

June 21, 2008

Fourteen Swan Rangers enjoyed a sunny day of hiking on this first day of Summer! Five hiked up the Crater Notch Trail and nine hiked up the Switchback Trail to the ridge above the Jewel Basin parking lot.

The Switchbackers saw an immature bald eagle and two red-tail hawks. They ate a pleasant lunch looking out over the Flathead and Swan valleys, with great views of the Mission Mountains and peaks beyond!

They retraced the first steps of Bob Marshall's epic 1928 hike over the Swan Range to Spotted Bear and up the South Fork Flathead River into the heart of the wilderness that would later bear his name and be formally protected as big "W" Wilderness by Congress.

You can read about Bob Marshall's journey at www.swanrange.org/Journal/journal.htm by clicking on "Up the Switchback Trail with Bob Marshall" for starters. Along the Switchback Trail you'll also learn about whitebark pine, grizzly bears and Clark's nutcrackers!

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 on following page:



Taking in the views and some lunch on the ridge above the Jewel Basin parking lot.



A 180-degree panorama from the ridge, overlooking the Swan Range, distant Mission Range, and Flathead Lake (left to right).