

# ASLE News

A Biannual Publication of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment

Fall 1996

Volume 8, Number 2

## Letter to ASLE Members

Greetings, friends,

- ♦ I hope this issue of the News finds you well and ready for the pleasures of the coming winter season. Of course, those of you who don't look forward to winter may simply want to curl up by the fire with a warm toddy and begin fantasizing about midsummer in Montana. That's right, ASLE's second biennial conference will be held July 17-19, 1997, at the University of Montana in Missoula. ASLE Officers and Executive Council members have been working with conference host Hank Harrington to organize what promises to be ASLE's best event ever. We expect more than 300 scholars, writers, activists, and artists to participate in this gathering, which features academic paper sessions and roundtable discussions, field trips and recreational activities, publishers' exhibits and authors' receptions, plenary sessions on traditions and trends in ecocriticism, and readings by authors including Rick Bass, Pattiann Rogers, and Gary Snyder. Judging from our last major gathering, held during the summer of 1995 at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, this conference is not one you will want to miss. The full-page Announcement/Call for Papers published in this issue of the News provides you with submission and contact information, while more complete information about the conference (including lodging options, recreational opportunities, etc.) may be found on the ASLE World Wide Web Site: http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/ ~djp2n/asle.html. Our thanks to Hank Harrington, John Tallmadge, Don Scheese, Susan Lucas, Mark Schlenz, and all the other ASLE folks whose hard work has established such a strong foundation for this ambitious gathering. We look forward to seeing you all in Missoula!
- ◆ As you begin to page through this issue of the News, you will notice that the time for ASLE's annual elections has once again come around. Published in this issue are brief statements offered by candidates for the positions of Vice-President, Executive Council, and Secretary, while a fold-in, mail-back ballot has been included for your convenience. Please read the candidates' statements, mark your ballot, and return it to ASLE Secretary David Teague at the address printed on the ballot. Because the vitality and creativity of our organization depends largely upon the energy and vision of the people who serve it, we ask that you consider your choices carefully and return your ballot soon. Our thanks to all these fine candidates for their willingness to serve our community of scholars. Remember, you too can serve ASLE—by running for an office, or by working in support of one of our many projects, publications, and conferences. Please contact me or any ASLE officer with your ideas, suggestions, and offers to become more involved.

- ♦ Two important ASLE projects that have been in the works for a full year are now complete. The ASLE Handbook on Graduate Study in Literature and Environment, Revised Edition, is now available to you for purchase at cost. Edited by Gioia Woods, the revised Handbook offers practical information to current and prospective graduate students, practicing scholars, academic advisors, and anyone seeking information about graduate studies in literature and environment. Included in the revised edition you will find: an overview of the developing field of literature and environment; bibliographies related to environmental careers, graduate school, and the academic job market; an extensive bibliography of primary and secondary works in literature and environment studies; the latest national listing of prominent and notable graduate programs in literature and environment, complete with contact information; advice from ASLE members to prospective graduate students in literature and environment; and "Meeting the Tree of Life," an essay by ASLE President-Elect John Tallmadge. Ordering information for the revised Handbook may be found on the ASLE Product Order Form included in this issue.
- ♦ The other major ASLE project recently completed is the ASLE Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship in Literature and Environment, now available to you for purchase at cost. The third of the ASLE annotated Bibliographies edited by Zita Ingham, this valuable resource offers an annotated listing of many hundreds of recent books and articles on subjects such as: nature writing; environmental literature, philosophy, and history; ecofeminism; place studies; green cultural studies; regionalism and bioregionalism; and nature/culture theory. The Bibliography features helpful cross-listings designed to make information easily accessible. A few back issues of each of the first two Bibliographies are still available for anyone who may have missed an opportunity to get these publications when they first came out. Again, ordering information for all three Bibliographies may be found on the fold-in, mail-back ASLE Product Order Form included in this issue.
- ♦ As you will discover from the more detailed article offered elsewhere in this issue of the *News*, ASLE successfully hosted its first truly international conference this past August 12-17, when we gathered in Hawai'i for the **ASLE Symposium on Japanese and American Environmental Writing**. Organized by Scott Slovic and ably hosted in Honolulu by Frank Stewart and his colleagues from the University of Hawai'i, Manoa, this unprecedented symposium included nearly equal participation by Japanese and American scholars, and also featured readings by acclaimed environmental writers including W.S. Merwin, Michiko Ishimure, David Quammen, James Houston, Keizo Hino, Linda Hogan, and Brenda Peterson. Those of us who attended had an unusual op-

- portunity to envision nature writing from an international perspective. New friendships were made, scholarly collaborations initiated, and rich intellectual and personal experiences were shared both at the conference and during field trips to Waikiki Aquarium, Lyon Arboretum, and Volcanoes National Park on the big island. It is our hope to continue international and/or special topics symposia every other summer (during even-numbered years), so please contact me or President-Elect John Tallmadge if you have an idea and/or site for the summer, 1998 symposium.
- ♦ On a different note, let me offer a short chapter in the long and convoluted story regarding the status of ASLE's relationship to the MLA. Four years ago Cheryll Glotfelty submitted a formal request that the MLA approve a new Discussion Group on Literature and the Environment and had her proposal rejected on the grounds that no Discussion Group would be formed on a limited "theme" (never mind that the MLA has an entire division on "literature and science"). The MLA instead proposed that scholars of literature and environment form an association, draft bylaws, publish a newsletter, wait four years, and then become an MLA Allied Organization. Although this response seemed unreasonable—seemed to be a way of simply encouraging literature and environment scholars to go away—we did precisely as the MLA suggested. We formed ASLE and now, four years later, we have bylaws, a newsletter, a scholarly journal, a substantial conference, an impressive constellation of associated projects and publications, and an international membership nearing 1,000. This year, on ASLE's fourth birthday, Cheryll and I once again applied to the MLA for Allied or Affiliated Group status for ASLE, only to discover that the MLA, having changed its rules in the past year, now requires our organization to have been in existence for six years. Challenging what appears to us another unreasonable effort to limit access, we have petitioned the MLA to accept our bid for affiliation despite the rule. Our thanks to Cheryll for mounting this effort, which ultimately resulted in our sending the MLA twenty pounds of "evidence" in support of what would seem a patently obvious claim: the study of literature and environment is a legitimate, timely, and important scholarly enterprise. As of this writing, the MLA has not responded to Cheryll's persuasive letter and voluminous supporting materials.
- ♦ Other ASLE projects proceed apace. The ASLE Mentoring **Program** is running smoothly, doing good service by linking graduate students working in literature and environment with faculty scholars who share their interests, and who may be in a position to offer them support and guidance. For information, or to become a part of the program as a student or as a mentor, please contact Andrea Herrmann, ASLE Mentoring Coordinator, Dept. of Rhetoric and Writing, University of Arkansas, Little Rock, 2801 S. University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204 (awherrmann@ualr.edu). The ASLE Collection of Syllabi in Literature and Environment, edited by Peter Blakemore and Laird Christensen, is a well-organized, book-length collection of syllabi from undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in all areas related to literature and environment. The Collection is forthcoming, but it is not too late to have your syllabi included if you send them soon. Please address materials and inquiries to: Peter Blakemore and Laird Christensen, English Dept. Univ. of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97407. (blkemor@oregon.edu), (lairdc@darkwing.uoregon.edu).

