

RE-ENCHANTMENT & GRATITUDE DAY

THE SMALL ONES



A thousand worlds beneath our hurry.

WILD NATURE HEART • SEPTEMBER 2026

A Blessing for the Small Ones

Beloved Small Ones, we thank you.

You of many legs or none, soft bellies, pollen-dusted bodies.

You who make a forest of fallen parts,
a whole sky of the space between grasses.

Every small life opens a world.

Thank you for the worlds you tend beneath our notice—
for loosening soil, carrying seed,
for the click and buzz or shimmer of a wing
that brings us back to our senses.

You teach us that a life need not be large to be whole.

May we learn your names and leave room for your lives.

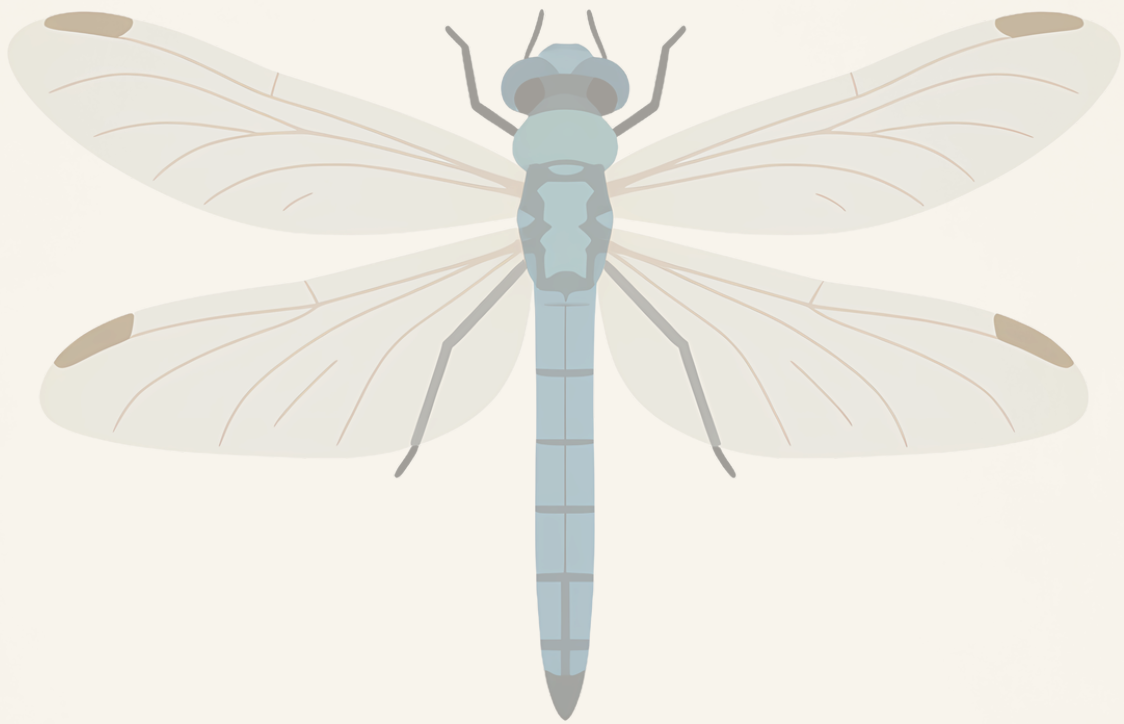
May our gratitude grow tiny legs,
get down close, become awe and shelter.

Blessed be your hungers, your courtships,
your strange and necessary ways.

May you flourish in the leaf litter,
in the unmown margins,
in the widening circle of our care.

May we remember your sacredness.
Beloved Small Ones, thank you.





A thousand worlds beneath our hurry.

