



ASLE News

Summer 2012

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

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ASLE Bookshelf

The following works were recently published by ASLE members. If we've missed your publication, please send

Announcing the 10th ASLE Biennial Conference in Lawrence, Kansas: "Changing Nature: Migrations, Energies, Limits"

by Paul Outka, University of Kansas, ASLE Vice President

Warm greetings from Lawrence, Kansas, the site of the 10th Biennial ASLE conference, "Changing Nature: Migrations, Energies, Limits." By now you should have received the official Call for Proposals, introducing the conference theme and describing Lawrence, the University of Kansas, and the beautiful region that surrounds this bustling and progressive college town. If you haven't done so already, I urge you to visit the conference website--asle.ku.edu--where you can read more on the theme and location, plenary speakers, and conference logistics, download the CFP, and submit your proposals. The conference will run from May 28 - June 1, 2013, and proposals are due November 15, 2012.

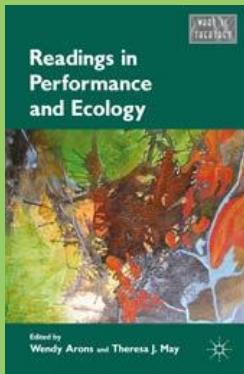
As you may recall, the 2013 conference was originally going to be held at the University of North Texas in Denton, but unforeseeable changes in the scheduling of a major campus renovation program at UNT meant that some facilities critical to the conference would not be available. We reluctantly made the decision earlier this summer to move the conference to Lawrence. Many thanks are due to UNT site hosts Ian Finseth and Priscilla Ybarra for all their efforts, and for their grace and support in the decision to shift the venue. I'm also immensely grateful for the quick and generous support KU offered, and especially to my colleague, friend, and the new 2013 Conference Site Host, Byron Caminero-Santangelo, whose dedication, insight, and hard work made the move to KU possible. All of ASLE owes him a huge debt.

The conference theme, while initially decided with Denton in mind, works equally well for Kansas and the Great Plains. As many of you know, this is a region grappling with a boom in fracked fossil energy production and the possible construction of the Keystone pipeline across the Ogallala aquifer, and an area with enormous wind energy resources as well as a critical flyway for a wide variety of migratory birds. This is also a place of small organic farms and huge agribusinesses, and of an often sharp political, cultural, and economic divide between urban areas like Kansas City and the vast prairies that stretch westward to the Front Range. We are very fortunate that two of the most prominent experts on this region--environmental historian Don Worster and Director of the Land Institute Wes Jackson--have agreed to offer a joint plenary session that focuses on the environmental challenges and opportunities facing the bioregion. I'm also delighted to bring to the stage Daniel Wildcat, Yuchi member of the Muscogee Nation of Oklahoma and professor at Haskell Indians Nation University in Lawrence. A prolific author and speaker, Dan is one of the nation's leading indigenous voices on the intersection between environmental defense and cultural diversity.

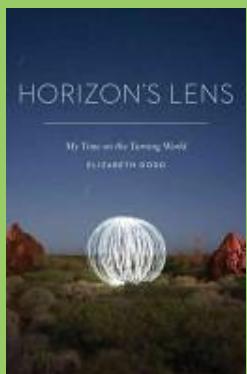
Don, Wes, and Dan join a range of other terrifically interesting plenary speakers from around the globe whose work and experiences speak to the central concerns of the conference. Rob Nixon, author of the groundbreaking and multiple-award winning *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* will be there, as will Maxine Burkett, an environmental law professor and Director of the Center for

bibliographic information to Catherine Meeks (catherine-meeks@utc.edu).

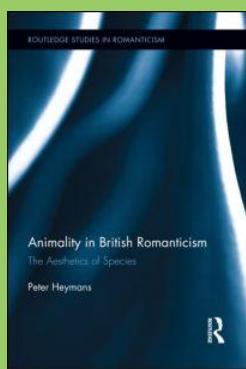
Arons, Wendy, and Theresa May. *Readings in Performance and Ecology*. Palgrave MacMillian, 2012.



Dodd, Elizabeth. *Horizon's Lens, My Time on the Turning World* (essays). University of Nebraska Press, September 2012.



