

Heli Aaltonen Workshop:

Connecting with earth others: telling and performing bird stories

This workshop invites participants to explore the conference theme participation and cooperation with birds through process drama (Neelands & Goode 2015). Wildlife species such as birds represent our closest and most accessible everyday connection with the natural world. Birds are messengers of climate change (BirdLife International and National Audubon Society 2015). Numerous traditional folk stories and myths address humans' deep connection with birds. Yet classifying our concepts regarding birds is far from easy, as human societies have many different cultural interpretations for various species of birds. Birds are often represented as metaphors for human feelings in songs and poems. People have celebrated birds in various rituals and told stories about meetings with them. Birds are hunted and eaten. In modern society, as well as in our imagination, some birds are admired and beloved while some are despised and unwanted (Nagy & Johnson II 2013). For this workshop I have chosen the theme of 'trash birds', which will be explored using various process drama conventions, such as teacher in role, role play, ritual, movement, voice work and performance. The workshop aims to reveal more about our attitudes towards the natural world, in this case birds, which share their life with us. No previous knowledge or experience in drama is needed to attend this workshop.

#### References

BirdLife International and National Audubon Society (2015) *The messengers: what birds tell us about threats from climate change and solutions for nature and people*. Cambridge, UK and New York, USA: BirdLife International and National Audubon Society.  
[http://climatechange.birdlife.org/assets/THE\\_MESSENGERS\\_FINAL\\_WEB.pdf](http://climatechange.birdlife.org/assets/THE_MESSENGERS_FINAL_WEB.pdf)

Retrieved from <http://climatechange.birdlife.org/>

Nagy, K. & Johnson II, P. D. (2013). *Trash animals: how we live with nature's filthy, feral, invasive and unwanted species*. Minnesota: the University of Minnesota Press.

Neelands, J. & Goode, T. (1990/2015). *Structuring drama work*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.