

# The Weekly Avocet - #697

## April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026

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

**little bird on the tree  
thinks it is the budding leaf  
spring desires all**

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



Submitted by Edwina Kadera

## **Spring's Awe**

After the thaw  
air clean and clear.  
With joyous senses  
I walk ranch loop.

Purple counterpane  
meadow flickers  
in brilliant sunlight.

Rolling hills covered  
with cerulean ceanothus  
color of sky display.

Wide wings glide  
Red-tailed hawk  
back and forth from  
distant California oaks.

Quail rustle, flutter,  
scatter from buckwheat  
and sage hiding places.

Honeysuckle skirts  
twirl split-rail fence  
as horses dash  
around pasture.

Buzzing bees holy wait  
for Our Lord's Candle  
rosettes to pop open.

Jill G. Hall - San Diego, CA - [jill@jillghall.com](mailto:jill@jillghall.com)

## **Tom Turkey**

Every afternoon Tom turkey  
comes to call. He struts along  
meadow, head-half-cocked  
and scrounges for fallen  
crispy birdfeeder seeds.

He spies a hen fly  
over wooden fence.

Agog at her beauty,  
he fans tailfeather arch,  
makes deep gurgling sounds.  
She saunters over, gives him  
a sly smile then helps herself  
to his no longer secret stash.

Jill G. Hall - San Diego, CA - [jill@jillghall.com](mailto:jill@jillghall.com)

### **Rite of Spring**

Robins have returned.  
They cock their heads  
near the ground,  
listen for worms,  
braid twigs into nests  
for their bright, blue eggs,

Small birds serenade,  
whistle and trill  
as they pause  
on lampposts and benches.

Crocuses have poked  
up through earth,  
showing hints of purple petals.  
Rows of forsythia are tipped  
in butter yellow pastels.

Straw colored grass  
transforms overnight  
into chlorophyll green.  
Curled buds on branches  
have unfurled after  
winter's long sleep.

The earth awakens,  
becomes an artist's palette  
of colorful, floral profusion.

Leaves of trees turn into  
sheltering umbrellas,  
animals and insects  
provide a symphony of sound.

Lynne D. Soulagnet

## Hello Spring

Winter with its weary, grey landscape,  
tired trees and bundles of fallen branches  
is moving into the past like an old film and

a door to a new season is opening with  
glorious color. Trees are sprouting leaves,  
flowers are growing out of the ground, and  
bushes are presenting blossoms in vibrant

displays. Birds in all their feathered finery  
are announcing the season singing the  
joyous songs of spring. The world is being

transformed, coming alive as if it had long  
slumbered and then awakened. We too have  
roused to join in the dance. We step lighter and  
higher as we breathe in the sweetness of life.

