

# muttering thunder

---

an annual of fine haiku & art



edited by Allan Burns

---

art by Ron C. Moss

No. 2, 2015

Copyright © 2015 by Allan Burns & Ron C. Moss

All rights reserved. *muttering thunder* is an ebook that may be downloaded for readers' personal use only. This book may not be sold, and no part of it may be reproduced, distributed, or stored in a retrieval system in any form or by any means, written, electronic, mechanical, recording, photocopying, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the editor and publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews and other uses permitted by copyright laws.

The copyright of the individual haiku rests with their authors.

[mutteringthunder.weebly.com](http://mutteringthunder.weebly.com)

**Dedicated to the Memory of Steve Sanfield  
Writer, Storyteller, Freedom Rider  
(1937–2015)**

The earth shakes  
just enough  
to remind us.

All the paths  
vanished  
under last night's leaves.

field guide  
lost somewhere among  
the wildflowers

Freedom Riders: Racially mixed Civil Rights activists who challenged segregation on interstate buses and in public lunch counters in the Southern U.S. during the 1960s.

## Preface

Aloha.

The sparsely traveled road terminated about two kilometers up the river valley at a locked gate: *Private Property. Beware of Dog*. It was the far side of the Hanalei National Wildlife Refuge, established on the windward northern coast of Kauai, the oldest and westernmost extant major island of the Hawaiian chain. The island's center, Mt. Waialeale—inaccessible by car and very rarely even glimpsed—is reputedly the wettest spot on the planet, receiving more than 11 meters (or approximately 37.5 *feet*) of rain a year. From a tourist's perspective, it's a rumor wreathed in clouds. The North Shore, though, was all dreamy beaches and cascading waterfalls—but just a few miles southwest the land became arid, sun-scorched, and scarred by Waimea Canyon, 3,600 feet deep, two miles wide, and ten miles long. Truly, Hawaii is a region of wonders and contrasts. But its wildlife refuges have been established for good reasons.

Heading back toward the main road, one could hardly help but reflect on how the surrounding irrigated taro patches aren't exactly what would likely come to mind if you were asked to envision a wildlife refuge. Yet the place served the purpose for which it had been created in 1972: to protect native Hawaiian bird species, such as the Hawaiian goose, or nēnē (pronounced “nay-nay”), the state bird. Only half the size of the common Canada goose, two waddled by in a ditch, streaked necks in serpentine motion, cautiously picking each step with black webbed feet, issuing soft closed-beak calls. Beyond them in a taro field stood a Pacific golden-plover in his striking black-breasted breeding plumage. He had winged from Arctic nesting grounds across thousands of kilometers of open ocean to be there.

Hawaiian birds are, without a doubt, badly in need of protection. Since the arrival of European settlers to the Hawaiian islands, 71 of 113 endemic avian species have been driven to extinction. Of the 42 that remain, 32 are federally listed as endangered, and 10 of those have not even been sighted for up to 40 years. Virtually all the remaining native songbirds reside in remote mountain forests, protected, finally, by topography. Of all the many sad stories of Hawaii's birds, one stands out particularly in my mind: The po'o-uli, a black-faced honeycreeper and a unique member of its genus, was discovered on Maui as recently as 1973. Within just 10 years, however, the population crashed by 90 percent under the combined pressures of habitat destruction and human-introduced predators, such as cats, rats, and mongooses. The last-ditch creation of a natural reserve was too little too late. By 1997, only three known individuals remained. In 2004, after desperate attempts by biologists to locate a mate failed, the last po'o-uli died in captivity. No other bird, living or in the known fossil record, has a structure similar to this ghost.

Meanwhile, everywhere you look or listen on the islands, you find introduced and invasive species: spotted doves, zebra doves, red-vented bulbuls, red-crested cardinals, saffron finches, house sparrows, aptly named and highly aggressive common mynahs, and on and on. The monkeypod and banyan trees in which many of them perch and nest are likewise imports. The noisy and widely disliked myna was introduced deliberately in the mid-nineteenth century to combat the endemic cutworm moths. The rapacious mynas dutifully complied and promptly drove the moths to extinction. Meanwhile, the mynas also out-competed native birds for nesting areas and ate their eggs—not to mention eating crops, spreading diseases and parasites, as well as waking tourists up early and “decorating” their vehicles. No wonder the mynas earned a spot on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's list of the world's worst invasive species.

Hawaii is, in short, a concentrated microcosm of the ecological devastation that humans are inflicting on Island Earth. To understand why Hawaii has been so vulnerable, it's important to keep in mind how remote these islands really are. Honolulu is some 3,800 kilometers from San Francisco and 6,200 kilometers from Tokyo. For a long, long time, species besides pelagic birds tended to arrive there very slowly as a result of highly improbable "accidents." But given sufficient time, the improbable actually becomes the likely. Isolated from other species by the vast Pacific, the flora and fauna of Hawaii evolved unique characteristics but required minimal defenses. We changed all that.

A typical manifestation of "progress" in Hawaii was the transformation of the native taro fields into rice fields and then into cattle ranges—in other words, movement from sustainable coexistence with nature toward one of the most destructive uses of land imaginable. One could also mention all those golf courses in that very finite space. Thankfully, in more recent times, some of this "progress" has actually been halted or even reversed. Some cattle ranges have been converted back into taro fields, and the construction of new golf courses is *verboden*.

Heading back to my vehicle, I contemplated ecological devastation and efforts such as the establishment of this refuge to mitigate them. The ideal this refuge represents of a harmonious coexistence of human enterprise and protected wildlife called to mind the scientist, humanist, and environmentalist René Dubos, who first urged people to "think globally and act locally" and who believed that a gardenlike Earth would be the logical fulfillment of human potential. The refuge also seemed analogous to haiku, which in the classic English-language formulation is, typically, "a poem recording the essence of a moment keenly perceived, in which Nature is linked to human nature."

In September 2016, the world's largest conservation conference—the International Union for Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress—will be hosted, with President Barack Obama's support, for the first time by the U.S. How fitting that it will be held in Hawaii. All such efforts should be applauded as we attempt to navigate the dangerous waters of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And likewise, it may be that little poems of insight, expressing wonder and compassion, will help us find our bearings in this floating, burning world.

