

POET'S CORNER

Whip-Poor-Will

All that night under the Flower Moon
The Whip-poor-will called his name,
“Whipowill, Whipowill, Whipowill”

with force on the “Whip” and “Will”
he seemed insistent on something
and why would this bird,
hardly seen in daylight,
want darkness to whistle his name
two hundred twelve times?
I counted as I lay in my sleeping bag.

after a moment, he was going again.
three hundred ninety-one.
“Whipowill, Whipowill, Whipowill,”
with hardly a pause for breath.

By this time the moon had passed
Between two branches of oak
And I was sure the bird had moved nearer
Maybe he was trying get it through my head
“Whipowill, Whipowill,, Whipowill”
One thousand eighty-eight.

He started again, the same old story
So I turned on my side.
Next, I was hearing flute notes,
thrush music.

Maxwell Corydon Wheat , Jr.