Lynne D. Soulagnet

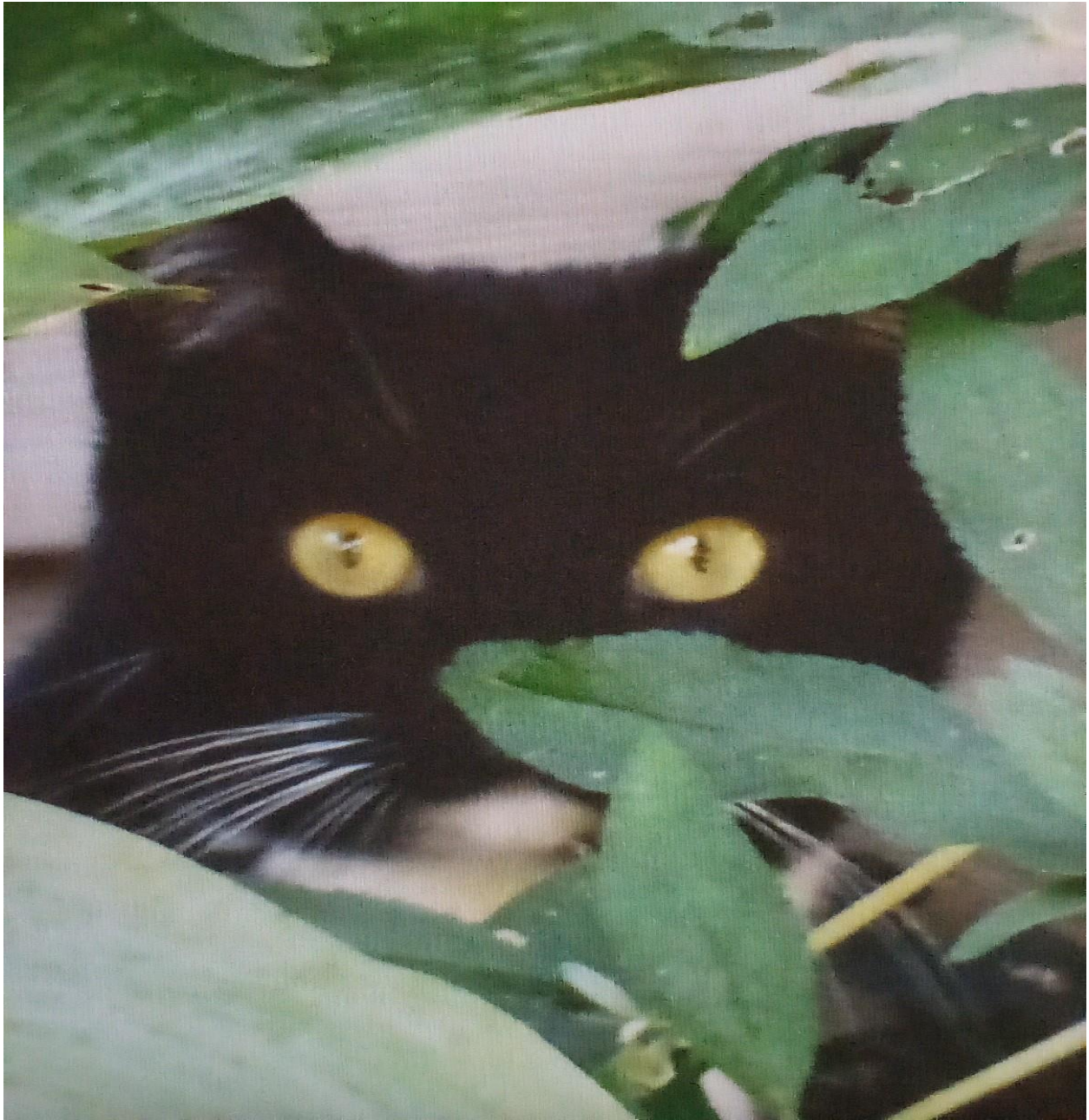
## Cat

Crawling on her belly across the grass, her  
paws grab the earth in long, singular strokes.  
She is sleek and black with stealth and power  
using the element of surprise silently stalking  
her prey. Swiftly moving ever closer to her target,  
her eyes are riveted on the prize. She does not  
play cat and mouse with the mole or bird; no, she  
strikes with certainty. Soon her trophy will be placed  
beneath my front door as she has deemed, I am  
worthy of her gifts, and, having adopted me,  
is making sure I am properly fed by cat standards.  
When she goes on another hunt, I will remove her  
gift so she will not see. Now it is my turn to  
give her what I can, namely, cat food and water.

She continues to patrol the area for mice, beetles,  
garter snakes, and mostly anything that crawls, hops,  
jumps, or slithers. She almost caught a squirrel the  
other day. Escaping, it managed to squeeze itself  
into the leader of the gutter. There it remained  
stuck and screeching until I removed the metal  
piece to set it free. Now the cat has become

fascinated by the butterflies going from flower to flower on my butterfly bush and tries to catch them when I am not looking. Because that's what cats do. She remains wild by nature, red in tooth and claw, driven by instinct. But come late afternoon this fierce, little feline will become a tame tabby and can be seen sunning herself by the pagoda in my Zen garden.

