



June 16, 2008

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Summit Nature Center Opens

The Summit Nature Center, located on the lower level of the Summit House atop Big Mountain at Whitefish Mountain Resort, opens Saturday, June 21. The Nature Center, a cooperative project of the Flathead National Forest in partnership with Whitefish Mountain Resort, is a fun and educational experience to spark curiosity and understanding about the area's natural resources. Daily hours are 10am – 5pm.

While visiting the Summit Nature Center, kids and adults can test their animal identification skills with the various animal hides and pelts on display. Visitors can learn about wildlife viewing and the importance of keeping safe and being responsible when hiking and camping in bear country.

Various books, DVDs, games, and other materials are also available at the nature center. Children are invited to draw and color, and measure themselves in height compared to different animals of the forest. An outstanding view of the Flathead Valley and several mountain peaks are visible from the Summit Nature Center. Flathead National Forest naturalists will help to identify the peaks and other natural landmarks of the area. Artwork from the Artist-Wilderness-Connection program is also on display in an Inspiration from the Forest exhibit.

During July and August daily wildflower and nature discovery hikes with a naturalist are offered free of charge at 11am and 3pm. Participants should meet the naturalist by the sign near the Summit House entrance.

Children ages 7-12 are invited to become Junior Forest Rangers, with official badge and certificate, by completing an activity book obtained at the nature center. Families are encouraged to reserve an "adventure pack" from the nature center and explore the outdoors. The pack contains field guides and materials to help families learn together in a fun and informal setting. There is no use fee for the adventure pack.

Contact 758-5218 for more information about the Summit Nature Center.

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