The Avocet

The fog lifted
As we drove into Matagorda
Where the Colorado River used to flow
Into the Gulf of Mexico.

The day bloomed blue and
The birds came out to greet us
As we paddled into the marsh
That was losing water to the moon.

The flock of small waders
Shimmered in the sun,
Turning to and fro with delight
In their ability to fly.

The vultures and the caracara
Hung low above the fragmites
As the mergansers scuttled before us,
White wing patches bright against green water.

The avocets came by at eye level,
The line of birds pulsating up and down,
Their upturned beaks in a line,
Their brown and black and white stunning.

Paddling back at the end,
My muscles speaking their discomfort,
Pulling up near the bank,
Reclining on the kayak - floating,
Looking up at the blue sky
With the high, whirling white clouds,
Kayak thoughts flying through my head –  
Thoughts of being sucked into a large immensity,  
Of being enraptured casually and completely,  
Without forethought, without planning.

Bobbing in the river,  
I knew I had found the elixir,  
The potion for aging happily -  
Drinking from nature,  
Letting it flow over my mouth,  
Staining my chest. Indelibly. Forever.