Allan Burns  
September 2015



# Haiku





sunset

swans preening

the hard-to-reach-places

Francine Banwarth

dark against the evening cloudscape the sky-wide lines of returning geese

some colour yet  
in the devil's-bit scabious  
sunlit hoverflies

a seal's silver-gray shadows on the moon

John Barlow

dry July  
a blue jay flies  
from ash to ash

cloud eddies  
a boat-tailed grackle  
cuts through the sky

Brad Bennett



sunset cloud's purple  
only seen  
by looking away

a spider  
stops in mid-drop  
seeing me seeing him  
we both wait

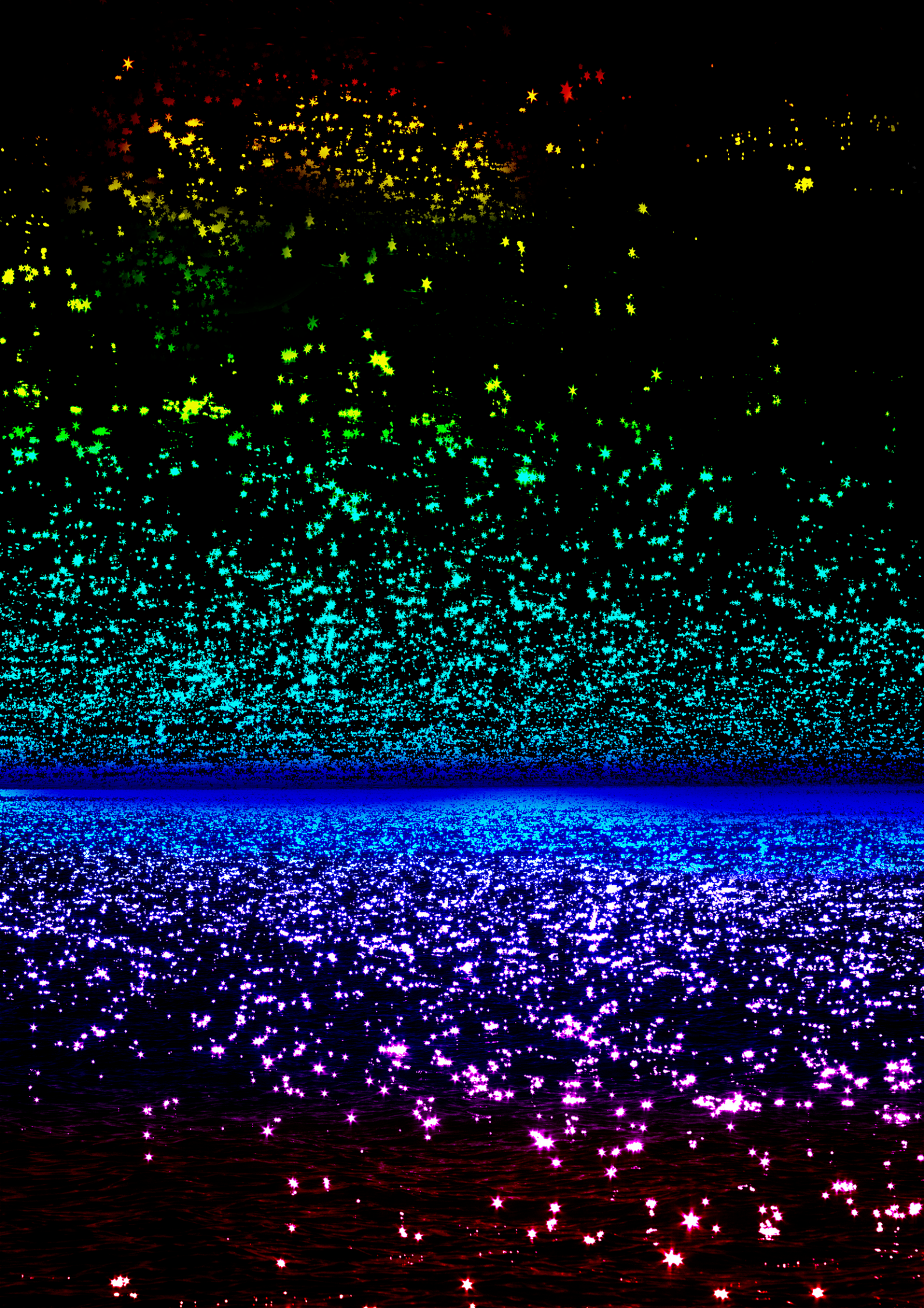
the waxing moon  
reflects my bedroom pane  
Nabokov's birthday

Jason Charnesky

rainy season  
the stone *jizō* sinks deeper  
into weeds

moonless night  
fireflies  
move the darkness

Margaret Chula



fly on the page  
here there touching  
tongue to word

Joyce Clement

deep heart of the daffodil the risen sun

Ellen Compton

first their sound  
then overhead with outstretched necks  
nine black swans

Ross Coward

kettle bog  
the jewel tones  
of sundews

crab spider  
matching yellow within  
the yellow

end of winter  
the washboard ridges  
in miles of beach

Cherie Hunter Day



passion  
of the sparrow's maggots  
sunrise

Mike Dillon

Great Whin Sill  
a grouse lures a greyhen  
with his lek

were it not  
for the chack of a snipe  
the way lost to cloud

Claire Everett



raised voices  
of the raven family—  
the rain that stays

red dust in a road train's wake camels regrouping

Lorin Ford

nearly spring  
a magpie drives off  
last year's young

Beverley George



dry wind  
the creep of black tarantulas  
leaving their holes

the rising howls  
of an orphaned monkey . . .  
poacher's moon

a horse drinks  
where piranhas run  
scent of wild honey

Ferris Gilli



from the full throat  
of an unseen chaffinch  
April morning

Caroline Gurlay

afternoon deepening the songbirds' crescendo

beached jellyfish  
describe the tide line—  
afternoon cool

Carolyn Hall

splitting a pomegranate  
a hundred days of summer

Simon Hanson

California sun  
one walrus tooth for one  
automatic gun

Mark Harris



slender sunbeam  
a hummingbird perched  
on the tip of a twig

veering away  
from the meadow path  
red dragonfly

icicle-morning  
a small feather clings  
to the cat's whiskers

Christopher Herold

years of tradition  
the wind knows its way  
out

Gary Hotham

hill country  
the distances  
different blues

Jim Kacian

drinking the dawn  
a flock of southbound plovers  
pauses along the shore

in autumn leaves  
a rusted saw that felled  
the schooner's oaks

Kirsty Karkow



warm wet winter  
she is expecting  
mushrooms

kjmunro

sunset on the puddles  
the ants marching  
home

David Lanoue

Moss softens rocks  
in the forest hollow  
a horned owl's call

Rebecca Lilly

becoming morning . . .  
the hedge redirects  
a dove's flight

forgotten on the porch . . .  
the hiking boots' shadow  
lengthening

paul m.



