

One does not necessarily associate South Africa with hiking, yet the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Park mountains offer the Giant's Cup Hiking Trail.

At over 70km in length, it's one of the most attractive trails in the country. The trails begins at Sani Pas at an altitude of 2847m. The diverse and well marked Giant's Cup Hiking Trail is easily achievable in five days by someone of average fitness.

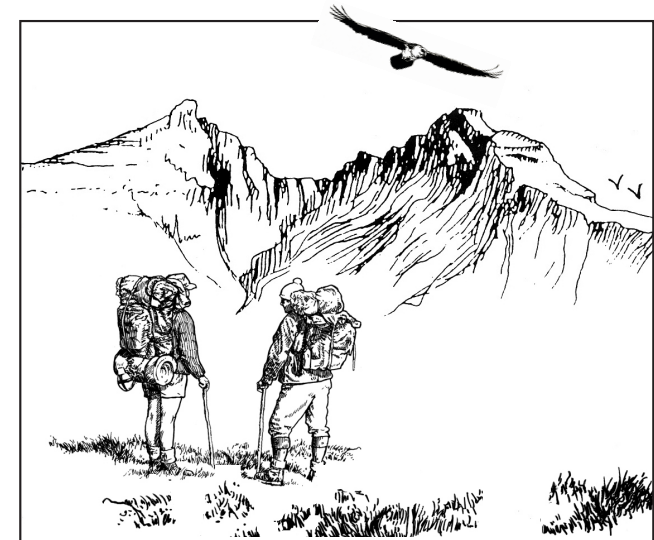
Sani Pass is an access road linking South Africa and Lesotho. An interesting detour is a day's walk up Thabana Ntlenyana which at 3482 m is southern Africa's highest peak.

The Drakensberg mountains offers magnificent scenery, San rock art paintings and a diverse world of fauna and flora; and with their proximity to a generally unexplored Lesotho, provide a sense of wonder and appeal for individuals and adventure seekers.

The safety and comfort of visitors is important to Park management staff.



Giant's Cup Hiking Trail Visitors Guide



CONTENTS

	Page
1. Introduction.....	2
2. To the Start of the Trail.....	2
3. Day 1: Sani Pass to Pholela Hut, Cobham.....	3
4. Day 2: Pholela Hut to Mzimkhulwana Hut, Cobam.....	5
5. Day 3: Mzimkhulwana Hut to Winterhoek Hut, Garden Castle.....	6
6. Day 4: Winterhoek Hut to Swiman Hut, Garden Castle.....	8
7. Day 5: Swiman Hut to Bushman's Nek, Garden Castle.....	9
8. Climate.....	11
9. Fauna.....	11
10. Bookings.....	11
11. Important Information.....	12
12. Tariffs.....	12
13. How to Get There.....	13
14. General Information.....	13
15. Transport & Parking.....	13
16. Indemnity.....	14
17. Notes.....	15

Information contained in this booklet on the Giant's Cup Hiking Trail was translated from the German Outdoor Handbook - Südafrika Drakensberge Giant's Cup Trail by Regina Stockmann and updated by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife staff.

INTRODUCTION

The Giant's Cup Hiking Trail starts along the Sani Pass Road where you will find the trail head sign on your left, approximately 6.4 km from the turnoff onto the gravel road. You have the option of spending the night before starting the trail, in Himeville or Underberg. The two small towns, of which Underberg is the larger one, are 5 km apart and offer a variety of accommodation opportunities, shops, banks and petrol stations.

Before you start the trail (if possible) or at the end of the first day, you are required to visit the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Office at Cobham where you must complete the Mountain Rescue Register. It is important to complete the Mountain Rescue Register because this register contains important information for Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife staff in case you need assistance along the trail. You need to provide names, ages and genders of all hikers in your group as well as the colour of your backpacks and other information on equipment, contact telephone numbers and any relevant medical information. A detailed route description is also required. It is also important to sign back in at the end of the hike at the nearest Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife office (i.e. Bushman's Nek) so that staff know that you have safely and successfully completed the hike. The Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife office also sells hiking maps for the trail and offers the opportunity for you to book the trail at the last minute if necessary. If the huts are already booked, you could book caves or camping accommodation as an alternative.

