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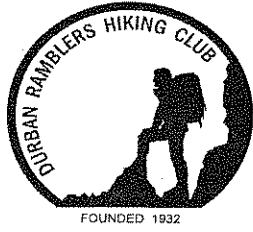
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*This is the official newsletter of the Durban Ramblers' Hiking Club. Contributions are welcome, but the right to edit any contribution is reserved. The opinions expressed in any published article or inserts do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Durban Ramblers' Hiking Club.*

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**THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE DURBAN RAMBLERS' HIKING CLUB**

OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2006

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Chairman	VACANT		
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Magazine Editor	TBA		
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Christmas Party

Book Early

Date and Time  
Venue  
  
Cost

Saturday : 2 December 2006  
Northlands Bowling Club  
Margaret Maytom Ave  
Durban North  
R80 per person.

Cash bar at club prices, glasses provided. Lamb & Beef on the spit with salads/vegetables and pudding. There will also be enough Vegetarian lasagne for everyone. Secure parking with car guard. Yvonne's grandson will be the DJ again. As we need to confirm numbers by 15 November 2006 please contact Mike on 312 4923 (a/h) or 082 822 3106. You can pay by cash before 15th November 2006 or deposit direct into Ramblers account. Friends are welcome but this is

essentially for members of Ramblers and partners as the Club is sponsoring the cost of the venue & DJ.

**Plea from Biff** - Please do not delay in the booking and the paying. We are finding that more and more members book and pay at the last minute for these functions. This causes a problem with the caterers and the quoting of prices which are calculated on numbers at the time of booking.

### INTERESTED IN ADVENTURE?

Come on an amazing journey from Durban to Vic Falls along the old wagon trails with popular Radio and TV Personality **PATRICIA GLYN**.

Hillcrest High School                      Thursday 5th October, 7 pm                      R35.00

Secure Parking on the School grounds. Refreshments on sale. In aid of Hillcrest Scouts (many of whom could be potential future Ramblers members)

### MEMBERS' NEWS

#### **New Members**

Welcome to new members : Cedric Stembridge, Bill & Sandra Gosling, Joy Hodgson, Lisa Raubenheimer. We look forward to hiking with you.

**Monthly Get Togethers                      Meet at 19:00                      Contact Mike on 082 822 3106**

13 October	Royal Natal Yacht Club.
17 November	German Club. 7 Barham Road off Essex Terrace Westville
2 December	Christmas Party see front cover

**NB** It is accepted practise to tip 10% of the bill to the person waiter. Serving a big table like Ramblers is not an easy job.

#### **75<sup>th</sup> Celebration**

Colin Turner and Marge Blake are planning for Rambler's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which will take place in 2007. If you would like to be part of this team (active and non active members) or have any suggestions on ways to commemorate this special anniversary, please contact Colin Turner on 031 708 3517.

