



# The Mountain Club of South Africa KwaZulu-Natal Section

Established 1919

EXPLORE

• DISCOVER

• CONNECT

• PROTECT

## 94<sup>th</sup> JULY CAMP 2013 - WONDER VALLEY

This year, July Camp will be in the aptly named Wonder Valley, which many people only know from looking down into it, longingly, after a good walk from Injasuthi to Wonder Valley Cave. We have a new Base Camp Site this year, about 4 kilometres upstream from the 1999 Camp Site. This new site also offers other exciting attractions. We will be camped on privately owned land alongside the Spitsberg Stream. Our generous hosts, Jonathan Bass and Colin Barrow, have offered us a superb Base Camp site - far off the popular Berg trip routes, with new approaches, stunning views, extensive indigenous forest and excellent swimming pools! (If you have the Natal Drakensberg Park Hiking Map no 2, Culfargie to Monk's Cowl, or the older Department of Forestry map of the Northern Berg, Cathedral Peak to Injasuthi), you will be able to find it in the vicinity of the farm, Maatshappij, where the path crosses the river. In the recent past, a massive wattle-clearing programme has been underway and the results are a delight to behold.

This area of the Berg offers a dramatic and scenically rugged terrain with park-like protea savannah, stunning ridge walks, easy access to the contour path, fine opportunities for subcamping, backpacking on the Escarpment, and, of course, delightful, varied and memorable day-walks, for those who are thus inclined. There are also relatively unknown examples of rock art, abundant bird life and the antelope for which the Berg is renowned.

Like last year's Base Camp, this year we will be back to the traditional style July Camp, but with additional improvements in the vital kitchen area. Once again, we have come up with yet more refinements to the bathrooms and toilets in the determined hope that they will be more windproof!

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Camp dates have been changed to accommodate two full weeks of school holidays and so will run from **Saturday 29 JUNE to Saturday 13 July 2013**. Following the article in the recent MCSA Journal about the three 3 July Camp Mums who subcamped with 7 very young children and gave all the low-down on how to do it, we are hoping for good support from parents with younger would-be mountaineers. Wonder Valley Cave, being in sight of Base Camp, is just made for such trips!

Campers can attend for the whole period, either week, or for just a few days. **Please book early.**

### • July Camp 2013 will offer:

- 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
- visits to rock art sites
- excellent opportunities for game viewing, bird-watching and Berg photography

### • Applications to attend the Camp:

**Each Camper should** apply to attend July Camp on a **separate copy of the enclosed form** and indicate his/her preferences, abilities, and membership status. Campers are assigned to parties according to their ability and preferences. **Prospective leaders** are asked to indicate the type of party they would like to lead. All Campers, for their own convenience and safety, should be reasonably fit and well equipped. **Children, will be very welcome and are to be** accompanied by a parent (or other adult) taking full responsibility for them at all times. **N. B. Visitors are very welcome.**

## ● DIRECTIONS TO THE BASE CAMP

**From Durban, Pietermaritzburg and Howick**, continue on the N3, pass through the Mooi River Plaza. Then **take Exit 179 (Estcourt North, Drakensberg World Heritage Site North)**. At the top of the ramp, **turn to Loskop**. Pass the turn off to Injasuthuti. A little way on, **take Exit 600 (Drakensberg World Heritage Site and Cathkin Estates)**. At this point, on the opposite side of the road, there is a large sign with a picture of the Drakensberg Boys' Choir and "Welcome to Thokozisa" on it.

**Keep left at the Drakensberg Sun/Sterkspruit Falls sign.**

**Continue about 1.4 kilometres and turn in at Inkosana Lodge where we will be parking.**

**FROM UPCOUNTRY**, take the N3 until you come to Exit 179, then turn to Loskop and follow the directions given above. Or if you so wish, you could turn off earlier and come in via Winterton.

**Unless there has been a dramatic change to conditions on the Oliviershoek Road, PLEASE do not attempt it, even though it is shorter.**

This year the logistics of getting kit and Campers into Camp are a bit complicated; but the site is worth it!

\*Parking will be at Ed Salomon's Inkosana Lodge

\* Parking will be available at Ed's at R20, regardless of the length of the stay because he will have to hire extra guards for the whole period of the Camp. **Pay direct to Ed.**

\*From there, Ed will provide transport @ R5 per person per trip (for own account) and leave the kit at the dump site about 5kms further up the road, then continue to take passengers further by road to the start of the recommended walking route.