an anhinga  
surfaces with a fish  
toss catch swallow dive

insistent mockingbird  
dogwood blossoms  
replaced by leaves

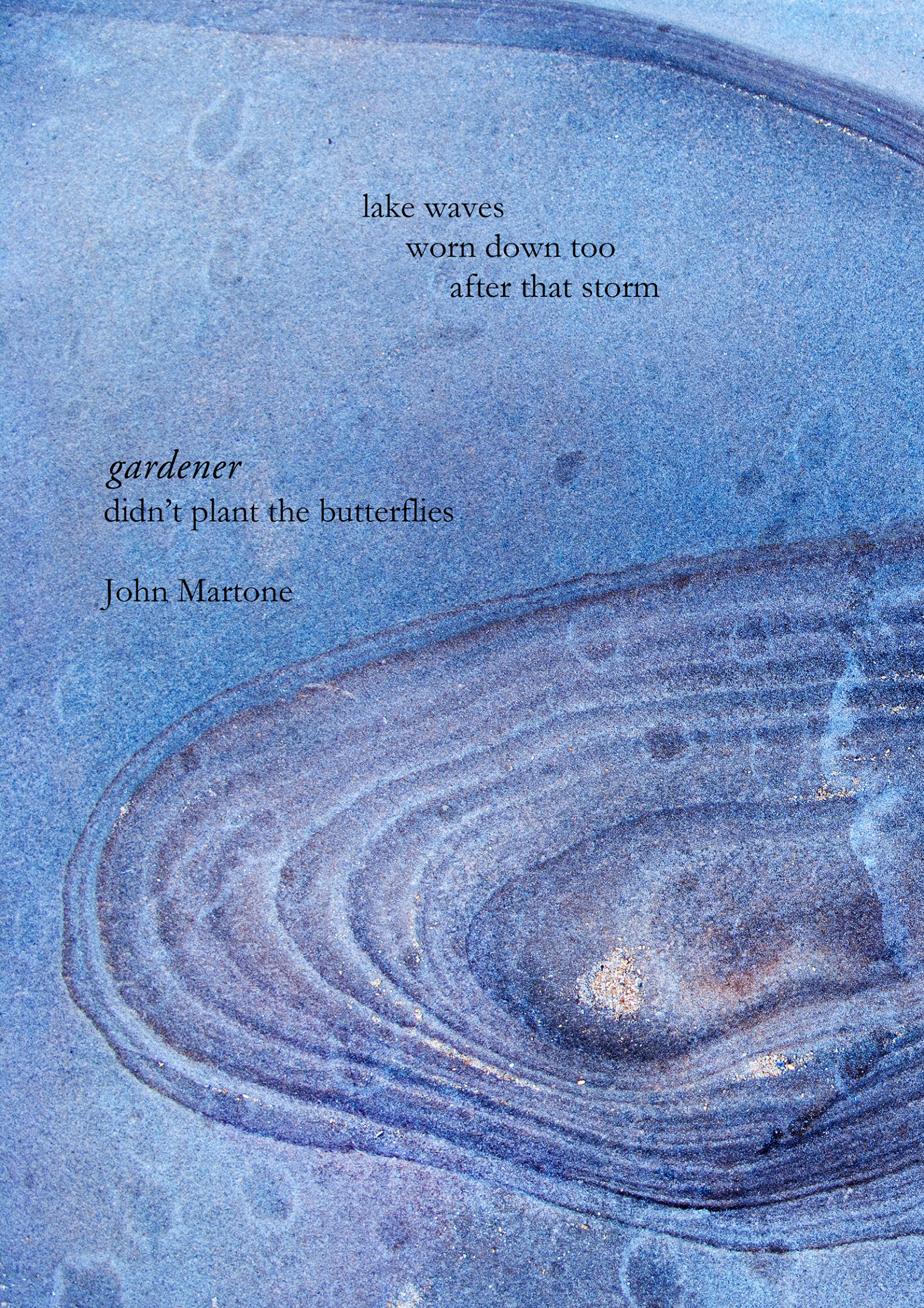
Paul MacNeil



forest path—  
the fate of the rabbit  
filling with snow

through the tips  
of a dead coyote's fur  
the dawn light

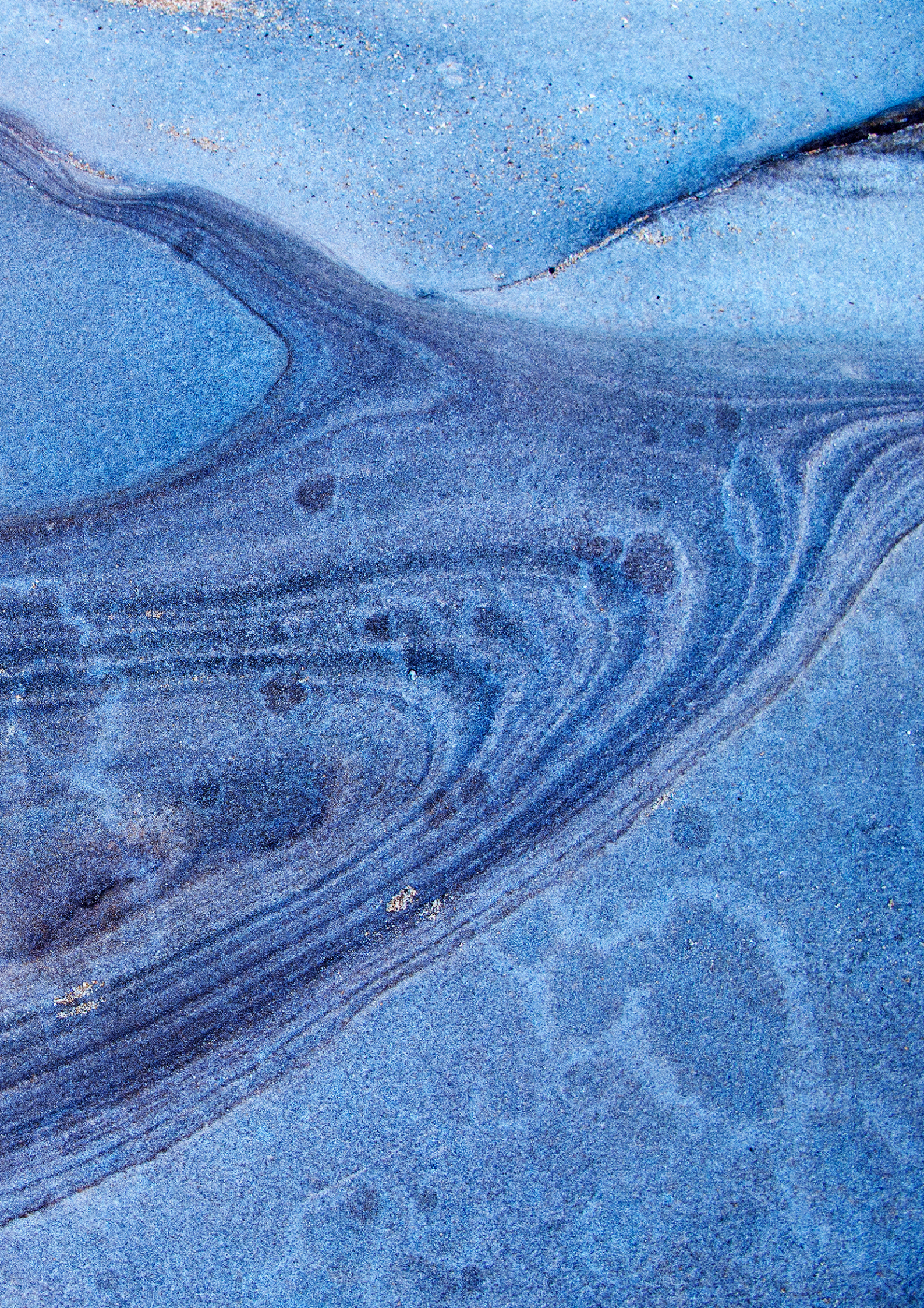
Carole MacRury



lake waves  
worn down too  
after that storm

*gardener*  
didn't plant the butterflies

John Martone



no man's land  
the taiga partitioned  
by yellow eyes

upwind scent  
the long hang time of a whitetail  
leaping

epochs in the making  
the box canyon's  
sudden chill

Scott Mason

whales  
passing down a coast  
where no one lives  
the open waters must sparkle  
all the way to China

Michael McClintock

adrift in the sunlit shallows of not-yet frogs

Peter Newton



summer field  
two boys ruining  
the snake's day

Marian Olson

vanishing  
in each other's arms  
winter night

Victor Ortiz

wolf trap  
the ice blue  
of his eyes

Renée Owen



snowy egret  
on one leg . . .  
cottonwood seeds

evening star  
a treasure hunter  
scans the beach

Christopher Patchel



a wisp of cloud  
between the water lilies  
this floating world

Greg Piko

paua shell clouds  
above the weeping willow  
the swallow's arc

Patricia Prime



heavy at the reed tips the honesty of rain

crescent moon a keening wind cleaves the winter wheat

Stuart Quine

single call of the night-heron so many stars

K. Ramesh

morning sunshine  
on the banyan tree . . .  
old age ashram

Kala Ramesh

ghost town  
a red-tailed hawk ascends  
to a higher wind

harmonica to the key of coyote

Chad Lee Robinson



going on dawn  
one wing enough  
for a maple seed

night shadows the squirrels as they climb to their nests

Michele Root-Bernstein



the sunlight  
seems more itself  
first coltsfoot

bouldered trail  
everywhere I put my hand  
mica schist

Bruce Ross

the swish of willows  
ducks swimming lanes  
through algae

Adelaide Shaw

lava field extending to the horizon lichens

nibbled moon—  
something stirs  
in the long grass

Sandra Simpson



Avocets  
change over at the eggs  
slant rain from the sea

An egret stalks  
through the greening paddy  
rain eased to mist

Ian Storr

a red kite whistles haymaking tractors

Alan Summers

ghost moon a barn owl quietly mousing

André Surridge

sudden rain the night-heron turns to rock

Lesley Anne Swanson



trees reveal  
the coming storm  
she undoes her hair

George Swede

January thaw—  
the mouse tunnel's rills  
visible in trackless snow

Wally Swist

so  
col  
d  
all  
the  
rh-  
ody  
lea  
ves  
curl  
ed  
in  
to  
th  
em  
sel  
ve  
s

sleepless  
the mid-summer moon silently  
trying on clouds

Anita Virgil



susurrus—  
shapes in the grass  
from sleeping elk

wave after wave  
breaking over shore rocks . . .  
time and times, forgotten

solo hike—  
a turtle disappears  
into brackish water

Michael Dylan Welch

truck stop  
we try to imagine  
what Lewis and Clark saw

Billie Wilson

flight formation  
the landing duck  
shapes a V

Quendryth Young

# Prose



## Environmental Haiku by Ruth Yarrow

(reprinted from *Frogpond* 14.3, 1991, with a new afterword by the author)

