



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

JUNE 1993

THANKS TO MAY DONORS

May contributions to our land acquisition and operation funds amounted to \$396.66. Bulletin expense was \$116.95 and administrative expense, \$40.00. Our thanks to the following who contributed cash, recyclables or services and have given permission to be listed here (a federal requirement): Marilyn Bertus, Margaret Bloom, Inga M. Boyd, William F. Greene, Don Griffith, Michael Hamilton, Vern/Gloria Krebs, Karl Krogue, Leo J. Middendorf, Marlene K. Montgomery, Sharon M. Murphy, Rich Nelson, Rosemarie Olsen, Tom Rogers, Richard/Lonnie Schmidt, Florence/William Sylvester, Lawrence Thiemann, Ed Tietjen, Doreen B. Vance and Jeanne H. Wilson.

The banning of horses and vehicles in the county-owned portion of Dishman Hills Natural Area is still unresolved. A majority of the county commissioners appears to agree with us that these uses should be prohibited but we should not take this for granted. We expect the horse people to keep up the pressure on the commissioners to allow riding in the preserve, as they appear to be a well organized lobbying group. Their argument that they paid tax money to help buy the county's land also applies to the many hundreds of our supporters who also paid taxes. Letters are coming in to the commissioners from them, supporting our position against horse use. Our thanks to them! (Of course our association has already written to this effect.) But we need many more letters to the commissioners to insure the protection of the natural area.

A choice inholding in Liberty Lake County Park is being negotiated for by Spokane County Commissioners. The tract of eighty plus acres lies astride the hiking trail up the creek and contains a magnificent stand of old growth western red cedars. A camp spot under them has long been used by hikers, who supposedly thought that the place was part of the county park. The owner apparently made no objection to this use. However, we understand that he has indicated that he wants to log it. We urge that you write to commissioners Skip Chilgren, Steve Hasson and Pat Mummy telling them that you support their acquiring of this choice spot in the heart of the county park. The commissioners' address: West 1116 Broadway, Spokane, 99201.

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: Michael Hamilton, Vice President: Tom Rogers, Secretary: Helen Lininger, Treasurer: David Lentes, Board of Directors: Omar Carroll, Michael Hamilton, Francis Potter, June Potter, and Ray Staley

Our meetings are held every third Monday at 7 P.M. at Opportunity Elementary School, South 1109 Wilbur. During the summer we will be meeting at Camp Caro, 625 South Sargent Road, Dishman but only on call this summer. You are cordially invited to attend.

Please send donations to our box number, shown at top of this bulletin.

JUNE PLEASANT IN HILLS

A recent blustery, cool day nevertheless made for a rewarding hike into the Dishman Hills Natural Area, where wild flowers of many colors put on a great show. White clouds of mock orange blossoms lit up the slopes and the creamy drooping clusters of mountain spray graced more sheltered woods. Wild roses were fading but open grassland was a medley of yellow cinquefoil, blue lupine and white yarrow. Scattered here and there were patches of lavender fleabane and pink dogbane. The weather was too cool for any insects except for a few bumblebees and beeflies. Otherwise there would have been many a butterfly awing.

Two ducks dipped low to light in East Pond, one a mallard female and the other apparently a redhead female, a new record for the Hills. Several brilliant western tanagers sang and two nuthatches, a red-breasted and a pygmy, made their presence known from the pines. A pair of western wood pewees defended their territory from a third bird at Camp Caro, where a group of middle-graders and their leaders were engaged in activities.

Three big ravens patrolled the Goldback Spring area; possibly they comprised a family group down from Tower Mountain. From the tiptop of a tall pine a Townsend's solitaire, a gray relative of bluebirds, sang.

We found two of the caterpillars that have been introduced to help control the weedy Dalmatian toadflax. The little green fellows with rows of black spots are inconspicuous as they lie along stems. Hopefully they will be effective but they have a big job ahead, for the Spokane Valley has entire fields yellow with these weeds.

June found several groups enjoying hikes into Dishman Hills. The Sierra Club under the leadership of Rich Leon at Camp Caro and the more active members hiked as far as Eagle Peak, where a 360 degree view was most rewarding. Several members were wheelchair bound or otherwise not able to make the hike, so found the lodge at Camp Caro most congenial.

The next day Jan Reynolds, who does much volunteer work in environmental education for children, brought an enthusiastic group to the Hills. They were fascinated by the little water creatures in the ponds.

Marian Cox led a group of curious kindergartners into the Hills June 11. What fun to be with these kids.

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