

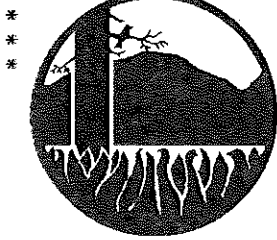
Dishman Hills Natural Area Associat.  
P.O. Box 14141  
Spokane, Wash. 99214-0141

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# LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

## FROM THE DISHMAN HILLS

OCTOBER 1991

### THANKS TO SEPTEMBER DONORS

Income for the Dishman Hills Project came to \$493.53 in September. \$128.53 were from recyclables. Expenses were: Bulletin \$155.70 and office expense \$40.00.

Our thanks to you listed below who have given permission to be listed here. (If you have been omitted, please let us know at 926-7049 and accept our apologies.) Kathryn Bernard, Joe Cooley, Ruth/Cecil Cunningham, Verna Dolphin, Reece Ennesh, Gil/Myrt Erickson, Dick/Harriet Evans, William Fix, Dorothy Hartung, Evelyn/Russ Harmon, Ivy/Ken Hendrix, Blanche/Mel Holsten, Jean Koch, Karl Krogue, Shiran Lee, Helen Lininger, Evelyn Lynch, Leo J. Middendorf, Helen E. Nelson, Ruth S. Peterson, Neil Prescott, Fred Radebaugh, Tom Rogers Jr., Tom Rogers Sr., Blanche Sarver, Bill Schuh, Shirley J. Schneider, Etta Mae Silsbee, Marcella Smith, Al/Phyllis Stagnan, Johnnie K. Streit, Patricia Sweeney, Florence Thayer, Lawrence Thieman, Doreen B. Vance, Whitworth Belles Garden Club and Jeanne H. Wilson.

### PRESERVE ESCAPES FIRE

Dishman Hills Nature Preserve has so far been spared the devastating fires, as has the heavily forested area along Iller Creek on upper Tower Mountain, and the homes in the area along Holman Road. The lower areas of the mountain have not. Much of the slopes on both sides of the creek have been burned almost bare, and the ground cover along the creek also. Birches and alders presumably will die but likely will sprout again from their roots. Larger ponderosa pines likely will survive as their thicker bark protects them.

In the burned area along the creek the sighting of birds, small mammals and even tracks of a fawn deer indicate that these creatures have escaped.

As of now (October 20) spot fires still burn on the mountain. Hopefully the predicted winds will not cause them to flare up.

As with the Dishman Hills Preserve, we have compiled records on the plants and animals of Tower Mountain for many years. The recovery of the burned area will surely occur. We will be recording this.

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

Our monthly meetings starting in October and continuing until Spring will be at Opportunity Elementary School, 1109 South Wilbur the third Monday at 7 P.M. You are cordially invited.

### AUTUMN, FIRES ARE THE NEWS

"Brown leaves rustle at each footfall" wrote a would-be poet high school boy. Brown leaves are here now but lack of heavy frosts has left many green leaves still on the trees. Right now this is changing. By the time you receive this we may even have had some rain, long overdue, to moisten the tinder-dry forests and grasslands.

Wildflowers are practically gone, except for some hardy weeds: spotted knapweed (which is attracting painted lady butterflies) and tansy. A few wild asters linger. Pearly everlasting is living up to its name as its dry flowers are t. But wild autumn fruits put on a show: the smoky blue of elderberry clusters, the reds and oranges of roses and our native mountain ash shrubs.

We are now in the autumn "bird vacuum", when nearly all the summer birds have left and few or no winter birds have arrived. Robins are restless. Whether or not it will be a "robin winter" may depend on the food supply. The mountain ash berry crop, a staple in their winter diet, looks heavy. A group of varied thrushes ("Oregon robins") was seen on Tower Mountain recently. Last winter they were common in residential areas of the Spokane Valley. Golden-crowned kinglets are trickling in.

For butterflies and other insects the days are numbered. November 1 has been the cutoff date for the former in past years. A few painted ladies ("thistle butterflies") and sulfurs are still around. Anglewings and mourning cloaks will hibernate. Grasshoppers are becoming inactive and will soon succumb but the proverbial industrious ants will retire to their underground nests. The big yellowjacket population will be disappearing, only the fertile queens seeking wintering crannies. Field crickets and snowy tree crickets are still chirping it up, though slowed by cooler weather. (It is said that the latter, which chirp intermittently, can give you a rough estimate of the temperature (Fahrenheit) if you count the number of chirps in thirteen seconds and add forty to it. What do you get?)

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