TO THE START OF THE TRAIL

Before you take the first step, you need to get to the trail head which is 6.4 km along the Sani Pass road. The Sani Pass road is a gravel road but is accessible to most vehicles, even in bad weather. The turn-off to Sani Pass is on the left approximately 4 km north of Himeville. The trail head is reached by travelling along this road past the Sani Pass Hotel on your right. The South African border post is 15 km further along the road beyond the start of the trail. At the border post you may only proceed in 4 x 4 vehicles up the pass to the Lesotho border post, 6 km further. You will need a valid passport to enter Lesotho.

If you have a vehicle, you can drive to the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife field ranger outpost 5.6 km from the turn-off and leave your vehicle there for the duration of the trail. The outpost is permanently manned. Since the trail is not a circular one, you will need to get back to your vehicle at the end of the hike or drive it to the end of the hike at Bushman's Nek. Refer to Page 13 of this brochure for details on transport. If you do not have a vehicle, you can phone beforehand (details on Page 13) or arrange transport with the place where you are overnighing. If you overnight at Sani Backpacker Lodge or hotel, they will drive you the few kilometers up the pass to the start of the trail.

DAY 1: SANI PASS TO PHOLELA HUT, COBHAM

The Giant's Cup Hiking Trail is well demarcated with route markers throughout. You will frequently encounter white footprints (180 x 70 mm in size) on trees, rocks or poles along the route. These footprints indicate the way-to-go. The trail follows the direction of the front of the foot. Numbers in the footprint indicate the number of kilometers since the start of the day's trail. Two footprints indicate an upcoming change in direction of the trail. The change in direction is shown by two footprints pointing in the direction of the way-to-go.

The first day from Sani Pass to Pholela Hut is 13.3 km and will take approximately 4½-6 hours, including a few rest stops. The trail starts in the parking lot at the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife field ranger outpost 5.6 km past Sani Pass Hotel. From the outpost, you walk about 400 m along the Sani Pass road following three sharp curves in the road. The trail starts at the Giant's Cup sign on the left of the road. For the next 2 km the trail leads left through the grassland. You will walk past rocks of an unnamed plateau but the terrain is not very steep or sheer. In order to prevent the trail from eroding, erosion barriers have been placed across the trail to channel water off the trail. These erosion barriers are often hidden under grass bushes and one should take care not to trip over them.

Shortly before you reach the 2 km marker, the trail turns to the right. The rocks of the plateau have become a steep rocky slope that now has to be climbed. After 1½ km and approximately a 200 m rise in altitude you reach the top of the plateau. The trail then leads along the plateau past a large boulder. From this site (about 3.7 km), you have a good view onto the Giant's Cup Peak - the namesake of the trail. The Giant's Cup itself, lies in a saddle between the two Peaks known as Hodgsons Peaks.

After 500 m the view drops into the Gxalingenwa valley that separates the unnamed plateau from the Ndlovini hill opposite (2 202 m). In the narrow boulder valley you will find the enchanting and deep blue-grey Ngenwa Pool at 4.5 km, a small natural pool on the Gxalingenwa stream. You reach the pool via a short steep trail. You can rest on the large boulders at the waters edge and have a refreshing swim. If there are already people at the pool, you can walk a few metres upstream where you will find a few more pools. The water in the Gxalingenwa stream is drinkable, as is all the water in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site.

In order to cross the pool use the wooden bridge.

