

# *The Weekly Avocet*

## *#454*

### **August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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

**fisherman's net  
heavy with its catch  
of plastic**

William Scott Galasso - Laguna Woods, CA - [scottgalasso@yahoo.com](mailto:scottgalasso@yahoo.com)



**Enjoy your stroll through our pages to find yourself in nature.**

**We are pleased to share the poetry submissions from Creative Voices, writers from the Piedmont Region of North Carolina for this week's issue of *The Weekly Avocet*.**

### **Miss Coneflower's Garden Party**

Tall, slender beauty,  
head and shoulders above the crowd,  
a fashion icon in pink frou-frou hat,  
pretty face tilted up to catch the sun.

Regal, she nods and waves to greet admirers.  
Butterflies politely perch then stay for tea.  
Bees buzz, swarm and guzzle with gusto.  
Bright birds nibble thistle, a delicacy.

Ever the generous hostess,  
she graciously serves each guest  
from dawn to dusk,  
until, at last, the garden party ends.

Phyllis Castelli - Henderson, NC - phylcastelli@gmail.com

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

### **Dawn Song**

The call of the wren  
breaks open the thin, misty space  
between darkness and daybreak,  
coaxes the drowsy sun over the horizon.

He cues singers from maple tree to poplar,  
Call, response.  
Call, response,  
stretches the antiphonal chorus from old gray oaks  
to the sleepy creek beyond.  
Full-throated, cacophonous--  
robins and cardinals,  
finches and sparrows  
join to sing the day awake.

Phyllis Castelli - Henderson, NC - phylcastelli@gmail.com

## Nature's Parlor

From my front porch  
I step into nature's parlor  
Not with my pain riddled legs  
I employ my senses to visit  
The summer ambiance nature offers

My eyes glean the parlor walls of trees  
Resplendent in lush green hues  
Vibrant colored flower gardens  
Show off their summer finery  
Sunshine glow enhances a gray-blue sky

A Painted Lady Butterfly flits by  
In a blur of yellow russet and black  
It stops to say hello to purple Iris  
Gathers energy from the sun  
As a squirrel skips through the clover carpet

My ears become attentive  
To the cooing of a mourning dove  
I hear a cacophony of  
Chirping cardinals and bluebirds  
In morning conversations

A warm summer breeze  
Ripples through nature's parlor  
With a pulsing whisper;  
My body feels its caress  
It responds with a cozy shiver

My spirit connects  
With the colors and textures of summer  
I relax in the parlor's comforts  
Each visit renews my spirit  
Calms my psyche, settles anxiety

I smell the sweet clarity of morning air  
My day begins with peace and wonder  
Nature invites me into her world  
To celebrate summer  
And I rejoice.

Maxine Reynolds Chauvaux - Oxford, NC - [paperlady-32@centurylink.net](mailto:paperlady-32@centurylink.net)

## **Sea Symphony**

A calm sea,  
Tidal waves lap in rhythm  
Upon a sandy shore  
Tide in...Tide out.  
The soft sound of moving water  
Whispers nature's amphibious symphony

Torrential winds blow and rains pour  
To create a battering storm  
That makes the sea symphony  
Play a loud and furious crescendo  
Called hurricane

Pushing the ocean waters  
To spill over the sand,  
Pushing the rain to fill brooks and streams  
Causing rivers and lakes to flood and damage

The winds calm, nature's symphony of the sea  
Begins its natural rhythm; its usual symphonic score  
Then joins the pounding, buzzing, whirring sounds  
Of repair and rebuilding; the pain and tears of loss  
That becomes a symphony of HOPE.

Maxine Reynolds Chauvaux - Oxford, NC - [paperlady-32@centurylink.net](mailto:paperlady-32@centurylink.net)

## **Never Mind**

My chard flourishes;  
Must find recipes. But wait!  
Deer came. Problem solved.

Kat Ravenel - Oxford, NC - [ksravenel@gmail.com](mailto:ksravenel@gmail.com)

## **Respite**

Stepping on crisp grass  
an eye to shimmering woods.  
In trees' shade, cool bliss.

