



## Long-billed Dowitcher

On the prairie after a big, hard rain  
Near the Texas coast in Galveston County.

The dowitchers are feeding in the shallow swale  
That has standing water after the downpours  
That restored life to the dry, clay soils,  
Life displayed in many forms and processes,  
Plants increasing their circulation and respiration,  
Sucking in carbon dioxide, making carbohydrates,  
Turning the prairie green with photosynthesis,  
Moving carbon from leaves to roots to soil,  
Providing habitat for the worms and bugs  
Sought by probing beaks of the small brown birds -  
Meeting needs, trying to survive,  
Dowitchers enjoying a good day on Earth.

Nature's plan is suddenly revealed –  
Straightforward and beautiful. Rain comes.  
Plants thrive. Dowitchers thrive. Humans thrive.  
All benefitted by the circular economy  
Of water and carbon cycling in nature,  
Naturally removing that which we emit  
Excessively into the Earth's skin,  
Carbon dioxide that is now of concern  
To the oil and gas giants and power plants  
Who must maintain carbon balance sheets,  
Carbon that will be money in the bank  
For visionary landowners who helped initiate  
A marketplace - an exchange  
For ecological services that benefit us all  
Like those of the coastal prairie –

Services like storing carbon, creating habitat,  
Making food for the birds and bunnies.

The dowitchers know not the human mind  
That developed a dollar value for nature's gift,  
An important concept in the human world  
That equates dollar value to real value,  
For as the dowitcher views it,  
These cycles are simply the way nature works  
For all living entities, humans included,  
And we humans would be wise indeed  
To conform our system to that system.

So welcome to Earth Church  
Pull yourself up a pew,  
Put your faith in the cycles  
They will liberate you.