\***Or** the driver could take passengers and kit and drop the kit at the dumpsite

\*Then take the passengers beyond the prominent sign "Strathyr" on the left hand side of the road and to the next farm gate that is the start of the recommended route for walkers.

\*Then the driver would drive back to Ed's and either get a trip with Ed or walk the entire trip.

\***Or** the really fit could carry all their kit from Ed's!!!

\***Those wanting to get their tents up early are advised to carry them in or ensure that their kit is at the dump site well in time for the earlier trip, i.e. 12:00 sharp! ( N.B Not mountain Club time!).**

\***In any event, carry warm clothes with you. This is not a trip for late arrivals.**

**If you need any further details, please phone Rikki Abbott Wedderburn on 082 538 5389 or 033 330 3921 (home), Margaret Brown on 082 055 2143 or Mike Coke 083 321 8841.**

## HIKING FEES, CARDS and PASSPORTS

- Leaders wanting to stay in caves will have to take potluck and book them at the Office during the Camp, or let the Organiser know, well in advance, so that she can make an early booking.
- MCSA members are required to carry their **current membership cards** with them.
- Campers intending to go up to the Escarpment must also carry their passports with them.
- For **EVERY TRIP**, be it a day-walk or a sub-camp, **campers will have to complete the appropriate mountain register before leaving the Base Camp and the leader must carry the tear-off counterfoil.**

## BASE CAMP

**Campers are required to bring their own lightweight mountain tents - sub-zero temperatures can be expected. Strong winds, snow or rain are not uncommon.** If you plan to take your own tent sub-camping, there is a large MCSA tent to store your excess kit.

Base Camp, meals are prepared and served by the Camp staff, **but we ALL do our own washing up.**

**Limited hot water** will be available at the superior, state of the art, camp-style bathrooms.

After supper, weather permitting, we gather in the campfire enclosure for a singsong **or chat** and hot drink.

## **TRANSPORT OF CAMPERS' KIT**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due the long tractor ride into Camp on an extremely rugged road, only VERY LIMITED AMOUNTS OF CAMPERS KIT per Camper can be transported into Camp from the luggage dump at the turnoff to the jeeptrack. Transport to the Base Camp will leave this point at the following times, sharp:

- Saturday 29 June from the dump site to Base Camp – 12h00 and 15h00**
- Saturday 06 July from Base Camp to the dump site - 09h00**
- Saturday 06 July from the dump site to Base Camp – 12h00 and 15h00**
- Saturday 13 July from Base Camp to the dump site – 09h00**

However, in the event of very bad weather, if the tractor transport cannot negotiate the track or is involved in fighting fires, **it may be necessary for Campers to carry ALL their own kit to and from the Base Camp. SO, in your own interests, PLEASE LIMIT YOUR KIT TO REASONABLE AMOUNTS and pack it very securely because the tractor track is extremely rugged.**

### **NOTE: EMPHATICALLY NO ARMCHAIRS**

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

## **KIT REQUIRED**

- **Lightweight tent and bedding suitable for sub-zero temperatures with** wind, snow and/or rain
  - Clothing (generally, the days are sunny and mild, but the nights are intensely cold)
  - Waterproof and windproof gear
  - Personal first aid kit, sun-hat and sun-barrier creams
  - Torch and spare batteries
  - Toiletries
  - Boots (sturdy, supportive, water-repellant, strong Vibram-type soles! **Other shoes are NOT suitable!**)
  - Water bottle
  - Rucksack appropriate to intended activities
  - Two mess kits - one for use in Base Camp (retrieved at the end of Camp), the other for your trips
  - Plastic bucket/ basin to carry water and to wash clothes
  - **Biodegradable** soap and shampoo
  - A clothesline and a few pegs are useful
  - If required, a folding stool or **SMALL folding chair (NB: NO ARMCHAIRS will be accepted)**
  - Preferred sweets, drinks and snacks to share at the campfire or while out on sub-camps and/or day trips
  - **TWO large rubbish bags – the ‘carry in, carry out’ principle applies. Please keep ALL the rubbish YOU generate both in Base Camp and on day-trips/sub-camps and TAKE IT AWAY WITH YOU.**
  - **If you want to plan your trip in advance or acquaint yourself with the area, the relevant map is Natal Drakensberg Park Hiking Map no. 2, Culfargie - Monk’s Cowl - available from Ezemvelo, P O Box 13609, Cascades, 3202 or [customerservice@kznwildlife.com](mailto:customerservice@kznwildlife.com) (or) from the office at Monks’ Cowl Reserve.**
  - MCSA Berg maps will also be available for sale in the Camp.
  - **Since NO OPEN FIRES ARE ALLOWED in the Drakensberg, ONLY STOVES may be used on day trips and or overnight trips.**
- PLEASE NOTE: NEITHER benzene NOR methylated spirits for stoves will be provided in Base Camp.**
- **If you plan to join a sub-camping party, please bring cooking utensils/billies, containers, plastic bags, stove plus all your fuel, spare fuel containers and gas, if using a gas stove. Then the leader can select the best equipment for the trip.**

