

July 14, 2007

Four Swan Rangers beat the heat by exploring the lower reaches of Birch Creek, starting at the Broken Leg/Wolf Creek trail, heading uphill and finding a nice "refrigerator" spot along the creek where an old logging road crosses the stream.

Notions of bushwhacking all the way up to Martha Lake, however, were abandoned when the devil's club became chest high!

A loop was made by hiking part of the old logging spur road from Birch Creek to an old dozer track and back down to the main Jewel Basin road.

Plants like fireweed, that usually bloom in August, are already in bloom, a few ripe huckleberries are to be had here and there, and things are just plain hot and generally ahead of schedule!

Unfortunately, spotted knapweed, ragweed, orange hawkweed, yellow hawkweed, and other noxious weeds are all doing well along the old logging road, with some patches of orange hawkweed having already gone totally to seed for the season.

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.

Everyone is Welcome!

Hope to see you soon,

Keith

Keith Hammer photos:



Swan Rangers seek out a shady bushwhack, as does the devil's club at left.



The bushwhack reward was a cool, shady spot along one of the many cascades of Birch Creek - a great place to just hang out during a heat wave!