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## Spring

She arrives with optimism,  
to begin her work on the canvas:  
brown valleys and hills and cold hearts.  
Newborn calf moos, his first vocal practice;  
old cowboy sings to his young apprentice;  
mountain brook cheers;  
wren returns to the old nest;  
yellow forsythia, red tulips flirt with  
neighbor's cat;  
all these and the scent of earth in the zephyr  
thaw the frost in the mind of grumbler.  
She assesses her work, smiles in pride;  
who can do the job in such a perfection?  
plans for the coming summer,  
thinks that can wait;  
for now, she'd enjoy what she has done;  
dazzling hues; pink and green.

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

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

## Early Spring

Soft sunlight  
and the milding breeze,  
branches hazed with green,  
forsythia edging to gold,  
daffodils peering out  
from winter bulb slumber,  
as we too stretch and yawn  
awakening to the season's delights.  
Soon the lilacs will bloom  
and days will begin to drift  
on their sweet-scented perfume.

Barbara Novack - Laurelton, NY - bnovack@molloy.edu

## On a Day Like Today

On a day like today  
sun shining  
its soft light warming, melting  
our winter stiffened souls,  
on a day like today  
when breezes bring the scent of spring  
sweetness of flowers not yet bloomed,  
memory and hope combine  
making the world new  
on a day like today.

Barbara Novack - Laurelton, NY - [bnovack@molloy.edu](mailto:bnovack@molloy.edu)

## April Walk

April showers bring May flowers  
so they say. I took a walk in April rain  
today. It was the annual “worm day”,  
when warm rain reaches the worm depth,  
and they wake up and slither onto  
the sidewalk. They lie there looking  
like masses of twigs. A suicide mission  
for them when the sun appears again.

Outside of the houses, summer patio  
furniture drip forlornly, their wet cushions  
ready to ooze into jeans and cut-offs  
on the next warm day. A pair of mallards  
out of range from the creek, paddle  
in the puddles, gather worms.

The happiest couple in the neighborhood  
are a pair of white plastic sheep  
with water rolling down their sides as they  
stand in their afternoon fixation. As for me,  
the rain pearls down my weatherproof jacket  
as I enjoy the fresh April air.  
I reach home, hang my coat in the laundry,  
make a cup of smokey Lapsang Souchong  
tea and watch the weather report.

Christine Valentine - Sheridan, WY - [svalentine@rangeweb.net](mailto:svalentine@rangeweb.net)

## **An Ex-Patriot Thinks Of Spring**

In January snowdrops push  
Their sleepy heads through ice and snow,  
To shake their white and emerald bells,  
While we wait for spring.

On February's sunny days  
The crocus flings its petals wide  
In gold and purple majesty,  
Then spring is on the way.

Beset by March gusts, pounding rain,  
The daffodil on sturdy stalks  
Waves cheerful trumpets as we pass  
And spring is here again.

On sunny April days we walk  
By green and mossy country banks  
And gather creamy primroses  
And then we know it's spring.

In May through wood and copse we stroll  
To stop and sigh and wonder there,  
At bluebells bobbing mile on mile  
To celebrate the spring.

When Rose and Lilac scent the lane  
We know that spring has yielded now  
To summer's warmth, and buzzy bees  
Know spring is on the wane.

Christine Valentine - Sheridan, WY - svalentine@rangeweb.net

### **Birds Are Beacons of Hope**

At Cornell Lab of Ornithology we believe in the power of birds. Birds are such a vibrant part of our world. **Their colors, songs, and behaviors bring us joy, peace and wonder. They connect us to the cycles of nature. And they remind us of the awe-inspiring variety of life on Earth.**

A core part of our mission is to help people celebrate the wonder of birds. We do it because we all share a love of birds, are amazed by their powers, and even gain solace from them and **a deep, clean breath of hope.**

Now more than ever, we need bird conservation! Half of bird species in the U.S. are declining, and 1 in 8 bird species is threatened with extinction worldwide. Over the past 30 years the status of the world's bird species has deteriorated, with more species slipping closer to extinction.

Your support is more important now than ever to help protect the birds and other wildlife we love—and to prevent the silence created each time another species is lost forever.

**Please join us today!**

## **I Love My Birds**

I read with despair  
that half of bird species  
are declining.  
I have watched  
my Goldfinch,  
Rose-breasted Grosbeak,  
Black-capped Chickadees,  
Hairy Woodpeckers  
at my bird feeder  
with great joy.  
My heart aches for my dear friends,  
my heart aches for me.

