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The Lagoon

Ann Taylor

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The Lagoon

A palette of rust—giltless goldenrod,
 sticky burrs, fallen acorns broken,
cat-o'-nine-tails, ragged like bucks' antlers
 shedding velvet. Cracked milkweed pods
clinging like wounded birds, a few feathery filaments
 waiting to break loose. Abandoned nests
exposed on bare limbs, remaining leaves countable,
 the rest hustling down cracked pavement,
or waved to water's edge, soon to be frozen under.

But still, tight white birch catkins, like raindrops
 suspended, seeded. Wispy young pines rooted
in the esker. Chickadees' persistent comment
 in the cold air, coots bobbing, mallards still paired,
swan parents circling with offspring ready for flight,
 a noisy flurry of Canada Geese, chaotic, agreeing
only on south. The warm sun's slight heat.

Today's harvesting chipmunk, like me,
anticipating, faithful to the mostly unseen.

Ann Taylor

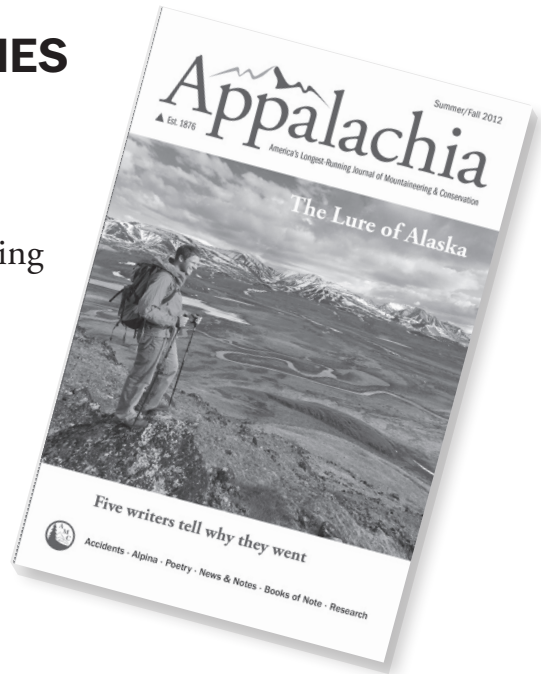
ANN TAYLOR of Woburn, Massachusetts, teaches poetry at Salem State University. Her poems have appeared or will appear in *Arion*, *The Aurorean*, *Ellipsis*, *The Dalhousie Review*, and others. Ravenna Press awarded her its first Cathlamet Prize for Poetry and published her collection, *The River Within*, in 2011.

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