- ◆ Yet other projects are also in the works. ASLE President-Elect John Tallmadge is in the very early stages of attempting to organize a program that would bring ASLE scholars into the national parks as collaborators in programs designed to use literary natural history to enhance appreciation for landscape and ecology. Dan Philippon has expanded and enhanced the ASLE World Wide Web Site, making it an impressive virtual storehouse of information and a nexus with numerous other important Internet sites and groups. Peter Blakemore and Laird Christensen continue to run MesaVerde, an Internet discussion group for ASLE graduate students (to subscribe, send your name and e-mail address to: Majordomo@oregon.uoregon.edu). Julie Seton is nearing completion of her work on the ASLE list of literary and environmental journals and magazines; the list of more than 250 journals will eventually be published by ASLE and will include full subscription and submission information. I am in the process of establishing a permanent ASLE archives at the University of Nevada, Reno, so send me all those ASLE artifacts: conference papers, programs, photographs, signed books, cocktail napkins, tape recordings, T-shirts, and the like. In an attempt to expand our ability to serve our growing number of members overseas, new ASLE executive council member Suzanne Ross has begun work on ASLE's international development; our other new executive council member, Melissa Walker, is strengthening bonds between ASLE and the publishing industry and is arranging the publisher's exhibit for the upcoming conference. As usual, there are too many other projects to list here, but our perpetual thanks go out to the people involved in developing these projects and bringing them to fruition.
- ♦ Now a final note. The end of 1996 will also mark the end of my four years as an ASLE officer. Having served ASLE as treasurer, secretary, vice-president, and president, you might imagine that I've gathered my share of those dark tales of infighting and pettiness that so often plague organizations, however well intentioned. Nothing could be further from the truth. I'm privileged to have devoted these years to serving a community of people whose intellectual energy, genuine wit, and love of the world has been an infinite source of pleasure to me, and never have I so much enjoyed the company of the people with whom I've worked. My special thanks to founding officers Cheryll Glotfelty and Scott Slovic, to secretary Dave Teague and treasurer Allison Wallace, and to John Tallmadge, our next president. Thanks also to all the executive council members, project coordinators, graduate liaisons, advisory board members, conference and symposium hosts, journal and newsletter editors, student assistants, and other volunteers who have made my work with ASLE so rewarding. I'm honored to have participated with all of you in this successful act of midwifery, and I look forward to hoisting a pint with you in Missoula!

Cheers,

Michael Branch ASLE President Department of English/098 University of Nevada, Reno Reno, NV 89557 702-784-8016

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to ASLE Members	
Michael Branch	1-2
A Conference with a View: Two Reports from the ASLE Hawai'i Symposium	
David Robinson and Ken-ichi Noda	4
ASLE Elections: Candidates' Statements	
Vice President	5
Secretary	4
Executive Council	5-6 G
Call for Papers: 2nd Biennial Conference of ASLE	7
ASLE Graduate Handbook Announcement	
NEH Seminar on Environmental Writing Announcement	8
Conferences and Gatherings	10
Letter from the Editor.	11
How to Organize an ASLE Panel	11
Special Announcements	12
ASLE Membership Form	13
ASLE Product Order Form	Enclosure
1997 ASLE Election Ballot	Enclosure

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(photographs by Bobby Takahashi)

ASLE News is the biannual newsletter of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, reporting ASLE's business to and publishing letters from its membership. Items of interest, including news about conferences, forthcoming publications, and work in progress, should be sent to the editor's attention: Ralph Black, Dept. of English, Wake Forest Univ., Winston-Salem, NC 27109.

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## A Conference With a View: Two Reports from the ASLE Hawai'i Symposium

Hawai'i's remarkable geography and ecology are dramatic reminders that the earth is constantly changing, being destroyed, emerging anew. ASLE's conference on Japanese and American environmental literature at this beautiful, fragile place, where the evidence of the expansion of modern global economy is also everywhere apparent, brought into sharp focus the concerns of writers on the environment, both East and West. That the conference brought together writers and scholars representing Japan and the United States, two of the most advanced industrial economies, was a reminder that these concerns are indeed global ones.

American scholars were brought into contact with a rich tradition of discourse on natural history and a lively contemporary dialogue on environmental problems and policy in Japan. And they understood the sense in which scholarship on environmental literature, as it expands in American universities, has an audience, and the attendant responsibilities of such an audience, around the world. For ASLE, this was a coming-of-age conference, in which both the exhilaration of knowing that the literature and environment movement has established itself internationally was attended with a new sense of the gravity of the task we have assumed.

The lines of demarcation between "author" and "scholar" were very fluid at the conference, reinforcing a sense of common enterprise that has too often been left behind in the profession of literary scholarship. Environmentally centered field trips to the Waikiki Aquarium and Lyon Arboretum on Oabu, and the Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the island of Hawaii, were also important in bringing participants together informally while we saw in more detail the aspects of the Hawai'ian landscape. "Not your typically angst-laden scholarly conference, I thought to myself as I hiked out with a group over the cap of a now cooled volcanic eruption site on the big Island. "How can we top this one?" I asked Scott Slovic at the end of the conference. "Don't worry," he said. "ASLE can be very creative."

David M. Robinson, Oregon State University

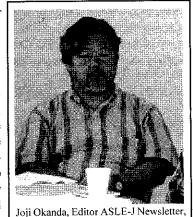
I met Michiko Ishimure for the first time at Kansai International Airport near Osaka, where we were to catch a flight to Honolulu. Michiko Ishimure, a well-known woman writer since the 1970s, looked to me like a very quiet lady, extremely different from what the Japanese mass media have publicized. It was my great pleasure to speak with her during the long flight, an exceptional chance for someone like me who has long been an attentive reader of her work. It was not unlike how an American scholar would feel sitting next to Annie Dillard.

