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Executive Director's Corner

As the oldest land conservation organization in Washington, Dishman Hills Conservancy continues to work on our mission to connect and protect the land within Dishman Hills. Our vision is to promote the conservation of lands in a continuous, connected corridor from Camp Caro along Appleway to the southern portions of the Dishman Hills bordering the Palouse. We support education and recreation, and manage our lands through stewardship activities. Your generous support continues to fulfill this mission and vision.

As our landholdings have grown, our priorities have expanded. Our first priority remains the purchase of land, but we also support efforts to conserve lands through the Conservation Futures program with Spokane County and through conservation easements. We have a restricted land fund, used only for the purchase of property and are fundraising in anticipation of purchasing connected properties. You can designate your donation for land purchases.

A second priority is education. We continue to offer numerous events, guided hikes and youth-focused programs put on by volunteers and our Education Committee. We are also in the planning process for the Wilson Conservation Area Education Center made possible by the commitment of \$46,000 through the Washington State Local Community Projects program and support of Legislative District 9 Representative Mary Dye. Fundraising and grant writing will continue as we seek funding for the next steps on the path to support outdoor education for all.

A third priority is to be good stewards of our land and wildlife living there. Our newly relaunched Volunteer Trail Stewards program is helping us monitor and address concerns in our trails systems. Volunteers help us pull, mow and spray noxious weeds. They help with clearing, hauling brush, and splitting firewood. Efforts are also underway to thin and trim trees to reduce fire risk and build resilience to climate change. Our ongoing partnerships with local schools, conservation minded organizations, and individuals help us monitor and evaluate our efforts. These projects are also supported by your generous donations.

This is an exciting time to be part of DHC. We have a strong mission and exciting goals that include you. We hope to see you on the trails within the Dishman Hills. While you are there, watch for the wildlife supported by your generous donations. Keep checking your inbox for upcoming events to connect and protect the lands within Dishman Hills. We welcome your contributions of time, talent, and treasure to help us continue our mission!

Other ways to support DHC:

- Consign for a Cause with Rambleraven
- Connect your Fred Meyers Rewards with Dishman using this QR code



DHC is seeking new board members with financial planning and/or governance experience. Please send a resume and bio to Ruth Gifford at ed@dishmanhills.org.

We are requesting donations of:

- free-standing wood-burning shop stoves (similar to pictured)
- gently used 30" wide slide-in electric range kitchen stove
- gently used 30"w 15"h 12"d above-stove microwave with exhaust fan
- gently used 45"-55" screen (TV or computer) that accepts HDMI cable



Pool table for sale!



The Wilson Conservation Area property was purchased with a pool table in the basement. We would like to rehome it so we are accepting the best offer. For more information, please contact Marie Fenske at volunteers@dishmanhills.org.

Announcement

INLC and DHC have been exploring a merger through a formal, facilitated process and have concluded that the timing is not right to move forward under this process. We will continue to explore the opportunities and challenges associated with collaborative endeavors, including the possibility of merging into a single land trust in the future. Our ultimate goal is to strengthen conservation efforts in our greater Spokane Community.

The Dishman Hills Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Gifts to DHC are tax-deductible. We are also able to receive stocks and real estate donations, with tax advantages. Tax ID No. 91-6087260

STAFF:

Ruth Gifford - Executive Director

Sue Legel - Financial Officer

Dan Wilson - Properties Manager

Marie Fenske - Volunteer Coordinator

CJ Kreitlow - Events Coordinator

Annual Fundraiser

Buy your ticket now! Dishman Hills' annual fundraiser will be on **October 16th, 2023** from 5:30pm-8:30pm at Centerplace, Spokane. This year we are "Protecting the Wild Heart of Spokane". The \$100 early bird special ends August 31st and the \$125 regular sale ends October 9th. Go to www.dishmanhills.org/events. Don't miss out!



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Yoga in the Hills**, Camp Caro, alternating Thursdays
- **Pilates in the Park**, Camp Caro, alternating Thursdays
- **Two for Tuesday Hike**, 2nd and 4th Tuesdays each month
- **Geology Hike with Chad Pritchard**, August 5th 10am



Donation Coupon

Fill out this section and mail it back with your donation to the address listed below

Please contact me about a sustaining member subscription Please add me to your volunteer list

Name _____

Address _____ City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please contact me about: Employer Match Securities Gift Including the DHC in my will / estate plan

Please make checks payable to the Dishman Hills Conservancy and mail to P.O. Box 8536, Spokane, WA 99203

Or donate online at www.dishmanhills.org/donate-now

Connecting People to Nature Since 1966

“Are You My Mother?”

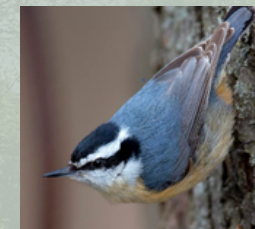
Many of us remember the quest of the little bird in Are You My Mother? who hatches while his mother is away, and goes on a quest, inquiring of all he meets “are you my mother?”

Hikers in DHC might have had such inquiries from fledgling Red Breasted Nuthatches, House Wrens, or Dark Eyed Juncos in August. This trio of small, migratory birds might not be the flashiest avian residents of the Hills, but they are among the most inquisitive about the human visitors to the Conservancy.



Each of these birds has a rounded head, a barrel chest, and a short, almost imperceptible neck, creating a cute and chubby profile. But do not be fooled by the unprepossessing appearance, this group of little birds can migrate for miles, fearlessly visit urban backyards, or, perhaps most astonishingly, form an alliance with spiders.

According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/>, the little House Wren will nest companionably with spiders in holes in trees, where the spiders provide the service of eating parasites. These fierce little birds will also challenge much bigger birds. While feistiness is often an admirable trait, the House Wren’s assertive behavior has been linked to nest failure in Bluebirds.