Trail Head to Ngenwa Pool - 4.5 km ±1½hours

On the other side of the pool the trail continues left along the front of the Ndlovini. After 300 m of uphill, you reach a cave. The cave is protected by boulders and trees which hide a large empty space through which the path passes. If the weather is bad,

this is an ideal spot for a rest. However, you are not allowed to overnight in the cave. A few hundred metres further on the trail crosses another stream. The trail heads uphill for a short section and then east around Ndlovini. At the 5.6 km mark, you come across a large field of *Watsonia* flowers which look like an orange carpet in spring. At the 5.8 km mark, you will have a good view of the Gxalingenwa forest.

At the 8.3 km point, the trail reaches a sandstone shelf. The trail is very well demarcated by white footprints. You reach the end of the shelf after about 200 m and in the distance, you can see Pholela Hut and the end of day one's trail. The trail to the hut passes through boulders and a grove of yellowwood trees before heading down a steep hill. In bad weather, you could take shelter amongst these boulders. At the 10 km mark and for the following 1.7 km, the trail heads steadily downhill through a landscape that offers little shelter from the elements. Once the trail reaches the valley, it first crosses a tributary and then the small Trout Beck stream at 10.5 km. There are two large rocks in the water that provide hikers with long legs a good opportunity to cross. Others might have to take their shoes off to cross the stream. Within the next 500 m the trail crosses the river again where the stream has carved a lovely river bed through the rocks. On the left the river is channelled away by sandstone rocks and upstream to the right it flows over a smooth river bed which offers a good crossing point. If you want to continue with dry feet, you will need to cool your feet once again. If the weather is good, the stream provides another great rest spot, particularly as you know that the end of the day is only 2 km away.

Ngenwa Pool to Trout Beck - 10.9 km ±2½hours

From the rest spot, the trail follows the Trout Beck stream on the right. Only 200 m after the last river crossing, you see Pholela Hut again. After the Trout Beck flows into the Pholela River, you may get the impression that you pass the hut on the wrong side of the river, but at the campsite you will see a hanging bridge and the 13 km mark across the river. Follow the trail past the campsite to Pholela Hut.

Trout Beck to Pholela Hut - 2.2 km: ±½hour Pholela Hut

The hut is an old farmhouse with 30 bunk-beds in four rooms. Two of the rooms have built-in fireplaces. There is a toilet and bathroom with one basin and two showers. There is another bathroom with a toilet and showers that can be accessed from outside. In front of the hut you will find a covered braai area. Hikers reaching Pholela Hut should report to the Cobham office. The office is about 500 m to the right of the front of the Hut. At the office, you can also buy maps, postcards, curios, sweets and cool drinks, and basic grocery items.

You could complete the hike as a day trip at Cobham or start a four day trail from here. Alternatively you can walk the various trails in Cobham where you can book caves to sleep in instead of huts. Keep in mind that huts/caves may already be

booked. If you start or end at Cobham, you can also camp at the campsite. The road that leads to Cobham starts at the southern end of Himeville town. For the 13 km, you should calculate approximately ½ hour.

Day Walks from Cobham - more information on day walks is available at the office. Ngenwa Pools to Baboon Rock and Emerald Stream; Pinnacle Rock; Lakes Cave; Cobham to Siphongweni Shelter; Chameleon Cave; Lakes Cave; Whale Back; Titty Peak; The Policeman Peak; Camel Rock; Venice Cave and Mzimkulwana River.

Day Walks along the Giant's Cup - Hodgson's Peaks; Masubasuba Pass; Pholela River; Monster Rocks; iNhlabeni River; Spectacle Cave and Gorge Cave.

DAY 2: PHOLELA HUT to MZIMKHULWANA HUT, COBHAM

Pholela Hut to Mzimkhulwana Hut - 9 km: ±2½ hours. (Incl. stops: ±3½ hours)

From Pholela Hut you walk diagonally to the left towards a horse paddock. The sign "Giant's Cup 2nd Day" points right along the paddock to the Pholela River. The trail winds along the paddock and after 100 m the Giant's Cup trail leads away from the Pholela River and to the left up the slope. After 100 m you climb some stone steps on the left where the trail makes a large bend uphill away from the paddock and over rocky substrate after which it heads off to the right. At this point if the weather is good, one has a fantastic view onto the Giant's Cup, and you can see a large part of yesterday's trail behind you. At the 1 km mark, you have a view of a lovely waterfall on the right.