Kat Ravenel - Oxford, NC - [ksravenel@gmail.com](mailto:ksravenel@gmail.com)

**“We don’t inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.” -  
Native American proverb**

### **A Summer Swim**

I swim beyond the breakers  
And feel as if I’ve treaded water all my life  
Sometimes a shark-shadow flashes by  
Sometimes a wave of apprehension swallows me  
Yet, I feel home here  
*Breathe slowly, don’t fall apart*  
*Is the shore still there*

Out here beyond the breakers  
I feel the power of the ocean seas  
Beyond the breakers in this place alive, in vibrant motion  
Colors--yellow, green, blue, to black  
I find the currents, tides, and undertow a comfort  
*Breathe slowly, don’t fall apart*  
*Is the shore still there*

Kiki Win - Berea, NC - 1kikiwin@gmail.com

## **Clean water is life... Clean air is life...**

### **I am seduced by seashells**

I walk along a beach spread with seashells in long streaks parallel to the surf line  
Large masses of shells punctuate depressions like trays of jewels  
The display surprises me  
Names I know, Olive, Angel Wing, Baby’s Ear, Periwinkle, Bear’s Claw, Boat Shell and Scotch  
Bonnet  
Shells broken and unbroken, smooth, crinkled, fluted, spiraled and shapes for which I know no  
words  
I am awed by an array of color;  
Red, orange, brown, to deep purple  
Some pearl white, some shimmer with iridescence  
Each one I hold possesses dignified beauty  
Each unique and revealed to me with the fallen tide

Kiki Win - Berea, NC - 1kikiwin@gmail.com

**“Leave the road, take the trails.” - Pythagoras**

**“U.N. Panel Issues Stark Climate-Change Warning -- Rising seas, melting ice caps and other effects of a warming climate may be irreversible for centuries and are “unequivocally” driven by greenhouse-gas emissions from human activity, a scientific panel working under the auspices of the United Nations” - Robert Lee Hotz**

### **The Lollipop Tree**

It was summer.  
My daughter, Trish, planted a tree.  
She was three years old and loved lollipops -- any flavor.  
She wanted a lollipop tree.  
One day, she dug a hole in her grandmother’s garden.  
She stuck the lollipop candy side down into the hole,  
Patted dirt around it and gave it a tiny sprinkle of water.  
Trish stood back and smiled.  
The lollipop stick stood up from the ground.  
While I watched, my imagination wondered:  
If the lollipop could grow, would it be a tree or a bush?  
Would it bear fruit? Would it bear new fruit when the summer season changed?  
What color -- what size would the lollipops be?  
When Trish realized lollipop trees didn’t grow,  
Would it break her heart?  
Years later would her lollipop venture  
Give her something to laugh about?  
A story planted in her mind as a pleasant memory of childhood.

Marion Woods - Pottstown, PA - woodsmarion460@gmail.com

**Respect and protect that which gives you life!**

**“We’ve known for decades that the world is warming, but this report tells us that recent changes in the climate are widespread, rapid and intensifying, unprecedented in thousands of years,” said Ko Barrett, vice chair of the panel and the senior adviser for climate at the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. “Further, it is indisputable that human activities are causing climate change.”**

**We feel blessed to publish the best Nature poets in America**

**“I go to nature to be soothed and healed, and to have my senses put in order.” - John Burroughs**

### **Summer's Flowers**

Flowers have a ministry all their own  
Nothing else seems comparable to the joy they bring  
Colorful blooms become the backdrop for summer events  
They add beauty to a church sanctuary

On a walk, you smell sweet flowery fragrances  
The aroma often flows through open windows  
Aromas that give a lift to the living of a day  
Or give a spring to your step as you walk along

Wildflowers bring life to woodlands, roadsides, and fields  
They flaunt their rustic beauty at tourists and local residents  
Driving by you delight in colorful roadside splendor  
They brighten a long drive home or provide dinner table bouquets

Nothing is more beautiful than a wall of morning glories  
All different colors awakening from a good night's sleep.  
No matter the size or color each bloom wears  
You might -- if you use your imagination  
Hear them sing a song something like this:

“Do you know that flowers go to bed at night?  
Say little prayers; Shut their eyes up tight.  
While silver moon beams  
Shine Down from the sky.  
They are off to dream land  
Just as you and I.”\*

*(\*author unknown - Ms. Woods learned this six-line song as a young child.)*

Marion Woods - Pottstown, PA - woodsmarion460@gmail.com

**“The report highlights human responsibility for record heat waves, droughts, more intense storms and other extreme weather events seen around the world in recent years. It also sharpens estimates of how sensitive the climate is to rising atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases--a key metric in forecasting the rise of global temperatures in the years ahead.” - Robert Lee Hotz**

## Longing

On the kitchen window ledge,  
sits a Mason jar that holds my tears.  
Sunlight streams through,

creates a warm, prismatic beam.  
I reach for the jar, unscrew the lid,  
dampen a finger, touch it to my tongue,

taste the saltiness, envision bright  
reds, blues, greens, and yellows  
of lobster pot buoys

like the colors and patterns  
of horse racing jockeys' silks.  
Fishers' buoys float on

Maine's Penobscot Bay.  
Fishy smells mingle with the scents  
of red spruce and balsam fir.

We sit at a harbor dock picnic table.  
Melted butter drips over fresh lobster,  
satisfies our hunger for seafood.

Warblers and terns swoop overhead.  
We hike rocky shores, bike rolling terrain,  
gather around campfire embers,

snuggle, wrapped in a woven blanket,  
watch coral sunsets over forested hills.  
Evening chill and fog arrive, warning bell rings,

rose glow of the lighthouse's lantern trolls.  
I long to return to those carefree, summer days.  
Now only my mind can make the journey.

I hold the Mason jar in my hands.  
My joyful tears will evaporate.  
My memories will fade.

Suzanne Cottrell - Oxford, NC - cottrell\_suzanne@yahoo.com

**“When you see what has happened this summer with heat waves in Canada and the heavy precipitation in Germany, I think this is showing that even highly developed countries are not spared,” said Sonia Seneviratne, a senior scientist at ETH Zurich in Switzerland and a lead co-author of the report. “We don’t really have time to adapt anymore because the change is happening so quickly.”**

## Leisurely Observers

We lean against the top rail of a wooden bridge  
that spans a pond rimmed with chartreuse reeds  
and brown fuzzy cattails that sway in the breeze.  
A musty, earthen smell pervades.

Motionless, dark olive shells, the size of Frisbees,  
rest on a half-submerged log covered with moss and algae.  
Eastern painted turtles with outstretched hind legs and webbed feet  
like our Labrador retriever that sprawls in front of the air conditioner.

The turtles relish the sun's warmth on this summer day.  
Ah, to bask in sunlight without the fear of sunburn  
or to drift in warm, shallow waters serenaded  
by an Eastern Towhee, its familiar call of "Drink your tea."

We turn to the opposite rail and scan the pond's surface.  
A beaked nose, dark shell, and spiked tail glide toward us.  
The snapping turtle cuts through the murky water, creates ripples.  
Atop the bridge, distanced from the water, we relax and watch,

relieved our exposed toes are safe  
from being misconstrued for tasty worms.  
The turtle disappears into the shadows beneath the bridge.  
We hasten to the other side and wait.

Despite the heat and the pond's invitation,  
we choose not to enter the water,  
content as mere observers  
on this leisurely afternoon.

Suzanne Cottrell - Oxford, NC - cottrell\_suzanne@yahoo.com

**We want to thank the poets of Creative Voices, writers from the Piedmont Region of North Carolina, for sharing their wonderful poetry with all of us and a thank you to Suzanne Cottrell for putting their work together for us to enjoy...**

**"Last year, global temperatures tied for the warmest on record, capping the warmest decade in modern times. Oceans are warming, and sea level is increasing by 3.7 mm, or about 0.1 inch, a year, the scientists said in the report. Mountain glaciers, sea ice and polar ice sheets are steadily melting. Weather around the world has grown more extreme by many measures, the scientists said, with more frequent heat waves and prolonged droughts in some regions and heavier rainfall and flooding in others." - Robert Lee Hotz**

