

John Morgan

The Unnamed Lake (from a field journal)

In memory of Charles Ott and William Ruth

Slogged over tipsy muskeg, past a "moose
wallow," grizzly tracks, to reach this breeze-
rippled lake, where, through waving horsetails,
a golden-eye, her pesky offspring in tow,

preens and dives. Across the sky-flecked water, spruce,
then tundra meadows mount toward jagged Zs
of rock. Like specks of white-out, Dall sheep line
the ridge. If this place had a name, it's been

erased, in homage to two men whose ashes
seed the hills nearby. They staked their lives
on wildness beyond naming. Can we go back,
reclaim the power of unaltered place? Blue
and scintillant, a damselfly lights on this page;
two kingfishers weigh in, wheel off down the lake.

Denali National Park, July 29, 2008