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Winterkill

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Winterkill

Because the day disrobes, discards scarf and sweater,
exposing April's white skin, I go singing
into the longer light, walking and fishing and gathering
the bright red teaberries that grow sweeter through the cold
months and now taste like fresh mint cut from a summer garden.
And in this I find the bones of animals who starved,
or were run down by coyotes or wild dogs leaping over
the deeper snow, who also felt hunger gnawing at their bones.
Here the rib of a yearling doe points up through the canopy
of May apples, while near the stream the skull of a porcupine
sleeps in a deathbed of quills, softened by the petals
of the first yellow violets.

Todd Davis

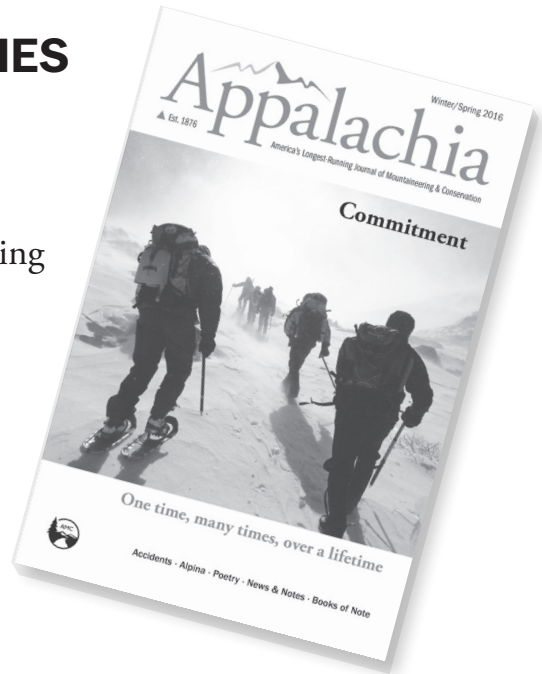
TODD DAVIS teaches creative writing and environmental studies at Penn State University's Altoona College. He is the author of, most recently, *In the Kingdom of the Ditch* (Michigan State University Press, 2013), as well as four other books of poems, including *The Least of the These* (Michigan State University Press, 2010) and *Household of Water, Moon, and Snow: The Thoreau Poems* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2010).

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