

Geese

by [Terri Kirby Erickson](#) in the [September 12, 2018](#) issue

Canada geese, after leaving Mallard Lake, are walking uphill, their webbed feet like flippers flapping beneath the wetsuit of their bodies. They move like heavysset ladies who have lifted their curvaceous selves from a swimming pool, fulsome and luscious in their beauty. They walk in single file as if queuing up for something so wonderful, it is worth the wait. But it's the same old grass, the same old hill, though leaning over it are trees and from the trees fall leaves through which the sun shines, turning every leaf to gold. And the lake they left behind continues to beckon, so many will soon turn back to it—its mirrored surface reflecting the scudding clouds and limbs not yet barren of their once-bountiful foliage. And all the while, the geese honk as if they are irritable drivers stuck in traffic, yet they can take flight any time and some do—leaving behind the hill, the trees, the lake, their fellow travelers—everything that holds them to the ground. Because even when geese fly in formation, each goose takes off alone, flapping its own wings, finding its place in a vast expanse of sky where even a solitary bird separates the waters above the earth from the waters below, as necessary and important to this world as anything God has ever made.