### Ten Survival Tips that could save your life:

1. **Always leave a travel plan with someone.** Your plan should cover where you are going to hike and when you will return. In the event you do become lost, searchers will know the exact area in which to concentrate their efforts.
2. **Carry a few basic items in case you do have to spend the night.** Always carry a garbage bag, lighter, whistle, pocketknife and water bottle. This is the bare minimum as it covers the basics of shelter, water and fire.
3. **Pack some basic gear along, like a garbage bag, and you can create a quick shelter.** Cut a slit in the middle of the closed end and then pull it over your head. This amazing survival tool packs easily in a pocket, costs pennies, and can save your life! You can also pack it with leaves or pine needles and use it as a blanket. Carry one with you on every hike. Remember hypothermia- a drastic lowering of the body's core temperature, can occur in 50 degree weather, so have some means of making shelter quickly.
4. **Carry a wool cap with you in your vehicle and in your daypack.** Protect that amazing survival tool between your ears at all costs! Eighty percent of your body heat will be drained if your head is exposed. If you're without a cap, use a sock, bandanna, or anything- but keep your head warm.
5. **Get into the habit of carrying at least three fire making sources on you.** A lighter in your shirt pocket and a spark rod and Windproof matches in your pants pocket or pack. When you have to make a fire in rainy or adverse weather, always gather the dead twigs of evergreens – they will ignite quicker than any other wood.
6. **One of the best emergency fire starters are 100% cotton balls smeared with vaseline.** One of these will burn 4-5 minutes and a batch can be stored in a film canister. A 5cm x 5cm piece of crumbled wax paper will also work but has a shorter burning time. Pine or spruce sap is a superior material for helping to ignite wet wood. Collect the honey-like sap from tree wounds or the ends of fallen logs and insert into your bundle of twigs or smear on Kleenex. Sap will work even if it's wet.
7. **Carry a signal mirror in your pocket.** The glimmer from a mirror can carry for miles and a signal mirror can be used on a windy day unlike the smoke from a fire. Other objects to use for signaling are camera flash, flashlight, aluminum foil, compass mirror, whistle, rocks & logs spelling SOS, cutting a garbage bag into strips on the ground.
8. **Always have a bandanna with you.** These amazing items can be used as a: water strainer, cap, scarf, water collector- use to dip into rock or tree pockets, flag for signaling, pot holder, lashing material, first-aid sling for injured arm, washcloth, and even a fire starter. There are even some bandannas that have useful graphics printed on them such as constellations, animal tracks, and topographic maps.
9. **Know your limits and when it is time to turn back or stop to rest.** Common sense is an important muscle that you must exercise on every trip to the wilderness. All the survival gear, training, and reading won't help unless you USE YOUR BRAIN!
10. **Let's say you do all of these things and you still run into Murphy's Law in the backcountry.** If you do have to spend a night alone in the wilds, remember to adopt a positive mental attitude. Sit down, remain calm by assessing your situation. Are you injured? Did you leave a travel plan with someone? What resources do you have in your pockets? etc. Being calm is a truly critical survival trait to possess.

## AND, TALES OF TRAILS

### Highover : 16 - 18 June 2006

A good party of 26 hikers spent a most enjoyable week-end at Highover in the early winter. The days were fresh and sunny. The winding Umkomaas River was surprisingly full for the time of year, and the red/orange colouring of the cliffs opposite the campsite was quite spectacular in the late afternoons. Ostrich and Impala roam around quite close to the campsite. We spotted a Black Eagle soaring along the cliffs above the river.

With Merle and Ken's leading we made good use of the variety of walks available. On Friday we set off on a moderate hike along the Soada Trail and then branched up to the right along the "Slippery Trail" which was actually pretty dry, and very picturesque.

A new trail has been opened on the opposite side of the river from the campsite - "Tonya's Trail". We drove to the Reception Office on Saturday morning, to hike up the zig-zag path leading to the top of the cliffs. The clear views back to the river and campsite were enhanced by masses of Leonotis Leonorus (Wild Dagga) in full orange bloom.

By lunch-time we had made it to the top feeling we had 'summitted' far more easily than anticipated at the outset. The rest of the hike should have been easy. But the last third of the return was hardly visible. We really struggled down a slippery, grassy shoulder before getting to the farm track, about 3 kilometres from the cars.

Chatter and stories around the braai in the evening did not reflect tired, aching bodies or dampened spirits. Amazing how quickly we recover!

Some of our party enjoyed a game drive on Sunday morning. Others lazed at the campsite. After a leisurely breakfast six of us drove up to the top of Hela Hela for our own game drive. The atmosphere was rather hazy, obscuring distant views somewhat.

We did enjoy the strange looking Wild Donkeys, herds of Springbok(!) and Blesbok. Ken found an amazing number of hidden Porcupine burrows, much to his anguish - a broken rib as a result!

The bunk-houses have been up-graded, electric lights and power points installed, and several kitchen areas have been built.

### Wednesday Walks

Colin Turner and Philip Gatenby organise a morning hike every other Wednesday. All welcome. Phone Colin on 708 3517 or Philip on 201 3592 before the day to find out details and meeting place.