What fool thinks we are not next?

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## Faithful Friends

The sun is warmer.  
Tree leaves have not unfurled.  
Early spring does not mean snow is gone.  
I walk the path to the quarry  
to look for my Hepatica.  
They are dear friends I miss  
during long winters.

I am excited when I see their cheery  
faces with shades of pink, purple or blue.  
Lying face to face we visit.  
Sometimes I paint them,  
sometimes photograph them.  
They are very silent flowers.

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### **Wild Clouds**

Clouds in spring  
take over the sky  
with a wildness  
that is the divide between  
winter and summer.  
A call to action,  
a stirring of all  
that wants to turn green,  
produce seeds,  
make nests.

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### **I Have Waited All Winter for This Moment**

The first Robin  
scratches leaf litter for food.  
Sunlight and warmth  
cause the pond  
to reverberate, the ice to crack.  
Largemouth Bass will swim to the surface,  
Spring Peepers begin their mating calls.

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### **Every Breath We Take**

We're no longer permitted to see  
the Paleolithic cave paintings,  
our breath would destroy them.

Perhaps if all of us stopped breathing  
global warming would cease, then  
all those driverless electric cars

could roll on without us since they  
don't eat up fossil fuels yet even  
electricity brings environmental cost.

I'm sorry to say holding our breath  
for at least a minute every day can't  
do the trick, nothing less than our

prompt exit along with all those  
farting cows we put out to pasture  
to become burgers or filet mignons

as well as other complicit critters  
would have to go, yet there's still  
the problem of all those gases

set to take to the skies as our bodies  
turn different colors and decay.  
Even those sunk in the sea wearing

Mafia supplied cement shoes will  
bloat and rise to the surface and give  
the crime away. I love my oxygen

as much as the next person and I  
don't really plan to stop breathing  
unless you do and I have no choice.

William Heath - Annapolis, MD - [heath@msmary.edu](mailto:heath@msmary.edu)

### **On Spiders**

Of the fifteen quadrillion spiders in  
the world, most I hope you never meet.  
All spiders are cannibals, collectively  
they eat more meat than we do.  
They prey on each other as well as  
a vast variety of other edibles.

Female wasp spiders eat their mate  
immediately after copulation.  
A spider doesn't digest its food  
as you might expect, regurgitated  
enzymes break down a victim's  
soft tissue into a liquid, which

the spider sucks up, leaving behind  
a small indigestible residue.  
To hint this is a devilish joke  
or part of a divine plan, at the center  
of its web a spider named for  
St. Andrew weaves a cross.

William Heath

## **Bird Song**

I wonder if any birds prefer  
the songs of other birds,  
the magpie, that scoundrel,  
comes to mind. I wonder  
when different kinds of birds  
are singing in the trees  
if they make any attempt

at harmony, jazz riffs,  
a recognition somebody  
else is performing, making an  
effort to get laid, no doubt the  
wrong idiom in terms birds.

When I step into the forest  
birds start talking, not in  
a friendly way, to me. I'm  
nothing they'd want to eat,  
at least while I am alive,  
I've brought them nothing

they can or might want  
to peck, I am no danger to them.  
"Get lost," is what they say,  
"Stay lost, leave us [no pun  
intended, but with birds  
who knows?] to our trees."

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## **Snakes**

Where did all the snakes go?  
I remember as a boy we are driving  
a narrow backcountry road and Dad  
suddenly stops to let a blacksnake longer  
than the pavement slither across,

its head disappearing into the weeds  
before the tip of a tail enters the picture.  
As a boy walking in the woods  
I once step in a nest of snakes,  
more than I can count, they don't

bite and probably aren't poisonous,  
but the shock puts a hop in my step  
as I dash off. Another time I run head-  
first into a snake hanging from a branch  
over my path. On hot summer days

it is common to glimpse a dead snake  
flattened by a car. This is in Ohio,  
not the Deep South where I've seen  
water moccasins in the swamps.  
The last snakes I recall meeting

was years ago on the Gettysburg  
battlefield, appropriately enough  
at Devil's Den, where I saw two  
copperheads snuggling in a cleft  
in the rocks to catch the setting sun.