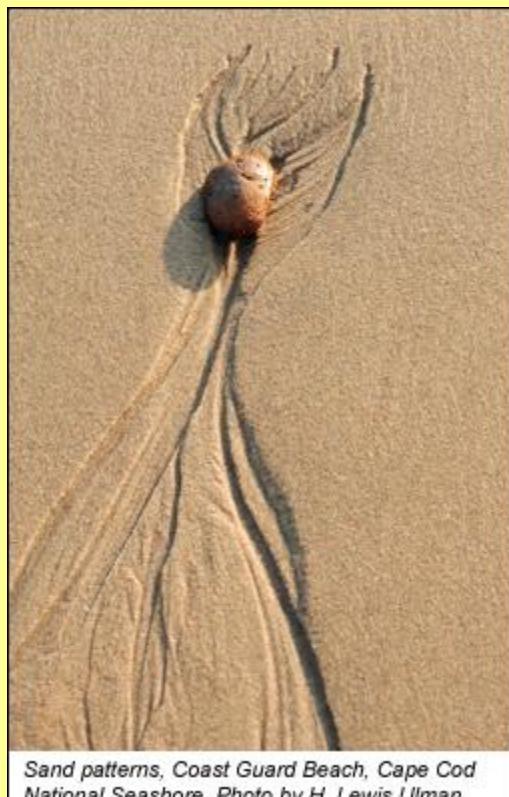
Heymans, Peter. *Animality in British Romanticism: The Aesthetics of Species*. Routledge, April 2012.



Knott, John. *Imagining the*

Island Climate Adaptation and Policy at the University of Hawai'i, whose work focuses on climate justice and island nations. There are two additional plenary sessions on tap, both of which, I'm pleased to say, showcase winners of the 2011 ASLE book prizes. Stacy Alaimo (who won the ecocriticism prize for *Bodily Natures*) will be presenting with Cary Wolfe of Rice University on their current work in Animal Studies, and Jeff Thompson (who won the creative prize for his poetry collection *Birdwatching in Wartime*) will share a reading with the well-known Columbian poet and filmmaker Juan Carlos Galeano (who has written *Amazonia* and written and directed *The Trees have a Mother*)

Like many of you, I had never been to Lawrence (or Kansas) before I was hired away from Florida State University last year. So, let me close with a snapshot of the charms of the location. On the edge of the prairie and a short drive from Kansas City, Lawrence is a hilly and forested city of just under 100,000 that shows up on any number of lists of "Best College Towns." We have planned a conference that takes advantage of the city's and university's walkability. All conference events, dormitories, dining options, and one of the conference hotels are within a five-minute walk of each other. The other two hotels are located in the center of downtown Lawrence, a 15 minute walk from the campus and the conference. Massachusetts Street--named one of America's 10 "Great Streets" by the American Planning Association in 2010--is at the center of the downtown area, offering a dense, pedestrian-friendly mile of local restaurants, bars, music venues, stores, and coffee shops, then opening up into verdant South Park. Proud of its diversity and friendliness (it's the only city in Kansas, for example, to include transgendered people in its anti-discrimination laws), Lawrence deserves its recent ranking by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the country's "Dozen Most Distinctive Destinations." The KU campus is also considered one of the prettiest in the country, and the weather at the end of May is likely to be lovely. We look forward to welcoming you in May 2013!



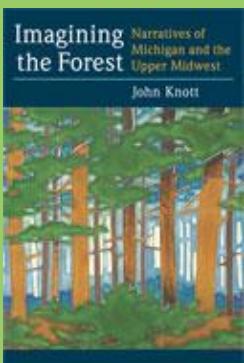
Sand patterns, Coast Guard Beach, Cape Cod National Seashore. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

ISLE Has Relocated

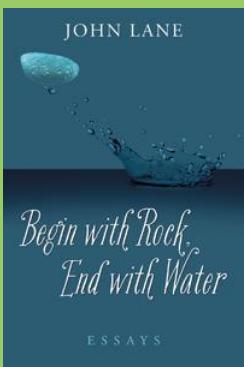
by Scott Slovic, *ISLE* Editor

ASLE members who've been tracking the shifting of North American ecocriticism's tectonic plates in recent months--or who've simply tried to write to me at my longtime UNR address--may have realized that I have moved this summer from the University of Nevada, Reno, to the University of Idaho, and the *ISLE* editorial office has accompanied me. Actually, managing editor Tom Hertweck remains in Reno and is currently passing the torch to a team of UNR co-managing editors--Sarah Nolan, Kyle Bladow, Will Lombardi, and Andy Ross. But we are also beginning the transition of *ISLE* editorial processes to the English Department at Idaho, which has pledged strong support for the journal. We will continue to use Oxford University Press's Manuscript Central system for receiving and evaluating submissions to the journal. My new e-mail address is slovic@uidaho.edu.

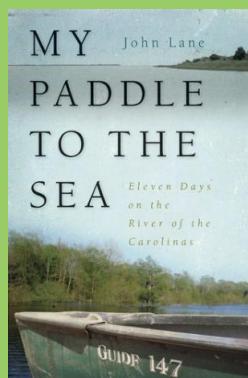
Forest: Narratives of Michigan and the Upper Midwest (paperback). University of Michigan Press, 2012.



Lane, John. *Begin with Rock, End with Water* (essays). Mercer University Press, 2012.



