

The Weekly Avocet - 673

October 26th, 2025

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

**setting sun
scarlet maple tree in pines
bathed in light**

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



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

Sea Ghouls

No better disguise knocks at your door
Than the infamous Portuguese Man O' War
And, no better reason to remain inside
Than a bladder full of carbon monoxide
Like a pirate's ship its sail defies
What danger in store below deck lies
Long tentacles hide like a submarine
Harrowing harpoons for Halloween
Long ribbons strung with nematocysts
Sling stinging darts for venomous trysts
Even when dead, it packs a punch
Physalia will have you for its lunch

Rochelle S. Cohen

Shark Bites

A Halloween party on Noah's Ark
Invitees include two kinds of shark
The sea surface is still but far beneath
A dentist's dream with three hundred teeth
Around his neck, its gills embellish
A primitive shark that is quite hellish
But the Frilled Shark in comparison pales
To the Goblin Shark whose teeth are nails!
It's long, flat snout resembles a blade
With a guarantee you'll be quite afraid
Stay clear of this duo on All Hallows Day
Don't be a guest, or you'll be the buffet

Rochelle S. Cohen

Trick Or Treat

A pumpkin guarded my apartment's door
From tricksters' blood and guts and gore
But someone comes in his birthday suit
Innocent looking, cunningly cute
But behind that angelic, virtuous look
Is a furry scoundrel, who is a crook
The pumpkin once an orange delight
Succumbed to the squirrel's gnawing bite
Tasty innards that filled its core
Alas, are shells, with seeds no more
Victory couldn't taste any sweeter
For this scheming trick or treater

Rochelle S. Cohen - Marlton, NJ - rochellecohen19@yahoo.com

Curling Leaves

Fiery brownish orange edges
veins enfold verdure core

rust-tinted curling leaf tips
surround verdure shaded palm--

a fist clenching its fingers
grasping onto the coming season

or a mouth tightening as it
puckers around some green
chili hot spicy morsel--

senses an overcoming drying chill
released to overcome tree green moisture.

Color contrast intensifies tension of change,
dry burn hardens plially elastic to brittly dry

adjusting from passing changing temperature
from inner green core of passing season
extremities are drying out

escaping moist-dry tension
in a gentle warm orange -- not black cold burn--
a gentle stage on the way to change.

Will shrivel to dry brown particles
swept away by the wind
crackling crushed underfoot
whispering "Farewell!"

Its tree can get to sleep
from frenzied eating, drinking
making food to grow on
swinging in tune with its multitude
that filled its branches

Diane Tehrani - Portland, OR - dianetehrani@gmail.com

**Please feel free to share The Weekly Avocet with all those you know who love
Nature poetry. Thank you! It's free, just email us your email address...**

damp chill and cloudy
oaks turning brown overnight
fall fading

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

All Hallows

Sacred night filled with light and dark
All Hallows holds the spark of a new year
together with the passing of the old.
Comes now the cold, bringing the thinning
of the veil, singing spirit's song of love
and of well wishing, time of celebration.

Now we foretell the future, bob for apples,
play ancient games that echo the past,
for time mingles now with then, seeking when.
Children in costumes gather their harvest
reaping the sweets of this bleak day,
offerings to bring luck to the time ahead.

There are those whose memory of it
sings only in their dim ancestral past,
and there are those who do remember
firelight tales and ceremonies, feasts
and conversations with those who linger
by the veil waiting to let us know their love.

We may salute the past with joyful play
as well as sacred invocation. Let us honor
this time, hallowed by transformation.
Then Earth begins her rest and so do we,
as we honor the darkness of the womb,
and seek to gather dreams of days to come.