### Communication

Members are requested to let Derek Pretorius have their e mail addresses. This will be used in the event that any urgent messages need to be sent out. Derek's e mail is [sandrajp@eject.co.za](mailto:sandrajp@eject.co.za)

### General

- Each member should keep medical aid and emergency contact details in their backpacks.
- Note that the hikes are organised in various areas according to the season. Hence many hikes are planned in the Kloof area during summer as this area offers shadier hikes.
- Hikers may only hike on official paths in Palmiet Reserve and not in Wilderness area.
- Change of contact details to be advised to Derek Pretorius who is maintaining the Club's membership data base. Telephone 765 5029.
- If possible, please pay monies due to the Club either by cheque, bank transfer or internet banking. This will keep bank charges to the minimum. Cash deposits are expensive. Remember to mark the deposit slip with your name and item for which you are paying and post copy of slip to the Treasurer. See front cover for banking details.

## HIKING PROGRAMME : OCTOBER- DECEMBER 2006

### Saturday Hikes

Hikers may meet at Musgrave Park Medical Centre before 13:30 sharp, or earlier if indicated in the programme, to travel in convoy or to share transport to the start of the hike. Please get to starting point by 13:45 in order for hike to begin on time. A cost of R8.00 for transport is payable to the relevant driver. Hikes marked \*\* are suitable for beginners. Hikes marked # involve an entrance fee into the nature reserve. Visitors are to pay R4.00 to the Club. Bring the correct amount of money as change is not always available. For directions to the starting point, please phone one of the organisers between 12:00 and 12:45 on the day. Children are welcome but check suitability of hike with leader. Please bring at least 1 litre of water, a snack for half time and a hat.

### Sunday Hikes (Full Day)

Please try to get to the meeting places at least 10 minutes earlier so that fees can be collected and lifts arranged timeously. Bring the correct amount of money as change may not be available. Please bring at least 2 litres of water, lunch and a hat. Add R5 for visitors. Sunday hikers are welcome to join Saturday hikes and the following social.

Meeting Places	Durban	Leave 07:30	Musgrave Park, Cnr Berea & Musgrave Roads
	Pinetown	Leave 08:00	Union Main Centre, Old Main Road

If there is a change to the meeting time this will be noted in the hiking schedule below.

**IMPORTANT : if you need a lift from the meeting place, contact the hike leader or one of the hike organisers to ensure that somebody will be there.**

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
1 Oct	<b>Umgeni Valley Nature Reserve. Walk among the giraffes and gambol with the zebras in a different walk from the last time.</b> R40 + R10	Merle	082 454 0521
7 Oct	Umhlanga Lagoon. Shady mangrove forest walk returning via beach. Meet at 13:45 opp. Cabana Beach Hotel. Bring & Braai at Merle's. Easy	Merle	031 561 3038
8 Oct	<b>Rob Roy. Starting from the Rob Roy Hotel. Jon and Steve have a slightly different hike in the Valley of a Thousand Hills. Always beautiful.</b> R10	Steve/ Jon	082 443 4155 082 459 1522
14 Oct	Thornridge Farm. Grasslands and riverine forest walk. Meet at 13:30 at Assagay Hotel car park. Nice walk in spring for flowers. R10 donation to conservancy. Bring & braai at farm. Moderate to Stiff	Trevor	031 765 5133
15 Oct	<b>Tower Meander. Once more to the White Tower. However, this is a different hike from before since we start from the mushroom farm.</b> R15	Brian O'Connell	072 995 6565
21 Oct	Virginia Bush. Easy coastal bush walk. Park in Kensington Drive outside reserve.	Gerald	031 205 1089
22 Oct	<b>No Hike. Weekend away</b>		
28 Oct	Sibaya Meander (NEW). Lovely views. Meet at 13:45 at entrance. Park on right hand side. Drinks afterwards in casino. Moderate	Jenny	031 303 3258
29 Oct	<b>Mimosa Rock. Let's try again to see the Mimosa Rock. Durban's oldest rock formation. See the city from a different angle. Meet at Musgrave Park at 08:30</b> R0	Mike White	083 325 5348
4 Nov	Kloof Beacon. Climb to beacon, stunning views to Durban. Meet at 13:45 at Kranskloof picnic site. R10 entry fee. BYO sundowners. Moderate to Stiff	Brian	072 995 6565
5 Nov	<b>Faraway Farm. An old favourite and a moderate hike.</b> R25	Steve Nel	083 454 0569
11 Nov	Lower Burman Bush. Shady walk through indigenous bush. Meet at 13:45 at Rose Garden opp. Mitchell Park. Drinks at Cackle Jacks -- North past vehicle licensing office in Percy Osborne Rd.	Werner	031 767 2969
12 Nov	<b>Peacevale. Hike through and back above Peacevale Valley along Key Ridge. Fascinating path below Alverstone. Guest Leader.</b> R15	Adrian Rowe	764 4721
18 Nov	Paradise Valley. Shady walk, historical interest. Meet at 13:45 at entrance. R5 entry fee. Easy	Dennis	083 320 4951
19 Nov	<b>Roosfontein. This is a full day hike through the Roosfontein nature reserve and into the valley below Paradise Valley. All meet at the Firkin at the Pavilion at 08:30.</b> R15	Jon Stevens	082 459 1522
25 Nov	New Germany Nature Reserve. Grass/forest reserve, some game viewing and walk in aviary. Meet at 13:45 in reserve car park off Otto Volek Rd. R5 donation.	Philip 4	031 201 3592
26 Nov	<b>Umgeni Bend. Hike along the Umgeni river from Nagle Dam, return via a pretty valley. Fairly long but easy going.</b> R25	Dieter Becker	462 7445