After 3 km and 200 m altitude you cross over a plateau in the direction of Siphongweni Ridge (2 151 m). On the left of the trail you will see large sandstone rocks - The Tortoise Rocks. After following the ridge for a while, the trail takes you to the left and southern side of eSiphongweni Ridge. Once you have reached the sandstone rocks that the trail passes on the left, the vegetation becomes a denser-typical fynbos vegetation with Proteas, *Helichrysum* bushes and *Leucosidea* (Ouhout).

After the cave, the trail makes a large bend around Siphongweni Ridge. At the 7 km mark you walk through a Protea woodland and have a lovely view on a forest patch in a gorge below you on the left. At 7.2 km you cross a small stream. After 300 m you will see Mzimkhulwana hut. A bridge leads over the Mzimkhulwana River that separates you from the hut.

Mzimkhulwana Hut

The hut consists of five rooms next to each other with three bunk beds in each room. An open area in between the rooms serves as the kitchen with a concrete table in it.

A small hut further upstream offers toilets, cold water showers and hand basins. You can sunbathe on the rocks above the hut or you can swim in the large pool on the Siphongweni River, a tributary of the Mzimkhulwana River, about 30 m downstream of the bridge. A large rock offers a seat and the means to enter the pool.

Day walks from Mzimkhulwana Hut - Since Day 2 is quite a short one, there is lots of time to spend the afternoon at the pool on the Siphongweni River or scouting the area.

DAY 3: MZIMKHULWANA HUT to WINTERHOEK HUT, GARDEN CASTLE

Day 3 meanders along a plateau between Little Bamboo Mountain (2 421 m) and Bamboo Mountain (2 366 m) and leads through a populated valley to a couple of rondavels at the base of the Garden Castle Mountain.

Mzimkhulwana Hut to Winterhoek Hut - 12.2 km: ±4 hours (5½ hours with rest stops).

From Mzimkhulwana Hut hike back along the Siphongweni River without crossing it. The trail heads straight and crosses the hanging bridge over the Mzimkhulwana river. After the river crossing, head up the Bamboo Mountain. After 3.5 km you reach a small stream that must be crossed. You follow the stream for a bit before heading up to the left. After 4½ km and a 350 m rise in altitude you reach the plateau between the two Bamboo Mountains. The plateau cuts through an area of rugged beauty and bizarrely eroded rock. The path passes Crane Tarn, a small mountain lake where you maybe lucky enough to see cranes. The two Bamboo mountains are named after the endemic Berg Bamboo *Thamnocalamus tessellatus* that grows in the area.

Mzimkhulwana Hut to Crane Tarn - 4½ Km: 1½ Hours

On top of Little Bamboo Mountain, you will come across Crane Tarn which is a good rest spot. If you look along the trail in the direction of the walk ahead, you will see Garden Castle Peak (2 356 m) and in front of it a valley with many houses. The rondavels of Winterhoek Hut are at the foot of the peak under a few oak trees. To reach them you need to descend on the other side of Crane Tarn. The trail leads through a Protea woodland. After 700 m of downhill, you reach the narrow valley of Killicranckie stream which was named by Scottish settlers.

After about 1 km there is a fork in the trail, which if followed to the left for 100 m will take you down to the Killiranckie pool. The pool has a small waterfall next to a huge boulder which is an ideal place to sit in good weather. Many smaller pools can be found close by. Back on the main trail one crosses a stream, after about 600 m, after which the path leaves the stream and heads straight over a slope towards Garden Castle. The peaks of the castle provide direction. Upon reaching a stile you enter private land. After a second stile the path heads steeply downhill to a stream that

feeds the nearby trout dams. This and another tributary must be crossed. Once past the 8 km marker you follow the trail above the trout dams and a farmhouse.