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

## **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
- If leaders want to plan their catering, a copy of the food list can be sent via e-mail or posted
- **Campers with specific dietary needs are advised to provide for their own requirements**

### **COST – PLEASE NOTE:**

- a) **The FEES FOR THE CAMP ARE R220 per adult per night (13 to 18 years - R185, 6 to 13 years - R135 and under 6 years - R100)**
- b) If you are **NOT** a member of MCSA, or an affiliated Club, there is an additional **Visitor's Levy of R 80.00**, which can be redeemed against future membership of the KZ-N Section of the MCSA.
- c) The parking fee is R20 per vehicle, regardless of the length of stay, due to extra guards being hired.

**July Camp reserves the right to retain a 20% booking fee in respect of cancellations. Please note, refunds will only be made if cancellations are received before Monday 3 June 2013, as all the food for the Camp will be calculated and ordered during the following weeks.**

### **PAYMENT and CLOSING DATE**

**N.B. Once again, Mike Coke will be handling the applications and bookings.**

- a) Application forms and full payment must be **received by Mike on or before Monday 3 June , 2013.**
- b) NO Cheques will be accepted due to high bank charges on cheques.
- c) Alternatively, if making a **direct deposit**, please include the **applicable cash deposit fee.**  
**Account details are:** Standard Bank, Howick: **Branch code:** 058325: **Account number:** 058122133  
If needed, the Swift Code is SBZA ZA JJ     [www.standardbank.co.za](http://www.standardbank.co.za)

### **• PLEASE INCLUDE PROOF OF PAYMENT WITH YOUR APPLICATION.**

**Late entries** (after Monday 3 June, 2013) will be accepted only if the Camp is not fully booked.

### **• FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, QUERIES AND ADDITIONAL FORMS:**

**The Convenor, July Camp Sub-Committee,**  
**Rikki Abbott Wedderburn,**  
**Telephones: (Home) 033 330 3921 or 033 330 8412 (Cell) 082 538 538 9**  
**(Fax) 033 330 8412**  
**E-mail: [ronwedd@netactive.co.za](mailto:ronwedd@netactive.co.za)**

### **• URGENT MESSAGES:**

*From Monday 24 June to Friday 28 June, 2013, the July Camp Sub-Committee will already be in the Berg preparing the Camp. This year the Camp Site is in line of sight of the transmission tower, so is in cell phone range – keep trying.*

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE EZEMVELO KZ-N WILDLIFE 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.**

**Women please note that this applies particularly to items best described as ‘hygiene products’ and that they should bring suitable ziplock bags. While Campers are encouraged to ‘pack-out all waste’ a designated bag for such products is provided in the Women’s toilet at Base Camp.**

- **Climbing**

**Any leader intending to undertake rock climbs is required to be fully familiar with the Bolting Policy as developed by the KZ-N Section of MCSA and KZ-N Wildlife.**

- **Safety**

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

**WANDERING AROUND ON ONE’S OWN IS AGAINST ALL HIKING CODES.**

- **All Campers leaving Camp must complete the Camp register at the office and 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**

If any sensitive species (*e.g.* vulture, lammergeyer or oribi) are seen, please inform the Reserve Management promptly so that the KZ-N Wildlife specialists can be informed.

- **Fire**

**No open fires may be lit by day trip or sub-camp parties. Special concession is given for the Camp to cook on the camp stove, to heat the bath water in the ‘donkey’ and to have a campfire, if conditions permit.**

- **General**

**All standard conservation codes must be practised.**