1.15 pm

2 Dec	Kloof Longshadow. Shady walk along river. Meet 13:45 Kranskloof picnic site. R10 entrance fee Easy	Ann	031 767 1027
3 Dec	<b>No Hike. Day after party.</b>		
9 Dec	Palmiet Nature Reserve. Shady walk along river. Meet at 13:45 at reserve entrance below Westville Hotel. BYO sundowners. Easy	Philip	031 201 3592
10 Dec	<b>D'Moss Trail. Explore the wilderness in the centre of the city. Starting and stopping at Denise and John's place. Have a relaxing drink and braai afterwards. Meet at Montclair Senior Primary. 35 Bangor Rd, at 08:30</b> R0	John van Zyl	462 7952
16 Dec	Stainbank Nature Reserve. Shady walk through reserve, some game viewing. Meet at 13:45 at reserve car park. R10 entrance fee. Bring & braai at Herbie's afterwards.	Dennis	083 320 4951
17 Dec	<b>Longshadows. Fay's favourite walk. A medium walk starting from Fay's house at 08:30. Meet at Pinetown at 08:00 if you need a lift. This will be followed by a bring and braai. R10 only if you need a lift.</b>	Fay Fenn	082 530 3758
23 Dec	Christmas - Long weekend - Open		
24 Dec	<b>No Hike</b>		
30 Dec	New Year - Long Weekend - Open		
31 Dec	<b>No Hike</b>		

#### Weekend & Trails Programme : October-December 2006

Please contact the name of the "Contact Person" indicated below to confirm bookings of weekends before depositing the money in the bank to ensure your space is reserved.

Please liaise with Sharyn if you wish to share lifts or co-ordinate transport for weekends away.

Date	Description	Leader	Tel
20-22 Oct	<b>Umlalazi, Mtunzini</b> - camping or chalets available in Parks Board venue. For electrified camping bookings at R50 pppn, contact Sharyn. Chalets may be booked directly on 033 845 1000. Ideal for Sunday hikers, challenging hikes planned through coastal forest, beach and Raffia Palms.	Steve Nel 083 4540 569	Sharyn: 031-7012688 (H) 031-3277538 (B) 0826543400 Cell
27 - 29 Oct	<b>Sungubala Hiking Challenge</b> - hike into Babingibona Valley, to Troglodytes for lunch and back via Venus Baths and the gap. Not for the feint-hearted! R840 for the weekend at The Cavern Resort. Phone 036 4386 270. Camp at Hialanathi for R55 pppn. Phone 036 4386 308.		Make your own bookings.
24 - 26 Nov	<b>Haven Rock, Montezuma</b> , popular game farm adjacent to Vernon Crookes on the South Coast. 9 Beds available in the cottage, or sleep on mattresses or camp on the property, at R30 pppn. Ideal for Saturday hikers, two medium hikes planned.	George Archibald 083 4191 191	Sharyn: 031-7012688(H) 031-3277538(W) 0826543400 Cell