



LIGHTS AND SHADOWS FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

SEPTEMBER 1990

AUGUST DONORS LISTED

August donations (money, recyclables and in kind) to the Dishman Hills Project came to \$479.32 (\$139.32 from recycling) plus \$27.48 interest on our land fund reserve. Expenses were \$219.70 (mostly bulletin printing and postage). Our thanks to the following who have contributed and have given permission to be listed here. (If your name should be here but isn't, please let us know and accept our apologies).

Bill Akerlund, Kathryn Bernard, R.C Bohlen, Cheryl Craig, Jackie Davenport, John R. Dean, Verna Dolphin, Reece Ennesh, Gilbert/Myrt Erickson, Harriet/Dick Evans, Frieda Foth, Sue Gregory, Evelyn/Russ Harmon, Dorothy Hartung, Ivy/Ken Hendrix, Blanche/Mel Holsten, Emma Jacklin, John C. Lorang, Jack/Alice Malone, Gloria McCuddin, Florence Miller, Gloria M. Nicol, Madeline A. Phelps, Frank/June Potter, Milt Rawlings, Thomas H. Rogers, Holly Frost Sonneland, Jan Strobeck, Florence Thayer, Larry Thiemann, Alice Tiffany, Leona Widner, and Jeanne H. Wilson.

TOADFLAX EATERS HAVE A NAME

The toadflax-eating caterpillars, slender and green with rows of black spots, have been identified as those of a species of moth that has been brought in in an attempt to find a biological control for the pretty but noxious weed. (In case you are interested, their name is "Calophisia lunula"). Scott Nielsen of the County Weed Control Office alerted Dr. Gary Piper of Washington State University, who made the identification and visited the Dishman Hills, finding more evidence of the caterpillars' feeding. He was surprised that they were found there, since none had been released there. (They do get around!) According to him, introductions of the moths elsewhere have been unsuccessful, the reason apparently unknown. What do the Dishman Hills have that other places don't? A guess is that the open woods there have few ground-feeding birds to feed upon the caterpillars. Such is the complexity of the web of life!

We would like again to help out the caterpillars in the ridding of the hills of toadflax. We invite anyone interested to take part this fall, before more of the plants produce seed. Any adult or children's groups that are interested in a one time project now please call us at 926-7949 and we will arrange a time for a weed pull. We hope to hear from you. Thanks!

In case you don't know it, old car batteries are bringing \$2 each at some recycling centers. Also, plastic bottles-jugs with the triangular recycling logo and a "1" within it on the bottom are recyclable at 3 cents a pound.

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: Larry Thiemann Secretary: Helen Lininger
Vice-President: Tom Rogers Treasurer: David Lentes
Board members (in addition to officers): Doris Allgood, Omar Carroll, Margaret Haggin, Francis Potter, June Potter and Ray Staley.

Our monthly meetings starting in September will be at the new lodge at Camp Caro, S. 625 Sargent Road, Dishman, at 7:30 p.m. the third Monday of each month. You are cordially invited. For additional information call 926-7949.

FIRE DANGER HIGH IN HILLS

Nearly a month without rain has left woods and grasslands very dry and opens us up to the threat of fires. We have had no fires in the Dishman Hills this year. Let's keep it that way.

With Autumn coming on, only a few flowers remain in the Hills. The most conspicuous are the handsome lavender asters (*Aster laevis*). The related wreath asters (*Aster pansus*) with their sprays of little white flowers are conspicuous by East Pond. The blue of gentians is apparent in a few spots. Yampah, that carrotlike plant that formerly supplied food for Native Americans, is appearing in several new places with its flat topped cluster of tiny white flowers. Goldenrod and Indian paintbrush complete the picture.

We are now in the autumn "bird vacuum", nearly all summer resident birds having migrated and late migrants and winter visitors not yet arrived. Only the few year round residents in the Hills can be found: nuthatches, chickadees, woodpeckers (including flickers) and an occasional raven and magpie. Chipmunks are still active. Red squirrels are common but appear to face an uncertain winter as the bountiful pine cone crop, their principal food source, has shed its seeds and dropped to the ground.

Several kinds of grasshoppers are common and will survive until the killing frosts a few weeks away. Yellowjackets will be with us for a while but only the fertile queens will seek overwintering hiding places. Bright yellow sulfurs, often tinged with orange, are the most conspicuous butterflies now. They too will succumb to the frosts of October.

Unusually abundant in the Hills now are the little webs of funnel weaver spiders, their gauzy sheets spread over the low plants, not to dry in the sun but to catch unwary insects while the web makers wait below in their silken funnels. On bushes the scant webs of dome weavers sparkle in the sun while their makers, slender and inconspicuous, wait within.

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_____ Check here if you do NOT want your name listed as a donor.

Please make checks payable to Dishman Hills Natural Area Association and mail to the Treasurer, P.O. Box 14141, Spokane, WA 99214-0141. Many thanks!