Boy to man, I've always been afraid  
of the snakes that I now miss seeing.

William Heath - Annapolis, MD - [heath@msmary.edu](mailto:heath@msmary.edu)

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

### **beloved brother ocean**

beloved brother  
and sister-in-law-and-love  
drove me to our blue house refuge  
i had not seen in months  
joyful to stand again on its deck  
to watch the ocean waves curl white  
and spray against basalt rocks  
and splay upon the sand  
to huddle in the corner chair  
to work sudoku puzzles  
and listen to gulls crab about  
the gusty winds and people

mjNordgren - Hillsboro, OR - [maryjanenordgren@gmail.com](mailto:maryjanenordgren@gmail.com)

## **Only the Old Ones Remember**

Only the old ones remember fall  
green leaves turning red and gold  
crisp apples and Orion in the night sky  
hawks soaring, following the mountain ridges  
faith that bare branches would be clothed again.

Only the old ones remember winter  
snow falling fresh onto an outstretched tongue  
loaded branches touching the ground  
nose prickling cold and welcome firelight  
rabbit tracks tracing mysterious journeys.

Only the old ones remember spring  
melting ice and rushing rivers  
ferns uncurling their green fronds  
wedges of geese calling, flying north  
returning birds building their nests.

Only the old ones remember summers that ended  
forest trails and cool lakes for swimming  
lost loons calling all night long  
flowers, bees, ripe berries and honey in the comb  
blue sky and clear water, balance and abundance

only the old ones remember

Ellen Nielsen - Ormond Beach, FL - [enielsen5142gmail.com](mailto:enielsen5142gmail.com)

## **End Times**

It started with small slow deaths.  
When there were still seasons, each spring  
was greeted by fewer frog choruses  
and fewer birds returning.  
One summer there were no butterflies.  
After the bees disappeared, our children  
grew up never tasting fruit. Further south  
in lands ravaged by drought and famine  
stick-thin children with swollen bellies  
never grew up at all.

When it stopped snowing anywhere  
and the last ice caps melted  
we fled the drowning cities  
clogging the crumbling highways.  
Starving, we hunted down the last wildlife  
and then we hunted each other.  
There was no punishing thunderbolt  
or random asteroid--we did it to ourselves.

Ellen Nielsen - Ormond Beach, FL - enielsen5142gmail.com

**Thank you for submitting, subscribing, and sharing.**

### **Slow Spring**

Evenings, if the rain lets up, I walk  
to the beaver pond, listening for peepers.  
hearing only the sound of water, spilling  
over the dam's lip, and owls calling.  
The damp air smells of leaf mold.  
Last year's grass sways in clear puddles.  
At the end of the first warm day  
I'm tired, but something calls me out  
maybe the moon, almost full, veiled  
gleaming through shredded clouds.  
At first, my mind is somewhere else  
tuning out the sound of rushing water  
almost missing the light fading  
and the soft-footed night closing in  
only to be transfixed by the frogs' shout  
roused in time to see the beaver's head  
arrowing through the dark water  
and the moon's face, broken gold  
in a trail of silver ripples.

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**The Avocet and The Weekly Avocet are publications devoted to poets and readers who find meaning in their lives from the world of Nature; poets who write of the beauty, the peace, and the fury of Nature in all of its glory...**

### **Pink Vase**

sun-glow  
on the empty vase  
on the kitchen windowsill  
casts a rainbow shadow  
of spring flowers

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

**“For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it.” - Jacques Cousteau (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)**

### **Vernal Renaissance after Snowmelt**

After the last snowmelt in earliest spring,  
I gaze at sunset as it shimmers like raiments  
of pink and gold on the Cascade Mountains.

My breath catches as I reflect on the work of nature's  
hand and dwell on how it weaves the lattices of life  
with interludes of growth dependent on repose.

Winter precedes spring, but it is given scant value  
as many deem the season a time of loss, dormancy,  
or death. Yet, winter lays a foundation of promise  
in preparation for vernal renaissance.  
Though awakening spring still bears the chill  
of winter, it is marked by stirrings of new life,  
hidden in the magic of earth's loamy darkness.

