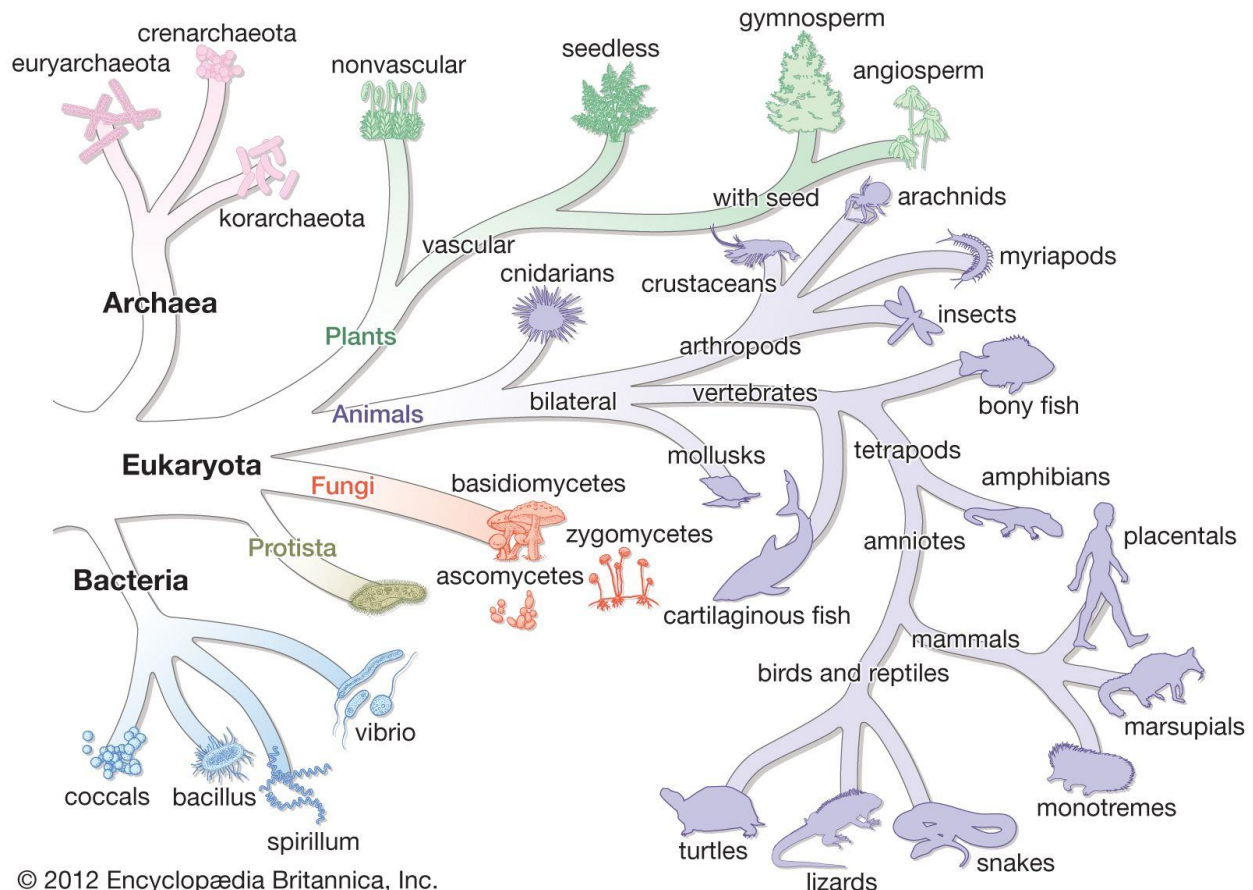
(If you want to hear from poets about your work, then write them about their work)