Behind the farmhouse, the path turns to the right and heads over another stile after which you cross the overflow from the trout dams another 100 m on. You will cross the tracks that lead to the farmhouse and follow the stream downhill to reach the main tar road. This is the main road from Underberg via Drakensberg Gardens Hotel to Garden Castle where the fourth hut of the Giant's Cup is located. Follow the road to the right for 1.7 km past a few farmhouses and over two bridges. There are no shops along the road. After the second bridge and a curve to the right you will see a "Castleburn Lake" sign and white footprints indicating that you need to head left up a small hill. The trail heads over the top of the hill and not around it. The view from this plateau into the foothills of the Berg, makes the short climb worthwhile. On the other side of the hill, the trail leads through a further two gates before you cross a stream below a small concrete dam and then reach Winterhoek Hut.

MAIN TAR ROAD TO WINTERHOEK HUT = 3.2 km: ½ hour.

Winterhoek Hut

This hut consists of eight rondavels. Five of these huts have three bunkbeds in each, one rondavel serves as a kitchen while another serves as the bathroom with cold water showers. The remaining rondavel consists of a low wall and a bench around the inside. The site is very inviting under the peak of Garden Castle and sheltered by the oak trees. You may swim in the small pond above the dam if the water isn't too murky.

DAY 4: WINTERHOEK HUT to SWIMAN HUT, GARDEN CASTLE

On Day 4, the trail does not follow the mountains to the east. It goes along Garden Castle and along the crest of a ridge stretching to the north, heading towards the escarpment. The trail passes through typical highland grassland which is very rich in wildflowers in spring and summer. From Black Eagle Pass you have a good 180 degree view onto the Drakensberg escarpment.

Winterhoek Hut to Swiman Hut - 12.8 km: ±4½ hours (6 hours with a rest)

The trail starts behind the rondavels and winds up over the hill below Garden Castle. The day's first uphill starts here, however, although it is steep it is very short. The trail crosses a small perennial stream at about 1.4 km. After about 2 km you reach Black Eagle Pass below the jagged peaks of the castle. At this stage you have climbed 300 m in altitude and your reward is a lovely view onto the valley below and the plateau across the valley.

Ahead you can see Little Bamboo and Bamboo Mountain and on the left, the rocks lead to a plateau that reaches its highest point in No Mans Pass (3 100 m) and Rhino

Peak (3 051 m). Keep an eye on the sky above because this is the breeding and feeding range of both the Verreaux's (Black) Eagle and the Bearded Vulture. You often see these majestic birds soaring amongst the peaks.

Winterhoek Hut to Black Eagle Pass - 2 Km: ±1 Hour

Since the long trail follows the top of the plateau you should not rely on coming across water. Once you have had your fill of the lovely view (hopefully in good weather), the trail takes you along Garden Castle onto another mountain in the west. There is, however, no change in altitude. At a height of 2 000 m the trail winds across the plateau providing alternating views of the Mlamboja and Mzimkulwana Rivers on your right and the Mzimude River on the left. In-between you will pass through a few Protea woodlands. The trail goes around a few hills on the right after which you can see Drakensberg Gardens Hotel amongst the pine trees in the valley on your right and a bit further ahead and on the left is Garden Castle. Just before the 12 km mark, you cross above a small waterfall and in the midst of the silvery looking gum trees of Garden Castle ahead, you can see Swiman Hut.

Black Eagle Pass to the End of the Plateau - 5½ km: 1½ hours

After the last, and much lower hill, the path goes over a saddle along rocky ground through Protea woodland. At the end (8½ km), there is a short and steep descent for about 300 m. After 500 m and at the 9 km mark, you end up on a sandstone shelf, along which the grassland stretches all the way to the hut.

