

May 24, 2008

Five Swan Rangers and two of their dogs hiked up into snow on the Switchback Trail above Jewel Basin Road Saturday. Snow persists on the upper third of the trail, still 4-5 feet deep in places.

It was very pleasant hiking weather with no rain. A ruffed grouse drummed its mating call at the beginning of the trail and a male blue grouse met the group in full courtship display about half way up. A sharp-shinned hawk was also spotted.

The Swan Rangers meet every Saturday at the Echo Lake Cafe for breakfast at 7:30, leaving at 8:30 for a partial day outing in the northern Swan Mountains and foothills.

They carpool from the Swan River School parking lot next to the Cafe.

Everyone is welcome! Hope to see you soon,

Keith

Bob Muth report and photos:



The Switchback Trail leaves the Jewel Basin Road after the 3-mile marker and first climbs through lush forest . . .



. . . before breaking into an open, burned area with great views of Mud and Flathead Lakes.



The Switchback Trail climbs to the ridge above the Jewel Basin Road parking lot, where it meets Alpine Trail #7 on the shoulder of Mount Aeneas.