

Shelley Kirk-Rudeen

## Zumwalt Prairie

The shadows of clouds race northward.  
Above the shush of wind in pine and grass,  
listen: timbers groaning,  
the ark creaking to life.

This will be no gathering of two by two.  
There will be no one place to call home.  
Everything on the move, leaving  
to become native to new places  
as the old homes change,

traveling by windblown seed, by wing,  
by cloven hoof and padded foot,  
in bellies and in dung, in water's flow.

And what of the ones who travel  
by rhizome's reach,  
by the exquisite slowness of slime trail?

And what of the ones who must stay?  
Is it only their names we will carry forward?