----- My Paddle to the Sea (paperback). University of Georgia Press, 2012.



Murray, Robin L. and Joseph K. Heumann. *That's All Folks?: Ecocritical Readings of American Animated Features*. University of Nebraska Press, December 2011.

The University of Nevada, Reno, provided crucial, generous support for *ISLE* for seventeen years. I'm sure I speak for all members of ASLE and for many scholars and writers beyond our organization in expressing my gratitude to UNR for this steady support, which helped us to launch the field of contemporary ecocriticism. At this time, the University of Idaho is poised to develop an exciting new program in literature and environment, building on the strength of its place-based creative writing program. I believe this transition will bring essential new resources to the journal, enabling us to improve the efficiency of our editorial work.



Juvenile raccoons (*Procyon lotor*), Barrett's Rim Trail, Highlands Nature Sanctuary, Highland County, Ohio. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

ISLE readers and contributors are welcome to contact me with any questions about how this re-location may affect the journal. In a very real sense, *ISLE*'s editorial processes exist in hyperspace, not in earthly geography, so my own move from Reno to Moscow may be of minor relevance to the day-to-day workings of the editorial office. But I am happy to assure my ASLE friends and colleagues that this move also signifies Idaho's enthusiastic commitment to support the journal.

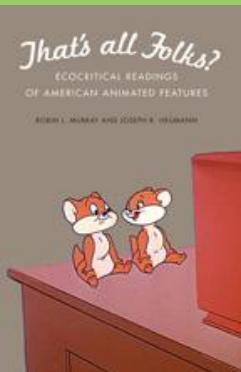
Got Cake? ASLE to Celebrate 20th Anniversary at WLA Conference

by Cheryll Glotfelty, University of Nevada, Reno

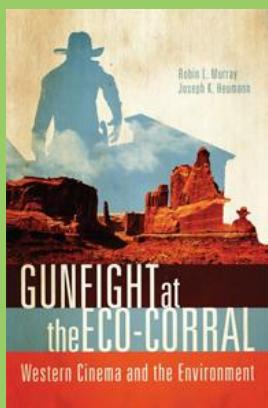
It was a gamble from the beginning. ASLE was founded in 1992 at the Sands Casino in Reno, in conjunction with the annual Western Literature Association (WLA) conference. But the gamble paid off and this year, ASLE is entering its 20th year. For this reason WLA's current president, Sara Spurgeon (Texas Tech University), and ASLE's current president, Joni Adamson, are planning several events to be held at the 2012 WLA conference to celebrate this significant milestone.

The theme of this year's WLA conference is *Literature, Social Justice, and Environment in the North American West*, and the dates are November 7-10, 2012 in Lubbock Texas.

Special ASLE events include:



----- *Gunfight at the Eco-Corral: Western Cinema and the Environment*. University of Oklahoma Press, March 2012.



ASLE Seeks Officer Nominations

Candidates are being sought to run for ASLE Executive Council (EC) and Vice President (VP), for terms beginning January 2013. EC members serve a 3-year term, as does the VP: one year as VP, one year as President, and one as Immediate Past President. If you or another member you know would like to run for an ASLE office, please contact 2012 President Joni Adamson (joni.adamson@asu.edu) by August 31, 2012.

- An **ASLE 20th Anniversary reception**, co-hosted by Sara Spurgeon and Joni Adamson on the opening night of the conference. There will be light appetizers, a birthday cake and a cash bar, and a new ASLE logo will be unveiled. There will also be a display of ASLE memorabilia.
- ASLE will also sponsor a **plenary session with Annette Kolodny**, introduced by Joni Adamson, focused on Kolodny's new book *In Search of First Contact: The Vikings of Vinland, the People of Dawnland and the Anglo-American Anxiety of Discovery* (Duke 2012). A reception and book signing will follow.
- There will be a **two-hour roundtable on "Literature & Environment-the Long View: Thoughts from the Founders of ASLE,"** featuring twenty-six (!) people who were there when ASLE was formed. Those planning to attend are Frank Bergon, Mike Branch, Mark Busby, John Calderazzo, SueEllen Campbell, Chris Cokinos, Nancy Cook, Terrell Dixon, Jerry Dollar, Reuben Ellis, David Fenimore, Cheryll Glotfelty, John Gourlie, Sue Maher, David Morris, Rebecca Raglon, Laurie Ricou, David Robertson, Forrest Robinson, Ann Ronald, Don Scheese, Scott Slovic, Robert Thacker, Mike Vause, Mary Webb, and Molly Westling. The session will be co-chaired by ASLE's founding officers--Scott Slovic (president), Cheryll Glotfelty (VP), and Mike Branch (secretary-treasurer). This session may be filmed and podcast.
- ASLE's WLA Liaison, Will Lombardi, has organized two ASLE-affiliated panels:

"New Directions in Environmental Justice Ecocriticism"

moderator and respondent Joni Adamson

panelists Mascha N. Gemein, Tom Lynch, and Kyle Bladow

"Chicana Feminist Environmental Writing and Praxis"

moderator Priscilla Solis Ybarra

panelists Priscilla Solis Ybarra, Jennifer Garcia Peacock, Kristin Ladd

For additional information on all the exciting events planned as part of the WLA conference, please visit the website:

<http://www.usu.edu/westlit/wla-conference-2012/>

ASLE Off-Year Symposium in Alaska a Great Success

by Sarah Jaquette Ray, University of Alaska Southeast

The June 14-17, 2012 ASLE Off-Year Symposium, "Environment, Culture, and Place in a Rapidly Changing North" was a great success. Held at the University of Alaska Southeast (UAS) in Juneau, Alaska, the symposium brought a wide range of scholars and writers together to address questions about climate, justice, indigeneity, representation, identity, and power, specifically concerning the geographical imaginary of "the North." Approximately 120 participants attended, including three panels of undergraduates and one panel of graduate students. Plenary speakers were Julie Cruikshank, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at University of British Columbia and author of *Do Glaciers Listen?: Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination*, Ellen Frankenstein, filmmaker and director of the documentary *Eating Alaska*, Nancy Lord, author of *Early Warming: Crisis and Response in a Climate-Changed North*, and Ernestine Hayes, Professor of Creative Writing at UAS and author of *Blonde Indian: An Alaska Native Memoir*.

Deadline SOON for ASLE Logo Contest

Don't forget! There are only a few days left to enter your design in the contest for a new ASLE logo. The winner of the contest will receive an award of \$500 USD and public recognition on the organization's website. The contest is open to anyone and links to the [full contest announcement](#) may be forwarded widely to listservs and to any designers or graphic artists who may be interested. Multiple submissions per entrant are allowed--we want lots of great options to choose from!

Submissions are due by August 24, 2012, and should be sent to Joni Adamson, President, ASLE, (Joni.Adamson@asu.edu) and Amy McIntyre, Managing Director, ASLE, (info@asle.org). Please contact them with any questions.

ASLE Ph.D.

In June 2012, **W. Mark Giles** completed his PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Calgary, AB, Canada. An excerpt from Giles's thesis, "Seep: A Novel; or, Placing Change," was awarded an honorable mention for graduate creative writing at the 2009 ASLE conference in Victoria, B.C.

In June 2012, **Nelson Gray** completed his PhD in Theatre History, with a dissertation entitled "Nature Acknowledged: The Ecocentric Tradition in



Slump-block arch, Miller State Nature Preserve, Highland County, Ohio.
Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

Tours during the Symposium included an Alaska Native Juneau Tour and a Toxic Juneau tour. Proceeds from two private whale-watching excursions were donated to Alaska Wildlife Alliance, and a wild Alaska salmon bake on the beach (with home-grown sides and desserts by caterer and UAS student Tom Schwartz) was made all the more magical by the passing of six orca off-shore. Kevin Maier and Sarah Jaquette Ray, UAS professors and hosts of the symposium, are grateful to everyone who attended, and invite those who are interested to read what others have to say about the experience at the following blogs:

<http://www.ecomediastudies.org/2012/06/26/ecomedia-at-the-asle-off-year-symposium-environment-culture-and-place-in-a-rapidly-changing-north/>

<http://blog.terrain.org/2012/06/18/report-from-asles-off-year-symposium-in-juneau-alaska/>

<http://www.aslediversity.org/2012/07/23/alaska-juneau-a-graduate-student-perspective/>

<http://www.aslediversity.org/2012/07/03/alaska-the-land-of-intellectual-adventure/>

Lastly, the final program and schedule for the Symposium can be found at <http://www.uas.alaska.edu/asle/program.html>

ASLE Welcomes new International Liaison and GSL

By Catherine Meeks

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **George Handley** as ASLE's new International Liaison. George is Professor of Humanities and Comparative Literature at Brigham Young University. He is the author of *New World Poetics: Nature and the Adamic Imagination of Whitman, Neruda, and Walcott* (Georgia 2007) and a work of creative nonfiction, *Home Waters: A Year of Recompenses on the Provo River* (Utah 2010). He is also the co-editor of *Caribbean Literature and the Environment* (Virginia 2005) and *Postcolonial Ecologies* (Oxford 2011). His current book project is *From Chaos to Cosmos: Literature as Ecotheology*. As International Liaison, George will play a critical role within the organization by fielding queries from scholars or students from other countries who wish to teach or study in the USA; organizing and heading ASLE's newly developing International Membership

English-Canadian Drama".

