



JULY CAMP 2009 GIANTS CASTLE

The site for the 90th July Camp of the KwaZulu-Natal Section of the Mountain Club of South Africa will be in the Giants Castle Game Reserve of the Ukhahlamba Drakensberg Park. This site offers excellent opportunities for trips north to the Injasuti and Champagne Castle areas of the Drakensberg and south to the Giant itself, or even further to Highmoor, Kamberg and Lotheni. The area offers superb hiking both in the Little Berg and on the Escarpment. For the climbers, there are good rock climbing opportunities and, if the winter is cold, there could be ice climbing. The area is very well known for its superb examples of rock art, and the display in the Main Caves at Giants Castle is a must for those who have not seen it. Also of particular interest for bird-lovers is the Lammergeyer hide and feeding station.



The Camp will run from **Saturday 4 July to Saturday 18 July**, and will be based north-east of the outcrop known as the Chimney Pot (Maqomfa 1894m) and overlooks the Mamnedeni Stream which drops to join the Bushman's River near the Witteberg Gate entrance to the Reserve.

July Camp 2009 will offer:

- some well-known climbs of varying grades (including Scholes, South Ridge and Gable routes on Giants Castle)
- the free-standing Injasuti Triplets (3187m), the Eastern Triplet having better rock than the Western sandstone cliffs nearby for those who would like to do some bouldering, without carrying climbing equipment to the Escarpment
- superb sub-camps and long hikes in the Little Berg and/or on the Escarpment
- satisfying day walks with views, forests, waterfalls, streams and spectacular rock formations
- excellent opportunities for game viewing, bird-watching and Berg photography
- visits to sites of historic and rock art interest

Applications to attend the Camp should be made on the enclosed form. Each prospective Camper is asked to indicate his/her ability, preference and membership status (non-members are most welcome and pay a modest levy). Campers are assigned to parties according to their ability and preferences. It is recommended that Campers should be reasonably fit and well equipped. Prospective leaders are asked to indicate the type of party they would like to lead.

Children, accompanied by their parents (or other adults) taking full responsibility for them at all times, will be admitted provided that, like all other Campers, they are reasonably fit, well-equipped and can carry their own kit according to the trip. Young children will be assigned to the same party as one of their parents (or other adults).

DIRECTIONS TO THE CAR PARK and BASE CAMP

From Durban or Pietermaritzburg areas, take the N3 towards Johannesburg, and continue until you reach the Mooiriver Toll Plaza glide off. At the top of the glide off, turn left and then right at the tee intersection at the petrol station onto the R103 road to Mooiriver. At the traffic circle, turn left into the town of Mooiriver, then right at the first stop street. Take the first left turn after crossing the railway bridge. At the stop street, turn right up the hill to the Giants Castle road. Continue along this road for about 65 kms, do not take the left-hand turn off to Kamberg nor the right-hand turn to Ntabamhlope.

From Johannesburg, Orange Free State and Cape areas, take N3 towards Durban, and continue until you reach the Mooiriver Toll Plaza. At the Toll Plaza take the extreme left-hand toll booth and then take the glide off. At the top of the glide off, turn left and cross the toll road and then right at the tee intersection at the petrol station onto the R103 road to Mooiriver. At the traffic circle, turn left into the town of Mooiriver, then right at the first stop street. Take the first left turn after crossing the railway bridge. At the stop street, turn right up the hill to the Giants Castle road. Continue along this road for about 65 kms, do not take the left-hand turn off to Kamberg nor the right-hand turn to Ntabamhlope.

The car park, which will be sign posted, is on the right-hand side of the road, about 150m before the Main Gate to the Reserve. However, Campers are advised stop at the gate, tick their names off the July Camp list at the Main Gate office, drop off their rucksacks for transporting up to the Camp and then to go back and park their cars at the car park. Please park carefully since parking space is limited in the car park.

Please note that the Main Gate is only open from 06h00 to 18h00 and that no camping is allowed at the car park.

Please ensure that everyone signs next to their name on the list at the Main Gate before you start walking up to the Camp. Campers walk to the Base Camp from the Main Gate. A fairly good jeep track drops down to cross the river near the Gate and then continues up into the Little Berg and to the Base Camp site. This walk takes about 50 – 60 minutes.

If you want any further details, please phone Ron Wedderburn on 083 735 8080.

Campers' kit will be transported between the car park and Base Camp at the following times:

Saturday 04 July from the Main Gate to Base Camp – 12h00 and 15h00
Saturday 11 July from Base Camp to the Main Gate - 09h00
Saturday 11 July from the Main Gate to Base Camp – 12h00 and 15h00
Saturday 18 July from Base Camp to the Main Gate – 09h00

However, in the event of very bad weather, if the tractor transport cannot negotiate the track, **it may be necessary for campers to carry ALL their own kit to and from the Base Camp.**

Campers arriving, or leaving, at times other than these must be prepared to carry ALL their own kit to and from the Base Camp.