End of the Plateau to Swiman Hut = 5.3 km: 1½ hours

SWIMAN HUT

This hut is an old forestry house that has electricity and therefore hot water showers. In the large house there are toilets and showers, a kitchen and a lounge with a fireplace as well as three bedrooms with four, four and six bunk-beds respectively. From the veranda you have a good view of Swiman Peak (2 430 m) above. A sign indicates that you are required to report to Garden Castle Office. To reach the office follow the road leading to Swiman Hut and turn left when it joins the main road. Alternatively you can follow a narrow path- a short cut to the office leading from the left of the veranda. Keep left and when you reach the fenced houses cross the access road and pass the houses on the left. At the back of the fenced area and to the right is a gate after which a bridge takes you across the Mashai River and the office ahead. The office has cold drinks, sweets and a few curios and basic grocery items. Because of the road access, you can start the Giant's Cup trail or end it at Swiman's although you only have one more day's walk to Bushman's Nek. **Remember to complete the Mountain Rescue Register if you are starting or ending the trail here.**

If you require more luxurious accommodation, or if you end the trail here, and require some pampering, Drakensberg Gardens Hotel is an option. The hotel is about 3.5 km

away along the access road to Garden Castle. You can take a short cut to the hotel by keeping right at the 9.5 km marker of the trail. There is also a shop at the hotel which offers a few more amenities than the shop at Garden Castle.

Day walks from Swiman Hut - a few day walk options exist. One option is the Monk via Sleeping Beauty Cave (sleeps 12) and Engagement Cave (sleeps 6). It is necessary to book caves if you intend overnighting in them. The second option is the trail to the pools and Busman's Rock. Another option is the path over Mashai Pass to Rhino Peak approximately 9 km (6 - 8 hours) via Pillar Cave and Mashai Shelter.

DAY 5: SWIMAN HUT to BUSHMAN'S NEK, GARDEN CASTLE

The last day passes over a ridge into the narrow valley of the Mzimude River and to Langalibalele Cave below a fire lookout tower. A few high peaks help to orientate you; Mlamboja (3 309 m), Wilson's Peak (3 276 m), Mashai (3 313 m), Mzimude (3 210 m), Walker's Peak (3 306 m) and Devil's Knuckles (3 028 m). You reach your destination at Bushman's Nek where you can either drive back to Himeville or overnight in the last hiking hut or in the nearby Bushman's Nek Hotel. Alternatively you can continue your hike up to Lesotho.

Swiman Hut to Bushman's Nek Hut - 12 km: ±4 hours (5 hours with a rest)

You start the hike by retracing your steps for 1 km to a stone sign at which the trail forks to the right. The trail takes you slowly over a few small ridges along the left side of the plateau. At 3.5 km you reach a few boulders behind which the path turns to the right. At 4.8 km a trail leads to the right of the main trail towards hidden valley. The trail crosses a hill and dips down a steep sided valley after 2 km to the Mzimude River which offers a good rest spot.

Swiman to Mzimude River - 5 km: ±1 hour

After crossing the wooden bridge over the river, choose the lower path and you will pass the 5 km marker. After 300 m the trail takes you up to the right and away from the river over a hill into a side valley of the Mzimude River. This remote valley is surrounded on either side by sandstone cliffs. From here you have a good view onto the Drakensberg and its foothills. The trail continues left of Mzimude Peak to Mzimude Pass between Mzimude and Walker Peaks. At 6.5 km, the trail crosses a stream and heads up a steep slope to the right along a tributary valley of the Mzimude River. At the top of this climb (7.3 km), is a large shady Protea and accommodating rock for a rest spot. You then cross this plateau in order to climb the next, less steep plateau. You stay on the latter and cross a stream (8.2 km) after which you stay left along the outer ridge of the plateau. In front of you, Langalibalele Cave comes into view. It lies on the opposite side of the valley under Langalibalele Peak (2 270 m). The trail crosses a stream in front of the cave (8.8 km) which has eroded a deep hole in the rocky river bed. The cave, 100 m on, is a deep overhang of which half has broken off.

