



***Oxford Is My
Living Tree***

Haiku in Bloom

Summer, 2023



Public Arts Commission of Oxford




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The haiku is an ancient Japanese poetic form, written in three lines and seventeen syllables, and traditionally used to celebrate the beautiful simplicity of the natural world. The Academy of American Poets describes the philosophy of haiku as including “the focus on a brief moment in time; a use of provocative, colorful images; an ability to be read in one breath; and a sense of sudden enlightenment.” What better way to acknowledge and appreciate our community’s calmest season than to capture it in images, in breaths. In that spirit, we invited poet philosophers of all ages and skill levels to capture the feeling of summertime in Oxford, and we present their work to you here, like fireflies in a jar. We welcome you to enjoy their flashes.

The Public Arts Commission of Oxford would like to thank all of the citizen poets who contributed to this year’s edition of Oxford’s Haiku in Bloom as well as the teachers and parents who fostered a love of poetry in our young contributors.

Public Arts Commission Members:
Bob Benson, Amber Franklin, Rebecca Howard, Carole Katz,
Norm Krumpe, Joe Squance, Todd Stuart
Staff Liaison: Jessica Greene



This booklet contains haiku from every individual who sent a submission to the commission. The haiku that have been selected for display in the windows of local businesses are highlighted in bold, italicized, and in color. They have been arranged thematically, representing the progression of summer in Oxford.

***All That Died Now Comes to Life:
Summer Emerges in Oxford***

***Watch the dancing leaves
Oxford is my living tree
Birds are flying back***

-Ava Perkins, youth submission

Summer in the sun
Is the best time of year
No more school, we're done!
-Mckenna Johnson, youth submission

College town no more
Locals slowly emerging
A different world
-Addison Greene, youth submission

The fountains are on
Musicians play from the stage
Uptown in summer
-Stephanie Pearson

A cool breeze floats past
The sun washes away the
Winter depression
-Olivia Naiman, youth submission

Dragonfly whispers
Heat wrinkles above the pond
Sun bleaches the bank
-Lee Baker DeVore

No more school, yippee!
We can swim and read all day!
No more homework, yay!
-Charlotte Bidwell, youth submission

Empty student house
Smoke detector battery
Is dead. Chirp. Chirp. Chirp.
-Brandon Ney

Breezes start to change
From cool to warm overnight
Smelling of cut grass
-Linda Helling

Wake robins asleep
Early summer lullabies
Whitetails at blue hour
-Monica Kakkar

Demographics shift
Quiet echoes through Mile Square
Small town folks exhale
-Anne S. Ritz

Hummingbird flutter
Sip on the sweet clear nectar
Tiny colorful friend
-Robin Moore

Rural summer sky
Sunlight shines onto my face
Napping in the shade
-Isa Abrinica

The breeze was singing
The heart of the ground breathing
Summer heat appearing
-Eleanor Davis

A babbling brook sings
Red petals amongst the green
A young fairy's dream
-Isa Abrinica

Hot, sticky weather
Bugs now chirping left and right
Animals set free
-Addison Greene, youth submission

Winter to summer
All that died now comes to life
Green replaces white
-Dylan Rucker

The air smells of hope
Everything around us in bloom
Nothing but good vibes
-Monique Runzer

The sun shines so bright
Filling the sky with colors
Summer in Oxford
-Lydia Broshear, youth submission

Fields of knee-high corn
Toads and frogs at Hueston Woods
Birds sing summer songs
-John Prindle

***Chartreuse shoots reaching
Up towards my eager hands
Their scent nostalgia
-Katy Dougherty***

Butterfly floats by
Flirts with me and my sweet blooms
Drunk with rich nectar
-Kathie Brinkman

Wild flowers bloom
Yellow, purple, red, and white
Bees and birds rejoice
-Mark Johnson

Bees and butterflies
Dancing among the flowers
The pollinators
-Lanzz

Field of sunflower
In yellowness, smile widens
Summer joy bursts forth
-Christopher Calvin

Groves of green walnuts
Apricot feathered spoonbill
Slow, clear water day
-Madeleine Sharp

Lilies leaping up
Dancing trees along the street
Warming breeze leaves stream
-Avery Williams, youth submission

Nature sings in trees
The sun shining through the wind
The tree makes the leaves
-Shayden Gabbard, youth submission

Flowers dance on grass
Sun shines on flowers all day
Bees collect pollen
-Naomi Bloodsaw, youth submission

Oxford is so green
Now we're dancing with the leaves
Lots of lovely trees
-Nora Aerni, youth submission

Hiking in the woods
Feeling the wind blow past me
Hearing the birds sing
-Christopher Stokes, youth submission

Bees make good honey
The rain comes down, makes flowers
It is beautiful
-Bryce, youth submission

The trees and the leaves
The beautiful breeze makes smiles
And the flowers bloom
-Bailee Ramey, youth submission

Marigolds in bloom
Field drenched in amber sunset
Warmth seeps into homes
-Erin Jamieson

***Freely strolling deer
Emerge as pedestrians--
Now, small town life blooms.
-Anne S. Ritz***

The leaves come back now
The fresh maple leaves smell great
Watermelon grows
-Leo Holland, youth submission

Billowing cirrus
Ocean flog like a south wind
The language of clouds
-Madeleine Sharp

***Waters Clear to Blue:
Fun in the Sun***

Stay cool in the pool
Then come to Spring Street Treats now
You'll leave happy
-Emma

Nails dug into palm
Toes curled over the white board
Deep breath, then jump in
-Grace Howard

