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Night Feeders: Los Quetzales, Chiriquí, Panama

Marcyn Del Clements

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Night Feeders

Los Quetzales, Chiriquí, Panama

Long after birds have slipped into torpor, after
a fern-thin moon sets behind banana trees,

grey bats take turns at hummingbird feeders;
they flutter, dip in, drink, fall away.

I watch at eye level from the landing;
in the porch light their fur shines silver

as they cue in air, swing down, tongue
sugar water from the feeder tube.

Quiet, orderly, almost polite, they refuel
then slip off with a slight creak of wings,

lost among stars. I wrap my rebozo
tighter over my nightgown, drift back

to the room, the rhythm of the night
feeders already easing into my dreams.

Marcyn Del Clements

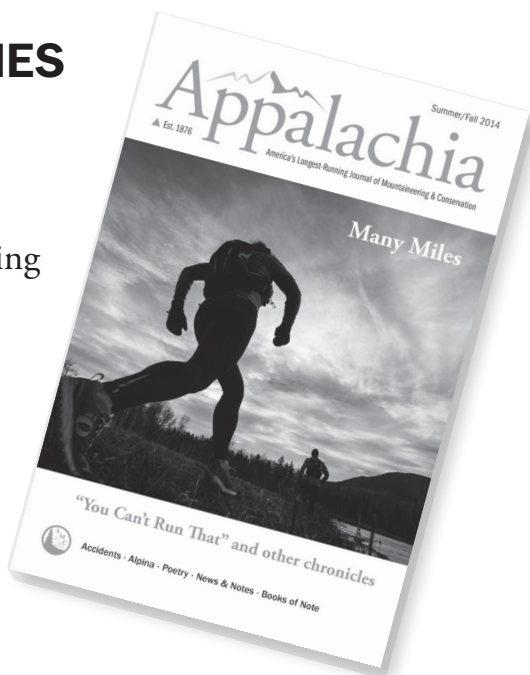
MARCYN DEL CLEMENTS is a regular contributor to *Appalachia*. In 2007, she traveled to Panama to observe birds, mammals, and flowers of the rain forest, including the shadowy Dracula orchid. She lives in Claremont, California.

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