Paul Huebener recently completed his PhD in English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. His dissertation is titled "The Cultural and Literary Construction of Time in Canada," and his committee members were Dr. Lorraine York (supervisor), Dr. Daniel Coleman, Dr. Roger Hyman, and Dr. Diana Brydon (external examiner).

Grants Panel; compiling a list of international members willing to mentor graduate students or help field inquiries about starting an ASLE affiliate organization; and additional activities related to enhancing and expanding ASLE's international foci. George will serve a two-year term that can be extended. He takes over from past ASLE International Liaison, Wes Berry, who stepped down after graciously serving in this role for seven years. As always, ASLE is lucky to have such talented, energetic individuals filling its ranks!



*Red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), Cape Cod National Seashore.
Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.*

ASLE is also thrilled to welcome **Andrew Husband** as the newest Graduate Student Liaison. Andrew is a doctoral candidate in English and a member of the Literature, Social Justice, and Environment (LSJE) initiative at Texas Tech University. His dissertation investigates the intersections of ecocritical theory, affect studies, and nature writing in the Western and Southwestern regions of the United States. He has published essays in *Texas Theatre Journal*, *ISLE*, and two edited collections on American novelist Cormac McCarthy. When he's not buried with work, Andrew enjoys hiking, camping, trail running, and long walks on the beach—he looks forward to reengaging himself in the latter once the opportunity to live near water again presents itself. Andrew will serve the first year of his two-year term as GSL as the "Junior" GSL, a nonvoting member of the Executive Council, under the "Senior" Graduate Student Liaison, Andrew Hageman of Luther College. During his second year, Andrew Husband will become the "Senior" GSL, with full voting privileges. ASLE is lucky to have another talented Andrew on board as Graduate Student Liaison!

ASLE Announces New Honorary Members

by Joni Adamson, Arizona State University, ASLE President

The ASLE Executive Council has voted to award honorary memberships to two outstanding writers and scholars. **Scott Russell Sanders** and **Molly Westling** were chosen for this honor because of their contributions to environmental creative non-fiction, literature, ecocritical theory and environmental studies.

Scott Russell Sanders, who has keynoted at two of ASLE's conferences, most recently in 2011, is the author of twenty books of fiction and nonfiction, including *A Private History of Awe*, *A Conservationist Manifesto*, and *Hunting for Hope*. The best of his essays from the past thirty years, plus nine new essays, are collected in

Earth Works, published in 2012 by Indiana University Press. Among his honors are the Lannan Literary Award, the John Burroughs Essay Award, the Mark Twain Award, the Cecil Woods Award for Nonfiction, the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana Authors Award, and fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. In 2012 he was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is a Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English at Indiana University, where he taught from 1971 to 2009.

Louise (Molly) Westling is Professor Emerita of English at the University of Oregon, where she is core faculty and a founder of the renowned Environmental Studies Program. She has served as President of ASLE in 1998 and as a site organizer for the 2005 ASLE biennial conference held in Eugene. Her books, which helped shape the field of ecocriticism, include *Sacred Groves and Ravaged Gardens: The Fiction of Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, and Flannery O'Connor* and *The Green Breast of the New World: Landscape and Gender in American Literature*. For many years she has focused on ecocritical theory, environmental justice literature, and critical animal studies. Her current research focuses on ecophenomenology and literature, animality, and embodiment in language. Her recent articles have examined human/animal relations in literature from The Epic of Gilgamesh to Virginia Woolf, and the philosophy of Dewey, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty as grounding ecocritical approaches to literary texts. For the past few years she has branched out into the practice of cross-species communication by learning to herd sheep with her Australian Kelpie dogs.



Ruby-Throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) Highlands Nature Sanctuary, Highland County, Ohio. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

Because of their work and exemplary lives, Scott Russell Sanders and Molly Westling have significantly enriched the professional work of many ASLE members. Their lifetime memberships are a small but sincere token of ASLE's gratitude to them. Sanders and Westling will also receive a lifetime subscription to our publications and all other member benefits and we look forward to honoring them at the upcoming ASLE birthday party to be held at the WLA conference in November in Lubbock, Texas. Sanders and Westling join 19 other honorary members who have received this honor in the past. ASLE congratulates them on their exemplary careers as artists, advocates, and environmental role models.

ALECC Update

By Keri Cronin, Brock University

President, Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada

As I write this update, I am preparing to fly across the country to the 2nd biennial conference of the Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada (ALECC), which will take place in the beautiful Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. The conference is jointly hosted by Okanagan College and UBC-Okanagan and promises to be an inspiring and enriching event. In addition to the papers and panels exploring the conference's theme, "Space + Memory = Place," there will field trips and other opportunities to think about and engage with the unique landscape of this region of B.C. Keynote speakers include: Pauline Wakeham, Nicole Shukin, Marlene Creates, Andrew Nikifourk, Angie Abdou, John Lent, Sharon Thesen, Garry Gottfriedson, and Tracey Kim Bonneau. ALECC is also pleased to welcome Denise Kenney as the Eco Artist in Residence for the conference. More information about this event can be found at the ALECC 2012 [Conference website](#).