ASLE-Japan invited two Japanese writers, Mr. Keizo Hino and Ms. Michiko Ishimure as featured writers for the 1996 ASLE Symposium on Japanese and American Environmental Literature. Although most of the American writers participating in the symposium may be willing to call themselves "nature writers," Hino and Ishimure might hesitate to be labelled so, for such literary terms as "nature writing" and "nature writer" have seldom been used in Japanese literary criticism. This does not mean that there are no Japanese writers who are "nature writers," but it means that the terms themselves are still new to Japanese literature. In this sense, the Japanese writers at the symposium came not as nature writers but simply as "writers" who are deeply concerned with the natural environment or with environmental issues.

Last year ASLE-Japan created within it a small research group focusing on Japanese nature writing and has endeavored to establish a historical and theoretical perspective toward Japanese nature writing or environmental literature. Japanese literature has had no definite idea even about the history of its nature writing. ASLE's Hawai'i symposium added great momentum to our research. Most of those research-group members participated the symposium in order to show how they apporoach Japanese nature writing. Although seventeen Japanese scholars gathering at the symposium read their papers on Japanese literature, most of them are originally scholars of American or British literature. So I don't think that it was easy for them to approach the new field of research. But they are serious enough to conceptualize the idea of nature writing in Japan, while most Japanese literature scholars have actually been indifferent to it.

· In regard to the situation observed above in the literary world in Japan, ASLE's Hawai'i conference offered a great op-

portunity attention of and writers interested between litronment. several macompanies, tional, gave contribute confertheir deep e W ecological both in Ja-United tion



Oji Okanda, Editor ASLE-J Newsletter, Yamanashi Gakuin University, at the ASLE Hawai'i Symposium

to enhance the literary scholars not previously in the relationship erature and envi-For example, ior newspaper local and name chances to the essays on the ence. That shows concern with the growth of the literary criticism pan and in the States. In addi-Michiko Ishimure

was invited by the International Pen Club as a keynote speaker to the conference on "Literature and Environment" held in Tokyo this fall, for the program director, an eminent scholar of Japanese literature, had heard something about the ASLE symposium.

So, after the symposium in Hawai'i (what a nice selection of place!), ASLE-Japan will step forward to a new phase where many more projects on Japanese nature writing will be planned and carried out within a few years. Specifically translation projects of Japanese nature writing into English will be more active, and several literary journals, either in Japan or in the U. S., will feature the special issues on this theme. Was that symposium too busy? Yes. You couldn't have time sufficient to fully discuss a few specified topics? Yes. Still, it was great because it pointed to the fact that the internationalization of environmental literature is both formidable and important for us.

Ken-ichi Noda, Kanazawa Univ., President, ASLE-Japan

## Nancy Cook, University of Rhode Island

- ♦ Recently, I trekked eastward to take up teaching in the English Department at the University of Rhode Island. After a few months here, I wondered why I had been hired, for no one mentioned my primary research and teaching interests in literature of place. Though I'm now teaching such courses again, and students are eager for them, I have had to adjust to the fact that for many of my colleagues and students, nature and environment seem to be those things distant, not proximate. Those of us who work or teach in urban or highly populated areas must strive to show that nature and the environment are always right where we are.
- ♦ As ASLE has gained national attention, we have been caricatured as recreationalists with day jobs and mere fad followers. We must work hard to secure public perceptions suggestive of the vigor with which we pursue our intellectual goals. Yes, many of us have what may be called political agendas. If it is political to assert that where we are in the world determines, to a large extent, who we are in the world and how we imagine who we are, then I'm all for political indoctrination. Let's disseminate our messages, and let's use our organization to do that.
- ♦ I would like to see us further develop affiliations with various organizations that support literary studies, but we also need to connect with cross-disciplinary organizations, such as the American Studies Association. We offer a valuable model both intellectually and structurally, since we have set a standard of rigorous examination of ideas with good fellowship, as a community of colleagues, not adversaries. Closer to home, we can work on strategies to get us interacting with institutional colleagues, as well as to open our conversations with scientists; it's equally important to interact with our colleagues in education and government departments. Let's think about having teachers invite ASLE independent scholars and writers on campus. We are now a large organization. I would like to help us use our strengths to interact beneficially with those not currently in our ranks.

## Ann Fisher-Wirth, University of Mississippi

♦ My interest in environmental literature began one April in college late 1960s, California. I stayed up all night reading Walden and reeled into breakfast the next morning, inwardly if not outwardly transformed. Since that time I have lived many places: near the desert in California, on a farm in Virginia, near the Alps in Switzerland, now in still-largely-rural north Mississippi. I have had five children, generations of cats, countless gardens, and a dog. My love and need for nature only grow. I am an Associate Professor and the Graduate Director in English at the University of Mississippi, where I teach graduate courses in twentieth-century literature, women's studies, poetry, and literature/nature. I've published a book on William Carlos Williams and am writing one on Willa Cather, as well as essays on Cormac McCarthy, Robert Hass, and Gary Snyder. I'm also a poet, with recent work in The Georgia Review, Wilderness, Feminist Studies, and the forthcoming ISLE. I've been a member of ASLE since its inception. I'd love to help it grow in the South, where environmental awareness may lag but so much knowledge of the country and folkways survives. I'd also love to help organize a branch in Switzerland, where I keep in touch with colleagues I met on a recent Fulbright, and finally, I'm eager to expand the connection between ASLE, poets, and poetry.

#### Mark Hoyer, University of South Dakota

- ♦ Over the past several years at UC Davis, I have been engaged in examining representations of western lands by Euro-American and Native American peoples, and the ways in which stories from particular cultural traditions, sometimes intertwined with one another, help shape human-nature relationships. I am fortunate now to be able to continue that work in my new position as Assistant Professor of English at the University of South Dakota, where I teach courses in American and Western American Literatures and in writing.
- ♦ My past research has focused on Mary Austin in the Owens Valley of California; the mixing there of Shoshone and Paiute, Hispanic, and Euro-American cultures; the story traditions that developed there and the ways the traditions adapted in response to cultural contact and a changing environment. A second booklength project will focus on the human and natural history of the Klamath River in northern California, in particular how salmon and stories about salmon have helped shape those histories.
- ♦ If elected to the Executive Council, I'd like to foster dialogue between those in literary studies and those from the social and natural sciences (my mentor here is an entomologist who studies relationships among crop plants, wild plants, and insects). I would like to see ASLE continue to grow overseas; since USD has exchange programs in England, France, and Germany, I'd be in a position to facilitate that growth. Above all, I would seek to promote an ecological literacy that is cognizant of the myriad cultural influences—cross-fertilizations as well as suppressions—that written and oral stories about our environments have had. I would welcome the opportunity to contribute to ASLE's continued vibrancy as a member of the Executive Council.

