

MUSHROOMS R US

The Dishman Association was contacted this month by the Spokane Mushroom Club. They would like to visit the Natural Area to tour the mushroom population there, and both survey and collect some specimens. We fully encourage such activity. Our charter encourages educational and scientific uses of the Natural Area. These fungi are part of the native plants we are committed to conserve, and it's very important to know the scientific details of their habitat. We also were loaned by the Club a unique copy of a document titled A Tentative Survey of the Mycological Flora of the Dishman Hills Natural Area, 1972, by E.R. Boynton. This fantastic 200 page report identifies 84 species of mushrooms in the Natural Area with a color photograph of each species, a location, and a full page handwritten description. This impressive survey is a must for anyone who's interested in the areas' mushrooms. We plan to reproduce the work (with color plates) and if anyone wants a copy they should contact the Association very soon. With volume color coping the cost should be between \$35 to \$40 per copy. This is a one time opportunity.



SPRING'S SPRUNG

The annual buttercup hike was blessed with fair weather and a spectacular mid spring display of glacier lilies, grass widows, phlox, and a few late buttercups. On the hike we spotted a very large raptor bird that was probably an eagle. While Goldback and Midway springs were flowing, the ponds were more like puddles than ponds. This time of year the ponds are usually full. Several mallard ducks in the east pond were trying to maneuver around on the small expanse of open water, and the west pond was also about 1/4 full. We did spot the resident snake at the ponds that seems to come out often to greet visitors. The forest now is lush and green, almost as if the plants know they better get their growing and reproduction over fast before the hot, dry season hits.

This summer is shaping up to be a drought for the record books. The lower Dishman Hills is a dryland forest and its occupants are well adapted to the conditions we expect this summer. Wildfire may be a real problem however. Many think that the pungent sent of burning wood will be a familiar feature this summer. Most of our wildfires in the Dishman Hills are started by unauthorized campfires and we will be vigilant later in the season when things really dry out. Local fire departments and the State DNR are short of firefighters this year because of draws on the National Guard and Reserves caused by the war; they are calling for volunteers to fight the anticipated heavy season of wildfires. This month the Spokane Valley fire department was using the Dishman Hills area to run wildland urban interface training exercises. Lets hope people will be very careful this summer with fire.

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread. Places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul.— John Muir

BACK TO THE FUTURES

The Association is in the process of co-nominating a tract of land for this year's Spokane County Conservation Futures Program. Working with the Dishman Ridge Dream Trail group, we continue our efforts to conserve the open spaces to the south of the natural area, between the Dishman Hills and the new natural area up the ridge on Tower Mountain. We want to protect the animal migration corridor on the ridge, and some day, provide a public trail through the open space on the east side of the ridge. This project is like a large puzzle, with each effort adding another piece that will, hopefully, reach a completed goal (faith in the future is mandatory!).

This County Conservation program has been a tremendous success. The dedication of the McKenzie Conservation Area at Newman Lake this month serves as an excellent example how important it is for each community to champion the natural spaces in their own back yard. The County's Program is somewhat competitive since there are many places to save and limited funds to do the job. The involvement and support of citizen community groups can't be over emphasized. Community support means more than their desire to keep their neighborhood green and less crowded, it means that they will be there in the future to manage and maintain it. Our neighbors at the Dishman Hills have been very supportive over the years.

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 meet every other month on the third Tuesday at Opportunity Elementary School, S. 1109 Wilbur, in the teacher's lounge, 7pm. Our next meeting will be May 17th.

The following are our March donors that have consented to be listed: Andrew Ashmore, William Burmeister—memorial for Margaret Mills, Joseph Collins, Elizabeth DeNiro, Robert Downing, Earthworks Recycling, Myrtle Erickson, Danial & Marva Goede, Don Griffiths, Patricia Huff, Mary Alice Jones, Stephanie Lambert, Maxine Leszczykowski, Linda Martin, Leo Middendorf, Gale Mueller, Madeline Phelps, Diane Rogers, Ed & Beth Tietjen, Babetta Velategui, Jean Wilson, and one anonymous donor. Thank you one and all.

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