

Virus Vigil

Poetry by Jim Blackburn
Art by Isabelle Scurry Chapman



Eastern Kingbird 2

On the Brown and Root Ranch
On the north shore of East Bay
On the watch for the migrants
It's gonna be a great day.

The brackish marsh is alive and thriving,
Full of wonderful plants and animals surviving,
It's been dry but there's been some recent rain,
And the birds are out looking o'er their domain.

I've arrived in time for an Earth Church ceremony,
The right Rev. Kingbird's giving his testimony,
The white line is spread across his flared tail,
An inverted priest's bib in the wind like a sail.

His message today is he's grateful to have made it,
To have food and water and a place to sit,
And he gazes out from his hackberry ministry,
And smiles out upon Earth Church's emerald tapestry.

Brother Redwing leads the chorus from the green,
That happy fellow got the singing gene,
The black and white stilts stand and peer,
They're setting up to breed for another year.

The pairs in the distance are the mottled duck,

The kingbird hopes their breeding finds luck,
For native species are important to foster,
And the rain ensures that they will prosper.

The blue winged teal are getting antsy,
The males dressed for church, looking fancy,
The last of the migrants will be leaving soon,
And flying at night by the light of the moon.

But church today is a special service,
We've been called by the kingbird for a purpose,
To acknowledge life and express appreciation
For this wonderful place of love and creation.

So welcome to Earth Church
Pull yourself up a pew
Say a prayer of thanks
For what the kingbird knew.