

San Pedro River Review

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A Matter of Perspective

My son bought the feeder as a joke
after I emailed several corny TikTok reels
of baby squirrels at a rescue habitat

dressed in frilly dresses and ridiculous
hats, hamming it up for the cameras, miniature
rutabagas propped between their paws.

They're nearly as theatrical here,
without cause or costume,
scurrying upside down and crossways.

I have a favorite who sports
a reddish use-your-imagination
heart-shaped mark

smack in the middle of his forehead.
He barks at me on days
I'm late to fill the feed box.

My son teases me, his tree-hugger
mother spending cash money
on silly rodents who will eventually

raid the trash cans and make
a mess of the bird feeders,
then in the next breath admits

he's been doling out apples to a small
herd of white-tailed, who line up
at his back door every morning, feeds

them in spite of the fact they nibble his hostas
nearly to the ground every summer, as if
his flower bed is a Ruby Tuesday's salad bar.

Our critter care won't stop
the polar ice caps from melting,
or curb world hunger,

but from where I stand
in this overwrought world, practicing
compassion is an act of resistance.