Though its neighbor is allied with spiders, the Red Breasted Nuthatch is busy feeding them to its young. If the moniker “nuthatch” suggests a vegan diet, it is misleading. The small bird, a backyard fan of peanut butter and sunflower seeds, will catch bugs out of the air, sometimes stuffing them into crevices of bark to break them into bite-sized pieces.

Almost nothing is sweeter than the head-tilt and button-eyed stare of the Dark Eyed Junco. But again, spiders beware! When scratching on the ground for food both Junco bird parents will pick up spiders to feed them to their young.



If you want to listen to know what entreaties from these creatures might sound like, Cornell offers that in an app — <https://merlin.allaboutbirds.org/>. Humans can only guess whether these calls bring succor or terror to the spiders of DHC.

Though human visitors to the DHC may need to tell these fledglings that they are not their mothers, all DHC supporters should know that we are their protectors.

Written by: Lynn Briggs

Kids in the Hills

One of Dishman’s largest and most anticipated events, Kids in the Hills, was a major success this year. This May, our wonderful Education Committee taught third and fourth graders the beauty of the outdoors. Local Title 1 schools came in groups of 50-100 kids over the course of five separate days. Each school visited Camp Caro and rotated through three outdoor classrooms: Geology, Wildlife, and Forest ecology.

Our Geology classroom, or “Life on the Rocks”, was led by Dishman Board member, Rick Severn. This rotation took a closer look at the surprising amount of life growing on the grand rock formations. The kids learned about lichen, moss, and tree saplings emerging from the cracks of the rocks.

Our Wildlife rotation was led by Matt B. and Carrie L. from the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. The kids observed bear, deer, owl, and cougar skulls and learned why they may look different from one another. They also looked at scat and tracks of wildlife such as turkeys, deer, and moose to hone their wildlife identification skills.

Our forest ecology rotation was led by Jamie R. and Mary-Ellen R. from the WA Department of Natural Resources. The kids learned the “LAWS of the forest”: Light, Air, Water, and Soil, and pondered how Dishman Hills expresses these LAWS.

George Stratman kept the kids energized throughout the day with his playlist of nature songs such as the Food Chain Song (Steve Van Zandt), Dirt Made My Lunch (Steve Van Zandt), and Habitat (Bill Oliver).

The students were sent off with a take-home message that good habits make for a good environment, and sharing their new knowledge with their loved ones is one way to practice good habits. Multiple kids returned the following weekend with their families to enthusiastically attend National Trails Day at Camp Caro and flaunt their new expertise of Dishman Hills.

We have received hundreds of thank you notes from the students expressing gratitude for the program and describing it as “the best day ever”.

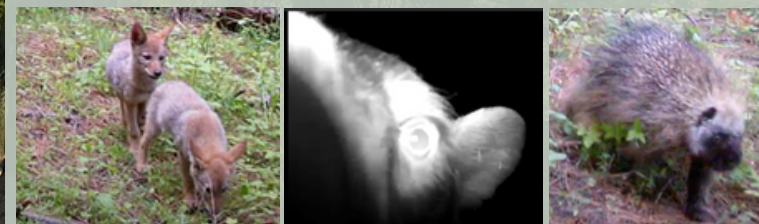
A special thanks to all of the volunteers on our education committee that helped make Kids in the Hills a success this year: George and Susan Stratman, Rick Severn, Stan Miller, Kris Hendron, Lisa Klapp, Kellie Crawford, Cec Mooney, Maureen Miller, and Pat Muntz.

Written by: Marie Fenske

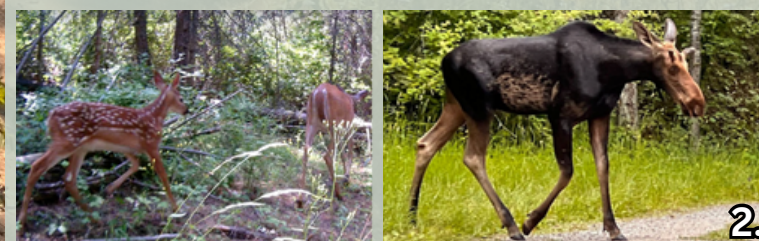


Trail Stewardship Program Relaunch

We are happy to announce that Dishman is relaunching the Trail Stewardship Program this season! Trail Stewards are select individuals that are assigned one or two Dishman trails that they regularly walk and report any issues back to our staff. They also inform trail users about Dishman regulations and information about our organization as a whole. Stewards commit to about 8 hours a month of hiking the Dishman trails and several stewardship work days. We have 15 active volunteers for the season. If you see a Steward on the trails, be sure to say hello and thank them for their work!



Staff and volunteers at the Wilson Conservation Area have been enjoying several wildlife sightings this past Spring. Volunteers Carl Barrentine and Ray Owens have used their game cameras to capture a coyote family with four pups, a black bear, a porcupine, a moose, and a fawn with its mama! Check out Carl’s youtube channel to see more videos of Dishman wildlife: @Lucretius40. Thanks Carl and Ray!



DHC Maps from SCC

This past school year, Spokane Community College students taking an ArcGIS class chose Dishman Hills for their final project. Logan Nelson and Kholton Thielen used their new ArcGIS abilities to create a map displaying “Potential Habitat within the Jack and Mary-Jane Wilson Conservation Area”.

Shelby Irmer created a map to visualize past donations to DHC and the general area they are coming from. We are pleased to see the widespread support of our mission!

These projects serve as great examples of Dishman Hills working with the local community to engage students in authentic, hands-on learning that is practical for their future careers.

