Ecology

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Yesterday I walked a Gulf coast littered with broken shells, the azure water bright as a color photo in a resort brochure. Two pairs of dolphins swam just a short way out in a casual search for food. Overhead, floating in wide circles through the clear blue sky, an osprey, white underfeathers bright as he angled toward the sun, was also fishing. But not casually! When he spotted his prey, he pulled in his wings and dropped like a rock, like a boulder, like Galileo’s five pounds of feathers. Utterly reckless, he hit the water with a grand splash and disappeared beneath it, then emerged, writhing fish claspèd in his four talons, his outer reversible toes enabling him to carry it securely back to his mate in their high-rise apartment where she waited with their babes, open-mouthed, eager for Papa to come home from the office.

It is an ancient arrangement designed by a Creator whose ways we understand less, the more we know.