



DISHMAN HILLS NATURAL AREA ASSOCIATION
3415 S. LINCOLN DRIVE, SPOKANE, WA 99203, 509 747-8147

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Spokane, WA
Permit No. 546

Buttercup hike set for Aprils
21; meet at Camp Caro 1pm

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS from the Dishman Hills, February, 2001

TREAD SOFTLY

Pretty soon the snow cover will start melting back and more outdoor enthusiast will be out on the trail to celebrate the end of one of the longest winters we had in a long time. One of the problems that we face each year at this time is the erosion caused by human traffic when the ground is saturated with water and soft.

This year we are especially concerned since there is an ongoing project in the natural area to restore redundant, shortcut, and unneeded trails. Last Fall the project was started, backed with a matching grant from the Nature Conservancy with Washington State. Boy Scout crews under adult supervision planted over 7,000 native grass plugs in an attempt to restore unneeded trails. The area covered was off the main loop trail from Camp Caro to the ponds. Restored areas were planted for 50 to 100 feet off the main trail to start recovery by removing from sight the trail from hikers; the rest of the trail will then recover naturally over time.

This Spring the program will continue with the planting of an additional 2,000 native grass plugs, and maybe some shrubs. We are considering whether or not to mark the restored trails with signs. With the whole idea to make the restored trails disappear as fast as possible, trail restoration signs may be counterproductive by calling attention to the trail site. We may just settle to use forest floor debris to cover the restored pathways.

So, if you are hiking and see newly planted ground just off the trail, please do not tread on this restored area. The natural area is a laboratory for the development of methods to improve the ecology health, and you can be part of the solution by leaving these areas alone, especially in the Spring when the ground is really soft.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

We are a non-profit organization dedicated to saving nature areas in the Spokane region for public enjoyment and education. Call Michael Hamilton, 747-8147, if you have any questions. We have a monthly meeting the third Tuesday of the month at Opportunity Elementary School, in the teacher's lounge, S. 1109 Wilbur, 7pm.

The following are our January donors that have consented to be listed: Greg Baker, Margaret Becker, Marje Benander, Robert Burroughs, Diane Casey, Rita Cencich, Nancy Coddington, Joseph Collins, Francis Davis, Robert Downing, Myrtle Erickson, Joan Fergin, June Foote, Fosseen Foundation, Celesta Frost, Jerome Harrington, Isabel Hawkins, Eris Heggem, Irene Herbert, Mark Huggar, Rosmary Johnson, Loring Jones, Janyce Keeling, Hugh Lefcort, Rich Leon, Helen Lininger, Barbara Lockood, Jacqueline Mallereau, Lucille Marchan, Bettie Maron, Marilyn Miller, Roy Mills, Marlene Montgomery, Jack Nisbet, Aroa Ohme, Joy Peterson, Francis Potter, Jane Rogers, Norma Rosenberger, Margorie Rozell, Shirley Schneider, Nan Smith, Hazel Strange, Betty Stratton, John Swan, Joan Talbot, Grace Ward, Wanda Warren, Robert Wilson, Barney Wilson, and Art Zack. **Thanks**

GIVE A HOOT

For hikers braving the icy wilds, there's a special treat on the main trail behind Camp Caro. A nesting pair of Great Horned owls, the "Cat Owl", can be heard and occasionally seen to the northwest of the trail near Caro Cliff. Their haunting calls echo throughout the forest over the steady hiss of traffic on the new couplet and the barking announcements

lots. The male owl hoots, then the back with 6 - 8 digital photo here, weeks ago, caught Since the owls are must have been the nest. The male



male owl female owl nest

has a higher pitch voice than the female. The Great Horned owl is the only large owl in North America and is generally dark in color. The birds in these northern areas are lighter. They eat rodents, rabbits and birds including other owls. They also occupy the nest of other birds such as hawks and crows. The distinctive features of these magnificent birds includes two tufts of head feathers that resemble ears or horns.

These owls are equipped to see and hear better than us humans and they were definitely aware of our presence before we saw them and watched us with as much curiosity. Please let these birds nest in peace, and maybe in the Spring we will have some little owls to look at. The average brood is 2 to 3 chicks. While the local rodent population is probably developing ulcers, we are delighted to have such impressive animals in our part of the neighborhood.

from the local car calls out with 4 - 5 female answers hoots. The fuzzy taken about two the birds together. nocturnal, they taking a nap around owl is smaller and

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3415 S. Lincoln Dr.

Spokane, WA 99203

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