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# LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

OCTOBER 1990

## SEPTEMBER DONORS LISTED

Our income from donations of cash and recyclables for September totaled \$362.08 (\$92.08 from recyclables). Interest on the land fund added \$28.91. Expenses came to \$207.28 (\$159.28 for bulletin expense and \$48 for administrative expense). Our thanks to you listed below who contributed and have given permission to be listed here: Patricia K. Adams, Kathryn Bernard, Marilyn/Jim Bertis, Gretchen S. Brown, Helen Bucknell, Ruth/Cecil Cunningham, Jackie Davenport, Janet R. Davis, Verna Dolphin, Reese Ennesh, Helen Ferguson, John Gardner, Emmett Gumm, Louise/Tollif Hance, Evelyn/Russ Harmon, Dorothy Hartung, William Houff, Ivy/Ken Hendrix, Blanche/Mel Holsten, Marion Krauss, Karl Krogue, Helen Lininger, Barbara W. Lockwood, Jack/Alice Malone, Ruth Mogan, Bonnie/ Wilfred Moss, Frank/June Potter, Ambrose/Willene Priestley, Bonnie/Oren Randles, Tom Rogers, Mabel Sackett, Dennis L. Sanders, Blanche Sarver, Reiko Shimizu, Bill Schuh, Ray/Ernestine Staley, Phyllis/Al Stagman, Carol A. Steele, Larry Thiemann, Alice Tiffany, Leona Widner, Mary Ann Wilharm, Jeanne H. Wilson and Joy Zimmerman. If we missed you, please let us know (926-7949) and accept our apologies.

Could events in the Persian Gulf area affect the wildlife in the Spokane area--and elsewhere? Sounds farfetched, doesn't it? But the price of energy, in this case oil, tends to cause more people to use wood for heating. This wood usually comes from snags in surrounding forests, snags in which birds excavate nesting and wintering holes, used also by some small mammals. Hole nesting birds are an important control on insects, including wood borers. Lacking this control could result in increases of some insects and changes in natural balances in forest ecosystems. In this small planet everything is connected to everything else!

We recently showed our slide program on the Hills to most responsive audiences: Spokane Valley Pioneers and Spokane Valley Newcomers Club. It appears that the beauty of the Dishman Hills is appreciated more each year.

We understand that Spokane County Parks and Recreation Superintendent Sam Angove, has said that incorporation of the Spokane Valley into a city would not affect the Dishman Hills. (Parts of the Natural Area are owned by the county, our association, The Nature Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources. On the periphery are a few privately owned parcels.)

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

President: Larry Thiemann Secretary: Helen Lininger  
Vice-President: Tom Rogers Treasurer: David Lentes  
Board members (in addition to officers): Doris Allgood, Omar Carroll, Margaret Haggin, Francis Potter, June Potter and Ray Staley.

Our monthly meetings starting in November are at Riverview Terrace Retirement Apartments, E. 1801 Upriver Drive, Spokane. At 7:30 p.m. the third Monday of each month. You are cordially invited. For additional information call 926-7949.

## FALL COLORS BRIGHTEN HILLS

After the frosts of early October the Dishman Hills offer a colorful stroll. Contrasting with the pines and firs are the colors of autumn: the bright yellows of aspen and willow, the rich reds of dogwood, chokecherry and hawthorn, the pink of spiraea and the multiple hues of serviceberry, replacing the flowers. Red squirrels scold from overhead and a few chipmunks are still about. Nuthatches and chickadees search for insects, an occasional raven croaks and a magpie calls raucously. Recently, pleasing sights were of a hermit thrush and a varied thrush, late migrants, as well as a white-breasted nuthatch, scarce in the Hills. A few varied thrushes may winter in the Spokane area, feeding on old apples.

On a recent hike by Cub Scouts and Brownies, led by Cindy Chatham, sharp eyes spotted a lone ruffed grouse sitting motionless in a brush pile, finally deciding it had been discovered and quietly stealing away. A few insects were still active: a red dragonfly at East Pond, an antlion in its pit, a gray stinkbug and several ichneumon flies, inexplicably crawling on the trunk of a fallen pine.

Anticipated shortly is a meeting of the advisory committee, composed of representatives from each land owning organization, to further management plans for the area, designated as Dishman Hills Natural Resources Conservation Area. Primary consideration is the protection of the area. Expected is the placing of signs at entrances explaining what uses are and are not permitted. Anticipated is limited fencing to keep out motor vehicles. A possible issue is fire suppression. The evidence indicates that all fires in the Hills during the last thirty-three years were human-caused; a few lightning strikes did not result in fires. During this period fires have on the average occurred about once every two or three years. Recent fire control policy in the United States has shifted toward noncontrol of naturally caused forest fires. Whether this should apply to the Dishman Hills is a question that should be carefully considered.

Our share of the cost of surveying the area has been placed at about \$5700. Please keep sending whatever donations you can.

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- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ 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!