



# RESTORING EDEN

*"For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all of the birds of the air, and all that moves in the field is mine." ~Psalms 50:10-11*

## A SEASON ON THE WING

A walk or drive through just about any part of town these days will allow you to see one of the great annual North American animal migrations; that of the cloudless sulphur butterflies. These are the buttery-yellow butterflies that seem to have sprung up from nowhere and are now found everywhere. They can be seen passing through yards, golf courses, and crossing over highways. And each and every one of them is pressing relentlessly towards the south. While most bird migration takes place at night, these butterflies press onward in the daylight, allowing us to get a real sense of the season – fall is coming!



If you watch closely, you may also notice that the cloudless sulphurs are not always traveling alone. There are other kinds of butterflies that also migrate – monarchs, red admirals, American ladies, and many others. It is quite amazing to think of animals as delicate as these undertaking long migrations full of hazards. It has been estimated that they average about 12 miles a day on their journey. With contrary winds, hungry birds, and car windshields, most probably never complete the trip.

The cloudless sulphurs we are now seeing are heading for south Florida and points beyond, as they have for generations. Christopher Columbus and Charles Darwin both noted seeing these butterflies at sea. They only occasionally stop to feed on this trip, so don't be disappointed if they pass right over those beautiful flowers in your yard.

In the spring, those cloudless sulphurs that completed the journey and overwintered will

start their trip back north again, with the females laying eggs as they go. These individuals will not complete the journey; but as their eggs hatch and the young become adults, they, too, will keep flying north. After multiple generations, the cloudless sulphurs will reach southern Canada. But, by then, it's late in the season and it's once again time to start flying south. And so the cycle repeats again.

What a privilege it is to be able to see this migratory cycle year after year. What a witness the little cloudless sulphurs are to the faithfulness and timelessness of God. May God bless them as we wish them safe journeys!

## A LIVING FOSSIL

The Ginkgo tree can be found planted all over our town, from some of the "green islands" of Independence Mall to the roadside of Market Street between 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> streets. It is a beautiful tree and its leaves turn a brilliant yellow in the fall.

This tree was once known only from fossils, but a population was discovered in China during the 1700's. Because of low genetic diversity, it is believed that these trees may have been cultivated, and thereby saved from extinction by some Chinese monks living in the area.

There are both male and female ginkgo trees, but most ginkgo trees you see will be males. This is because the seeds produced by the females have an unpleasant odor that most folks with rather not have around.

Ginkgo trees have been on earth for a long time. Fossils recognizable as Ginkgo trees have been found from the Permian, about 270 million years ago, which means they coexisted with and outlasted the dinosaurs!

## WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID

*"A society in which consumption has to be artificially stimulated in order to keep production going is a society founded on trash and waste, and such a society is a house built upon sand."*

Dorothy Leigh Sayers  
(1893-1957)