Beneath the matted layers of decaying leaf debris,  
a milieu of sustenance cradles a multitude of creatures.  
And tree and plant roots urge a burgeoning of leaf  
and stem as the earth tilts towards the warming  
rays of its star.

Soon, the bare-limbed orchard trees will be adorned  
with garlands of blossoms and the air will resonate  
with the jazzed percussion of Northern Flickers,  
intermingled with the flute notes of songbirds  
in celebration of spring's renaissance.

Wendy N. Bell - Edgewood, WA - wendynbell@hotmail.com

**“Mother Nature is always speaking. She speaks in a language understood within the peaceful mind of the sincere observer.” - Radhanath Swami (Theresa Cancro - phoenixlady@comcast.net)**

### **Thoughts on the rush of life in spring**

While winter days moved slowly and we yearned for warmth and light  
And nature coiled in slumber under a canopy of night  
Now comes the early spring when the long wait subsides  
And abundance wakes and overtakes as shoots of green arise  
The mad dash of growth delights our eyes and warms our hearts  
As the colors of life splash and form a stunning work of art

First the crocuses appear and snowdrops dot the ground  
Soon they're followed by narcissus - yellow cups face up and down  
No sooner do they show before the purple vinca blooms  
And up have come the hyacinths, whose fragrance fills our rooms

Yellow bright forsythias announce the end of March  
While trees explode at once to form a crisscrossed flower arch  
The pink and purple petals, the magnolia and the cherry  
The fruit trees flower quickly  
the weight of blossoms heavy  
And then we have the tulips, in the deepest, richest shades  
Singly and in bunches or in rows upon the glades

This springtime rush of life is such exuberant abundance,  
Every day a change in hue and if you blink you're missing so much  
It's nature's burst of glory  
A competition playing out  
For life depends on timing  
That's what the bloom's about

It all goes by so quickly  
And I want to slow it down  
The glory of that is springtime  
The rainbow all around  
The warmth of the sun  
The fragrance of the air  
Press the memories within me  
To keep close throughout the year.

Meryl Smith - Rumson, NJ - meryljbs@gmail.com

# **INTERNATURAL**

*- The Collection -*

## **I. CORNERED SOUL**

In the vertices of time, my feelings nest,  
in the apices of space, my mind rests  
eager for the cobweb-breaking light: YOU(\*)

## **II. RELEASED SOUL**

The sun melts the cobwebs  
and the caterpillar flies  
the cocoon is empty now.

## **III. PRODIGAL SON**

I already looked my soul in the eye  
and kissed goodbye evil in her lips:  
Now I am coming back home.(\*\*)

## **IV. GAS IN GLASS**

Your natural gas  
fills my radical glass  
reaching our destination.

## **V. RAINY DAY**

Under an overled sky  
animals wonder and wander,  
as purification becomes flood.

## **VI. SURF DREAMS**

As easy as bliss  
the sea-surf caress  
in my endless dreams...

## **VII. AIR AND FIRE**

The spell of lightning  
the smell of night breeze  
fragrant and colourful airwaves.

## **VIII. NATURAL EMBRACE**

The mist of my feelings  
embraces your mindful soil  
bringing forth the flowers of our love.

## **IX. DREAM HOUSE**

Forest House,  
Water Dreams:  
Mind your House, Love your Dreams.

Edilberto González-Trejos - Ciudad de PANAMÁ - egtrejos@gmail.com

## **JAZZ VARIATIONS ON A NATURAL THEME**

### **I. VAN DAM**

Broken levees, dead dams,  
dry, wasted reserves,  
energy under threat of extinction.

### **II. SPRING**

Heavenly chant, like a spring  
springing water from the mountain  
the lullaby for my foreign heart  
to drink and relieve its thirst.

### **III. AVIS**

Dance of fabrics, rainbow`s song  
shining feathers on the horizon  
whistling birds, masters  
of the auditive caress.

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**Please be kind, write to each other...**

**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](mailto:angeldec24@hotmail.com)

**Please put (early or late) 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.

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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.

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