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In the Duck Marsh

James Doyle

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In the Duck Marsh

A thousand wings above me, all invisible.
I will take the next train south, meet
them there. I suppose the dog will want
to go along too. We are concentric circles
widening out from a splash we have
been waiting for year after year.

The cry of clouds on a gray morning,
the sky crouched over in its own
duck blind, the water idling through
the reeds. We are notching time
to make it go away. The chill wind
reminds us we have nothing to lose

by giving up. The corners of the dog's
eyes start to close. I tell him
he will drown if he falls asleep.
The cold scaling my legs ripples
out from me as if I were a stone
dropped in the water's center to stir

the nutrients around their slow
microscopic pirouettes. The dog and I
are adjuncts to the algae, the water,
the ducks. The wind from the north
breaks into thousands of arrows, so
quickly through the target's center
my eyes crack across the sky.

James Doyle

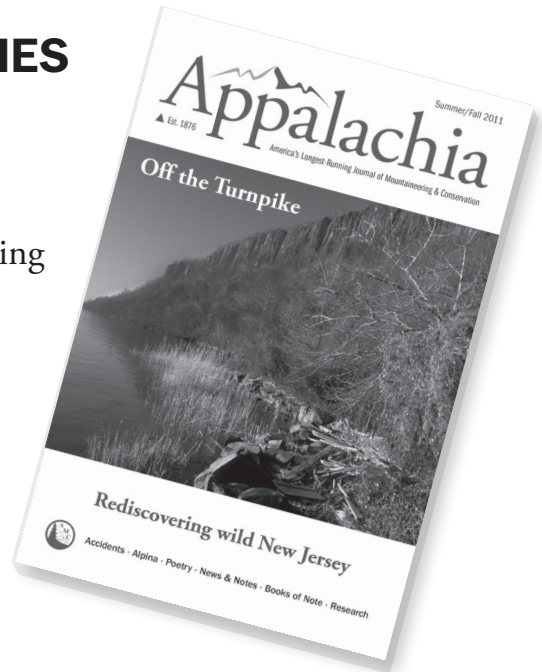
JAMES DOYLE's latest book is *Bending Under the Yellow Police Tapes* (Steel Toe Books, 2007). He has published poems in many journals, including *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Cold Mountain Review*, *The Iowa Review*, and *Poetry*.

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