Last September Adele Kenny, in proposing that I speak to the HSA on environmental haiku, asked, “Do you think haiku poets can serve the planet while we create art?” To answer Adele’s question, I searched through over a decade of haiku publications for examples of environmental haiku. I found that almost all haiku touching on environmental issues were published in the last three years. While nature has been essential in haiku for centuries, I think the environment, including a sense of global environmental crises, is a new focus.

To answer “yes” to Adele’s question I think we have to meet three challenges: 1) face our emotions about the natural environment, 2) deepen our understanding of the natural environment, and 3) include the political in our environmental haiku.

### 1) *Facing our emotions about the natural environment*

In recent essays, several haiku poets have discussed the loss of pristine nature and the degradation of our environment in somber, even despairing tones. Marlene Mountain concluded that “the majority of haiku written today [are] ‘if only’ haiku because nature has run out of nature. Pure nature.”<sup>1</sup> She expresses this starkly:

less and less nature is nature<sup>2</sup>

Cor van den Heuvel echoes this as he discusses Marlene’s work:

The bitterness she demonstrates in her work now as regards the pollution of the environment is perhaps an attitude that will become more prevalent. When a haiku poet says haiku is what is happening now—how can he escape it.<sup>3</sup>

I share this gloom. We face overwhelming problems—ozone layer depletion, pollution including toxic and radioactive wastes, global warming, deforestation, desertification, soil depletion, overpopulation, and the related human problems of vast inequities of resources and power, starvation, epidemics, and war.

When we are faced with problems of such magnitude, I think we deal with them in a couple of ways. One is to shut our eyes to the horror and revel in the nature we do have left. I believe the power of haiku in helping us focus on natural beauty is one reason the form attracts so many adherents in this time of environmental crisis. Eugenie Waldteufel says: “At the same time that we confront the harsh realities of our time, we can escape with haiku into the richness of our lives, small, simple, but real and embracing.”<sup>4</sup> But if we only cling to the unsullied nature we want to see, our haiku can become naively romantic.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Winter–Spring 1989.

<sup>2</sup> *Intimate Posters*, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> *Frogpond*, May 1989.

<sup>4</sup> *Two Autumns*, back cover, 1990.

Another way to face the situation and its attendant emotions is to write from that experience. Then our work will powerfully reflect today's experience. The following capture anger and fear about what is happening to the natural environment:

leave my trees alone (on a brush painting of a bird)  
—Marlene Mountain<sup>5</sup>

anchored supertanker  
its reflection  
trembles  
—George Swede<sup>6</sup>

## 2) *Deepening our understanding of the natural environment*

As haiku poets we often use our five senses in fresh ways to capture our experience of the natural world. But I think we need to be careful that we don't become complacent about our awareness of the natural environment. A second look at how an insect moves, a question to a knowledgeable friend about a bird song, or a glance in a field guide to wild flowers can help us write or read haiku more perceptively.

For example, a recent discussion in *Woodnotes* shows that our knowledge of the natural environment can affect our understanding of haiku. The discussion focuses on Anita Virgil's haiku:

following me  
deeper into my quilt  
the wren's song

The haiku evoked different responses from different readers based on what they knew or didn't know about wren songs. Margaret Molarsky from California noted the "the bird's cascade of sweet notes has an ethereal quality." This is certainly true of the clear downward cadence of a Canyon Wren's song, or the exquisite high, tinkling, trilling song of the Winter Wren, perhaps the species with which she is most familiar on the West Coast. My fellow Ithacan, Tom Clausen, also commented on this poem and honestly admitted, "I might be better able to respond if I knew for sure the quality of a wren's song. ... If a wren song in particular moves one deeper into one's quilt vs. some other bird song, doing so is an aspect of this haiku that escapes me. ..." When I read this haiku, I figured that outside her East Coast home Anita is most likely to hear the loud bubbling, gurgling song of the House Wren or maybe the rollicking whistle of the Carolina Wren. I read this haiku as retreating from all that boisterous vocal energy, but at the same time feeling comforted by it. So each of us, using what we knew or didn't know about wren song, experienced the poem differently.

I think a wide variety of interpretations, as in the above example, can be positive. I certainly don't think every haiku poet has to become an instant ornithologist or precisely name each living thing in his or her poetry. But I do think we need to grow in our awareness of what we know and what we

---

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Autumn 1990.

don't know about the natural environment. Charles D. Nethaway Jr. counts on our familiarity with the age of the bristlecone pine (the oldest known living thing at 4,600 years) to grasp the awe in his haiku:

bristlecone pine  
eight rings  
for my son<sup>7</sup>

### 3) *Including the political in our environmental haiku*

Major American poets have struggled with the question of poetry and politics. Carolyn Forché reminds us:

There is no such thing as nonpolitical poetry. The time, however, to determine what those politics will be is not the moment of taking pen to paper, but during the whole of one's life. ... In the many thousand daily choices we make, we create ourselves and the voice with which we speak and work.<sup>8</sup>

Denise Levertov says there are many more politically active poets than there used to be, which enriches the poetry that people write. She notes that:

Many writers of political poetry persist in supposing the emotive power of their subject alone is sufficient to make their poems poetic. This accounts for a lot of semidoggerel. ... [But direct involvement can impart] a concreteness to their passion and an authenticity to their metaphors.<sup>9</sup>

In the last decade, several haiku poets have discussed politics and haiku. But so far few haiku poets include political issues in their haiku. Rod Willmot links this with "the purism of the North American attitude toward haiku":

Our purism makes us unwilling to believe that haiku could possibly have anything to do with the "world"; yet little by little this very purism is bringing the world and our haiku closer and closer together. Purism makes us insist that our haiku be authentic genuine, intense, concrete, reeking of experience.<sup>10</sup>

Other poets also note this American reluctance to mix politics and art. As Robert Bly asks:

Why then have so few American poems penetrated to any reality in our political life? I think one reason is that political concerns and inward concerns have always been regarded in our tradition as opposites, even incompatibles. ... It's also clear I think that some sort of husk has grown around that psyche ... the poet's main job is to penetrate that husk around the American psyche, and since that psyche is inside him

---

<sup>7</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Summer 1988.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Jones, ed., *Poetry and Politics: An Anthology of Essays*, 1985.

<sup>9</sup> Jones, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Winter–Spring 1988.

too, the writing of political poetry is like the writing of personal poetry, a sudden drive by the poet inward.<sup>11</sup>

Awareness of our inner emotions, however fleeting, is the challenge of haiku. It is difficult enough to capture those emotions and create a reverberating haiku. If we have an aversion to politics, perhaps from our Puritan heritage, believing that politics are messy, dirty, and not appropriate for poetry, it is not surprising that we write very few political haiku.

