



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

August 1983

RARE PLANT MAY HELP LAND ACQUISITION

A rare plant in the Dishman Hills may become the key to adding more land to Dishman Hills Natural Area. Reed Schuller, botanist with Washington Natural Heritage Program, recently conferred with us here, pointing out that the plant is on Washington State's list of threatened species. The Dishman Hills site is the only one known for the species in eastern Washington. Reed plans to consult with Fayette Krause of The Nature Conservancy's Washington office about the possibility of acquiring the land.

The Nature Conservancy made possible the acquisition of the first eighty acres of nature preserve in the Dishman Hills and holds the title to it. Since then that organization has acquired through donations from the public, several tracts of land containing unusual and threatened plant communities. We recommend strongly that you show support for The Nature Conservancy and its program by becoming a member. Any donor of ten dollars or more becomes a member. If the first year's dues are sent to Washington Field Office, they are allocated in full to the Washington Chapter. Renewal dues are billed through the National Office and are shared equally with the Washington Chapter. Address of the Washington Field Office is 1601 Second Avenue, Suite 910, Seattle, WA 98101. Donations are Federal income tax deductible.

COUNTY GETS OPTION FOR LAND IN HILLS

An option for 140 additional acres in the Dishman Hills has been secured, according to A.D. (Sam) Angove, County Parks and Recreation Department superintendent. Acquiring of this land, adjacent to The Nature Conservancy's eighty acres, awaits the sale by the county of a tract of land next to Balfour Park in the Spokane Valley. It is expected that our organization will be asked to supply part of the money to buy the addition to the natural area. Please keep the donations coming. Many thanks for your support in the past!

ECOLOGY DAYCAMPS WELL ATTENDED

About 35 teachers and other interested persons took part in the Ecology Daycamp Workshop at St. George's School on the Little Spokane River the first week of August. Ernie McDonald of the U.S. Forest Service and his assistants led sessions on wildlife, forest, soils, water, land measurement, energy and food and land use. Other sessions explained how to develop environmental study areas and how to apply knowledge gained to teaching situations. Spokane Audubon Society and Dishman Hills Association volunteers instructed groups in art and sketching, natural history and nature photography. The workshop concluded with a field trip to Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge near Cheney. Many enthusiastic comments were heard. The workshop, sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service, Spokane County Parks and Recreation and Spokane Audubon Society probably will be offered again next year. Carol Hollar, Audubon member; Diana Townsend, and Spokane Audubon's education committee planned and conducted the workshop and extend their thanks to the many people who made the workshop a success.

The natural history workshop at St. George's School hosted a total of 29 enthusiastic fourth-sixth grade children--many parents were equally excited by the program--and will be conducted again next year. Directors Jan Reynolds and Heather Hastings heartily thanks the sponsors, Spokane County Parks and Recreation, St. George's, the Leuthold Foundation and Spokane Audubon. One session, for gifted children aged 8 - 9, was sponsored by Whitworth College and accommodated 24 children.

The three three-day sessions of the daycamp for kindergarten - third grade on the Little Spokane were attended by 43 children and their parents. The purpose of the camp was to create an awareness of nature and an enthusiasm for protecting it and it did just that. It will be held again next year, Margaret Haggin, director, tells us.

WILD THINGS PREPARE FOR SUMMER'S END

August begins the real wind-down of the season, with blue gentians, several kinds of wild asters, yampah and more goldenrod, all of which continue into September and even October. One aster even persists into November. Most of the shrubs have been setting fruit, adding color to an otherwise drab late summer and fall and providing food for birds and chipmunks. Prominent are the snowberries, bright red rose fruit (rose hips) and clusters of pale blue elderberries. Grouse are fond of the latter and chipmunks relish the seeds of the rose fruit.

August still finds many butterflies about, including a second brood of ringlets and the tiny but numerous woodland skipper. Butterfly numbers drop off rather sharply in September and October as flowers continue to disappear and killing frosts arrive. A few hardy species, including the hibernators, will be around until late October. Preying mantises reach adulthood in August in grassy and weedy places and fall webworms may spread their not so welcome tents over shrubs and trees. The latter, ironically, become very pretty white moths.

Most kinds of birds have completed nesting by late July and August, except perhaps mourning doves, and singing has largely ceased, so birds are less noticeable. A few, particularly the redstart and chat, usually slip away quietly before August is over, but September is the principal departure month. It also brings migrants from the mountain forests, ruby-crowned kinglets, Wilson's warblers, varied thrushes, evening grosbeaks and, from subalpine meadows the shy Lincoln's sparrows. White-crowned sparrows from the shrubby subarctic are passing through; a few may winter in our nearby valleys or at feeders but most of them move farther south, even as far as California. Nighthawks often appear in loose groups over the valleys and suburbs on early September evenings, feeding on flying insects before moving southward.

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural environment of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from. Our monthly meetings are at Kiwanis Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Road at 7:30 p.m. the fourth Wednesday. You are cordially invited to attend. For further information and for slide programs and guide service into the Dishman Hills call us at 926-7949.

Please use this form when sending contributions to save the Dishman Hills and the Tower Mountain corridor. Your dues and/or gifts are income tax deductible.

\$ ___ Annual dues (\$5) New? ___ Renewal? ___

\$ ___ Land purchase fund

\$ ___ In remembrance of _____

\$ ___ Bulletin expense fund (\$1 or more)

_____ Your account number above your address.

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to David E. Lentas, Treasurer, E. 10922 23rd Spokane, WA. 99206. Many Thanks! To reduce expense, no receipt or acknowledgement will be sent unless requested.