Don't Forget the Smalls in Your Basket of Whos

Don't forget the Smalls
in your basket of Whos

Don't forget the smells
when you're looking for clues

Don't forget your nose
when you're searching for hints

Don't forget the sense of all of the scents

Don't forget your ear, to put to the ground

Don't forget the slow
when you forage for sounds

Don't forget to see
from the snail-point-of-view

Don't forget the Smalls
in your basket of Whos

—Ryan Van Lenning, from *Don't Forget the Smalls*



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The Songs of Seeds



**What if
seeds sang
when they
sprouted?**

**Imagine
the meadows
ringing
with the
joyous sound**

**of thousands
of tiny green voices
lifted together
in exultation**

**—Kai Siedenburg,
author of the Poems of Earth and Spirit series**



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POEMS

I Bent My Ear

They were calling for attention
as I walked past—

the fruiting fungi
and horsetails whispering

mugwort and trillium
bellowing the rainbow
through the redwoods

and those baby ferns
curled up like seahorses
of the forest

confiding in me
their secret potencies

I suppose I could have kept up
my pace
stepping past them

never learning what song
they were singing

or what the slug was saying
in its bright hum of the earth
from their banana mouth
and sure-footed saunter

But as they were calling
so charmingly and gently

I slowed down
and bent my ear

I had to give them
what they asked for

—Ryan Van Lenning



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‘Shroom Forest

If I were shrunk and found myself
the size of a sequoia seed

I would try to find a home
among the ‘shrooms
in a village hidden from Empire.

I’d wake and wash my face
in the dewdrop
on my mushroom-cap roof

and hold little gatherings
among the grandmother grove of mushrooms
bigger than all the rest

(more than 3 inches tall!)

with an altar of spores
and even tinier seeds
of every stripe and hue.

We’d have a little fire
started with a single redwood needle
twice my size

so I’d need to find a nice ‘shroomy girl
to help me break it down
and light it.



‘Shroom Forest

Then all us ‘shroom villagers
would sing fungi songs
around the tiny flame

folksy songs about lichen and love
and chants of Puhpowee*—

a Potawatomi word
for the emergent force
that pushes mushrooms
up from the earth overnight.

And after the fire died down
some of us would stay behind

wondering what it would be like
to be big as a fern
among the giant redwoods

telling stories about our first time
and sneaking into Mr. Psilo’s
big mushroom mansion

and how he was bald-headed by thirty
and how we hoped
we’d never get that old.



‘Shroom Forest

But if we did, well,
we’d promise each other

we’d stay young at heart
and always caper about
in the woods together
and never, EVER get so old
that we wouldn’t stick our bare feet

in the cold creek
or the soft ground

and put our arms around each other
and our mushroom-tree homes.

That’s what I’d do
if I were the size of a seed.

—Ryan Van Lenning



*Puhpowee is a Potawatomi word I encountered in Robin Wall
Kimmerer’s wonderful *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom,
Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants*. Kimmerer describes it
as naming the force by which mushrooms rise from the earth.



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What Do You Hear
When You Listen to Lichen Grow?

Under the spell
of a turbulent creek in a mountain cave
you listen to lichen grow

Under the smell of a whipping winter rain
you listen to a landscape's
green resurrection

Enchanted, you become velvety
like moss

patient like stone
beflowed like water

and suddenly remember
that you are in fact

a songbird
a spiderweb
a sprouting buckeye

and wild like worms
in the hill beside/inside you
navigating the flood

What do you hear
when you listen to lichen grow?

—Ryan Van Lenning



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Seeing the Dust

It's mostly
little bits of us,
they say,

floating through the air,
coming to rest
on any available surface,

and, given enough time,
covering it with a
soft, gray blanket.

Mostly
we see it
as a mundane
fact of life
or a minor annoyance—

the endless accumulation
of tiny particles
of our skin
on every nearly-level surface.

Yet it is also
a subtle reminder
that we are not
entirely solid,

but rather
ever-changing,
with 50 billion or so
of our own cells
dying and being replaced
every day.

We are literally
not the same people
we were yesterday,
or who we'll be
tomorrow.

Even as we live
and breathe,
feeling
more or less solid
and distinctly ourselves,

we are gradually
dissolving,
releasing
the boundaries of
our individual forms
into the
formless
and infinite.

