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Title

The Science of _____

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Journal

Parks Stewardship Forum, 39(2)

Author

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Publication Date

2023

DOI

10.5070/P539260979

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VERSE IN PLACE

JULIA KOETS

THE SCIENCE OF _____

“The French, I believe, have agreed on the term ‘aviation’
in case they ever succeed in flying.” — *Century Magazine*, October 1891

Let’s agree on a word for _____ in case
we ever succeed in _____. To the girls
who lie down in fields, their bicycles
on their sides, too, like horses
asleep in the sun, know this: even though
_____ is not a science yet, it will be.

When you button your shirt in the morning,
fingers fumbling to fasten the circles,
to thread them through, know that we invented
the word for this science from bud, as if
a row of tender orchids will soon bloom
down your chest, a new branch of botany.

Science of radio, science of sleep,
science of kindness, science of the wheel.
One day we will study _____ like we study
flight or photography. Let’s agree
on this: everything exists on a spectrum,
word derived from specter, science of startle,
science of the remarkable. Two girls
in a field test the science of buttons.
Their shirts soon to break into yellow blooms.

From *PINE*, Southern Indiana Review Press, 2021, and *QU Literary Journal*, 2018.
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VERSE IN PLACE

JULIA KOETS is the author of three books: *The Rib Joint: A Memoir in Essays*, a LAMBDA Literary Award finalist; *PINE*, a Florida Book Award winner; and *Hold Like Owls*, a South Carolina Poetry Book Award winner. The recipient of a 2023 National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship, an Ohio Arts Council Individual Excellence Award, and a National Science Foundation Grant, Julia's essays and poems have been published or are forthcoming in literary journals including *Creative Nonfiction*, *Indiana Review*, *Nimrod*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *Carolina Quarterly*, and *Portland Review*. She earned her MFA at the University of South Carolina and her PhD in Creative Writing and Literature at the University of Cincinnati. She's an assistant professor of creative writing at the University of South Florida.

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ELEANOR KOETS



This article is published in Volume 39, Number 2 of *Parks Stewardship Forum*, 2023.

Parks Stewardship Forum explores innovative thinking and offers enduring perspectives on critical issues of place-based heritage management and stewardship. Interdisciplinary in nature, the journal gathers insights from all fields related to parks, protected/conserved areas, cultural sites, and other place-based forms of conservation. The scope of the journal is international. It is dedicated to the legacy of **George Meléndez Wright**, a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley, and pioneer in conservation of national parks.

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The journal continues *The George Wright Forum*, published 1981–2018 by the George Wright Society.

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“Strength,” a Tarot illustration representing a radiation of power coupled with inner understanding and love. | [HENRY CRAWFORD ADAMS](#)