Tasha Halpert - North Grafton, MA - tashahal@gmail.com

windy autumn day
raining red, orange, yellow
colored mosaic

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

Squirrel euphoria

He has dreamed of this day. 🤔🤔



(Courtesy of Lynn Miclea) sent in by Gay Marie Logsdon - gmarielogsdon@gmail.com

Little Handkerchiefs

Little lacy handkerchiefs carefully placed along the wet morning trail
How comforting, the delicate craft of these funnel web spiders.
Yes, we all could use a good cry, grateful for their suggestion,
Now presented with dew laden handkerchief webs scattered,
As if by a great heavenly sneeze on the dark wet forest floor.
The fat little spiders worked all through the rainy night crawling up
From their funnel shaped home to spin heavy bottom sheet webs
Topped by a wispy lightly woven cover drawing down through
The funnel to the carnivorous underground larder of bugs below.
I rejoice knowing I have just seen yet another new wonder along
My beloved southern mountain trail, soaked wet and heavy
From the night's rain before. Where else would I choose to go
Each morning seeking a bit of sacred peace we search the day for?
I could use these handkerchiefs to catch my tears shed for nearby
Lush hillsides of deciduous spires recently scaped away, gutted,
Embarrassed, bare and murdered, they lost all, roots, trunks, limbs of leaves
Hoping to turn on their fall splendor. The little spiders, determined boxies
Crawling below, nests, precious flowers, scooped, ground together, gone
From the precious heartbeat of the forest, I know. Tenuous, fragile as a web.
Funnel spiders, your artful gesture is for survival not solace.
Still, you offer up a delicate web of blessings to touch our joy and grief,
Too familiar forest trail companions that go with us forevermore.

Cathy Scarbrough - Oak Ridge, TN - cmscarbrough@gmail.com

Heart Warming

There is a strange new
crispness within the air
that will make your breath visible
with just enough of a breeze
to make ones nose and cheeks
a nice shade of rosy red.
Amidst that crisp fall breeze
there is a familiar warmth
that has managed to take
a comforting grasp
around my cool heart.

Amy Hrynchuk - Alberta, Canada - ahrynchuk_poetry@yahoo.ca

October Rain

Not yet Halloween, nature's
first autumn rain spends
Saturday soaking the ground.

Nimbostratus clouds cover the sky and
reward the earth with steady showers
and quagmires on a once dry forest path.

No sharp spears of lightning splits
the sky. No rolling thunder echoes.
Just slow peaceful rain.

The growing season has ended. Wet
leaves now dot the land -- no longer
dry and crinkly -- only wet and cold.

Like this darkened autumn day.

Madalin Bickel - Tallahassee, FL - madalin60@verizon.net

Grandpa Remembers Autumn

On a crisp fall afternoon,
as he strolls beside the creek,
his long white cane
swings from side to side.
He remembers watching
leaves turn from green to gold and flame,
then drift to Earth,
birds flitting through tangled branches,
squirrels and deer darting, quick and shy,
ducks frolicking in the water,
joggers and cyclists rushing past.

Now, eyesight gone, he still hears
leaves whisper in the breeze,
birds chirp, wings a sudden flutter,
ducks laugh in the current,
joggers and cyclists call cheerful hellos in passing.

Though the world has faded from his vision,
its music still surrounds him.

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

Nature's Silent Clock

"Who knows where the time goes..." - Sandy Denny

Who whispers to the geese
it's time to fly
to a warm, enticing place?

Who encourages leaves to turn
from green to brown, then float to Earth?

Who coaxes bears
to lumber from berry-laden fields
to Sleep's inviting mouth?

Who reminds squirrels to pocket acorns,
press them into the earth?

Maybe knowing is in every feather, root, heart —
a silent clock with no hands,
only pulse, hunger, the Earth's rotation.

Maybe it's not knowing but listening
to sound and silence of changing seasons.

Maybe everything in the world
breathes an answer we can't hear.

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

"Here we are, the most clever species ever to have lived. So how is it we can destroy the only planet we have?" - Jane Goodall

Nature Is

A cool autumn breeze that caresses you,
causing tree branches to sway,
the crunch of fallen leaves underfoot,
birds singing to the world,
squirrels gathering winter food,
what you see, hear, smell, taste, touch,
what keeps us alive.

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

Autumn Morning Boardwalk to School

In the silent park,
warm sunlight permeates morning chill,
grass blades covered with frost.

