



Lights and Shadows from the Dishman Hills, January, 1998

BIRDS COUNTED IN SPOKANE VALLEY

It was a *robin winter* for the Spokane Valley portion of the Spokane Audubon Christmas Count in late December. One hundred forty nine were counted by volunteers. An abundance of robins, apparently, are being induced to stay by the bountiful supply of mountain ash berries.

As far as the species are concerned, forty-one kinds were found with about 1,800 individuals. Mallards topped the list with 452. Six other kinds of ducks were found on the Spokane River; along with a Great Blue Heron and two Canadian Geese. House (English) Sparrows came in second, with Starlings a close third. House Finches, little gray birds with pink breast and heads, were fourth. California Quail totalled fifty-seven, but only four Ring-necked Pheasants showed up. Increased housing may be reducing their habitat. Completely lacking were Bohemian Waxwings, though some years we see thousands. Their smaller relatives, Cedar Waxwings, came in at two. Chickadee and Nuthatch numbers were good, as were those of juncoes, "snowbirds" with black heads and white outer tail feathers. Notable was a Golden Eagle over the Dishman Hills, the northwest corner of which is in the 15-mile count circle. American Tree Sparrows, winter visitors from Canada, totalled six, but they are often missed on counts.

The complete count for Spokane will appear in the Spokane Audubon Society's "Pygmy Owl" publication and likely in a future article in the Spokesman Review.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving natural areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton at 747-8147 for any questions. We have our monthly meetings at Opportunity Elementary School, South 1109 Wilbur, the third Tuesday of the month at 7PM, You are cordially invited.

We thank the following December donors who have given permission to be listed here: Karen Behm (memorial), James Bertis, Ferne Dahlstrom, Jeff Danner, Harriet Davies, Dave Deline, Stanley Fahlgren, Joan Fergin, Walter Fernau, Wilbert Fritz, Margaret Galbraith, George Girvin, Don Griffiths, Adeline Haines, Le Roy Hook, Jean Koch, Richard Landers, Helen Lininger, John Lorang, Barbara Lockwood, Beradine McClincy, Stephen Peterson, Tom Rogers, Luella Rowberg, Marjorie Rozell, Shelli Wood, Holly Sonneland, Spokane Area Retired Educators Foundation, Patricia Sweeney, Edwin Weilep, Jeanne Wilson, Mrs. Harold Wimpy, and two anonymous donors. **Again many thanks.**

NEW TRAIL MAP

The reverse of this month's newsletter is a sample of the new trail map for the Dishman Hills Natural Area. With this sheet in your pocket getting lost will now be optional! The map is designed for a folded 17" by 11" sheet in a brochure so the numbers and lettering are a bit small on this sample. The database for this produce is 100% digital using the new GIS technology. The brochures will be available in trail head boxes during the warmer months.

Contour lines are included to allow hikers to match topography to trail location. Contour lines represent points of the same elevation, and when you cross the lines you are either going up or down slope. The closer the lines the steeper the slope, round circles are hills, and v-shaped bends in the lines represent cuts in the topography made by streams with the "v" pointing upstream. While this map is more accurate and complete than previous maps, there are still a number of minor trails that do not appear on the map. Many of these small trails are not included since they are being restored and we don't want people to use them, so please use only the trails on this map. The boundary line has been updated to include some new acreage added last year on the northwest side.

Special symbols are used for trail heads and trails that continue out of the DH onto private land. Remember that only trail heads provide public access. New in this map edition are trail numbers and trail lengths. Later this year a set of new trail signs will be installed. There should be updated versions of this map appearing now and then in the future when trails are opened or closed, acreage is added, or locations are refined. Happy hiking!

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