It is not easy to break through this aversion to greater awareness of our own political emotions. We will feel tensions between old comfortable thoughts and new jolting realizations. But this is the stuff of haiku. As Robert Bly put it: “A true political poem is a quarrel with ourselves.”<sup>12</sup>

Christopher Conn reveals a major internal quarrel in his senryu:

not one empty space  
in the parking lot . . .  
Earth Day— 1990<sup>13</sup>

One of my quarrels with myself is how I deal with solid waste. When I wrote this haiku years ago, I was not yet agonizing about the landfill:

emptying the trash  
the past week  
tumbles backwards<sup>14</sup>

I find this recent haiku by Tom Clausen powerful:

some of the sunrise  
compressed with the trash  
bitter cold morning<sup>15</sup>

It reverberates with my fear and anger about the landfill’s oppressive weight. Tom said when he wrote this haiku he was thinking how trash, such as paper from trees, has been formed with the sun’s energy. I believe any reading of it illustrates a general environmental awareness that had not yet developed when I wrote the haiku about trash in 1982.

Can we also write haiku that include heavy phrases such as “destruction of the ozone layer” and “global warming”? As I was recently sitting at a stoplight, watching the white exhaust of the car ahead of me rising and dissipating into the air, a haiku began to form. But as soon as the term “global warming” came to mind, it seemed impossibly heavy and strident. I rejected it. The light changed to green and the haiku apparently disappeared with the exhaust. (I say apparently

---

<sup>11</sup> Jones, *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Jones, *ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Autumn 1990.

<sup>14</sup> *Inkstone* 1(1), 1982.

<sup>15</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Summer 1990.

disappeared because I know those exhaust gases are still in the ecosystem and that haiku is still simmering inside me.)

The heavy rhetorical quality of phrases such as “global warming” is intimidating. It seems easier to write a bumper sticker containing such phrases than a poem. Robert Bly notes the danger of using terms that sound rhetorical:

The rhetoric is as harmful in that sort of [political] poem as in the personal poem. The true political poem does not order us either to take any specific acts: like the personal poem, it moves to deepen awareness.<sup>16</sup>

Rod Willmot echoes this:

In talking about haiku and change, I am not calling for haiku that obviously try to change people. To the extent that political haiku will do this, that is a danger and a weakness. ... If I suggest that our haiku is becoming an agent of change, I mean it in only the humblest of ways, like a bead of dew bending a leaf.<sup>17</sup>

But is it possible, within the constraints of our short haiku form, to use a heavy political term even in “the humblest of ways” without crushing the poem? I think Garry Gay has done it in the following senryu:

Hole in the ozone  
my bald spot  
sunburned<sup>18</sup>

We know the hole in the ozone is not like a theater spotlight focusing ultraviolet on Garry’s head. But by hinting at this he personally connects with the horror in a way that make us smile in recognition. I think it is significant that this poem is labeled a senryu. Anita Virgil says that senryu:

drag you to the center of [raw truth] .... They are wonderful because they shoot from the hip. In today’s world, with all the ugliness and painful material that at last is out in the open, the poet feels impelled to write this way—if he is to be true to the world in which he lives ....

The new direction for haiku poets of this era is very naturally going to be senryu, at least part of the time.<sup>19</sup>

Adele Kenny shoots from the hip:

hairdo perfectly sprayed  
she asks  
about fluorocarbons<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Jones, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Willmot, *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Frogpond*, November 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Dylan Welch, ed., *On My Mind: Anita Virgil, Vincent Tripi—an Interview*.

Even more challenging than to write senryu may be to write haiku that aren't crushed by heavy environmental terms. Anita Virgil says the haiku "points to [the truth] but doesn't grab your hand and drag you to the center of it."<sup>21</sup> Haiku have to be more subtle, with strong emotion grounded in everyday experience to bear the weight of heavy political terms.

I think some haiku work because they hint at a more reverent environmental ethic:

I gather branches  
forgetting  
to thank them  
—Holly Arrow<sup>22</sup>

recycling:  
before he grinds the stump  
he counts the rings  
—Peggy Willis Lyles<sup>23</sup>

deeper into the forest  
slapping blackflies  
more gently  
—Ruth Yarrow<sup>24</sup>

Muir woods:  
closing the car door  
(quietly)  
—Lee Gurga<sup>25</sup>

Some compare environmental destruction and the remaining natural world:

dimming the moon  
gray drifts  
of smoke  
—Adele Kenny<sup>26</sup>

on both sides of the river  
brushfires smoke—  
the low chirp of birds  
—Raffael de Gruttola<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> *Haiku Quarterly*, Spring 1990.

<sup>21</sup> Welch, *ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Frogpond*, November 1989.

<sup>23</sup> *Woodnotes*, Spring 1990.

<sup>24</sup> *Frogpond*, August 1985.

<sup>25</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Summer 1988.

<sup>26</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Summer 1990.

<sup>27</sup> *Recycle/Reciclo*, 1989.

Others work because they contrast a healthy natural environment with human inroads on it.

wild iris blooming  
beside the polluted pond  
a stillborn fawn  
—Charles B. Dickson<sup>28</sup>

A styrofoam cup  
bumping against  
the pink lotus.  
—Alexis Rotella<sup>29</sup>

hundred year old trees  
from the woodpile to the stove  
in a plastic sled  
—Jack Ervin<sup>30</sup>

Some hint at a quiet triumph of the natural world.

parked bulldozer—  
a cattle egret rests  
on the blade  
—Ron Asato<sup>31</sup>

after evening rain:  
n-power plant misty—  
firefly  
—Sheldon Young<sup>32</sup>

Some reverberate with a tantalizing combination of horror and hope—as does the environmental crisis itself.

suburban winter—  
peering through leafless woods  
highway lights  
—Charles H. Easter<sup>33</sup>

at Seabrook  
a gleam of sun  
shimmering on the water

---

<sup>28</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Autumn 1990.

<sup>29</sup> *The Persimmon Tree*, Winter 1990.

<sup>30</sup> *Brussels Sprout*, September 1989.

<sup>31</sup> *Haiku Canada Members' Anthology*, 1990.

<sup>32</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Autumn 1987.

<sup>33</sup> *Frogpond*, February 1990.

—Raffael de Gruttola<sup>34</sup>

Venus rising  
in the beached whale's  
eye

—Adele Kenny<sup>35</sup>

If we face our depressing emotions about the destruction of the natural environment, if we deepen our understanding of the natural environment, and if we include the political in our poetry, I think we can answer Adele's question, "Yes, haiku poets can serve the planet while we create art." I think we are already doing it.

---

<sup>34</sup> de Gruttola, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Modern Haiku*, Summer 1990.



## Afterword by Ruth Yarrow (2015)

A quarter-century ago when I wrote the preceding article, we saw the environment as under attack, unhealthy, and hurting, and we noted our growing empathy. But we were still writing as if the environment were somewhat separate from ourselves.

Now we are facing climate change. Climate change includes us. The term sounds deceptively benign. It is really a euphemism for the end of the world as we know it.

Poets have contemplated the end of the world. Listen to Robert Frost: “Some say the world will end in fire,/ Some say in ice.” Or T.S. Eliot: “*This is the way the world ends/ Not with a bang but a whimper.*” A couple of haiku poets have addressed this subject, maybe with subtle hope:

at the end of civilization star after stars<sup>36</sup>

sudden rain  
no end to the universe  
as we know it<sup>37</sup>

To find haiku that address climate change, I have just finished looking through literally more than 4,000 haiku from 2011 to the present in some issues of *Frogpond* and *Modern Haiku* as well as Bruce Ross’s anthology *A Vast Sky* (Tanco Press, 2015). I feel steeped in many beautiful poems. Of course, a huge number deal with love, death, and all the nuances of relationships. There are many effectively linking nature and emotion. And haiku poets don’t shy away from taking on global issues. I found one or a few haiku dealing with each of these topics: environmental degradation, 9/11, ebola, and economic disparity. A dozen dealt with nuclear weapons. War seems to be weighing increasingly on our minds—I found at least 150 on war.