This spring ALECC hosted the first annual "100 Mile Verses" event, a regional reading series. This event was conceptualized as a way to highlight writers from different areas of Canada, in particular those who engage with environmental themes as well as those who address "the local." Our inaugural event was held on March 9th in Wolfville, Nova Scotia and featured Don McKay, Basma Kavanagh, Brian Bartlett, and E. Alex Pierce. ALECC was honored to have Gaspareau Press, Brick Books, and Goose Lane partner with us to put on this event. Look for the second installment of 100 Mile Verses in 2013!



Spider web, Miller State Nature Preserve, Highland County, Ohio.
Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

The Goose, ALECC's online journal, continues to be a wonderful resource for our members. Editors Lisa Szabo and Paul Huebener do a tremendous job of bringing together articles on "hot button" issues in ecocriticism and reviews of new and forthcoming books. In addition, each issue of *The Goose* includes "Edge Effects," a special section dedicated to showcasing "the intersections of artistic talents and critical contributions of Canadian poets," as well as a section called "Scatterings," in which other forms of creative expression are showcased. Features for graduate students and those focusing on different regional aspects of Canadian art and literature round out this vibrant publication. *The Goose* can be accessed at <http://www.alecc.ca/goose.php>

Ecocriticism in Spain: GEICO and the Benjamin Franklin American Studies Institute

by Joni Adamson, Arizona State University, ASLE President

For ten years, ecocriticism has been growing and thriving in Spain! This is in large part due to the leadership of Carmen Flys-Junquera, immediate past president of the European Association for the Study of Literature, Culture and Environment (EASLCE) and the strong support of the Benjamin Franklin American Studies Institute of the University of Alcalá. The Institute's Director, Jose Antonio Gurpegui, has been a strong supporter of ecocriticism (<http://www.institutofranklin.net/en>) and has backed the creation of GIECO, an ecocritical research group organized by Flys-Junquera (<http://www.institutofranklin.net/en/research/branches/gieco>).

The Institute has provided funds for GEICO and hosted a number of environmental writers, ecocritics, and ASLE members such as Alison Hawthorne Deming, Louise (Molly) Westling, Linda Hogan, Patrick Murphy, Terry Gifford, Scott Slovic, Axel Goodbody, Annie Ingram, and Joni Adamson. The Institute hosts the best ecocritical library and is the national reference for ecocriticism in Spain. The Institute has also helped fund its members to attend ASLE conferences since Boston 2003. The 3rd EASLCE conference on "Cultural Landscapes" was organized and hosted by the Franklin Institute in 2008.



Hiking trail, Cape Cod National Seashore.
Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

GEICO has organized a series of seminars held in different parts of Spain where literature and active knowledge of diverse ecological environments have been combined. As a result of these seminars, the first ecocritical reader in Spanish was published in 2010, *Ecocriticas. Literatura y Medio Ambiente*. The Franklin Institute has also just inaugurated a new book series: CLYMA (culture, literature and environment in its acronym in Spanish which also spells "clima" which is climate). The first volume, *Realidad y simbología de la montaña*,

edited by Juan Ignacio Oliva (recently elected Vice-president of EASLCE) focuses on mountains, and was inspired by a seminar held at the volcanic park in Tenerife, in the Canary Islands. There are three other volumes in the making. The Institute has also launched the Susan

Feminore Cooper grant for young scholars (pre-doc or recent post-

doc) to spend fifteen days at the Institute doing ecocritical research on US texts. The Institute is also supporting PhD candidates in ecocriticism. One dissertation has already been completed and this fall another two students will defend. The Institute also hosts the Friends of Thoreau program which focuses on environmental studies from the perspective of the sciences, and a new group focusing on landscape from an ecological perspective. These groups complement the ecocritical group as well as the environmental interests of the Institute.

The Benjamin Franklin Research Institute, working with GIECO, also awards research grants to promote foreign experts who are working with Alcalá research groups to internationalize research. Most recently, the Institute helped fund the 5th EASLCE conference in Tenerife, on the Canary Islands, "Natura Loquens: Eruptive

Dialogues, Disruptive Discourses" and helped sponsor a seminar on "Ecology, Culture and Literature of American Indigenous Peoples" organized by GIECO and the Spanish Department of the University of Alcalá and the Museum for the Americas of Spain. The GIECO group, together with EASLCE, has also launched the journal Ecozon@ European Journal of Literature, Culture and Environment which is working on its 6th issue. For more information on any of these events or activities, please contact Carmen Flys-Junquera (carmen.flys@uah.es).

