

Kansas Prairie, End of May

Step into this Kansas prairie
in May, and it washes up
around you as the ocean
does, swirling. And you
are drenched to the knees.
Drizzle drips down grasses,
from their clustered seed
heads, beaded with drops.
You slosh on, a wake
outlined behind you.

Such a gathering of shapes
and colors: milkweeds,
parsleys, alfalfa, spider
antelopehorn, larkspur,
penstemon, wild indigo.
To what end, such diversity,
such intricacy, here, or in
any coral reef, rain forest,
mountain meadow, any
tangled bank? Infinite fins,
feathers, furs, feet.

Such questions dazzle,
frazzle, when the sky is
awash with drifting clouds
and atolls of galaxies.
Swale to swale, you swim
on: big bluestems, witch
grass, coneflowers, bearded
larkspur, bastard toadflax.
Tickled, you kick up your

heels in the Kansas prairie,
scatter seeds everywhere.

~ Elizabeth Schultz

Elizabeth Schultz, after retiring from teaching at the University of Kansas and from doing academic writing, turned to essays, a memoir, and poetry. Her essays are published in *The Nature of Kansas Lands*, the memoir in *Shoreline: Seasons at the Lake*, and the poetry in numerous reviews and five books: *Conversations*, *Her Voice*, *The Sauntering Eye: Kansas Meditations*, *Mrs. Noah Takes the Helm*, and *The Quickening*