## Gretchen Legler, University of Alaska Anchorage

- ♦ I am an assitant professor in English and Creative Writing at the University of Alaska, Anchorage. I also co-direct the emerging Women's Studies Minor Program at UAA. I've been a member of ASLE since its inception—in fact, I remember rumblings about ASLE in the elevator at the CEA Conference in Pittsburgh—must have been 1992.
- ◆ I did my M.A. in Creative Writing and my Ph.D. in English and Feminist Theory at the University of Minnesota. My dissertation focused on American Nature Writing and the cultural construction of nature among contemporary women nature writers. I was reaching far and wide then for sympathetic and like-minded colleagues, and found them in ASLE. It has been a tremendous thrill to be a part of this growing field of scholarship and teaching. I've found, like many others, that my colleagues in ASLE have been not only friendly and more likely to spend good portions of their time actually in the outdoors, but helpful in ways that are sometimes uncharacteristic of scholars in a profession that encourages competition. I've also found that members of ASLE are a diverse group, embracing "creative" scholarly work, so that I have found a place within ASLE as a writer of creative nonficition as well as an eco-theorist--my first book of essays All The Powerful Invisible Things came out in 1995.
- ♦ If elected to the Executive Council I would lend my energy to the continued development of the Mentor Program, the syllabus exchange, the journal ISLE, the continued growth in membership, and to the organization of more successful conferences.

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## Call for Papers & Presentations

The Second Biennial Conference of the

## Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE)

July 17-19, 1996

The University of Montana Missoula, Montana

"The Last Best Place"

## Featured Writers and Scholars:

David Abram — Rick Bass — Shoko Itoh — Thomas J. Lyon Joseph Meeker — David Robertson — Pattiann Rogers — Louise Westling

## Gary Snyder

(presented in conjuction with Wilderness Watch)

The Association for the Study of Literature and Environment invites program proposals for its second biennial conference. We welcome proposals for the following:

- Panels and papers on any aspect of literature and environment, such as nature writing, international studies, individual authors, theory and practice of ecocriticism, interdisciplinary approaches, place studies, new or neglected writers, gender and ethnic issues, religious issues, and bioregionalism.
- Roundtables on topics of general interest, such as urban nature, professional issues, literature and activism, hunting, wilderness, and landscape.
- Poster sessions to showcase teaching, curriculum, or research innovations, as well as cooperative ventures and other institutional projects.
- Readings of original nature writing.

## Activities and Entertainment

Afternoon outings and planned recreation Publishers' Exhibits

Banquet Authors' Reception

## Submission Guidelines

Send two copies of the following materials to the address below:

- For papers, posters, and readings, a 1-page proposal/abstract or the full text.
- Papers should approximate fifteen minutes reading time (ten double-spaced typed pages)
- For panels, a 1-page proposal including names and vitae of the chair and 3-4 presenters, plus a 1-page abstract for each paper
- For roundtable discussions, names and vitae of chair and 6-8 panelists, plus a 1-2
  page proposal describing the topic, approach, and intended contribution of each panelist.

## Deadline for Submissions: January 15, 1997

Send submissions to:

John Tallmadge, President-Elect, ASLE

6538 Teakwood Court Cincinnati, OH 45224

(513) 681-0944 jtall@interramp.com

Submissions will not be accepted by fax or e-mail. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for reply. Submissions will not be returned.

General information about conference facilities, activities, recreation, or registration is available from:

ASLE Conference

Conferences and Institutes, Center for Continuing Education

Missoula, MT 59812-1900

(406) 243-4600 cni@selway.umt.edu

Conference Director: Hank Harrington



stay together learn the flowers go light

Full information about the conference is available on the ASLE World Wide Web Site: http://faraday.clas.virginia.edu/~djp2n/asle.html

-Gary Smider

## The ASLE Handbook on Graduate Study in Literature and Environment, 2nd Edition

## **Edited by Gioia Woods**

This revised edition of the *Handbook* offers practical information to current and prospective graduate students, practicing scholars, academic advisors, and anyone seeking information about graduate studies in literature and environment.

The revised edition of the *Handbook* features:

- •Information about ASLE, including membership, mentoring, conferences, the ASLE Home Page, and ASLE publications including annotated bibliographies, syllabus collections, and the journal *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*.
- An overview of the developing field of literature and environment.
- •Bibliographies covering environmental careers, graduate school, and the academic job market.
- An extensive bibliography of primary and secondary works in literature and environment studies.
- •The latest national listing of prominent and notable graduate programs in literature and environment studies, complete with contact information.
- Advice from ASLE members to prospective graduate students in literature and environment.
- •"Meeting the Tree of Life," an essay by 1997 ASLE President John Tallmadge.

To order the ASLE Handbook on Graduate Study, mail a check for \$6.00 for one copy, or \$15.00 for three copies, to:

Allison Wallace, ASLE Treasurer Unity College of Maine HC 78 Box 200 Unity, ME 04988 Please make checks payable to ASLE, and be sure to make clear the address to which you wish the handbook sent. For further information, contact *Handbook* editor Gioia Woods at: Core Writing/213, University of Nevada, Reno, NV 89557; or, woods@scs.unr.edu.

