

Between Land and Sea: THE GREAT MARSH



Photography by Dorothy Kerper Monnelly, essay by Doug Stewart,
foreword by Jeanne Falk Adams. Braziller, \$50 (160p) ISBN 978-0-8076-1578-2

This book of 57 large-format b&w photographs is a deeply felt tribute to the Great Marsh, 70 miles of salt marsh stretching along the coast of Massachusetts from Cape Ann to New Hampshire. In the informative accompanying essay, writer Stewart states: “Marshes are often dismissed as vaguely malevolent wastelands, muddy, messy, and bug-infested, suitable only for draining.” But “for those with the patience to experience its rhythms and subtle beauties, a salt marsh is both bracing and peaceful, spectacular and placid, mysterious and majestic.” Monnelly, a third-generation native of Ipswich, Mass., beautifully captures the spacious tranquility of her subject in images of a single oak leaf lying on a round mass of rough grasses near the rippling stillness of a tidal stream or sparkling garlands of spider webs hung across misty meadow grasses. But her eye extends beyond nature documentation to more painterly, abstract visions: the grainy rhythms of wave-washed sand at Crane Beach and huge tree shadows falling across partly melted and powdery snow. An active defender of this fragile ecosystem, Monnelly says, “I’m not an ecologist. Photography is my strongest voice. It’s the best way for me to advocate for this landscape.” (*Apr.*)