



La Vista Ecological Learning Center

A ministry of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Octoberber, 2022

E-News and Eco-spirituality Calendar

Maxine Pohlman, SSND
Email: info@lavistaelc.org
Website: lavistaelc.org

Monthly reflections are archived in the Blog on our web site.

October

Sacred Bond



As I write I am well aware autumn begins soon, and already the prairie next door is showing signs of seasonal changes. Indian grass is bowing, partridge pea petals grace the ground, and sunflowers have become part of the soil. Fall, what an apt name when so much of Earth's community heads downward to rest on whatever lies below.

I had not thought of all this falling as a kind of desiring until I read Pattiann Rogers' poem *Signifying (Coming to Earth)*, which is full of gorgeous images of what seems to desire Earth this season. She writes of rain streaming into ravines; spiders dropping, sailing, gliding, settling in grasses; acorns, walnuts, knocking through twigs to get to earth; geese zeroing in and skidding to a lake-slide landing. According to the poet's imagination, all of these are seeking earth – earth is so desired!

I was drawn to this poem because of my own desire for Earth. So many poets, artists, authors and musicians also express humanity's love of our planet. But is that the end of the story, humans expressing their passion and creativity for our rare and precious planet?

Robin Wall Kimmerer, author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, answered that question for me. In a chapter entitled *Epiphany in the Beans*, she tells of an awareness that came to her *with a certainty as warm and clear as the September sunshine*. What was the epiphany? She writes, *Land loves us back. She loves us with beans and tomatoes, with roasting ears and blackberries and birdsongs. By a shower of gifts and a heavy rain of lessons.*

Of course! I now realize the prairie has been loving me back all summer long in the scent of mountain mint, procession of colors, and abundance of wildlife enchanting me with their hopping, leaping, buzzing,

humming, and darting.

Kimmerer goes on to write, *But when you feel that the earth loves you in return that feeling transforms the relationship from a one-way street into a sacred bond.* Now that is food for the soul, considering our mutual relationship with Earth a sacred bond; our oneness and interconnectedness – real and holy.

October 5 Migrants



According to my calendar notes, on October 5th in 2021, hummingbirds left the feeder to migrate to Mexico or Central America. So, hummers are migrants, too, and this reminds me to expand my consciousness. While continuing to care for human migrants, we are called by our ecological crises to expand our circle of compassion to include all Earth's migrants and migratory species like the 4,000 birds that are regular migrants, the monarch butterfly whose migration is threatened, and further from home, caribou, wildebeest, zebras, bats and flamingos.

In the book *No Way Home: The Decline of the World's Great Animal Migrations*, author David Wilcove writes that it is probably too late to recreate the great migrations that have already been lost, like the American bison and wild Atlantic salmon. According to Wilcove, humanity needs to realize the intrinsic value of migrations. He calls us to work to preserve these amazing phenomena before another species edges toward extinction. He writes, *A dozen cranes rising from the Platte River at dawn during their spring migration is a beautiful sight," and "five hundred thousand doing the same thing is miraculous."*

The question is always, *What can I do?* To learn how humans impact migrations as well as how to take action, view the [Human Impact Gallery How Humans Affect Animal Migrations Around the World](#) . Thanks to National Geographic for this outstanding educational piece!

Photo: Mark Olsen on Unsplash

October 11 Workday in the Oblates' Preserve

9:00 – 11:30

What a great month to work in the woods! So much color, so little sweat. Please join us and thanks for letting me know you are coming:

October 12 Protecting the Ornate Box Turtle Online Program 6:30 – 7:30 pm (Central)



In nearby Hillsboro, Illinois, there is a story brewing by the Deer Run Mine, a coal mine that has expanded its territory and is encroaching on the habitat of the Ornate Box Turtle. This state threatened species needs protection.

Join us for a virtual program featuring Devin Edmonds, a graduate student at the University of Illinois who studied the demography of three Ornate Box Turtle populations in Illinois, helping to inform their conservation. You will meet others who care about native wildlife, learn about this turtle and what you can do to help.

Registration and Information: <https://bit.ly/3UrEUee>

Sponsored by the Illinois Chapter of Sierra Club.

Photo: Devin Edmonds

October 30 Protecting Pollinators Beyond Summertime

Now that your garden and yard are covered with an abundance of dried plants and leaves, please allow them to stay there, resisting the urge to tidy them up! Many bees, butterflies, moths, spiders and other animals nest in hollowed out plant stems and/or winter in leaf litter. You will be saving their winter habitat as you aim to protect their lifecycle until they have left in the springtime.

You may have to explain to your neighbors and family that you are not being lazy; instead, you are continuing to care for the pollinators you so carefully provided for all summer with your native plants and decision to forego use of pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers.



[Unsubscribe info@lavistaelc.org](mailto:info@lavistaelc.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data
Notice](#)

Sent by info@lavistaelc.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!