

June 7, 2008

Seven Swan Rangers hiked in the rain Saturday. Three hiked the Bear Creek Road into Wolf Creek and made a loop on the Echo Broken Leg Trail, encountering fresh snow along the way. They saw a number of calypso orchids, glacier lilies, and a nice pile of bear scat!

Four hiked the Wild Mile Nature Trail along the Swan River upstream from Bigfork to check on the seasonal progression of wildflowers there. The arrow-leaf balsamroot has indeed bloomed. Chokecherry is in full bloom but the bees seemed to be taking the day off! Plenty of wildflowers and ducks are to be seen along this walking/biking/horse trail.

Anne Morley and Neal Brown lead wildflower and bird watching strolls along this trail every Tuesday in June from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at Showthyme restaurant in Bigfork at 10:00 a.m. Call Anne (886-2242) or Neal (837-5018) for more information.

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

Keith Hammer photos:



Balsamroot and chokecherry bloom on the warm south slopes among Ponderosa pine.



Hand-lain rock work can be seen in places along the Wild Mile Nature Trail. The trail uses the old highway into Bigfork, now closed to automobiles. Before the bridge was built by the power house in Bigfork, folks travelling north on what is now Highway 35 had to travel a couple miles upriver on the south side of the Swan River, cross the bridge at Kearney Rapids, then come back down the same distance on the north side of the river to Bigfork.



Chokecherry blossoms waiting for bees wearing rain jackets.



Some Swan Rangers claim the Wild Mile Trail actually begins and ends at Brookies Cookies, not the edge of Bigfork!