**To read the whole article by Robert Lee Hotz - <https://www.msn.com/en-us/weather/topstories/un-panel-issues-stark-climate-change-warning/ar-AAN6b9x?li=BBnb7Kz>**

**Here is another Saving Mother Earth Challenge poem.**

### **Generations**

still, moonrise occurs  
as expected, still moonrise  
cool elliptic disc spirals light  
around the globe until  
night hours drain still.  
sun climbs by degrees, silver  
pink-saffron blazing cerulean,  
surrounds swallows in & out  
mud-dab nest below the eave,  
air swims in buggy breakfast feed.  
from pines & coast live oaks  
swells of fog drip slow to still.  
deer step in through fence trim  
prim downhill, noses up,  
tail-twitching time.

still, less is more, more is less,  
more of us, more & more  
parts per million rise, still.  
up the road farmer Albert  
won't let land go baked & still.  
son of survivors  
who brought their dairy skills,  
he captures every bovine  
belch & hind release, methane  
digester closes power loop.

still, less of more-&-more  
power down  
subdue ourselves  
ambering specks of life  
slower than birds  
still lower than ridges  
unable to leap tall buildings.  
be ourselves, unmasked  
as nature's own, not owner.  
thank you, a choice  
flora fauna living, still,  
seven generations hence.

Lynn Axelrod - Point Reyes Station, CA - [lynnaxelrod@gmail.com](mailto:lynnaxelrod@gmail.com)

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

A Poetry Challenge for all Nature-loving poets in 2021. I love writing Saving Mother Earth Challenge poems. I am always on the lookout for an article about our wondrous Mother Earth. Please find a climate change issue about our precious planet and take the Saving Mother Earth Challenge, and, then send it to us to share with the community...

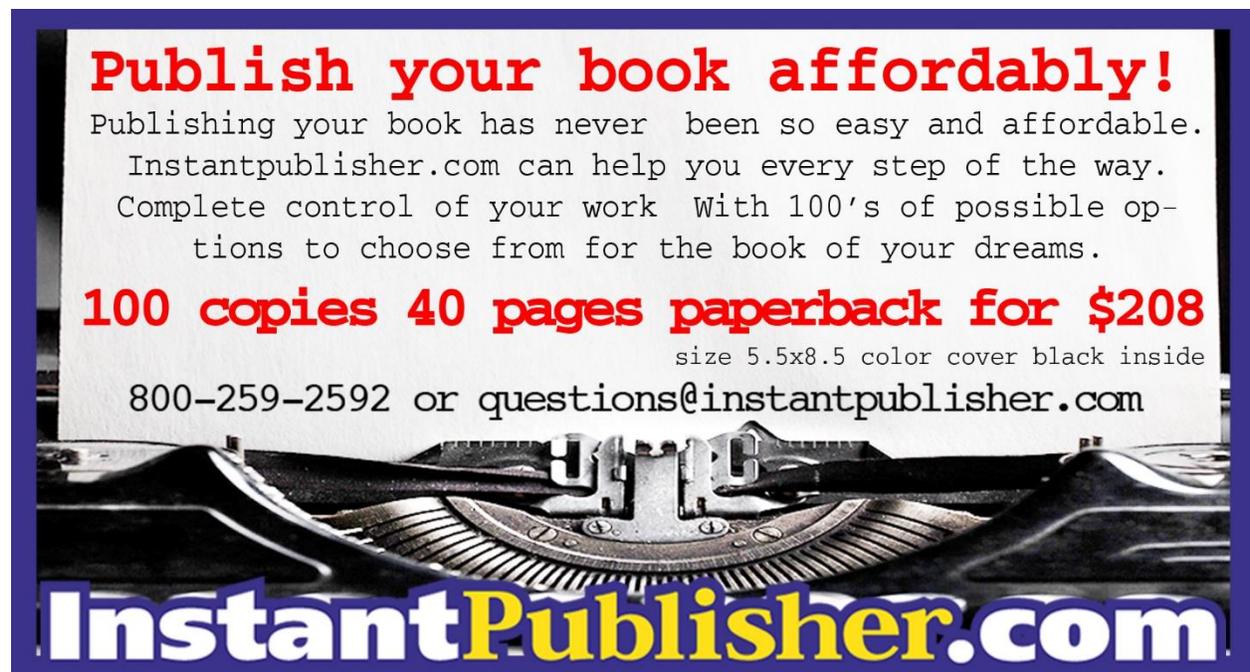
**We all call Earth our home - Have your voice be heard through your words!!!**