What about climate change? I’m sure I have missed a number in which the poet wrote with climate change in mind and I didn’t recognize that the haiku alluded to that issue. But even assuming that I missed many, the number out of more than 4,000 is very small; here they are:

“Record heat” or “global warming” appear in the following:

record heat  
shouting at us  
the spring sun<sup>38</sup>

record heat wave  
not a leaf of grass stirs  
in the deserted ball park<sup>39</sup>

record heat—

---

<sup>36</sup> Metod Cesek, *Modern Haiku* 44:2, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> Gary Hotham, *Modern Haiku* 44:2, 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Victor Ortiz, *Frogpond* 37:3, 2014.

<sup>39</sup> Cor van den Heuvel, “The Buson Variations: Second Series, East Coast Modern,” *Frogpond* 37:3, 2014.

his bishop stalks  
my queen<sup>40</sup>

a pigeon missing  
some of its toes  
record heat<sup>41</sup>

Global warming—  
the beard of Fujisan  
gets a trim<sup>42</sup>

global warming—  
my cycles  
closer together<sup>43</sup>

Loss of species diversity is one result of climate change. I recently moved back to upstate New York, where I led many spring bird walks in the 1980s and 1990s, reveling in the warbler migration. I'm still working on this one to express the hollow ache of loss I have felt this year:

white hair in spring green  
where we'd watched waves of warblers  
one

Here are the few that clearly refer to climate change:

retreating glacier  
how long since we've heard  
the black wolf's song<sup>44</sup>

too early  
first snowdrops  
already in bloom<sup>45</sup>

climate change  
but don't create an image<sup>46</sup>

carbon footprint of a snow making machine<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Alanna C. Burke, *Frogpond* 37:2, 2014.

<sup>41</sup> Sharon Pretti, *Modern Haiku* 45:3, 2014.

<sup>42</sup> Bruce England, *Frogpond* 36:2, 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Seren Fargo, *Modern Haiku* 45:1, 2014.

<sup>44</sup> Billie Wilson, *A Vast Sky*, 2015.

<sup>45</sup> Steve Mason, "Puddles," *Frogpond* 38:2, 2015.

<sup>46</sup> Annie Bachini, *Ibid.* (the next link in the same renga).

<sup>47</sup> John Stevenson, *Modern Haiku* 46:2, 2015.

Why are there so few haiku about climate change? Probably partly for the reasons I outlined previously in the article: focusing on the beauty of the natural world to avoid depressing emotions about the threats to it, being reluctant to mix politics and art, and finding it challenging to fit the heavy phrase “climate change” into a haiku.

Basically, I think we are not yet engaging with the reality of climate change. I have a delightful 6-month-old granddaughter whom I help care for, and it frightens me to think of the world she will live in when she is my age in 2090 if we continue to produce greenhouse gases as we are now. I want to enjoy the present:

rain lashes the pane—  
the baby’s changing table  
still warm and dry

But I owe it to her to do more. I need to take part in more demonstrations against the dangerous extraction of fossil fuels, divest from any companies engaged in that extraction, eat more of a plant-based diet, use my car less, put up another clothesline—you can add much more to this to-do list.

At the same time, I think our haiku writing is also powerful. It captures moments when we are most aware, alive. Those moments are the juice of life.

Edward Zuk recently wrote a *Modern Haiku* article<sup>48</sup> about William Carlos Williams as a kindred spirit to haiku poets. I’ll close with this excerpt from his “Of Asphodel That Greeny Flower” (1955) that touches on the importance of our capturing those moments of awareness.

My heart rouses  
                                  thinking to bring you news  
  of something  
that concerns you  
                                  and concerns many men. Look at  
  what passes for  
the new.

You will not find it there but in  
  despised poems.  
  It is difficult  
to get the news from poems  
  yet men die miserably every day  
  for lack  
of what is found there.

---

<sup>48</sup> Edward Zuk, “William Carlos Williams and Haiku,” *Modern Haiku* 44:2, 2013.



## Living Closely with Nature: A Conversation with Cherie Hunter Day

*Cherie Hunter Day is currently the editor of Mariposa, the bi-annual journal of the Haiku Poets of Northern California. She is also a staff editor for the Red Moon Anthology and serves on the Touchstone Book Award Committee of The Haiku Foundation.*

Back when I was in graduate school in the early 90s, studying English lit but also trying to improve my skills as a budding amateur naturalist, I obtained a copy of Dorcas S. Miller's *Track Finder: A Guide to Mammal Tracks of Eastern North America* (Nature Study Guild, 1981), which you illustrated. That was before I became interested in haiku or knew anything about the English-language haiku "movement." I now know that you illustrated two other books for Miller, *The Maine Coast* and *Berry Finder*, in addition to writing and illustrating your own *Life on Intertidal Rocks*. Would you tell us a bit about your work as an illustrator and also how that kind of artistic and scientific endeavor has informed the way you approach writing poetry and haiku in particular?

In my senior year in high school I took an advanced biology course that had as a final project to illustrate a dichotomous key for a pre-selected list of species—mostly marine plants and animals. It was probably the best part of my favorite class. That same year I took an English class that had us write weekly journal entries. I chose haiku, and fortunately, the instructor didn't try to talk me out of it in favor of essays. From then on my sketches had haiku written in the margins and my writing journal was more like a field notebook. Field science and haiku writing have their origins in careful and patient observation. If I sat quietly and blended in, I would be rewarded by nature revealing itself to me. This quiet work fits my temperament. It isn't passivity by any means. It's a very active curiosity about how things work.

After college, I spent four months on a remote island in the Bay of Fundy, in New Brunswick, Canada, researching the nesting behavior of a small population of Leach's storm-petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*). They are a pelagic species that comes on land only to raise a single chick during the breeding season. The rest of the year they remain at sea. The nest is in an underground burrow under mature spruce trees. The parents fly into the dense woods at night to feed their young. They can smell their way to their own burrow. Parenting is a coordinated effort, and the chicks fledge after 70 days. Both parents are necessary for the chick's survival. If something happens to one of the parents, the chick is doomed. Before the chicks leave the island, they grow to twice the weight of their parents. The research involved staying up all night and weighing chicks after the parent's fed them to determine the meal size of regurgitated krill, mostly calorie-rich oil. Who wouldn't want to do that for a summer?

This was a watershed moment for me. Living so closely with nature, without running water, no electricity, no phone (just ship-to-shore radio), no vehicles other than a supply boat once a week, and very limited contact with people, reoriented me. Without all the distractions I could see more clearly what was important. The clarity, simplicity, and immersion in the wilderness refreshed my soul. That experience still fuels my writing. It remains an available source of inspiration.

Haiku with a scientific angle of vision are rather fascinating and unmistakably "modern." How do you see this relationship between the venerable haiku genre and modern science evolving? A number of other poets, including Ruth Yarrow, Jim Kacian, Dietmar Tauchner,

the recently deceased Robert Mainone, and others, have published overtly “scientific” haiku as well, touching on such themes as deep time, evolutionary theory, cosmology, and so forth. One of your own along these lines that really struck me recently is a one-line haiku that concludes a haibun published in *Modern Haiku* 46.2, 2015: “sunset red the wavelengths closest to darkness.” Of course, without a modern understanding of electromagnetic energy, that one would have been impossible both to write and interpret. We need to know that red is the “bottom” of the narrow band of visible light, just above what we call infrared.