The boardwalk, slick with dew,
groans beneath my shoes.
Fallen leaves crunch underfoot,
as I climb into the day,
my breath making smoke rings in the air.

Maple leaves drift, carried by a cool wind.
Crows caw--woodpeckers drill.

A squirrel darts ahead,
clutching its precious acorn
in preparation for winter.

At the top of the hill, the world widens--
sunlight peeks through branches.
The park dissolves into the high school parking lot.
In the distance, campus buildings beckon.
After catching my breath,
I increase my pace, eager to start a new day of learning.

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

When Nature thrives, people prosper.

Bringing in the Garden

It was time to bring in the garden
the hot sun of summer had left dark dried stalks
and leaves curled in grief
a few Cosmos swayed in full purple bloom
each visited by a frantic bee
“Don’t take these few,” they seemed to say
in kindness, the lavender started to re-bloom
and when there is little left for us
somewhere, there will be a kindness.

Susan Oleferuk - Buchanan, NY - oleferuksusan@gmail.com

Bow Down in Bounty

Bow down in bounty
red, blue and gold
tumble out joy in berry full
nut brown
nectar crown

Stand proud in winter's cold
bare thin in brutal wind
shriven skinned
icy limbed
waiting for the return.

Susan Oleferuk - Buchanan, NY - oleferuksusan@gmail.com

Jack-o'-Lanterns

I accidentally planted a pumpkin patch
it happens
there is a quiet excitement in a pumpkin patch
the pumpkins themselves are silent, intent on growing as big as they can
their slight cords feeding off the earth getting all they need
to make them plump and round
their bellies smooth and ready for a rub
the large leaves draped protectively like coverlets
while insects buzz like nurses in the neon orange flowerlets
and my patch keeps growing soon to take over my house, maybe even my small village
if Halloween doesn't come soon
leaving home is scary
even for pumpkins.

Susan Oleferuk - Buchanan, NY - oleferuksusan@gmail.com

dispersion

charging waves collapse
sprayed to white nothing by winds
determined to clash

mj Nordgren - Hillsboro, OR - maryjanenordgren@gmail.com

arrogant air

top of cedar bows
to insistence of fierce wind
demanding homage

mj Nordgren - Hillsboro, OR - maryjanenordgren@gmail.com

Amid the Shadows of Hemlocks

The air has turned cooler, summer's slipped into fall.
Canada Geese by the river haunt me with memories
from years long ago. I feel a sense of being lost
in a life that is not of my making.

I'm not myself today, I tell the geese. They don't notice
me and go on pecking in the dew-covered morning grass.
Sunlight glints through a stand of hemlock trees, casting
shadows that dance like spirits of loved ones long departed.

I must decide if this brings sorrow or is a sign of something
stirring my soul to awaken a part of me I've let dissolve
in a sea of solitary longing. The word *ennui* floats in damp
clumps of riverside fragrance. Words have a habit

of wandering through my mind unbidden. I catch them like
butterflies in a net, look at them, study them, and let them go.
I want to grasp their meaning, to understand. I listen closely
to quiet, hidden sources of knowledge.

Like butterflies, bodies of water hold many mysterious secrets
in their surface eddies and ripples fed from subterranean streams
and from waters of cloud formations. The river flows past me,
leaving only an inkling of its vast knowledge.

My attention is caught by a flicker of red wings as a crimson
cardinal lights on a dark-green branch of hemlock, a flame
of passionate life burning in a forest of sheltering darkness,
a forest that's a fitting backdrop for the incandescence of life.

Emily Black - Gainesville, FL - eblack@asrsystems.ws

new canna bloom
will it open before frost
bees are hoping

Christine Valentine - svalentine@rangeweb.net

The Road was a Ribbon of Moonlight

A man on horseback riding through the night
has always been a most romantic symbol to me:
the powerful flanks of the horse; the man's legs

draped tight over the horse in a very erotic way.
I think of illustrations in my childhood picture books:
Paul Revere crying out, "One if by land, two if by sea,"

waving his lantern; King Authur's noble knights
jousting for the admiration of their fair ladies. I even
loved the Headless Horseman, terrifying as he was,

riding though fields of pumpkins, brandishing a sword
to scare the All-Hollows-Eve party goers. He excited
me in a scary way that made my bones shiver.

