

November 6, 2010

Ten Swan Rangers hiked Hemler Creek Trail #20 in balmy air above the colder valley temperature inversion - until the inversion rolled over and chilly winds replaced the balmy air at higher elevations, that is! They ate lunch near north Hemler Creek, then half headed back while the other half made it to within a quarter-mile of Alpine Trail #7 before finally getting their fill of post-holing in wet snow!

Rangers saw tracks of either very large pine marten or small fisher in the snowy trail above the lunch spot, as well as lots of deer and elk tracks in the upper Hemler Creek basin. The foul weather forecast had not yet materialized by late afternoon, as the Rangers returned to a sunny and warm valley bottom!

Next Saturday marks the Swan Rangers' 5th Anniversary and 260th outing! Perhaps thermoses of hot chocolate are in order?

The Swan Rangers meet every Saturday at the Echo Lake Cafe for breakfast at 8:30, leaving at 9:30 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!

When hiking in bear country, remember to carry bear spray and avoid the 3-D's: dawn, dusk, and darkness. Bears are not in hibernation yet.

Big game hunting season is on, so it's a very good idea to wear some bright "hunter orange" while hiking!



Keith

Photos by Keith Hammer:



Fall is in the air, the leaves are on the ground, and Rangers are styling in hunter orange!



The first couple miles of Hemler Creek Trail #20 is an old, closed logging road.



The trail at the end of the old road quickly climbs over the ridge and into South Hemler . . .



. . . which offers views of the lower Flathead River, Flathead Lake, and clouds with silver linings!



The trail then skirts a cliff and begins climbing up North Hemler . . .



. . . which offers views of Lake Blaine, today viewed from above the inversion and below the clouds.