Infinite swimmers
far above Acton Lake's reach:
Invisible blue
-John Hanklewicz

Swimming, having fun
Long days making memories
Cookouts, eating, yum
-Mckenna Johnson, youth submission

Precipitation
The heat makes my ice cream drip
I jump in the pool
-Olivia Naiman, youth submission

Whistle signals pause
Crowded waters clear to blue
Time for adult swim
-Siobhan Calnan

The kids play outside
The flowers grow in summer
Summer goes quickly
-Landon Hammons, youth submission

The pool is busy
The sun is angry today!
"Ahhh." Nice cool water
-Simone Corbin, youth submission

Baseball and ice cream
Shorts and tanks with sunnies
Smiles and laughter
-Layni Short, youth submission

Beneath a bright sun
I leap into a cold pool
Sweet summer, at last
-Margo Kissell

Red bucket clanging,
Rocking, swaying. Almost—splash!
Yellow slide is next.
-Susan Coffin

Hopping stone to stone
Dappled water, flashing fish
Slip! My shoe is wet
-Emma Toschlog

Blue skies and warm sun
Cookouts and baseball abound
Summer has arrived
-David V. Patrick

***Like Lemonade with Ice:
Small Sensations of the Season***

***Bare feet in the grass
Ice cream cones and Coppertone
Music in the park
-Rhonda Lee Pennington***

Summertime concerts
Beneath the water tower
Recall sweet days past
-Nora Ellen Bowers

It's sweet summertime
The trees are lush, weather's fine
Basking in the light
-Dylan Rucker

Haikus are awesome
But sometimes they don't make sense
Refrigerator
-Dominic Pirigyi, youth submission

Days spent in the sun
Ice cream, swimming, riding rides
S'mores burn while sun sets
-Lucia Rodbro, youth submission

***Red brick, hot from sun
Green trees cast pristine shadows
Oxford feels like home
-Addison Danner, youth submission***

Green trees and blue skies
The warmth of the sun on skin
Oxford summer breeze
-Spencer Lykins

All along the brick
Tulips shyly greeting us
Oxford's greatest gift
-Katy Dougherty

Bell wind chimes swiftly
Eyes slowly lulled into dream
Child in me awake
-Christopher Calvin

You lay down in grass
Look at the blue sky above
You see a bird pass
-Ellie, youth submission

I walk on hot brick
No shoes, my feet are all out
My feet kind of stick
-Ellie, youth submission

***Sounds like: waves splashing
Tastes like: lemonade with ice
Feels like: breeze on face
-Nico Morales, youth submission***

Warm wind in the breeze
The sound of the calming waves
Berries are thriving
-Emersyn, youth submission

***The sun is swollen
Promise of sunburn is high
Troubles peel away
-Anna Klitch-Harrelson***

Eastern box turtles
Rays of the summer sun warm
Not only my back
-Sebastian Chrobak

Walking around Oxford
Cool breeze blowing through the wind
Get ice cream with friends
-*Jeniveve Roark*

*Bricks on high. Dappled
sun. Leaves filter steamy light.
Trains break the silence.*
-*Loy Wiley*

Children's love and joy
Shines in the glimmering light
Family joy all year round
-*Isaac Coffin*

*Sanguine solstice sky
Silent reflections entwine
Freedom summer chimes*
-*Monica Kakkar*

Magic shines uptown
Dusty twinkle lights abound
Fountains cool us down
-*Sybil Miller*

*The cicada's song
Rustling of summer thistle
Kingfisher and sky*
-*Madeleine Sharp*

Say Hi to the Beach: Summer Vacation

Billowy waves crash
Seabirds glide and call above
Footprints in the sand
-*Rhonda Lee Penington*

Birds are on branches
vacationing, windows down
Ocean play right now
-*Jack Fisher, youth submission*

The ocean is blue
You hear lots and lots of waves
Say hi to the beach
-*Anonymous, youth submission*

Going to the beach
Swimming in the ocean waves
Playing with the sand
-*Luna Prados, youth submission*

***Between Flashes and Peals:
A Summer Storm Rolls In***

Scurrying dark clouds
Air that smells of rich moist earth
Soon, the rain moves on
-*Kathie Brinkman*

Quick rain cools us off
Red brick glistens in the sun
Rainbow shining bright
-*Mark Johnson*

*The dramatic space
Between flashes of lightning
And peals of thunder*
-*Charles Young*

***Night Lights in Glass Jars:
Summer Evenings***

Sitting in the park
Missing the water tower
Loving the DORA
-Karen Ferrario

***Gazing up at the stars
Glowing orbs fill the night sky
Warm breeze hugs my skin
-Grace Howard***

The uptown concert
Bringing us all together
Makes me very glad
-R. Scott Shriver

Summer evening plans
Spicy chicken; jasmine tea
Dinner at Phan Shin
-John Prindle

Just as twilight falls
Children capture nature's sweet
night lights in glass jars
-Rhonda Lee Pennington

Quiet restaurants
All the students are gone!
Soft nights on High Street
-Katherine Conger

***Blinking fireflies
Dotting my backyard at dusk
Attracting their mates
-Margo Kissell***

The music is playing
The square is full of motion
Uptown Thursday night
-Douglas Coffin

First kiss in moonlight
Lightning in a starless sky
Young lovers run home
-Erin Jamieson

***In the Park Fountain, a Collection of Footprints:
Summer Draws to a Close***

***In the park fountain
A collection of footprints
Already drying
-Brandon Ney***

Calming campus walks
Undisturbed strolls before the
Students travel back
-Siobhan Calnan

***The town of my birth
Despite changes of the times
Still retains its charm
-Nora Ellen Bowers***