

August 16, 2008

Eight Swan Rangers hiked the Peters Ridge Trail Saturday, crossing over the Swan Crest at Bee Notch and continuing on to Lamoose Lake. The bees are still busy gathering pollen and nectar on the west side of the Swan Crest and flying it along the trail where it passes through Bee Notch to the other side!

Lamoose Lake was visited by a cool breeze on a warm day, so we didn't need to swim to cool off nor escape bugs. We made a Gatorade toast to Clif Merritt who died this past week at the age of 88. Clif dedicated his life to wilderness preservation and was a primary force in getting Jewel Basin designated as a non-motorized hiking area in the 1970's. Watch for more about Clif in my next Lakeshore Country Journal article in two weeks.

The lake is likely named after the Iroquois Indian Ignace Lamoose who, having been converted to the Christian faith by Jesuit "Black Robes" in the St. Lawrence River area, came west around 1812 with the fur trade and taught the Flathead Indians Christian beliefs. He later made two trips to St. Louis in attempts to bring a Jesuit priest back to Montana, but was killed by Sioux on his second try along with the rest of his party. His successors on a third attempt were successful and escorted Father Pierre Jean DeSmet to Montana in 1840.

Our eight-mile hike was a bit shorter than the 2,000 mile trek Lamoose made to St. Louis! To read more about Lamoose and other Indian place names in the Swan Range, read the Lakeshore Country Journal articles archived at <http://www.swanrange.org/Journal/journal.htm>. Or, for a more concise history, go to <http://www.swanrange.org>, click on the Donate Now button and, for a minimum donation of \$25, we'll send you as a gift the booklet "The Lineage of Chief Aeneas: A History of People and Place."

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 pages:



Wild bees collecting pollen and nectar from angelica just below Bee Notch in the Swan Range.



A view of Echo Lake and Flathead Lake from Bee Notch.



Swan Rangers eat lunch while admiring the views of the Flathead Valley from Bee Notch.



Lamoose Lake sits tucked in high along the east side of the Swan Crest just south of Hash Mountain.