Interview with an Independent Writer: Rhona McAdam

Rhona McAdam is a writer and editor living in Victoria, BC. McAdam is active with many food issues, from food security to the Slow Food movement, and holds a Master's degree from Slow Food's University of Gastronomic Sciences in Italy. As her beautiful blog "Iambic Café" puts it, she is concerned with "food and poetry, but mostly the poetry of food." McAdam is currently a Member-At-Large of the Association for Literature, Environment, and Culture in Canada. She has published several full-length poetry collections, as well as two limited-edition chapbooks of "food poems," *Sunday Dinners* in 2010 and *The Earth's Kitchen* in 2011. Her most recent publication, the nonfiction *Digging the City: An Urban Agriculture Manifesto*, will be released in September. Please visit <http://reallygoodwriter.com/> for more information about McAdam's work.

How did your interest in writing about food develop? In particular, writing what you call food poetry?

I've always been interested in food, so when I moved back to Canada after a dozen years in England, I chose it as the subject I'd like to focus on in my freelance writing. This coincided neatly with a call for applicants to the Master's program in food culture & communication at the University of Gastronomic Sciences, Slow Food's university in Italy, so I spent 2007 living in Parma and learning about food - history, technology, anthropology, economics and more - and when I returned to Canada in 2008 it seemed a natural focus for my poetry as well, and an interesting challenge as I'd never tried to consciously guide the subject of my poems. I've been following my interest in food right back to its roots in agriculture (and most recently urban agriculture) though that aspect has yet to emerge in poetic form. I'm active in a neighbourhood food security/urban agriculture group, and volunteer at the farm stand and on the board of a local community organic farm, so I remain immersed.

What landscapes -- whether literal, figurative, of place, of the mind -- do you consider most important to your work?

I was born on Vancouver Island so coastal landscapes are always most attractive to me. I spent 14 years in Edmonton, Alberta and so I am also drawn to prairie, and to winter. The years in London left an indelible mark on me and I spend a lot of imaginative time in urban and rural Britain and Europe.

What books and/or authors have most influenced your work?

I find this a difficult question and think that as a poet one's influence can come in smaller packages: individual poems can have a profound impact. Poems like Louis MacNeice's poem "Snow," for example, or Carol Ann Duffy's "Prayer," or Yevgeny Yevtushenko's "Colours" are often humming in my background. The years I spent in England brought me into contact with a huge body of national and international treasures: Gillian Clarke has always been my "poet of the land" while Derek Walcott's *Another Life* and Sean O'Brien's *The Drowned Book* are two watery touchstones; Irish poets have really spoken to me: Medbh McGuckian, Derek Mahon, Eavan Boland, Seamus Heaney; Maxine Kumin's work touches food, agriculture and animals in a profound way for me; and Les Murray, Alastair Reid, Billy Collins, Heather McHugh, Tony Hoagland, Paul Farley, Sue Goyette, Carol Ann Duffy, Anne Carson, Alice Oswald and Simon Armitage are a few of my random favourites. None of them food poets per se, but then food is just one subject. A few of the food writers who have moved me or informed my work include Wendell Berry (essays more than poems), MFK Fisher, Michael Pollan, Felicity Lawrence and Peter Singer.

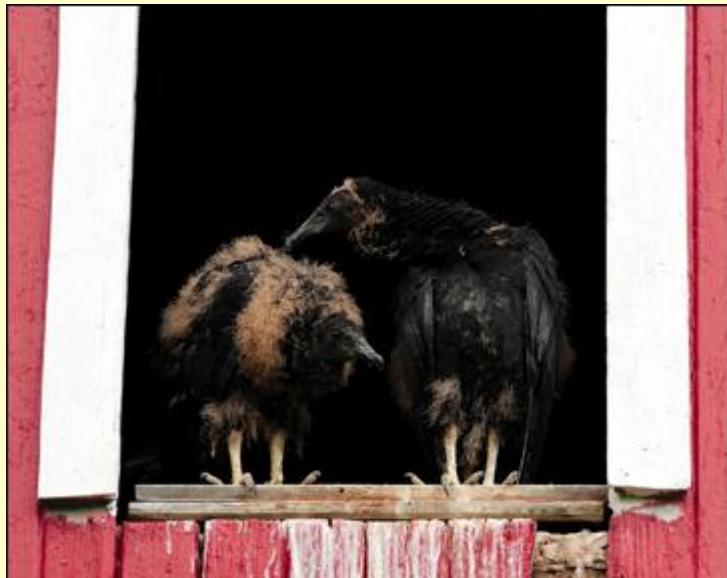
What is the best thing anyone ever taught you?