—Kai Siedenbarg,
author of the
Poems of Earth and Spirit series



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Small Ones in Small Form: Haiku

Moving by moonlight
trying to read my writing—
lonely ladybug

Just laying around
soaking up air and water—
these lazy mosses

When did you arrive?
I've been here
the whole night long,
winter web spinner

all day and all night
mighty chorus of crickets—
reporting the news

Bee leaves his tavern
flying cross-eyed without care
full of daisy beer

in the drying mud
a family of ladybugs—
I've not stepped lightly

red on a grey day
on rotting winter debris
blooming ladybugs

White leg spider
meet mister black leg spider
oh my, what a party!

Sweet purple fragrance
Oh, I wanna be a bee—
kiss all your blossoms

—Ryan Van Lenning,
from *High-Cooing Through the Seasons*



What if we stop treating attention as something that belongs only to the large, dramatic, beautiful things?



**Spend a few unhurried minutes
with a small neighbor.**

See what you notice when you stay.

THE SMALLING CONTINUES

If you feel called to slow down to notice things a little longer, these Wild Nature Heart spaces & creations flow from the same forest floors, where we continue practicing relationship with the living world and our next aligned turn.

A few places to continue:

—Write Your Wild River: Part creative writing journey, part nature-connected immersion, part earth community, a 6-week invitation into poetry and creativity as presence, practice, and portal. Next cohort begins **October 11**.

—Earth Intimacies: Earth Intimacies is a 6-week interactive course devoted to reinhabiting the animate web of life. We deepen ecospiritual intimacy by tending sacred relationships with the more-than-human world—Water, Moon, Lichen, Mycelium, feathered kin, soundscapes, emergence, and more. Begins **October 15**.

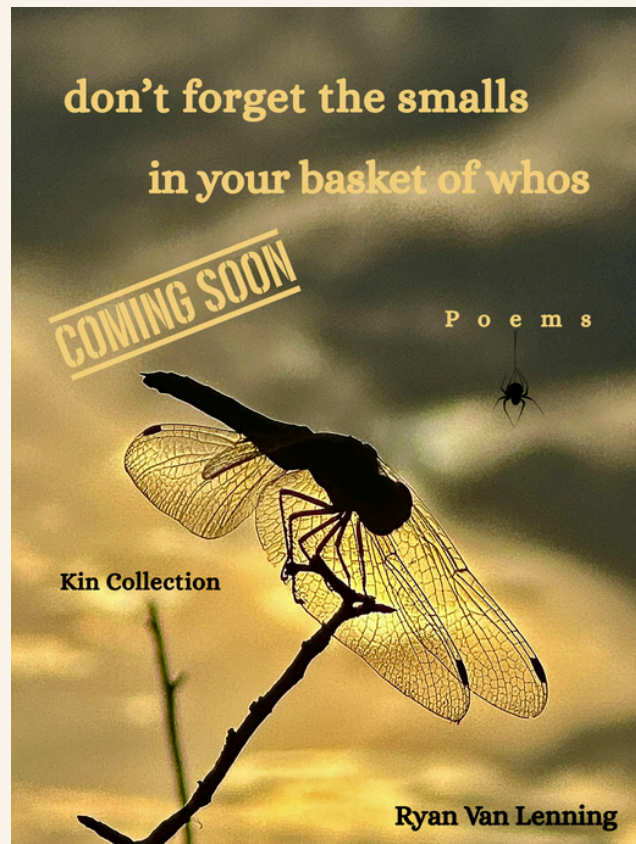
—New earth poetry collections available now: Becoming, Beautiful Barbarians, Riverever, and Watershed.



THE SMALLING CONTINUES

DON'T FORGET THE SMALLS IN YOUR BASKET OF WHOS

A small book of creaturely attention, re-enchantment,
and the beings we nearly overlook.



This month's issue wanders through some of the same terrain as an upcoming little book, Don't Forget the Smalls in Your Basket of Whos, part of the Kin Collection.

Release date December.

Preorders are now quietly open.



A Year of Enchantment

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wildnatureheart.com