PERMITS and PASSPORTS

Base Camp is situated on KZ-NWWildlife land and **each Camper will be required to carry a valid permit** to be in KZ-NWWildlife area and to produce it if required. Individual permits will be issued in Base Camp. The cost of the permit is included in the fees. All MCSA members are advised to carry their membership cards with them.

To avoid international problems, **Campers intending to traverse the Escarpment must also carry passports valid for Lesotho.**

BASE CAMP

Campers are required to bring their own suitable tents - remember that sub-zero temperatures, very strong winds and snow are not uncommon.

A large tent (belonging to MCSA) will be pitched for storing excess kit when personal tents are taken on sub-camps.

In Base Camp, all meals are prepared and served by members of the kitchen staff, but Campers wash their own mugs, cutlery and dishes.

After supper, weather permitting, Campers can gather around the campfire in the campfire enclosure for a singsong and hot chocolate or cocoa.

Limited hot water is provided at the rustic bathrooms.

KIT REQUIRED

Lightweight tent and **bedding suitable for sub-zero temperatures** (with possible wind, snow and/or rain)

Clothing (generally, the days are sunny and mild, but the nights are intensely cold)

Water-proof and windproof gear

Personal first aid kit, sun-hat and sun-barrier creams

Torch and spare batteries

Toiletries

Boots - sturdy, supportive, water repellent and with strong Vibram-type soles. **Veldskoen, tyre-soles and sports shoes are unsuitable for snow and ice conditions, which are not uncommon in July**

Water bottle

Rucksack appropriate to intended activities

Two mess kit sets - one set for use in Base Camp and to be retrieved at the end of Camp, the other for trips

Plastic bucket/ basin to carry water and to wash clothes

Biodegradable soaps and shampoo

A clothesline is useful

If Campers wish to bring a chair to sit on, please bring a small folding one and not an armchair. **Please do NOT bring a safari type armchair.**

Preferred sweets, drinks and snacks to share around the campfire or while out on sub-camps/day trips

2 large rubbish bags - the principle of 'carry in, carry out' applies. Participation in July Camp is on the understanding that each Camper will carry out and take away ALL the rubbish he/she generates both in Base Camp and on day-trips or sub-camps. NOTE: All empty cans and bottles MUST be carried back to the cars and taken away with you

If you want to join a sub-camping party, bring cooking utensils, food containers, plastic bags, cooking billy and stove plus spare fuel container. This allows the leader to select the equipment for the trip.

NOTE: NO OPEN FIRES ARE ALLOWED ON SUBCAMPS: ONLY STOVES may be used for cooking on subcamps and daytrips.

Benzene and methylated spirits for your stoves are provided in Base Camp.

Camping stoves MAY NOT BE USED IN BASE CAMP because of the fire hazard.

If you want to join a rock-climbing party, bring their own harness and climbing equipment. This allows the leader to select the best equipment for the climb/s.

FOOD

Camp fees include a standard selection of food for all meals in Base Camp and on day trips
Pre-packed, lightweight food is provided for sub-camping trips

However, Campers with specific dietary needs are advised to provide for their own requirements.

COST

R120 per person per night or R 840 per week

PLUS KZ-NWildlife Overnight Hiking Fee of R40.00 per night

If you are not a member of MCSA, or an affiliated mountain club, there is an additional visitor's levy of R75, which can be redeemed against future membership of the KZ-N Section of the MCSA.

The Camp reserves the right to retain a 20% booking fee to defray expenses when refunding cancelled bookings.

Refunds will only be made if cancellations are received before 19 June , as all the food for the Camp will be purchased during the following week

PAYMENT and CLOSING DATE

Application forms and full payment must be received on or before Saturday 6 June 2009.

Cheques must be made payable to Mountain Club of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Section, July Camp.

Alternatively, money **including any applicable cash deposit fee** may be paid directly into the July Camp account, Standard Bank a/c no: 058122133, Branch: Howick. Branch code: 058325. If needed, the Swift Code is SBZA ZA JJ www.standardbank.co.za

PLEASE REMEMBER TO FAX (OR INCLUDE A PHOTOCOPY OF) YOUR DEPOSIT SLIP WITH YOUR APPLICATION.

Late entries will be accepted only if the Camp is not fully booked.

