

A JOURNAL OF WESTERN OKLAHOMA  
WESTVIEW



---

Volume 30  
Issue 2 Summer

Article 11

---

7-15-2014

## The Thing About Diamondbacks

Ann Applegarth

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

 Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Applegarth, Ann (2014) "The Thing About Diamondbacks," *Westview*: Vol. 30 : Iss. 2 , Article 11.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol30/iss2/11>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu](mailto:phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu).

 SWOSU<sup>TM</sup>

# The Thing About Diamondbacks

by Ann Applegarth

—after Josephine Jacobsen, “The Thing about Crows”

. . .is, they are languorous.

When you are languorous, and dance,  
you look either tired or dangerous.  
Western Diamondbacks are not tired.

I say they are not tired, even though  
they spend every winter snoozing,  
dreaming of how—come spring—  
they will emerge, stretch, blink,  
rear, aim, strike, murder, and feast.

It's a hot March day. Thunderheads bank  
and billow in the soft desert air, and  
chaparral and Mormon tea provide shade.  
*Crotalus atrox* slithers from beneath a rock  
in a languorous rippling *adagio*.  
Now a hiker stalks briskly up the slope,  
parting the air, stirring the brush.  
The Diamondback seeks the shade,  
coils his winter-lean six-foot body,  
and lifts his head, ready to sink long fangs  
into the hiker's soft exposed ankle, deeply,  
against the threat of summer hunger.

