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As if to know the names of things  
(boxelder, red pine, slippery elm)

were to know the distances  
between them:—this same self once tried

to catalogue the undesignated  
forms in nature, too magnanimous

to exist without a name;—and yet, was  
unable to look beyond the shapes created

by swarms of mayflies:—the clouds they built with  
patterns of perpendicular flight;—or, the crash

landing that followed a laying of eggs.  
It remains difficult to quantify

the lifespan of a cloud, as its existence is one  
of constant flux;—the nimbus, now

too heavy to amble across savannahs  
of sky—is no different than the grappling

hordes of mayflies that obscure a given moon,  
before their bodies become rain.