The Sacred Tree of Life

Out of Africa
we branched out,
our branches spreading skyward,
our roots diving deep
into the dirt of our Earth
for we all need
shelter from the storms,
sunlight, water, and good soil
if we are to all survive
and truly thrive in this world
to set ourselves free,
but from our beginnings
the tree of life is
heavily fertilized with greed
for we all come in different sizes,
we all come looking different,
some grow tall and strong,
while others remain small,
but we all need
sunlight, water, and good soil
to set ourselves free
but from our beginnings
there are those who
will block out the sun
for anyone not their kind,
there are those who
will not share the warmth
from high above,
won't share the life-giving
gift of water
needed for all to survive
and truly thrive in this hard world
for the tree of life is
heavily fertilized with greed
where only the few will
allow others to know
the warmth of the sun
to grow up and out,
for our branches to touch the sky
for our roots to dive deep
into the dirt of the Earth
for in nature all life
is interconnected
if we are to all bear fruit.

Charles Portolano - cportolano@hotmail.com

The Tree of Life is a symbol that represents the interconnected nature of all things in the universe.



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The Tree of life illustrating the three-domain classification of life-forms. The tree of life according to the three-domain system of biological classification.

In science the tree of life is often used as a metaphor for the connection between the diversity of all life on Earth. Every organism on Earth appears to descend from a single common ancestor that existed roughly 3.5 billion years ago. As that ancestor and its descendants reproduced, life diverged in a process called speciation. These divergences are often compared to branches on a single evolutionary tree. Phylogenetics is the study of how different groups of organisms are related to each other, using genetics and other evidence to create diagrams that explain evolutionary history, called phylogenetic trees (or phylogenies).

It is commonly depicted as a large tree with roots that spread inward to the ground, and branches that spread outward to the sky. The idea of the Tree of Life is common in cultures throughout the world, and it represents the source of life, a force that connects all lives, or the cycle of life and death itself.

The **tree of life** is a fundamental archetype found in many mythological, religious, and philosophical traditions across the world. Its origins are deeply rooted in ancient symbolism and cultural beliefs. Let's explore its fascinating history:

Ancient Mesopotamia:

One of the earliest depictions of the tree of life can be traced back to ancient Mesopotamia. Here, it appears as a **sacred tree** symbolizing the connection between the heavens, the earth, and the underworld.

The Assyrian tree of life, represented by nodes and crisscrossing lines, held religious significance. It often appeared in palace reliefs attended by winged genies or the king himself. In the **Epic of Gilgamesh**, a quest for immortality involves searching for a "plant of birth" that would grant eternal life.

Ancient Egypt:

In Egyptian mythology, the tree of life represented **eternal life and regeneration**. It was associated with concepts of renewal and continuity.

Ancient Iran:

Avestan literature and Iranian mythology feature several sacred vegetal icons related to life and immortality.

Notable examples include the **Amesha Spenta**, guardian of plants; the **Gaokerena**, a tree symbolizing life in the universe; and the **barsom**, used in Zoroastrian rituals.

Norse Mythology:

The Norse believed in **Yggdrasil**, the world tree, which connected different realms: the heavens, the earth, and the underworld.

Yggdrasil served as a cosmic axis, supporting the entire universe.

Biblical References:

In the Book of Genesis, the tree of life appears in the Garden of Eden. It is closely linked to the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

The tree of life represents a connection between heaven and earth, and its fruit grants eternal life.

Iroquois Mythology:

According to the myth "The World on the Turtle's Back," the tree of life exists in the heavens where the first humans lived. A pregnant woman fell from there and landed in an endless sea.

Celtic Culture:

The **Celtic tree of life** symbolizes the passage for deceased ancestors to cross between heaven and earth. It is sacred and appears in tapestries, paintings, and statues.