## National Endowment for the Humanities: Summer Seminar on Environmental Writing

- ♦ "The Environmental Imagination: Issues and Problems in American Nature Writing" is the title of an NEH Summer Institute for College and University Faculty to be hosted by Vassar College next summer, June 16-July 25. The institute, with contributions from leading scholars and writers, will explore American nature writing from the colonial period to the present day. Directed by Thoreau scholar Daniel Peck, institute faculty include Frank Bergon, Lawrence Buell, John Elder, Wayne Franklin, William Howarth, Carolyn Merchant, Elisa New, Vera Norwood, and Hertha Wong. Visiting writers include A.R. Ammons, Linda Hogan, Barry Lopez, and Terry Tempest Williams
- ♦ Works by writers such as William Bartram, Henry David Thoreau, Mary Austin, Aldo Leopold, and Rachel Carson will be studied in an interdisciplinary context. The languages of literary studies and contemporary science will be drawn into conversation, around the institute theme, through a series of field and laboratory workshops directed by Vassar's environmental scientists. Other institute resources include the complete manuscript journals of literary naturalist John Burroughs in Vassar's Special Collections Library, the Elias Lyman Magoon Collection of Hudson River School landscape paintings in the College's new Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, and Vassar's 250-acre ecological preserve.
- ♦ The institute's six weekly themes will be: "Imagining the Earth: The History and Poetics of Writing about Nature in America," "The Thoreauvian Tradition in American Nature Writing," "The Human Presence: Wild versus Domestic Visions of Nature," "Bioregionalism: The Place of 'Place' in American Environmental Literature," "Women, Nature, and Narrative," and "Alternative Perspectives in American Nature Writing: Native American Conceptions of Landscape."
- ♦ Applications are invited from full-time college and university faculty in American Literature and American Studies. Faculty from other humanities disciplines, such as Environmental History and Art History, as well as faculty from the natural and social sciences with a keen interest in bringing nature writing into their teaching, are also invited to apply. Twenty-five applicants will be selected based on the likely impact of the institute on their teaching and research. The application deadline is March 1, 1997, with notification on April 1. Successful applicants will receive a stipend of \$1,500, as well as an allowance for room, board, and travel.
- ◆ For further information and the application form contact Daniel Peck, NEH Institute, American Culture Program, Vassar College Box 540, 124 Raymond Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. E-mail inbennett@vassar.edu. FAX: 914-437-7204. Phone 914-437-7485. Also consult the institute web page: http://iberia.vassar.edu/vcl/NEH/neh.html

#### Ian Marshall, Pennylvania State University, Altoona

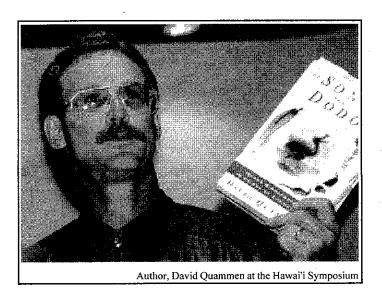
- ♦ Asked to provide a "vision for the future" of ASLE, I'm reminded of Cooper's *The Pioneers*, where Judge Temple ascends Mt. Vision to see what he can see. The world spreads out before him like a map, and as it unfolds he sees the future. In a generation or so it happens on Earth as it did in his vision, and a civilization takes shape on the shores of Glimmerglass. Except this newly ordered world has no space for a Natty Bumppo, and I think of Robert Pirsig saying in *Zen and the Art of Mortorcycle Maintenance* that "It's the sides of mountains that sustain life, not the top," for it is on the sides that "things grow."
- ♦ What I'm getting at (let me explain, quick, before this overwrought metaphor comes crashing down) is that I'm not so sure anyone ought to prescribe a future for ASLE, as viewed from on high. Oh, I have a few suggestions. We could, for example, have informal regional gatherings, more like jamborees than conferences. Have all Pennsylvania ASLE'ers, say, meet at World's End State Park for a hike down to Loyalsock Canyon and a night of song and story. Maybe have 50 different ASLE jamborees across the country, 100 across the world, on the same day, and we'll call it a movement.
- ♦ But I hesitate to get too definite about designating a direction for ASLE, or about offering precise definitions of whom we are beyond a group of people interested in the study of literature and the environment. I hope we can continue to explore our subject and keep searching out new approaches to it even as we record our positions on various maps and in our journals. (Darn metaphor just won't let me go.) Let us set out for the borderlands where environmental literature meets science on one side, mysticism on another. Let us explore the vast, wild interior of the written world. And let us return with stories to tell. Let ASLE be the campfires around which we meet. I'll bring the marshmallows.
- ♦ An associate professor of English at Penn State Altoona, Ian Marshall is completing work on a book tentatively entitled *Story Line: Ecocritical Explorations into the Literature of the Appalachian Trail*, due out from the University Press of Virginia in 1997.

#### Stephanie Sarver, Gustavus Adolphus College

- ♦ I became involved in ASLE in 1992 while a graduate student at U. C. Davis. My interest in environmental matters had resulted from a love of the outdoors (especially the wilderness), but my research interest in agriculture came from a concern for how humans modify their environments. I am interested in how the "civilized" shapes and influences the "wild"; in addressing environmental problems, we need to look at where we live the urban and rural regions—as well as the wilderness regions we work to preserve.
- ♦ ASLE's focus on the writing and study of literature should continue as we strive to make our work relevant to those in other disciplines. I would like to see ASLE address some broad questions: What counts as "environment" in our studies? Why does ASLE discourse emphasize wilderness issues? Where might our work overlap with the work of those exploring issues of science and technology? I want to hear about the range of work in which members are engaged, and how ASLE might better support them in their teaching, their scholarship, and their work that reaches beyond the academic realm. I would welcome the chance to serve ASLE as a member of the Executive Council.

#### David Teague, University of Delaware

♦ I have served as secretary of ASLE for the past two years, and I've enjoyed doing so a great deal, but I must admit that the sort of systems management involved in keeping together a 1000 piece data base is something I won't mind saying goodbye to. I look forward, as a member of the ASLE Executive Council, to contributing to ASLE on a more conceptual level. In particular, I'd like to continue pursuing avenues along which ASLE might become more "eastern," and more urban, as I live and teach in Wilmington, Delaware. I oganized an ASLE/MLA panel in 1995, "The Nature of Cities," which explored ways in which urban students of nature writing might best understand "wilderness writing," or pastoral writing, or any kind of literature, really, that embraces landscapes that city dwellers are generally not familiar with. I'd like to continue along this line of enquiry, and I'd like, as a member of the Executive Council, to encourage ASLE to continue to explore ways to make the green world accessible to those of us who live in the urbanized East, or in any urban area—to help people who are not able to live in green places, or even to see them much, become more aware of the literature of nature.



WANTED: New ASLE Bibliographer: After three years of service as ASLE Bibliographer, Zita Ingham is now ready to hand the project off to a successor. Zita has produced the 1995 Bibliography, now available for purchase (see the ASLE Product Order Form, folded into this issue). If you think you might be interested in taking over as ASLE Bibliographer, we would like very much to hear from you. The job entails coordinating the efforts of a team of annotators, and editing and producing an annual Bibliography covering relevant scholarship published during the previous year. Our infrastructure of volunteers and contributing editors/ annotators is largely in place, and Zita is happy to help train the new Bibliographer, so the transition of the project should be relatively smooth. The ongoing ASLE Bibliography Project is an extremely valuable contribution to the field, and we are anxious to commit our full support to Zita's successor. To learn more about the project or to leap recklessly into directing it, please contact: John Tallmadge, ASLE President-Elect, The Union Institute, 6538 Teakwood Court, Cincinnati, OH 45224-2112.

