

August 14, 2010

Sixteen Swan Rangers broke into smaller groups and hiked various loops around Mount Aeneas and Picnic Lakes Saturday. The sky was exceptionally clear after recent rains, making for great views.

A bull moose and a pica made surprisingly close appearances. The former was likely keeping cool at the higher elevations while the latter in fact depends on those cooler temperatures and the boulder fields found high in the mountains for its survival.

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

First three photos on following pages by Bob Muth, second three photos by Keith Hammer:



Atop Mount Aeneas.



Descending Mount Aeneas toward Picnic Lakes.



A rare, close approach by the reclusive pika - those little "beeps" of the boulder fields.



Trail 717 begins as the old road above the Camp Misery parking lot . . .



. . . and offers a lesson in the role of fire in restoring whitebark pine trees, along with wonderful views of Flathead, Echo and Mud Lakes.



Approaching Picnic Lakes and Mount Aeneas in the "reverse" loop!