

## Dickinson and Ecologies

[Emily Dickinson International Society](#) + Wenshan Conference (Hybrid)

Department of English, National Chengchi University (NCCU), Taiwan

**19-22 June 2025**

(1 Day Critical Institute + 3-Day International Conference)

### Call for Papers

Abstract Submission Deadline: 30 September 2024

The Emily Dickinson International Society, in collaboration with the Wenshan Conference, invites proposals for papers and panels at its international conference “**Dickinson and Ecologies**,” scheduled to take place at the Department of English, College of Foreign Languages & Literature, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan, from Thursday, June 19 to Sunday, June 22, 2025.

The English prefix “eco-” derives from the Greek word “*oikos*,” a word closely associated with one’s dwelling place. While the word “eco-” in Chinese is often related to the concepts of home/family/community (“家園”/“*jiayuan*”) or environmental protection/energy conservation (“環保” / “*huanbao*”), the Mandarin translation of the word “ecology” is “生態” (“*shengtai*”), a term that can refer to “the conditions of all lives” in the Chinese language. Can Dickinson’s writings provide various ways of thinking about ecology in its multiple forms?

Dickinson often resorts to the human to explain the nonhuman world, as it happens in “A Route of Evanescence,” in which a hummingbird fluttering by is hypothesized as “The Mail from Tunis – probably –” (c. 1879). In some other instances, Dickinson would emphasize what is most alien in the non-human world. In “I heard a Fly buzz – when I died –” (c. 1863), the speaker encounters an arthropodal visitor that disrupts the process of dying with its “Blue – uncertain – stumbling Buzz – / Between the light – and me –” (c. 1863). Elsewhere she finds the non-human world a site of what is unfamiliar or exotic in the human, as when she says “His oriental heresies / Exhilarate the Bee” (c. 1881); but just as often she sees that what is most unfamiliar may be fitly situated in its own biome: “Pity – the Pard – that left her Asia – / Memories – of Palm – / Cannot be stifled – with Narcotic – / Nor suppressed – with Balm –” (c. 1862). Human diversity and biodiversity may be inseparable.

The Wenshan District, where NCCU is located, is well-known for its biodiversity, mountainous terrain, and tea culture, as well as its proximity to the Taipei Zoo, one of the most famous zoological gardens in Taiwan. Wenshan in Chinese literally means “literary mountains,” explicitly conveying the theme of cultivation. As such, NCCU is a particularly appropriate site to consider Dickinson as a person and poet. Indeed, Dickinson is as much a gardener as a poet. Her poems often engage that liminal space between human order and the unsettled nonhuman world, asking us to reconceptualize our relationship with our surroundings.

Thus, our conference seeks to address Dickinson as an eco-poet through an interdisciplinary and/or transcultural lens. It invites papers, panels, workshops, artworks, and collaborative projects that explore Dickinson and ecological imaginations. It also seeks to examine how eco-critics have used Dickinson’s works to understand the human-nonhuman relationship and its relevance to our contemporary environmental crisis.

The Organizing Committee welcomes all works on the concept of ecology, broadly understood, in Dickinson’s writing and beyond. The topics include, but are not restricted to, the following themes:

Conceptions of Kinship

Posthumanism and Multi-species Imagination

Darwinism and Scientific Imagination

Food, Spices, and Tropical Imagination

Ecologies in relation to Economics/Technology/Medicine

The Anthropocene and the Global South

Weathers, Climate Change and Natural Disasters

Gardening, Farming, and Tea Plantation

Native vs. Foreign Species

Poetics of Decay and Decomposition

EcoGothic and Ecophobia

Environmental philosophies

Garbage and waste

Swamps and caves

Underground or subterranean spaces and materials

Botany, Herbarium and arboretum

Atmosphere and Ambiance

Rurality vs. Urbanity

Eco-linguistics and Biodiversity

Pastoralism and Co-thriving

Translation and Transcultural Thought

Planetary Poetics

Indigenous cosmologies

Environmental justice

Volcanos, Islands, and Archipelago thinking

Racial Ecologies and Queer Ecologies

All proposals engaging serious scholarship, interdisciplinary collaboration and/or workshops on Dickinson's works and ecologies will be welcome. Please upload abstracts of around 200-300 words, along with a brief biography of around 100 words, to the conference website (<https://2025edisinwenshan.wordpress.com/>) by **September 30, 2024**. Panel or workshop proposals and creative presentations are also welcome. Please specify if you plan to present virtually rather than in person. The Conference Organizing Committee will respond to proposals by **November 30, 2024**.

For further information and to submit a proposal, please see the conference website (<https://2025edisinwenshan.wordpress.com/call-for-paper/>).