The most handsome, the most haunting horseman
of all was the Highwayman who rode by night in elegant
clothes, lace at his throat, love in his heart, compassion

in his soul. He still rides for me, my gallant Highwayman.
In my fantasies he comes to me by moonlight. He looks
like my husband, shares his traits, even without the horse.

Emily Black - Gainesville, FL - eblack@asrsystems.ws

rain and more rain
the creek will be swollen
happy mallards

Christine Valentine - svalentine@rangeweb.net

rain and more rain
comes from the northwest--
soon it will be white rain

Christine Valentine - svalentine@rangeweb.net

The Mystery of One's Self

Glorious memories of childhood rise
unbidden to my mind and wrap me
in deep self-love. I awake in mornings,
sometimes refreshed from a good night's

rest, sometimes exhausted from strange
ghost-like dreams. I feel a kinship
with nature's moods: bright, warm sun one
moment, lashing rain the next, thunder,

lightning, wind rattling trees. My limbs
are bone-like tree branches, holding the colors
of my seasons, withering in winter, sublime
in spring, sheltering in summer.

I am in the autumn of life, cloaked in rich
garments curated and refined through years
of searching in the closets of my soul
to find the proper fit, color, and fabric

that expresses the intriguing mystery of myself,
a self I still don't fully understand. I sail like
the paper ship I made to float in rain-soaked
currents of a swale beside my childhood home.

Emily Black - Gainesville, FL - eblack@asrsystems.ws

grey butterflies
the size of a bee
on scarlet zinnias

Christine Valentine - svalentine@rangeweb.net

Transitions

Wind sounds its own strings against the backdrop of miniature happenings.
The change like simmering scenes no one can fathom.
Cobwebs dripping with dew. Pine needles drift to the forest floor brown instead of green.
Maple leaves shift from deep green to yellow and burnt orange.
It's beginning. Fur that was once thin and only a covering grows dense and thick in anticipation.
Even the insects find themselves singing a different tune.

Apples grow ripe on the trees. Pumpkins grow a lovely hue, ripe for the picking.
Harvest is upon us. Those vegetables, heat, and greens, ready to be cooked and canned.
Every animal preparing for the next season to come.
the sounds of chatter, gathering, and migration a daily tune upon the breeze.
Can you hear it. that old sound we hear every year.
Can you feel the difference shifting and blooming in our atmosphere.
Everything from the blooming mums and slowly fading azaleas know what's happening.
It's that same old rhythm that comes with a new note. The promise of harvest and mortality.
A sleeping beauty of Earth's devise.
An eternal cycle pulling us along in its tide.
A longing for peace the Earth demands of all of us from its birds and squirrels
To her gusts and warmth to cool the longer days into equilibrium.
Taste the air, feel the new breeze, embrace the change Earth brings.

Clennell Anthony - Jacksonville, FL - csa30@icloud.com

If you like a poem, please let the poet know it...

**Time to share your Fall-themed poems
for**

The Weekly Avocet.

**Please read the guidelines before
submitting**

We love previously published poems!

Please send your submissions to:
angeldec24@hotmail.com

**Photos (4), haiku (up to 10),
Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems
(as many as you can write)**

Please do not stack your info when submitting submissions, please have it: name - town, state - email address, in a line, just like it appears in both publications. Please do not make extra work for us. Thank you.

Please put (early or late) Fall/your last name in the subject line.

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

(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 poems in the body of an email or in one attachment, no pdf file.

**We look forward to reading your Fall
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

We hope we provoked you; that you leave having experienced a complete emotional response to the poetry found in each issue of The Weekly Avocet. 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.

Copyright © 2025 by The Avocet (for our poets)