## **Conferences and Gatherings**

## **Deadlines for Submission:**

- ♦ December 15, 1996. ASLE Panel at the American Literature Association meeting in Baltimore, MD. May 22-25, '97. The session will consist of three panelists and a chair/moderator. Submit papers or well-developed proposals on any topic related to the interests/concerns of the ASLE membership. Send paper/proposal to: Sean O'Grady, Dept. of English, Boise State U., Boise, ID 83725. Or by e-mail: sogrady@quartz.idbsu.edu. Direct questions and inquiries about the ALA meeting itself to the Conference Director: Gloria Cronin, Dept. of English, 3134 JKBH, Brigham Young U., Provo UT 84602.
- January 15, 1997. People & Place: The Human Experience in Greater Yellowstone. Sept. 28-30, '97. Yellowstone National Park. 1 page abstract and brief vita to Conference Program Committee. Yellowstone Center for Resources. Box 168 Yellowstone N.P., WY 82190.
- ♦ January 20, 1997. The 3rd International Interdisciplinary Conference on the Environment will be held in Boston, MA, June 25-28, '97. You may participate as session organizer, presenter of one or two papers, chair, moderator, discussant, or observer. For information contact Demetri Kantarelis or Kevin L. Hickey. Mail: IEA/Kantarelis-Hickey, Assumption College, 500 Salisbury St., Worcester, MA 01615. Tel: (508) 767-7557 or (508) 767-7296. Fax: (508) 799-4502, E-mail: dkantar@eve.assumption.edu, or at the following URL: http://www.assumption.edu/html/academic/conf/iicecall.html.
- Jan. 31, 1997. Conference on Communication and the Environment. July 26-29, '97. SUNY Syracuse. Send 3 copies of a 10pp. double-spaced paper, and a 100 word abstract to James Cantrill, Communication and Performance Studies. Northern Michigan U. Marquette, MI 49855. (210) 381-3583. E-mail: jcantril@nmu.edu
- March 31, 1997. Celebrating the American Woman: Native Voices. Oct. 17-19, '97. Columbia College of South Carolina. 200 word abstract by March 31 to Paula W. Shirley. Dept. of Modern Language, 1301 Columbia College Dr., Columbia College, Columbia, SC 29203. E-mail: pshirley@colacoll.edu.
- ◆ June 15, 1997. "THE BIG SKY AT 50." The Center for the Rocky Mountain West at the University of Montana, Missoula. This retrospective conference offers a chance to contrast our midcentury visions and late-century revisions from cross-disciplinary perspectives. Possible Topics: successes and failures of western revisionism, gender and ethnic studies, the Blackfeet or the Metis in relation to Guthrie, the rise of environmentalism and its relation to western myths, the Canadian and U.S. Rocky Mountain front, western film and fiction of the forties, Guthrie's career and associates, contemporary history, governance and land use, regional genesis and identity. Papers and proposals to the conference organizers: The Center for the Rocky Mountain West, U. of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812-1205. Daniel Kemmis, Dir.; William E. Farr, Assoc. Dir. and Professor of History; Mark A. Sherouse, Exec. Dir., Montana Committee for the Humanities; William W. Bevis, Professor of English; Mark A. Sherouse, Exec. Dir., Montana Committee for the Humanities. PO Box 8036 Hellgate Station Missoula, MT 59807. Phone 406-243-6022. Fax 406-243-4836. e-mail: sherouse@selway.umt.edu; www.umt.edu/lastbest/

## Of Interest:

- ♦ Jan. 10-12, 1997. Landscape and Technology Seminar at Hollufgaard. Topic: landscape studies and work on technology and culture. Professor David Nye, Center for American Studies Odense U. 55 Campusvej 5230 Odense M Denmark.
- ♦ March 13-15, 1997. Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery, 7th Annual Conference: "The Image of the Frontier in Literature, the Media, & Society." Speaker: Patricia Limerick (Author of *The Legacy of Conquest*), Colorado Springs, CO. An interdisciplinary conference exploring the idea and the imagery of the frontier, both as physical place and as metaphor—literature, film, television, history, politics, advertising, art, and music. Home Page: http://meteor.uscolo.edu/sissi. For information contact Will Wright, Dept. of Sociology, U. of Southern Colorado, (719) 549-2538; wright@uscolo.edu or Steven Kaplan, Dept.of English, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY (716) 878 6329; E-mail: kaplans@snybufaa.cs.snybuf.edu.
- ◆ April 3-5, 1997. The Power of Language. 28th Annual CEA Conference. Omni Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland. All correspondence to: Beverly Spears, 1997 CEA Program Chair; Francis Marion U., Florence, S.C. 29501. E-mail: bspears@fmarion.edu. FAX: (803) 661-1432.
- ◆ April 10-12, 1997. Pacific Northwest American Studies Association. Theme: Laws and Outlaws in American Culture, Portland, Oregon. 250-300 words. Gary Scharnhorst PNASA President U. of New Mexico Albuquerque, NM 87131 FAX: 505 277-5573.
- ◆ April 10-12, 1997. Delta Studies Symposium III: The Blues and Beyond. Arkansas State University, State University, AR,. Topic: blues, its source, and its offshoots will be considered. 250 word summary-sampling of previous work. Delta Symposium Committee. P.O. Box 1890; Arkansas State U.; State University, AR 72467 Phone: (501) 972-3043 FAX: (501) 972-2795. E-mail: DELTA@TOLTEC.astate.edu
- ♦ April 10-12, 1997. Mississippi Home Ties: A Eudora Welty Conference, Jackson, MS. 2 copies of 10pp. paper or proposal. Traditional papers, round table discussions initiated by three prepared "opening statements" on a common topic, and seminar discussions centered by a shared reading. Specify format. Correspondence to: Harriet Pollack. Bucknell U., Lewisburg, PA 17837.
- ◆ April 10-13, 1997. American Comparative Literature Association. "New Worlds for Old." Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. Conference Committee, ACLA Secretariat, 5242 University of Oregon, Eurgene, OR 97403-5242.
- ◆ April 18-20, 1997. California and the Pacific Northwest in Literature and Fiction. U. of the Pacific, Stockton, CA. Correspondence to: Professors Reinhart Lutz and Heather Mayne, Dept. of English, U. of the Pacific, Stockton, CA 95211. Phone (209) 946-2616 or 946-2414; fax (209) 946-2414. E-mail: rlutz@uop.edu.
- ♦ May 6-10, 1997. The International Association for Philosophy and Literature. Theme: Marginal Regions, Textual Margins. U. of Alabama Mobile, AL 36688-0002. E-mail addresses available from english@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.
- ♦ Sept. 24-27, 1997. Celebrating Robert Frost. Contact Earl J. Wilcox, Frost Conference Coordinator, Winthrop U., Rock Hill, SC 29733 (803) 323-4633.