(Richard Dawkins, btw, points out that insects can’t see red, so if they could speak, they’d probably call our red “infraorange.”) Is there a danger, though, of getting “too intellectual for haiku” here, do you think? Or is this extension of haiku reference legitimately in keeping with the expansion of our senses and knowledge through the use of scientific instrumentation? I’d also like to cite a blurb that Peggy Willis Lyles—a haiku poet I’m sure we both greatly admire and miss—provided for your first collection, *The Horse with One Blue Eye* (Snapshot Press, 2006): “Qualities of the scientist and the dreamer merge and make for very good company,” she wrote, in your haiku.

I reveled in Peggy’s good company, too.

she lifts one child—  
the underwater years  
of dragonflies

—Peggy Willis Lyles, *Roadrunner Haiku Journal* VIII: 1 (February 2008)

An editor of a well-known haiku journal quipped recently, “I always learn something from your work.” I’m pretty sure he meant that as a compliment. Our language is rich with words, handsome words, elegant words, why not use them? Dial in specificity. My aim isn’t to obfuscate meaning but to clarify the experience. The invitation is to become more familiar with our surroundings. If readers go to Wikipedia to unpack a few of my haiku, is that necessarily a bad thing? You mention the late Robert Mainone. I remember seeing this haiku of his in *Modern Haiku* 40:3 (Autumn 2009):

my haplogroup  
shows the sponge gene—  
distant lightning

I worked several years in molecular biology and genetics laboratories, so I have a passing familiarity with the genomic genealogy of mitochondrial DNA. Molecular evolutionists trace geographical human origins by calibrating a mitochondrial clock. Once focused on as a single source, mitochondrial Eve, the theory now features 10 to 12 different loci for just the European haplogroups. Mainone takes the connection even further back on the evolutionary scale to sponges. We share nearly 70 percent of our genetic make-up with a sea sponge. One theory of the origins of life on this planet has lightning as the catalyst that turned the primordial soup of elements into the first living organism. This haiku references that starting point of life. It also perhaps poses a question of what will facilitate the next cataclysm. Are we already witnessing it in the recent bouts of extreme weather and climate change? It’s bold work and even bolder for the editor to publish it. There is an abiding trust between the poet-editor-reader. Poetry has merit even if the audience is small.

In previous centuries poets frequently alluded to the Bible and Shakespeare with confidence that those references were culturally relevant and well understood. Today, I believe that familiarity with

science is the hallmark of an educated mind. An inquisitive person asks questions and seeks answers. We have the Internet at our fingertips to inform and misinform us.

**You're very much known for writing both "more traditional" (and often nature-oriented) haiku as well as more "experimental" or perhaps "*gendai*-influenced" haiku. Is there a sharp distinction for you between these modes, or do they seem to you more of a piece? In other words, is it more like wearing two different hats as a writer, or do you think of them as being more like points along a continuous spectrum? And is the impulse that motivates these two modes of writing similar or sharply different? Personally, I'll say that I find your practice in this respect most interesting, as a lot of poets have a strong commitment to pursuing one way or another, sometimes with a related need to "justify" an approach by taking polemical positions. But you seem to move freely between poles, as it were, much like a jazz performer who is comfortable playing both in what are known in that genre as "inside" and "outside" styles. And while we're on this subject, would you say something about not only your own work but also the wider haiku scene. Are you seeing more polarization or healthy diversity?**

I don't see these approaches as diametrically opposed. They both stem from the same desire to express the fullness of the experience. Humans are part of nature. Intellect is part of the mix, too. I'm a little dismayed that we haven't moved beyond the discussion of what is a haiku or can haiku be written in English. If it's not haiku, then come up with a name for what we have been doing for the past 100 years. Otherwise, let's get on with it. Haiku doesn't fit in a tidy box. It's dynamic; it's a living expression. The range of styles and constructs is evidence that we are still exploring the genre in English. And with every swing of the pendulum there is a correction phase of the swing. There are advocates at both ends of the spectrum. I think it is all healthy movement. The corresponding opposite of innovation is stagnation. And I don't think anyone wants that.

From your question Allan, I think I understand your analogy with the two styles as having to do with one's stance—orientation to the material. Perhaps the "inside" style in haiku is the nature-oriented traditional approach and the "outside" style is the more freeform, experimental approach. The haiku tradition has a lot to say about what subjects are acceptable at what time of year (*keigo*) and other craft considerations. There are times when I pay close attention to these techniques and others when I'm not as concerned with the rules. I give myself permission to take a looser approach. There may be a word or phrase that catches my attention, and I write it down. Something in the sound or meaning that acts like a center of nucleation, similar to dust motes in the atmosphere around which a raindrop forms. I wait for other thoughts and images to clarify or enliven those initial words or phrases. It's not a scientific process, not quantifiable, or necessarily repeatable. The results are unique like improvisations in a jazz performance. They happen in the moment.

Along with a greater flexibility in composition of the experimental mode comes a greater range of interpretation. The audience for this type of work has a more relaxed attitude towards ambiguity and disjunction. It may take a little work to unpack the meaning. But make it too hard, and the reader is likely to dismiss the work altogether.

Another way I reanimate my writing in the experimental mode is by doing abstract paper collages and digital vispo (*visual poetry*). It's visual improvisation. It taps into the same wordless region as being out in nature. I've published a number of these in experimental journals such as *Otoliths*, *moongarlic*, and *Bones*.

**You're known also for your work in other poetic genres, such as tanka. How does that fit together with your practice as a haiku poet? And how do you see the relationship between the haiku "pond" and the wider landscape of contemporary American and/or English-language poetry at the present moment? Is haiku "breaking through," do you think? Or is it destined to remain relatively isolated and neglected?**

Yes, I write and publish tanka, haibun, haiga, rengay, and non-Asian forms, including minimalist poems, prose poems, and flash fiction. My work has appeared in mainstream poetry print journals such as *Mississippi Review*, *Mid-American Review*, *Moon City Review*, *Quick Fiction*, and *Quarter after Eight*, as well as in online journals such as *Noon*, *SmokeLong Quarterly*, and *Wigleaf*, among others. Most journals ask for contributors' notes of 50 to 80 words, so I confine my comments to fit the publication's audience. I found prose poem editors don't want to hear that I publish haiku in the haiku journals and vice versa. I've taken flak for listing prose poem credits in haiku journals. It's a big hurdle to overcome the misconceptions and entrenchment that exists within various groups: the "us versus them" mindset.

One example of a recent breakthrough of the Japanese form is in the spring 2015 issue of *Rattle: Poetry of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The journal routinely puts out issues that include "a special tribute highlighting some ethnic, vocational, or stylistic group." For this particular issue the editor read in excess of 29,000 haiku to come up with 25 poets for the tribute. The issue included examples of haiku, haiku sequence, senryu, haibun, tanka, tanka prose, ninjuin renku, and solo rengay. It was an opportunity to correct some of the misconceptions about the genre. But despite the large pool of material, the editor picked some haiku that had the 5-7-5 syllable count with titles. Two steps forward for highlighting the Japanese form in a mainstream poetry journal, but one step back for cordoning off the material into a special section and perpetuating some misinformation on what haiku is in English. It's progress, but real integration is achingly slow. The fate of English-language haiku is in the hands of its practitioners. Do we withdraw into the "haiku ghetto" and lament the segregated status of haiku, or do we continue to engage with the larger poetry community? I vote for engagement.

