

# Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS  
OF WESTERN MONTANA

OCTOBER 1987

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## MONTHLY MEETING

Time and Place: 7:30 p.m. on October 14 at the Montana Power Building, 1903 Russell.

Program: Bill Cunningham will present a slide show on wilderness areas along the continental divide in Montana, particularly in southwest Montana. He will attempt to introduce us to the character of these areas and give us a lot of ideas for future trips, and will also discuss how these areas are being treated by the wilderness bill currently before Congress. Bill is an active outdoorsman, a conservationist who has been active on the national as well as the state level, and the author of a book on the continental divide which has been published by Montana Geographic.

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## TRIP CALENDAR

October 8, 15, 22, and 29: Join trip leader Ralph Flockerzi every Thursday evening at 5:30 p.m. for a mountain bike ride. Watch the "Around Missoula" column in the Missoulian or call 549-9986 or 728-5462 for details.

October 10-11: Hike up Boulder Creek in the Bitterroot Mountains to Mink Lake and out the Trapper Peak Trail over Trapper Peak. Drive up Saturday afternoon, camp at the car, and do the hike on Sunday. Call Martha Yale for more information, 549-2163.

October 17-18: Climb the Heavenly Twins in the Bitterroot Mountains. Camp Saturday night at Saint Mary's Lake. Call Dan Weinstein (who has moved back to Missoula) at 542-0283 for details.

November: Day ski trip to Saint Mary's Peak in the Bitterroot Mountains, probably the first or second weekend of the month. Call Art Gidel, 543-6352, for more details.

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## TRIP REPORTS

Blodgett Canyon, Sunday, September 20, 1987. On September 20, Carol Anderson and her friend Kathy, Jim Conkle and his friend Julie, Andy Huppert, Peter Dayton, Steve Niday, and Dave Pengelly hiked up Blodgett Canyon in the Bitterroot Mountains by Hamilton to Blodgett Pass. We had beautiful, warm, fall weather for the trip. Along the way in we saw a large bull moose with a cow and calf. We reached Blodgett Pass around 2:00 p.m. At that point Peter, Steve and Dave proceeded to the West to climb Blodgett Mountain, while the rest of the group headed back to the cars. Steve took the easy "scramble" approach up the east ridge, while Dave and Peter took the much more difficult walk up the east face of the peak. We left the summit at 3:30 and by 5:00 made our way back to the main trail at the base of Blodgett Pass, about 11 miles from the parking lot. Steve and Dave, being afraid of the dark, managed to get back during daylight hours. Peter, however, couldn't pass up the chance to chase grouse and an opportunity for a stroll in the dark. A good time was had by all. - Dave Pengelly.

Koch Peak, Bitterroot Mountains, Sunday, August 27, 1987. Carol Anderson, Barb Farrell, Brett Doucett, Ralph Flockerzi, and Steve Niday headed up the North shore of Lake Como (4245') and up Rock Creek on Sunday, August 27, under a partly cloudy sky. Barb and Carol hiked up to Elk Lake while the rest of us tried to bag the elusive Koch Peak (9072'). This was the fourth time I had left the car with the same intentions. We walked due North up the East side of a prominent drainage about seven miles from the trailhead near the section line between Sections 31 and 32. After walking up through some nice little Basins, some with small lakes, we came to a basin just below the main ridge. There were two nearly equal high points about a quarter mile apart. Not knowing which was Koch Peak, we climbed up to the ridge between them and decided to head West. After some "interesting" scrambling up wet snow and lichen-covered rock we spotted the real Koch Peak a few hundred yards west. After a bit of down climbing we bypassed a big block and walked up to the summit. The views south across Rock Creek of the Como Peaks, Lonesome Bachelor, and EL Capitan were especially nice, with a dusting of snow on the high country and lots of golden larch. For the trip out we headed east out a long gradual ridge and dropped down into the campground. This route out has a blazed and partially cleared trail most of the way, and would make a very nice day ski trip. The round trip was about ten hours. - Steve Niday.

Deer Lodge Mountain and Mount Powell, Flint Creek Range. Deer Lodge Mountain and Mount Powell are the two high mountains connected by a long bare ridge that are prominently visible to the west of Deer Lodge in the Flint Creek Range. Getting to the base of these mountains is a bit tricky due to closed roads, new roads and problems with access over private land, and it is a good idea to call the U.S. Forest Service office in Deer Lodge for more information about access if you are unfamiliar with the area. On August Peter Dayton, Hannes Jarka, and Brett Doucett hiked up these peaks. We reached the base of the east ridge via a new road which comes up from the south from the prison ranch. The hike up to Deer Lodge Peak is pretty straightforward; the ridge isn't particularly steep, and the vegetation is open and easy to bushwack through, even though there is no trail. Your grandmother could do it if she can handle the elevation gain. Watch for old unexploded artillery rounds; the mountain was apparently used as an artillery range at some point. From the valley the ridge between Deer Lodge Mountain and Mount Powell looks level and rounded, but the whole back side of the ridge is a very impressive curving cliff called "The Crater." However, the ridge is easy to traverse; your grandmother could do it if she doesn't have any problems with vertigo. We saw four mountain goats on this cliff, and the ridge shows signs of heavy goat use. From the top of Mount Powell you get a great view into the Flint Range, which has many lakes. It looks like a good place for a winter ski camping trip. We descended the south ridge of Mount Powell and followed it around to the east back to the valley. This ridge would be a good way to ascend Mount Powell in the winter if you were concerned about cornices or avalanche danger on the ridge between the peaks. - Peter Dayton.

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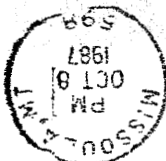
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