## Letter from the Editor

- ♦ For the past several years I have asked my students to turn in their papers and journals on "used" paper, that is, on outdated fliers and leaflets that they have plucked off overburdened bulletin boards. I tell myself that it makes students think a little more about where paper comes from and where it goes, but really, I just like the option of turning over a dull essay to see what concerts, parties, or soccer games they've been attending. A recent paper was typed on a sheaf of fliers that declaimed, startlingly: "On November 12, 1996, the world got smaller." Not a notice for a new Paul and Anne Ehrlich title, the flier announced a web site called "PlanetAll", a place where, apparently, "you can create your own community..." At the top was an image of the Earth as Neal Armstrong might have seen in from the Sea of Tranquillity. Superimposed across the planetary image was the bold-fonted, italicized exclamation, "Shrink This." I reached for my red pen in a hurry.
- ♦ And, yes, some things do indeed seem to be shrinking: the earth's natural resources, the MLA Job List. But ASLE seems to be growing apace. The litany of projects and publications that Mike Branch enumerates in his letter is impressive indeed. And with books like Cheryll Glotfelty's and Harold Fromm's *Ecocriticism Reader* (from Georgia), and John Elder's recent two-volume compendium, *American Nature Writers* (from Scribner's), the burgeoning field of environmental writing and ecological literary criticism seems on the verge of canonization--or at least some wide-spread, and welcome, recognition. This issue of the *News* comes just in time for the Winter Solstice--halfway between the Hawai'i Symposium (see ASLE-Japan President Ken Noda's and David Robinson's reflections on the fine gathering) and July's ASLE Conference in Missoula (see the Call for Papers).
- ♦ The Fall issue also marks the season of ASLE Elections. The candidates' statements for the Vice-Presidency, Secretary, and the Executive Council will bring in a new crop of dedicated, energetic members. Please be sure to get your ballots in the mail. This issue also marks the departure of our esteemed colleague and diligent President, Michael Branch. Mike's tenure as President has been marked by a number of accomplishments. He helped instigate and usher to fruition the new issue of the ASLE Handbook, the Syllabus Exchange, the Mentoring Program, and the adoption of ISLE as ASLE's official journal. Under his watch, the membership continues to grow, and official recognition by the MLA seems to be within reach. One of the pleasures of editing this Newsletter is that I get to speak in the collective (if not quite royal) "We" when I thank Mike for his imaginative and tireless dedication to ASLE. As sorry as we are to see Mike go, we can hope that the high country around Reno will treat him kindly now that he'll have a few extra hours to wile away.
- ♦ Finally, I want to welcome our new layout editor, Margaret Frederick, a graduate student here at WFU, whose good work is, I think, written all over this isse of the *News*. Also, timely and vital support has come from Dean Paul Escott's office here at Wake, and from Nancy Cotton, Chair of the English Department. To them both, I offer sincere thanks, and invite them to our plenary session on the hermeneutics of fly-casting in Missoula.

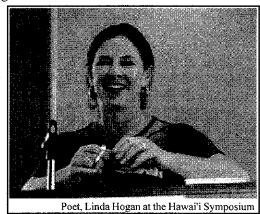
From the Piedmont,

Ralph Black, Wake Forest University

## How to Organize an ASLE Panel

Organizing an ASLE panel helps our association gain visibility in the profession and gives you the good experience of gathering a few of your colleagues in order to address a topic of particular interest to you. Organizing a panel is much easier than it seems, so give it a try! You might proceed as follows:

- ♦ Identify the conference at which you hope to organize an ASLE panel, and do so as far ahead of time as possible.
- ♦ Decide on a focus for the panel; choose something compatible with a range of interests in literature and environment but also something which is a good match with the focus of the conference at which the panel will appear.
- ♦ Gather several fellow ASLE members to join you. This can be done in several ways (or in a combination of these ways). Contact and invite someone whose work you already know to be compatible with the focus of your panel. Or, post a description of your panel and an invitation to possible participants on the ASLE discussion group on the Internet. Or, if lead time permits, post such an invitation in ASLE News by sending a notice of your panel to newsletter editor Ralph Black. If your available time and/or contacts preclude those approaches, contact the ASLE Conference Tracker: David Taylor, English Department, Converse College, Spartanburg, SC 29302. dtaylor275@aol.com. David can help line you up with ASLE members who share your specialty or who live in the region where the conference will be held. (Indeed, any questions about the process of setting up an ASLE panel may be directed to David.)
- ♦ Once you have identified the participants, contact them and ask them to send you an abstract of their paper and a very short professional bio (perhaps 200 words for the former, 100 for the latter). Submission requirements will vary by conference, so be sure to have panel participants provide whatever materials are required by the conference in question (cv rather than bio; specified length for the abstract, etc.).
- ♦ Write a short letter to the conference organizer. Explain why you think your panel will be a good addition to their program. Include abstracts, bios, and current addresses for all participants on your panel. Explain that your panel is organized by ASLE, ask to have "ASLE" appear in the conference program, and include with your letter some ASLE propaganda such as a membership brochure or Call for Papers for the ASLE Conference.
- ♦ Contact the ASLE Secretary to get a stack of ASLE brochures to take with you to the conference. Go have fun, do good work, and evangelize about ASLE!



## **Special Announcements**

ASLE Mentoring Program exists to link graduate students working in literature and environment with faculty scholars who share their interests, and who may be in a position to offer them support and guidance. For information, or to become a part of the program as a student or as a mentor, please contact Andrea Herrmann, ASLE Mentoring Coordinator, Dept. of Rhetoric and Writing, University of Arkansas, Little Rock, 2801 S. University Ave., Little Rock, AR 72204 (awherrmann@ualr.edu).

ASLE Collection of Syllabi in Literature and Environment, edited by Peter Blakemore and Laird Christensen, is a book-length collection of syllabi from undergraduate- and graduate-level courses in all areas related to literature and environment. Please address inquiries to: Peter Blakemore and Laird Christensen, Department of English, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97407 (blkemor@oregon.edu) (lairdc@darkwing.uoregon.edu).

The Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship in Literature and Environment, 1995, edited by Zita Ingham, includes works from journals and magazines, commercial publishers and university presses, and Dissertation Abstracts International. This edition also includes informal lists of authors and works (from any year) on selected topics, such as Northwest Coast Literature, Rivers, Plains, British Women Nature Writers, and others. The bibliography will be available on-line via the ASLE webpage and in printed form from Allison Wallace (at cost: \$5). For additional information contact Zita Ingham, Editor, ASLE Bibliography, e-mail address: z.ingham@swocc.cc.or.us. See the ad in this issue of the News; use the Product Order Form to place your order.

**Old ASLE Products! 1995 Conference T-shirts**, now a collector's item undoubtedly worth thousands, are going for a reduced price of \$7 each, so get yours while they last. Back issues of ASLE Bibliographies are also available for purchase at cost. To order shirts and other ASLE products, use the Product Order Form that is folded into this issue of the *News*.

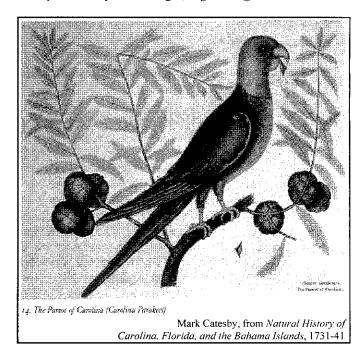
The University of Nevada, Reno, Graduate Program in Literature and Environment, formally initiated this semester, welcomes inquiries and requests for information from prospective students. Please contact Michael Branch, Coordinator of Graduate Studies in Literature and Environment, Dept. of English/098, University of Nevada, Reno, NV 89557.

The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology, coedited by former ASLE President Cheryll Glotfelty and ASLE Advisory Board Member Harold Fromm, was recently published by the University of Georgia Press. Our thanks to Cheryll for donating royalties to ASLE. Think of your purchase of this volume as a simultaneous act of self-education and charity!

Cancellation of Nature, Literature, Culture Series. Changes in personnel and editorial direction at Garland during the summer have precluded the possibility of developing the proposed series announced in the last newsletter as I had conceptualized it. After having a draft proposal for the series rejected recently by the University of Wisconsin Press, I have decided to complete the editing of the international handbook before determining whether to respond to another Garland editor's offer to begin again at square one to develop a series proposal significantly different from the original one or to abandon pursuit of the series entirely.

ASLE E-mail Network Thriving. The ASLE e-mail network continues to bustle with "virtual" conversation on literature and environment. Recent discussions have included debates on wilderness, recommendations of films, titles of interdisciplinary books on nature topics, and tips for the job market. There are currently approximately 280 subscribers.

To subscribe to the ASLE network, simply send a message to: **Majordomo@unr.edu**. The message should read, "subscribe asle"--(or "unsubscribe asle" if you wish to unplug). You'll be sent a generic "welcome" message with friendly user instructions. If you have a question about the network, please direct it to Cheryll Glotfelty, list manager, at **glotfelt@unr.edu**.



Syllabus Exchange Jan. 1, 1997. Western Literature Association. Your name, address and school affiliation, one-paragraph summary, categories most appropriate: Western American Literature, Native American Literature, Film, Canadian Liteature, Literature and Environment, Folklore, Major Authors, Special Topics including theme-based courses; genres; gender: canonical courses that include Western material; and that all-purpose category. Diane Quantic, Department of English, Wichita State U., Wichita KS 67260-0014.

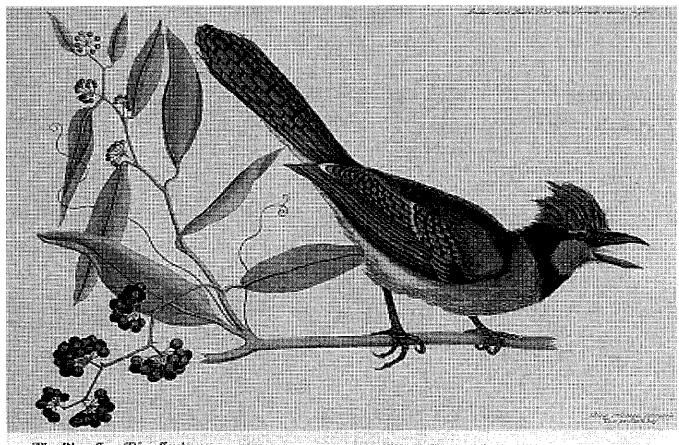


## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND CHECKLIST

(ASLE membership fee includes subscription to ASLE News)

Name			ı
Affiliation (if not listed below)			
Mailing Address	46		
Telephone Number(s)			(h)
FAX Number	E-mail Address		
Research/writing interests			
ASLE Membership (\$15/students \$10)		*Amount Enclosed*	
ASLE Sustaining Member (\$30)		<del> </del>	<del>_</del>
ASLE Patron (\$50 or more)  (Names of sustaining members and patrons will be published unless anonymity is requested)	•		
ASLE Gift Memberships (\$15 each)			_
Subscription to ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ASLE members \$12/nonmembers \$15)			
<u>Total</u>	a.		· 
☐ Please do <i>not</i> include my information in the mem	-	,·	

David Teague, Secretary, ASLE University of Delaware Parallel Program 333 Shipley Street Wilmington, DE 19801



7. The Blew Jay (Blue Jay)

Mark Catesby, from Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands, 1731-43



ASLE News c/o Ralph Black, Editor Department of English Wake Forest University P.O. Box 7387 Reynolda Station Winston-Salem, NC 27109 Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Winston-Salem, NC Permit No. 69



## Available from the Association for the Study of Literature & Environment

√NEW! 1995 ASLE BIBLIOGRAPHY—Over 300 annotated, recently published works of use to scholars studying literature of the environment and related fields. Edited by Zita Ingham.

NEW! HANDBOOK ON GRADUATE STUDY IN LITERATURE & ENVIRONMENT (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)—This new, revised edition of the ASLE Graduate Handbook contains information on literature and environment studies, ecological cultural studies and ecocriticism; straight talk on the academic job market and advice on deciding between MA and PhD degrees; hints on choosing a graduate school and listings of programs in literature and environment; advice from the ASLE membership; detailed bibliographical notes and a helpful list of contacts. Edited by Gioia Woods.

 $\sqrt{1994}$  & 1990-'93 BIBLIOGRAPHIES—A few copies of these previously published bibliographies are still available. Edited by Zita Ingham and Ron Steffens.

√1995 CONFERENCE (Vintage!) T-SHIRTS—good looking in "natural" tan with ASLE logo and

		burple. Quotations from Sc y. (Don't miss out on these	
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