

Non-profit Org.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
  
PAID  
  
Spokane, Wash.  
Permit no. 546



# LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

## FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

OCTOBER, 1987

### HILLS ARE DRY BUT PLEASANT

A recent afternoon hike into the Dishman Hills in pleasant 60 degree weather again underlined the prolonged drought. The leaves on many of the shrubs and bushes have turned brown or fallen off without showing the usual autumn colors. By the ponds aspens, turning yellow, and dogwood glowing dull red, were the principal exceptions. An occasional chokecherry glistened orange-red. Surprising was the greenness of a few plants on the rocky rise that was burned this summer. Bunchgrass and snowberry, stimulated to new growth by the fire, looked fresh and healthy but most of the ground there was still bare and charred.

All of the ponds were dry, though vegetation on their bottoms was green, drawing upon subsoil moisture but the customary flowers there were missing. Elsewhere also asters, goldenrod and gentians were virtually absent.

Very likely the extreme dryness will have little or no long term effect. Serviceberry shrubs, their leaves brown and dry, nevertheless had next spring's buds formed and waiting. Undoubtedly the plants and animals of the Hills have endured such conditions before. Those that haven't been able to have been eliminated. A recent example is a small patch of milkweed, which died out several years ago. It is the food plant of the larva of the monarch butterfly. On the contrary, the one little thicket of squaw currant actually has put out tiny new leaves!

Birds are much quieter now. The only summer species were a lone ruby-crowned kinglet keeping company with two mountain chickadees, a few robins and a junco. The low, mellow fluting of a pygmy owl, down from the mountains, was a welcome sound. Unusual was a hairy woodpecker, scarce because of few dead trees for nest holes and supplying woodboring beetles for food.

A mourning cloak butterfly, rich brown bordered with yellow, and a burnt orange California tortoiseshell basked in the sun before seeking crannies in which to hibernate. The yellow sulfur butterfly, sipping from a spotted knapweed flower head, has its days numbered, however, for it will not survive the heavy frosts. The knapweed, a noxious weed, has begun to enter the Hills. Fortunately it seems not to be competing well with undisturbed natural vegetation. The above mentioned plant was thriving, relieved of a competition from native plants destroyed by a bulldozer. Apparently the owner of the parcel on the west slope hopes to build a house on the rugged, rocky site. We will be watching the knapweed to check its spread.

Larry Thieman reported a canyon wren in the Enchanted Ravine a few days earlier. It is always rare in the Dishman Hills.

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, but we welcome contributions. Call us at 926-7949 for arrangements. Our monthly meetings starting in October will be at Riverview Terrace Retirement Center, E. 1801 Upriver Drive at 7:30 p.m. the third Monday.

### PARK BONDS NEED YOUR SUPPORT

Whether or not county and city parks will be restored and protected hangs on the November 3 election. Over 75 per cent approval was shown on the primary election but the bond issues failed because of lack of voter turnout. Of special concern to us is the help for Dishman Hills included in the proposal. Passage of the bond issue will make possible a larger lodge and new restrooms for this area, popular for children's groups camping. Play equipment, picnic tables, a paved access road and larger parking area are also included as well as other needed improvements to the heavy use area. Especially needed is fencing to exclude motorcycles and other motor vehicles from the natural area. The bond issue will also make possible the hiring of a full time ranger to patrol the Hills. We urge you to get out and support the bond issue and encourage others to do the same. Together we can preserve and enhance this community treasure.

### SEPTEMBER CONTRIBUTORS LISTED

Our thanks to the following who contributed money and/or recyclables and services to the Dishman Hills project during September: Ansel B. Barton, Winifred Becker, Verda Coryell, Jackie Davenport, Verna O. Dolphin, Doris I. Donnelly, John Gardner, Emmett Gumm, Mrs. Donald Hagan, Mrs. M.C. Haggin, Helen M. Hoffman, Betty Hughes, Lynn M. John, Roger A. Korus, Shiran K. Lee, John C. Lorang, Tim & Sunni Mace, William F. Marchand, Bettie Maron, Margie F. Middendorf, Irene N. Peyton, Francis & June Potter, Neil Prescott, Ambrose Priestley, Fred B. Radebaugh, Tom Rogers, Dennis L. Sanders, Elizabeth M. Saunders, Marilyn H. Stedman, Mrs. F.L. Terhaar, Larry Thieman, Evelyn B. White, Dr. Robert G. Wiegand and Jeanne H. Wilson. Donations totalled \$1043.03 and interest income on our cash reserve came to \$99.52. Office and bulletin expense amounted to \$226.91. The unpaid balance on the 140 acre natural area addition has now been reduced to \$27,953.96 from the total cost of \$154,000 plus interest. Thanks again to you loyal supporters. Please keep the donations coming.

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

Account No. **13080**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Land purchase fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Memorial for \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ To cover bulletin expense (\$2)

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here if you do NOT want your name listed as a donor.

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!