

August 30, 2008

Nine Swan Rangers hiked a loop Saturday, heading up the Peters Ridge Trail, over the Swan Crest at Bee Notch, down the east side to Alpine Trail #7, south to Strawberry Lake, and down Strawberry Lake Trail to shuttle cars left there after breakfast at Echo Lake Cafe.

While there are indeed signs of fall and fall colors, huckleberries in many places are still prime. This is a good thing for bears fattening up before winter denning time arrives and for humans addicted to huckleberry pie!

It was a beautiful and mostly sunny day with cloud shadows racing across mountainsides. Wildflowers have mostly gone to seed on the west side of the Swan Crest but are still in full bloom on the eastern side, which is also more northerly and holds snow later in the spring and summer.

With cooler temperatures, some of the best hiking of the year is yet to come this fall. So don't put those hiking shoes away yet!

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.

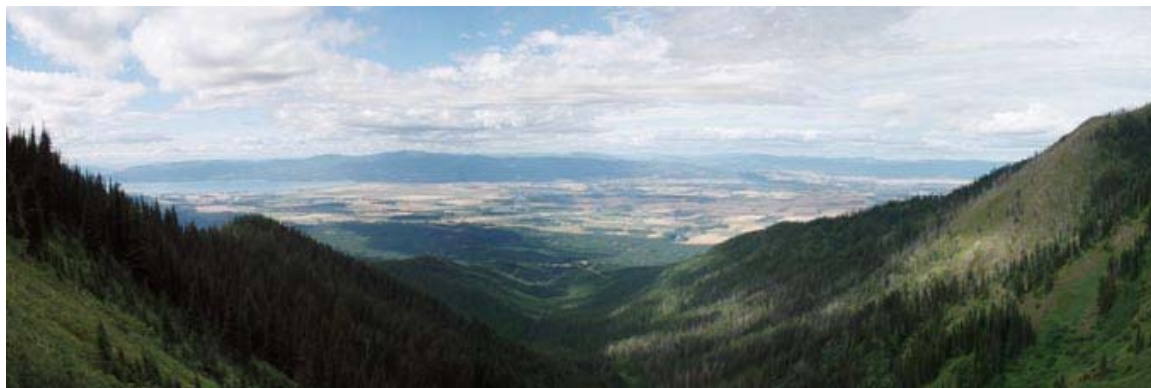
They carpool from the Swan River School parking lot next to the Cafe.

Everyone is welcome! Hope to see you soon,



Keith

Photos by Keith Hammer:



Peters Ridge Trail affords great views of the Flathead Valley as it traverses Brown Gulch . . .



. . . before switchbacking up to Bee Notch on a slope that's as steep as it looks!



But it's worth the climb and there's nothing better than lunch atop the Swan Crest!