

Appalachia

Volume 69
Number 1 *Winter/Spring 2018: Mount
Washington: Summit of Extremes*

Article 21

2018

Red-Bellied Woodpecker

Francis Blessington

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia>



Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Blessington, Francis (2018) "Red-Bellied Woodpecker," *Appalachia*: Vol. 69: No. 1, Article 21.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.dartmouth.edu/appalachia/vol69/iss1/21>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by Dartmouth Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Appalachia by an authorized editor of Dartmouth Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dartmouthdigitalcommons@groups.dartmouth.edu.

Red-Bellied Woodpecker

But it is the back of the head you notice,
the quick flame of the red flap.
Conspicuously it sneaks and swoops
between the snow ground and snow light.
The dry trees crackle in their ice
as the little darting target stops,
kisses the green steel feeder once,
where the flocks have ceased to fight,
have decamped; the distracted Broad Wing
is flaying a squirrel upon a branch.
Today is a catch-as-you-go thing
when brown is camouflaged white.

Francis Blessington

FRANCIS BLESSINGTON'S poems have appeared in *Arion*, *Arizona Quarterly*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Harvard Magazine*, *The Sewanee Review*, *Yale Literary Review*, and *Yankee*, among many others. His new book of poems, *Poems from Underground*, published in 2017 by Deerbrook Editions.