FURTHER INFORMATION, QUERIES AND ADDITIONAL FORMS

The Convener, July Camp Sub-Committee,
Rikki Abbott,
P O Box 557,
Hilton, 3245

Telephone: 033 330 3921 (home) 033 355 9358 (office) 082 538 538 9 (cell)

Fax: 033 330 8412 (all hours)

E-mail: ronwedd@netactive.co.za OR abbotr@dae.kzntl.gov.za in process of changing to rikki.abbott@kzndae.gov.za

URGENT MESSAGES

From Monday 29 June to Friday 3 July, 2009, the July Camp sub-Committee will be in the Berg preparing the Camp and will probably be out of cell phone range.

Any very urgent messages in connection with the Camp, may be telephoned to the Senior Conservation Manager, Central Drakensberg:
Mr. Makhiseni Myeza

Telephone: 036 353 3613 OR 084 811 2382

OR

Ms Daphne Mthetwa, Conservation Manager, Giants Castle

Telephone: 084 363 8660

REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE KZ-NWILDLIFE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

July Camp endorses a comprehensive system of environmental practices that address, *inter alia*, conditions of access, admissible structures, services, monitoring, auditing and decommissioning, reinstatement and rehabilitation, pollution and the impact of the event on soil, animals, vegetation and other area users. For example:

Water quality

The Berg is the main watershed for KZ-N, so all Campers are required to use biodegradable soaps and shampoo and to ensure that grey water is dispersed directly onto a grassed area and not into a watercourse.

When out of Base Camp, all Campers are required to observe bush etiquette.

Soil conservation

Palettes or duckboards must be used in the bathrooms to prevent soil trampling and compaction.

Waste

The principle of 'carry in, carry out' will apply. Participation in July Camp is on the understanding that each Camper will carry out and take away ALL the rubbish he/she generates both in Base Camp and on day-trips or sub-camps.

Safety

Each Camper leaving the Camp (whether for a day trip or a sub-camp) must ensure that he/she clearly indicates his/her destination on the Mountain Register in the Camp.

All Campers leaving Camp must carry water, adequate warm and waterproof clothing, a torch and spare batteries.

Noise

The sense of peace, animals and other visitors must not be disturbed by noise.

No radios (or loud music) shall be permitted.

Monitoring

The site will be monitored before and after the event

Flora and fauna

Should any sensitive species (e.g. vulture, lammergeyer or oribi) be seen, Reserve Management should be alerted immediately, so that the appropriate action, as advised by these specialists, can be taken.

Gathering of firewood is not permitted.

Fire

No open fires may be made by day trip or sub-camp parties. Special concession is given for the Camp to cook on open fires and to have a campfire, if conditions permit.

General

All standard conservation codes must be practised.

APPLICATION TO ATTEND JULY CAMP 2009

PLEASE:

- delete alternatives that are not applicable
- use **BLOCK LETTERS**
- use a separate form for each person

Dr, Miss, Mrs, Mr

Address

..... Code.....

Telephone (code and number).....Cell.....e-mail.....

In the case of a child, age..... countersigned by parent/guardian.....

I wish to spend only one night in Camp onJuly, 2009

I wish to attend Camp from July toJuly, 2009

I am a member of the.....Section of MCSA/ Mountain Club

I am not a member of any mountain club

I wish to **hike in the Little Berg with optional one-day trips to the Escarpment**

I wish to **subcamp with some nights on the Escarpment**

I do/do not go on regular subcamping trips

I wish to go on **day trips, returning to Base Camp each night**

I do/do not go on regular day-hikes

I wish to **lead a subcamp party**

I wish to **climb** up tograde

I do/do not climb regularly

I wish to **lead a climbing party** up tograde

I am/am not **proficient in abseiling**

CAMP CHARGES

KZ-N Wildlife over night Hiking Fee	nights @ R 40.00 per night	R
MCSA July Camp Camping fee	days @ R 120 per day/ R 840 per week	R
Parking fee of R5 per week, or part thereof		R
Non-member levy of R75		R _____
	Total	R

I enclose a cheque for R..... payable to Mountain Club of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Section, July Camp

OR

I have made a direct deposit of R.....to the Mountain Club of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Section, July Camp, Standard Bank a/c no 058122133. Branch – Howick, branch code - 058325. If a cash deposit is made then the applicable cash deposit fee must be included.

Proof of payment attached/ has been faxed to The Treasurer at 033 3308412 OR e-mailed to ronwedd@netactive.co.za

I have faxed a copy of the deposit slip to 033 330 8412.

YES

SIGNED

DATE.....

PLEASE return booking form and payment to Treasurer on, or before, Saturday 6 JUNE, 2009 to: _____

Fax: 033 330 8412 (all hours)

OR

The Treasurer
July Camp Sub-Committee
P O Box 78
DARGLE,

Treasurer: (cell) 083 735 8080 (phone) 033 330 8412 e-mail: ronwedd@netactive.co.za