Please put Saving Mother Earth Challenge/your last name in the subject line of your email and send to [angeldec24@hotmail.com](mailto:angeldec24@hotmail.com)

If you would like to become a supporting member of The Avocet community, The Avocet is only \$24.00 for 4 - 64 page - perfectly bounded issues and 52 weeks of The Weekly Avocet, every weekend, plus other poetry surprises, with the best Nature poetry by the best Nature poets in America, a steal of a deal. Please think about supporting our little poetry journal. Sample copy just \$7.50.

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

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



**Publish your book affordably!**  
Publishing your book has never been so easy and affordable.  
Instantpublisher.com can help you every step of the way.  
Complete control of your work With 100's of possible options to choose from for the book of your dreams.

**100 copies 40 pages paperback for \$208**  
size 5.5x8.5 color cover black inside

800-259-2592 or [questions@instantpublisher.com](mailto:questions@instantpublisher.com)

**InstantPublisher.com**

Please let them know we sent you. Thank you.

**Norma Bradley, an Avocet poet - [normabradley1@gmail.com](mailto:normabradley1@gmail.com) - writes, “When I was ready to publish my first self-published chapbook, I called Instant Publisher. Chris was very helpful and answered all of my questions. I am delighted with how the book turned out and have had many positive comments. I did have help along the way to be able to get it sent off to finally be published. What I like about self-publishing is that I made all the choices for the cover design, font, paper etc. The copies arrived within 10 days. Being able to speak directly with Chris made all the difference. I highly recommend Instant Publisher.”**

Deenaz Coachbuilder writes, “I have treasured each poem in Charles Portolano’s new collection of poetry, *Wild with Life*. Love and reverence for nature and those you love imbues each page. Relationships between animals, between man and animals and birds, between humankind and the plants we touch, smell, taste, shelter under, respect. There is a sense of almost holiness, that they were here before us, and will remain long after, that we are but ephemeral visitors in their world. Our power can be used to preserve nature or destroy it.

The poems enlighten, entertain, instruct. They help us understand the world around us in the best of ways, through the stories he tells, for did we not learn of the world through the stories we heard, and then read, when we were children?

There is a feeling that cannot be described, when we carefully and cautiously rescue a spider, a lizard, a bird, that has accidentally entered our home, which we release back into their natural habitat. It is as if something has blessed us.”

## **A collection of Mother Earth poetry by Charles Portolano**

Editor of The Avocet, a Journal of Nature Poetry – [cportolano@hotmail.com](mailto:cportolano@hotmail.com)

### ***Wild with Life***

Just \$15.00, which includes postage, for 90 pages of pure love for our Mother Earth.

*Knowing I am wild with life  
but once  
on this gift we have been given,  
this precious gift that we have  
been given guardianship of...*

Send checks to:  
The Avocet  
P. O. Box 19186  
Fountain Hills, AZ  
85269

“These poems are written by a seasoned poet who has reached the pinnacle of his art with a recognizable and moving voice. Charles edits the highly-successful nature journal, THE AVOCET, a must for nature loving poets and writers.”- Christine Swanberg, Poet Laureate of Rockford, IL.

“In Wild with Life, Charles Portolano has deepened his engagement with the natural world he began so movingly in his earlier works. It is a noble, ambitious, and moving work.”- Joel Savishinsky - Charles A. Dana Professor Emeritus in the Social Sciences, Ithaca College

## 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](mailto:cportolano@hotmail.com)

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

Be well, see you next weekend,

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

**Copyright © 2021 by The Avocet (for our poets)**