(1) Read (and eat!) widely. (2) When writing, put your newly minted work of genius aside for at least two days: the imperfections will be easier to see after a short rest.

What are you working on now?

I'm working on a memoir about my year studying food in Italy, which has been worth attempting if only to refresh my memory, awe and appetite for all I learned there. My nonfiction book *Digging the City: An Urban Agriculture Manifesto* is launching this fall, so that will stay in my life a while longer. And I continue nudging the food poetry towards a full-length collection (it's been published in journals and a couple of chapbooks so far).

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Black Vultures (Coragyps atratus), Highlands Nature Sanctuary, Highland County, Ohio. Photo by H. Lewis Ulman.

If you are, or you know of, an "independent writer" (someone not working full-time at a college, university, or other institution) that is a member of ASLE or one of ASLE's international affiliates that you would like to see featured in *ASLE News*, please e-mail *ASLE News* editor Catherine Meeks at catherine-meeks@utc.edu.

Member News

Wendy Arons and Theresa May are pleased to announce publication of their co-edited volume, *Readings in Performance and Ecology* by Palgrave MacMillian (2012). This groundbreaking collection of essays (with contributions by Una Chahduri (ASLE keynote speaker 2011), Nelson Gray, Wallace Heim (Asden Directory), Downing Cless, and others) focuses on how theatre, dance and other forms of performance are helping to transform our ecological values, and how theatre and dance can help us understand the ways we are integrally connected to the land and its many communities (human and non-human). The volume arises in part out of the Earth Matters on Stage Festival, founded by Theresa May and Larry Fried, and dedicated to calling forth and nurturing new ecodramas and eco-performance, and to forwarding ecocriticism in theatre and performance studies. EMOS took place at Humboldt State in 2004, University of Oregon in 2009, and at Carnegie Mellon University this past spring, 2012.

Elizabeth Dodd won the Theodore Christian Hoepfner Award from Southern Humanities Review for her essay "Megalithic North," which is included in her new book from the University of Nebraska Press, *Horizon's Lens, My Time on the Turning World*.

Dawnelle A. Jager received the 2012 President's Award for Community Service at the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF), for her service learning food politics course work with Fraser Elementary School's 5th grade, in Syracuse, NY, and other nonprofit organizations that provide food to the hungry. Dawnelle is a Senior Part Time Instructor in the Syracuse University Writing Program and a Tenured Instructor and Writing Resource Coordinator at the SUNY-ESF Environmental Studies Writing Program.

John Lane's 2011 book, *Abandoned Quarry: New & Selected Poems* (Mercer University Press) was recently awarded the 2012 Southeast Independent Booksellers Alliance Book Prize for Poetry.

Adam Rome moved from Penn State to the University of Delaware in January 2012 to help build a program in environmental humanities. He has a joint appointment in history and English, and he will teach courses in environmental non-fiction as well as environmental history. He is working with longtime ASLE member McKay Jenkins on the environmental-humanities initiative.

ASLE News Notes

Wilderness Plots Wins Award

Wilderness Plots in Concert, filmed at the ASLE conference last year at Indiana University Bloomington, has won a CINE Golden Eagle award for excellence! For those of us who attended, it was a memorable performance. CINE is internationally recognized for its highly acclaimed film and video competitions and related educational support activities which culminate every year in a gala Awards Event held in the Washington, D.C. area. CINE has a wide following in the film and video industry nationally and internationally, drawing over 1,000 entries per year into its prestigious competitions, which have been taking place since 1957.

[Find out more about the awards here](#)

[Watch some clips of the concert here](#)

[See the full listing of winners on the CINE site](#)

Silent Spring Virtual Exhibit

The Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society has just opened a new virtual exhibit on the international reception and impact of *Silent Spring* in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the publication of the book:

<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/exhibitions/silent-spring/overview>.

Member News

Whether you got a new job, won an award, or did something interesting, enlightening, or exciting, we want to know what you're up to! If you have some news to share with other ASLE members, and it doesn't "fit" into the Bookshelf, PhD, or Emeritus categories, please contact Catherine Meeks (catherine-meeks@utc.edu) with the Subject heading "Member News."

ASLE Emeritus

ASLE News honors those ASLE members retired or retiring from teaching. If you would like to acknowledge someone in this new feature--or if you yourself will be retiring during the coming academic year--please contact Catherine Meeks (catherine-meeks@utc.edu). We will include a brief account of scholarly interests,

the institutions of employment and years taught in the next newsletter.

ASLE PhDs

Have you or one of your students recently defended a dissertation? If so, ASLE News wants to know. Each issue, we include announcements commemorating those members who have recently completed their doctoral work. If you would like to be included in this feature, please contact Catherine Meeks (catherine-meeks@utc.edu) with the dissertation title, degree-granting institution, and committee members.

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