



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

SEPTEMBER, 1986

SUMMER WINDING DOWN IN HILLS; DNR QUICKLY RESPONDS TO FIRE

A mid-September hike into Dishman Hills Natural Area found extremely dry conditions. Nearly all flowers and grasses were dry and bleached and the leaves of many bushes brown and crisp. Earlier in the month a fire in Caro Ravine burned about an acre. Apparently caused by children camping where not permitted--there were charred remains of a lean-to shelter by a fire circle--it was promptly put out by a Department of Natural Resources crew. Our thanks to them! Trees were little damaged but undergrowth was obliterated. Fortunately bushes and smaller plants usually come up again from the roots, though this will take several years.

Bird life was quiet, with only permanent residents conspicuous. There were the usual chickadees and nuthatches, a few robins, a raven and a flicker. Less common was a Townsend's solitaire flitting softly among the pines. A relative of bluebirds, it nests in niches in cliffs and banks. Even less expected was a white-breasted nuthatch, for which we have only a few sightings in the natural area.

In still moist Cottonwood Hollow a few flowers managed to show: asters, Indian paint brush and gentians. Bright red rose "hips" added splashes of color. Band-winged grasshoppers crackled as they displayed their yellow, black and red wings and drab lesser migratory locusts--just ordinary grasshoppers to most people-- disappeared into the dry grass. A few hunting wasps searched the ground but bees had no flowers to visit. A lone sulfur butterfly, wings brightly tinged with orange, and a tiny brown skipper were the only ones of their group to appear.

The fall rains and chilly temperatures have announced the end of summer but we can still look forward to pleasant autumn days. Enjoy your hills!

Biologist Chris Servheen will give a slide show presentation on his research on the grizzly bear in Washington. The date: October 6. Time: 7:30 p.m. Place: Tidyman's at N. 6401 Cedar. You are invited. No admission charge. Sponsored by The Sierra Club.

We are a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving some of the natural areas of the Spokane area for people to enjoy and learn from.

Larry Thieman, President; Thomas H. Rogers, Vice-President and bulletin editor; Helen E. Lininger, Secretary; David E. Lentens, Treasurer.

We offer slide programs on the Dishman Hills and other outdoor subjects, and guide service on hikes in the Hills. No charge for these. Call us at 926-7949 for arrangements. Our monthly meetings during the summer months are at Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Rd., Dishman, the fourth Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. You are welcome to attend.

QUARTERLY LAND PAYMENT MADE; EXTRA PAYMENT REDUCES BALANCE

In order to save on interest, our board of directors has voted to speed up the retiring of the debt owed on the 140 acre natural area addition. Therefore we made an additional payment September 15, bringing the unpaid balance down to \$50,000. Our contract still allows us five years to pay for the land, but our quarterly payments are reduced to about \$4000 from the \$6339 in the past.

We are still looking at the possibility of obtaining a wildlife corridor to Tower Mountain by buying either easements or land around or through the housing development recently approved adjacent to our land on the south. If this becomes possible, we should, if donations continue at a strong pace, be able to secure such a corridor. On the other hand, if getting such a corridor is not possible, we could pay off the balance of our present contract faster. Please keep on with your donation support. We will keep you informed on the situation as it develops.

AUGUST CONTRIBUTORS LISTED

August donations to the land fund came to only \$426.94. This was not entirely unexpected, for many people are vacationing during that month. September contributions will, we fully expect, climb back to normal. Please keep them coming!

The following Dishman Hills supporters contributed cash, recyclables or in kind donations in August to help pay for the natural area addition: Lundy Benshoof, Omar Carroll, Maryann Conklin, Kathy Croskrey, John Gorman, Emmett Gumm, Dr. John Halsell, Blanche Holsten, Lynn John, Christine Larsen, Helen Lininger, Joy Peterson, Frank & June Potter, Dorothy Riegel, Doris Rogers, Tom Rogers, Dennis Sanders, Gary Schroeder, Dr. Roy Stewart, V. F. Strange, Doreen Vance, Jeanne Wilson and Kathryn Wolfe. Please let us know if your name has been omitted. Donations made late in the month may not be included in this list. Many thanks for your support!

Please use this form when sending contributions
(Contributions are income tax deductible)

Account No. **10420**

\$ _____ Land purchase fund

\$ _____ Memorial for _____

\$ _____ Annual Dues (\$10) New? Renewal?

\$ _____ Student or Living Lightly (\$5)

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to The Treasurer, P.O. Box 14141, Spokane, WA 99214-0141. Many thanks!