On the right of the cave, there is an opening to the main hollow at the back which has a hole in the ceiling and lies behind the piece that has broken off the main entrance. Even though there is evidence of people having slept in the cave, it is forbidden to do so. The cave is ideal for a rest stop in bad weather.

Mzimude to Langalibalele Cave - 2.5 km: ±1 hour

The Giant's Cup Hiking trail heads up to the right in front of Langalibalele Cave onto the plateau above the cave. Keep right past the old fire-lookout and head towards Langalibalele Peak and uphill towards the saddle in front of the mountain. At the end of the saddle (10.4 km) you have a view onto Bushman's Nek Hotel in the valley and the Devil's Knuckles up at Sehlabathebe. The hiking hut and the police station are hidden behind two hills. The trail passes to the right of the two hills and then swings left in front of a third hill before dropping into the valley. At 11.8 km you will reach a crossroads with a sign indicating Bushman's Nek Hut to the right. From this crossroads you walk another 10 minutes to reach the hut. To the left you need to walk another 1 km to the police station.

Langalibalele Cave to Bushman's Nek - 4.5 km: ±1½ hours

Bushman's Nek Hut

Bushman's Nek Hut is similar to Mzimkulwana Hut with five rooms next to each other. The toilets and cold water showers are located between the rooms. If you would like to walk to the police station and parking lot then don't follow the path you came along. Instead follow a path below the hut and in 15 minutes you will be there. Again, one can use this opportunity to overnight in the Bushman's Nek Hotel that lies 2.5 km below the police station.

Day walks from Bushman's Nek - There are opportunities to do day walks and visit caves in this area e.g. Lammergeier cave via Ngwangwane River. You also have the opportunity to walk to Sehlabethebe Lodge which is located in Sehlabethebe National Park.

CLIMATE

At these altitudes, nights are cool in summer and very cold in winter. Snow can occur during any month of the year. Rain falls mainly in summer, when mist and low cloud are common. Winter and autumn days are usually fine and warm. The weather can, however, change rapidly. It is essential, therefore, to be fully equipped to cope with severe changes of weather.

FAUNA

A variety of animals may be seen along the trail, ranging from eland to dassies (rock hyrax). Birds are less common at these higher altitudes but birds of prey such as the Verreaux Eagle and Jackal buzzard may be seen. You may be fortunate enough to see the endangered Bearded Vulture or Cape Vulture on your hike.

BOOKINGS

All enquiries and bookings can be made telephonically, by fax or by e-mail. Details are as follows: Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Reservations Office, PO Box 13069, Cascades, 3202. Telephone: +27 (0) 33 845 1000; Fax + 27 (0) 33 845 1001; General Information: + 27 (0) 33 845 1002. Website: www.kznwildlife.com. Email: bookings@kznwildlife.com

Please note that bookings should be made well in advance of the starting date of the hike to allow sufficient time for the forwarding of the necessary payments and permits. Written applications are accepted up to nine months in advance. If a booking is made in writing, please ensure that the number of people in the group is stated; noting separately the number of adults and juveniles.

Each overnight stop must be clearly stipulated. A minimum of two huts may be booked. The Swiman and Pholela huts may be booked independently, provided that a hiking party of 30 is not traversing the trail. These huts may only be booked a fortnight in advance.

At least one adult must accompany each group of up to ten persons under the age of 18 and hikers must stay on the marked route in groups of not less than three persons.

The receipt printed on the confirmed reservation advice form will serve as the official permit to undertake the hike and must be produced for inspection if required.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

You may start your hiking trail only at an official starting point and may only stay in overnight facilities provided for this purpose. Tents are not permitted.