In summary, the tree of life transcends time and culture, embodying themes of immortality, fertility, and interconnectedness. Its roots run deep, intertwining with human beliefs and aspirations throughout history

Tree of life, a widespread archetype common to many religions, mythologies, and folktales. The tree of life is a common idea in cultures throughout the world. It represents, at times, the source of life, a force that connects all lives, or the cycle of life and death itself. Common features of various myths include supernatural guardians protecting the tree and its fruits that grant those who eat them immortality. It is typically planted at the centre of the world, often within a sacred garden or forest. The tree of life is closely related to both the world tree, a motif found across many cultures that is typified by the Norse belief in the sacred tree Yggdrasil, and the tree of knowledge, which was said to grow in the Garden of Eden in Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

A griffin depicted as nibbling on a sacred tree (left), carved ivory plaque from the Mesopotamian kingdom of Assyria, c. 8th–7th century BCE.(more)

The motif of a sacred tree was common in ancient Mesopotamia and spread to many neighboring regions, including Egypt and Greece. While scholars believe this tree symbol held religious significance, there is no consensus that it represents the same tree of life idea that became a feature of later religious art and thought in the region. In ancient Assyria this sacred tree became a symbol of the divine order of things as personified by the king.

In some cultures a sacred tree was said to bear fruit that could grant immortality to the one who ate it. In Chinese Daoist mythology the *pantao* is a peach that ripens once every 3,000 years and is the food of the immortals. In Norse mythology apples of immortality are grown on sacred trees guarded by the goddess Idun.

In the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible, both the tree of life and the tree of knowledge are said to grow in the Garden of Eden. After Adam and Eve eat from the tree of knowledge, God bars them from the garden, setting an angel with a flaming sword to keep them out so they will not eat from the tree of life and become immortal. The idea of the tree of life subsequently became important to many Jewish and Christian traditions. In Kabbala a numbered diagram with a central trunk and branches reaching left and right is said to represent the attributes and powers of God. Christian thought sometimes relates the tree of life to Jesus, the source of eternal life in Christian theology. It is sometimes related to the cross upon which Christians believe Jesus was crucified.

In Norse mythology Yggdrasill is an enormous ash tree that connects the nine worlds, including the underworld (Niflheim), the earth (Midgard), and the realm of the gods (Asgard). Yggdrasill is associated with both life and death: it acts as a gallows that the god Odin hangs himself from in order to gain mystical knowledge, and it is said to be the source of new life after Ragnarök, the catastrophic final war of the gods.

The Celtic tree of life is associated with the dead. Celtic tribes would preserve a tree in the centre of their settlements to act as a sacred site. The tree was said to allow access to the Celtic otherworld, a realm of the dead and other spirits.

Please share this issue with all those you know who love Mother earth, our only home we have! Thank you.

Showcase your work in The Weekly Avocet.

Time to share up to four of your Spring themed poems for The Weekly Avocet,

Spring photos (4),

**Spring haiku (up to 10),
Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems
(as many as you can write)**

Please read the guidelines before submitting

Please send your submission to angeldec24@hotmail.com

Please put **Spring/your last name in the subject line.**

Please be kind and address your submission to me, Charles.

(Just so you know: I do not read work from a poet who doesn't take the time to address their submission to the editor, who they want to read their work.)

Please do not just send a poem, please write a few lines of hello.

Please do not have all caps in the title of your poem.

There is no line limit per poem.

Please no religious references.

Please use single spaced lines.

Please remember, we welcome previously published poems.

Please put your name - town, state - email address under your poem. No Zip codes.

Please send your poem in both the body of an email and an attachment, **no pdf file.**

We look forward to reading your Spring submissions...

The Burning Question for us Earthlings is:

What are you/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 to your congressperson and Senators. Let them know what you think and fear!

I want to have, at least, one Saving Mother Earth poem in each issue of The Weekly Avocet, so I am always looking for poems that address our 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. A world our great grandkids will never know. A Mother Nature who is no longer kind.

But if we join together, maybe, just maybe, working 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!

Write a Tell-off poem letting the world know what you are feeling about what is being done right before our eyes by those who claim to want what best for all of us.

Think it out in your head, then put it down on the page, then fight with it, get your rage out, then send it to us to share, so you can see your voice, your words, being read, being heard...

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.

Charles Portolano - Fountain Hills, AZ - cportolano@hotmail.com

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 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.

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