**By the way, Cherie, a somewhat similar example from a few years ago was when the literary journal *Riverwind* reprinted 30 haiku for its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The selection included work by a number of poets featured in this annual, such as Paul MacNeil, Kirsty Karkow, Christopher Herold, Billie Wilson, Bruce Ross, Ferris Gilli, and paul m., as well as Peggy and me. It was another moment in which there was a breakthrough for literary haiku to a different audience, and I'm sure most of us would like to see more such.**

**Onward: What writers, either inside or outside haiku, have had a substantial influence on you or have served as key inspirations, particularly in terms of your writing about the natural world?**

It was the writings of Loren Eiseley that first nurtured my interest in natural science and writing. His method of the "concealed essay" is that in order to explain complex scientific ideas, it is important to set fire to the imagination of the reader through rich language. Eiseley conducted his writing as a form of contemplation, and it engaged all of his talents as an anthropologist, scientist, philosopher, poet, and conservationist.

Another writer to meld natural science, personal memoir, and conservation is Terry Tempest William. Her book, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (1992) was particularly meaningful to me. She juxtaposed her mother's losing battle with cancer, the rising water levels of the Great Salt Lake, and the loss of habitat for countless birds. She became one of the birds who mourned the loss of place. The transference was a spiritual one. The book ripped me open emotionally having recently lost both my mother and father. The loci of friends, family, and our relationship to the land is what anchors us on this Earth. When habitats disappear, we lose more than common ground for plants and animals. Lose wilderness and we suffer a spiritual loss.

These are just two examples of many poets, naturalists, and ecologists who by their quiet actions inspire me to continue on the path to integrate science and art. John Muir said, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe."

**At this point, I'd like to talk a little about some specific haiku of yours. In your most recent collection, *apology moon* (Red Moon Press, 2013), you have quite a number of haiku with, as I put it, "eye-opening, thought-provoking juxtapositions and segues." Here's one example that I find particularly intriguing and that my fellow editors and I included in Norton's *Haiku in English*:**

termites  
with temporary wings  
the debt ceiling

**In this one, natural fact runs smack into contemporary politics in a seemingly highly "disjunctive" manner. Would you tell us a little about the circumstances and process that led to the composition of this haiku?**

This haiku was written on January 27, 2013. I guess this haiku began with the political backdrop leading up to the New Year. For months the national financial news headlines featured dire predictions of a fiscal cliff that would push the U.S. economy into a major recession. A budget compromise was reached to temporarily raise the debt ceiling. It was hard to dismiss the political unrest, but I wasn't really aware how deeply I had internalized the situation until after I wrote the haiku. The counterpart to this was direct observation. I looked out of my window that January morning and wrote down in my haiku journal: "We had a bit of rain and the daytime temps are up in the mid-50s, which signal favorable conditions for dividing the colony." All morning I watched termites rise from the first floor apartment patio across from ours—the awkwardness of the termites fluttering into the sunlight, each with four enormous wings. The exodus peaked after lunchtime. I wrote the phrase "termites with temporary wings." The word "temporary" was freighted with a transitory, awkward solution to get from Point A to Point B. That was the hinge that held these two phenomena together. When I added "the debt ceiling" as the third line, both of my experiences clicked into place. I didn't set out to create a "political" haiku or highlight disjunction. I found a truth in the course of writing it.

**I'd also like to cite three earlier haiku of yours, all collected in both *The Horse with One Blue Eye* and *Where the River Goes*, that seem particularly characteristic of your approach (or one of your approaches) to haiku. It's hard for me to imagine anyone else, except perhaps Ruth Yarrow, having written them, which is rather remarkable given how few words**

constitute a haiku. In a way, this goes back to the question about scientific background, but these haiku are not at all abstract; they're deeply experiential and tactile:

mole crabs  
in the palms of my hands  
the retreating surf

her first fossil  
the curve of the creek  
in springtime

a skull no bigger  
than my thumbnail  
jasmine in bloom

I wonder if you would say something about them as a group and what you were doing around the time they were composed. While preparing my questions, I noted that all three were published originally in 2003 and 2004, which leads me to think you might have been particularly active in the field then.

All three of these haiku involve holding a small object in my hands for closer examination—at the beach and in my garden in San Diego and alongside the Little Miami River in Ohio. The fossil experience was the oldest, from 1980. The other two were written closer to the time they were published. My haiku output dipped in 1999 to 2002 in favor of writing tanka: first for a full-length collection, *Early Indigo* (Snapshot Press, 2000), and then responsive tanka with David Rice. We corresponded through email for nearly three years, starting in 1999, and we wrote 216 tanka; 72 became *Kindle of Green* (Platyopus Books, 2008). In the preface I wrote the following:

Beyond our fragmented experience there is an extraordinary world of connectedness. Newness, vitality, renewal—a kindle of green is constantly present as the backdrop for ordinary, busy lives. All we have to do is lift our eyes and see.

*Kindle of Green* is David's and my love letter to the natural world that we explored separately and together.

fleeting a few times  
not quite a thought or feeling  
more a vague sense  
I've always been here  
dusk-lake-fir-star-breath

all that gloss  
from our deep past  
the brackish sea  
never left us—  
our skin another shoreline

I continued to write haiku during that time in large part because Christopher Herold and Alex Benedict started *The Heron's Nest* in August 1999. Peggy Lyles, a poet I deeply admired, became an associate editor at *THN* in 2002. She encouraged and strengthened my direction in haiku by her enthusiastic acceptances of my work. She nurtured the naturalist/poet in me.

**Do you feel that poets who write about the natural world (or even poets in general) have a responsibility to address, directly or indirectly, the ongoing environmental destruction and the carnage that humans are inflicting on other species that so characterize the course of contemporary global civilization? If so, in what ways? And can poetry hope to make any “difference”?**

I think one of the most important roles of writers and scientists is as witnesses. We must remain alert. There is so much incredible stuff that goes on all around us and inside of us. Connecting to this core can spark such wonder and awe and joy. Awe is just the tip of reverence. I wrote the following haiku about the re-introduction of the gray wolf to Yellowstone:

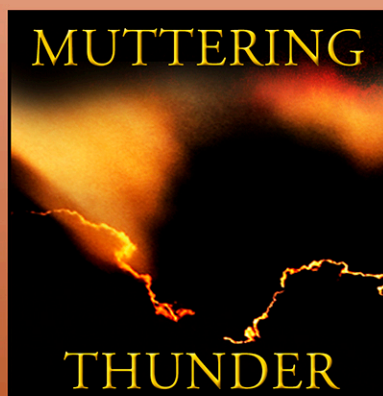
returning wolves  
seeds crack open  
to birdsong

*Bones* 5, November 2014

Scientists found that the entire biome responded to their return as if to a homecoming. Though the wolf population was small at first, it affected the behavior of the deer in the park who had been allowed to overgraze the vegetation. The deer began to avoid certain valleys and gorges where they might encounter the reintroduced predator. The willows and cottonwoods rebounded, which created more habitat for smaller animals. The birds returned and so did mice, rabbits, and frogs. The raptor populations increased. Beavers came because of the trees, and they built dams that held more water on the land. The burgeoning vegetation helped stabilize the banks of the rivers, and there was less erosion. The rivers flowed stronger and clearer. Wolves changed the physical geography in Yellowstone. Nature is inspiring. What more encouragement do we need that each of us matters? We can do our small part and make a difference. The Earth can heal.

**Where do you see your own writing and English-language haiku in general heading in the near future?**

Snapshot Press is slated to publish *A Color for Leaving*, a recent tanka e-chapbook winner in its online series. I'm also working on a full-length collection of prose poems and another book of haiku. I plan on continuing to explore my landscapes both exterior and interior. I'll report back in any way that I can—with words, drawings, collage, even a new form of sky writing if necessary. And I encourage others to do the same.



No. 2, 2015

[mutteringthunder.weebly.com](http://mutteringthunder.weebly.com)