Plan your hiking trip accordingly. Hikers are requested to use only one mattress each when staying in trail huts. Hiking is allowed only in the direction indicated on the map.

TARIFFS

All rates quoted are inclusive of Community Levy and Emergency Rescue Levy.

Accommodation fees quoted are per person per night. Minimum charges are per unit per night. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is a non vat vendor. Note: tariffs are subject to alteration without prior notice.

All persons of 12 years and older will be charged adult rates. A concession equivalent to half the adult rate is available to high school pupils undertaking the trail under the auspices of a bona fide educational institution. This concession does not apply during school holidays, weekends or on public holidays. Schools must make their written applications on official stationery which must bare the signature of the headmaster. Apart from the map supplied in this brochure, detailed hiking maps of Cobham and Garden Castle are available at the main offices at Cobham, Garden Castle and Bushman's Nek. It is recommended that at least one map per group is purchased. If a group does not wish to share with another party, a block booking and payment must be made for the maximum number of persons (30) that can be accommodated in each hut.

HOW TO GET THERE

Follow the N3 freeway taking the R617 from the Howick South/Underberg off-ramp (exit 99). Follow the R617 through Bulwer to Underberg. In Underberg turn right onto the R315 to Himeville. Approximately 2 km outside of Himeville, turn right onto the P318 to Sani Pass. Travel past the Sani Pass Hotel which is approximately 9.5 km from the Himeville turn-off for a further 3,5 km. The trail starts on the left hand side of the road.

TRANSPORT AND PARKING

Vehicles may only be parked at Bushman's Nek, Swiman and Pholela huts or at the Makhakhe Field Ranger outpost 500 m below the start of the Giant's Cup Hiking Trail. You are responsible for your own transport to the starting point and also from the end point back to your vehicle. This is not a circular route- the start and finish are a long way apart. The road to Mzimkhulwana and Winterhoek trail huts crosses private property. Trespassers will be prosecuted.

Should you need transport to and from the start of the trail, please contact the operators listed below. Underberg Express also offers transport from the Pietermaritzburg and Durban airports for hikers wishing to do the trail.

Mathew Wiggill	+ 27 (0) 33 7011411
Sani Pass Tours	+ 27 (0) 33 7011064
Underberg Express	+ 27 (0) 86 1114924

GENERAL INFORMATION

LITTER

Litter is unsightly wherever it is discarded. Even a sweet paper or piece of orange peel can mar an experience. Hikers are requested to bring back all their refuse for disposal in the refuse bins provided at the huts. Follow the Leave no Trace principles of carry it in, carry it out!

ROCK ART

Rock art is found in many places at Garden Castle and Cobham. The San people who left us these graphic accounts of their way of life are long gone and their art is irreplaceable. Wetting the paintings may reduce their life, while disfiguring them spoils them for the next visitor. Rock art is a national treasure, so please look after it.

FLOWERS

Spring flowers in the Drakensberg are magnificent, although flowers can be found at most times of the year. It may be tempting to pick them but by doing so you will deprive someone else of the pleasure of seeing them and disrupt the ecological process. It is a serious offence to pick wild flowers or any vegetation in the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site.

FIRES

Controlled fire-burning is a necessary part of management, but the use of this “tool” is very carefully considered and monitored. Uncontrolled fires can be devastating. Lighting a small fire to cook over or a carelessly discarded match or cigarette can cause untold damage to vegetation and small creatures and may even endanger human life. No fires are permitted, unless there are in designated areas.

INDEMNITY

Neither the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Board nor the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife accepts responsibility for any death, injury or illness sustained or suffered by any person, or theft, or loss of or damage to any property, occurring within or arising from a visit or visits to parks, reserves, or resorts under the management or control, however caused, and whether allegedly due to the negligence of the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Board / Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife or any of their employees or agents, or arising from the use of any facilities supplied or made available.

Website: www.kznwildlife.com
 Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Commercial Operations: February 2009
 WH/ 2583/02/09

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