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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

JULY 1995

CONTRIBUTIONS DROP IN JUNE

Contributions to our Dishman Hill-Rocks of Sharon project dropped to \$790.72 in June. Interest on our land purchase fund was \$12.09. Recycling brought in \$62.72 -- prices for newspaper and aluminum cans are very good now. (We need about \$2150 a month to cover our land payments of about \$6470 each quarter, plus about \$150 a month for operating expense.) Our June expenses were \$139.17 for bulletin printing and mailing, \$48 for office expense and \$2.15 for miscellaneous postage expense.

Our thanks to you who are listed below and have given permission to be listed here: Margaret V. Bloom, Naomi E. Edge, Helen E. Lininger, Janice G. Mahoney, Francis H. Potter, Avis E. Ray, Tom Rogers, Barbara J. Sanders, South Pines Elementary Student Council, Marcia F. Spohn and Jeanne H. Wilson. Again, MANY THANKS!

In June we gave our slide show to Bowdish Junior High students and to Instrument Service Association. We also led a hike into Dishman Hills for a Cub Scout pack with Pack leader Angi Meyers.

If you would like some wildlife around your house, try making part of your yard "shaggy", with trees, shrubs and a variety of smaller plants. These will allow shelter, nesting places and food for birds, butterflies, other interesting insects, and perhaps a squirrel or two. Mountain ash trees are attractive summer and winter and provide food for robins, house finches, cedar and Bohemian waxwings and other fruit eaters. Another advantage: these trees have little leaflets that fall and go back into the soil without your having to rake them up. Who likes to rake leaves anyway? Of course, trees, when properly placed, also provide you owners with shade in summer and a windbreak in the winter.

Native kinds of plants require the least care, little or no watering, no mowing and little or no trimming. Yet some kinds of nonnative plants will attract wildlife. Sweet rocket has colorful flowers, reseeds itself and provides food for house finches, as does salsify, a tall weed with dandelion-like flowers and seed heads. Dandelions themselves, usually considered a no-no in lawns, also invite the finches to their seeds.

Delphiniums (larkspur) attract butterflies, hummingbirds and hummingbird moths. The perennial Michaelmas daisies are excellent attractors of butterflies, particularly painted ladies and sulfurs. The big yellow and black swallowtails also will visit your flowers and lay their eggs on the leaves of cherry and chokecherry. Of course a bird water pan (bird bath) is a must during summer. Feeders with wild bird seed are most helpful in winter but put them and water pans where cats can't get at them. (Continued in column 2.)

ORGANIZATION PURPOSE

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

MEETING DATE / PLACE

During the remainder of this summer we will be meeting only on call, if needed. If you want to be notified, please let us know at 926-7949 and we'll call you.

SCOUTS EXPLORE DISHMAN HILLS

Fifty-some eager Girl Scouts of all ages, led by Jerry Young, assisted by older Scouts and parents, daycamped at Camp Caro in Dishman Hills Natural Area the last week of July. We assisted them in their exploration of the plants and animals.

Only a few flowers were evident. Goldenrod brought a reminder that Autumn is on the way. The showy lavender flowers of spotted knapweed, a noxious weed, were all too common, however, on the road to the vacated site of the old camp building. Interestingly, the abandoned paved road is gradually deteriorating, nature taking over. Possibly even the knapweed might disappear, surrendering to the native bushes and flowers.

One group of girls saw a cottontail rabbit. Another group found a tree frog. A red-tailed hawk screamed overhead. Over the Camp Caro lawn a new brood mourning cloak butterfly fluttered liesurely. With a bit of luck it will survive until next year, hibernating under a stone or a piece of loose bark on a dead tree. Along the trail the campers examined the little pits of antlions, waiting for an ant to drop in for lunch. No ants nearby though.

Young people such as these are learning to appreciate our environment, to love it and to want to protect it.

(Continued from column 1)

Unfortunately cats and dogs like our yards. They don't know the law says they are supposed to stay home and pet owners don't care. To foil the cats I place a two foot square piece of hardware cloth under my bird water pan, so that when a cat jumps up to catch a bird, the whole thing comes down and gives the cat a shower. Strangely, cats are slow to learn that what they are doing doesn't work, just gives them a surprise!--TR

If you would like your yard designated a backyard wildlife sanctuary, contact the Department of Wildlife, 456-4082. They will tell you how to do it and send you a neat little sign for your yard. And it's free!

CONTRIBUTION COUPON

Please use this form when sending contributions

(Contributions are income tax deductible)

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