



# CAMPING & OUTDOORS

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Black Diamond



This is the official newsletter of the Durban Ramblers' Hiking Club. Contributions are very welcome, but the right to edit any contribution is reserved.

If you have any tales to tell, we would love to hear about them. Please e-mail your copy to the Editor at [phenduke@durbs.com](mailto:phenduke@durbs.com)



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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE DURBAN RAMBLERS' HIKING CLUB

APRIL TO JUNE 2008

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### CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

One of the features and the attractions of the Natal countryside is its rapid change through the year. Dry winter grass is followed by late winter fires and the first spring green. High summer is characterised by exuberant growth and chest high vegetation before the cycle starts all over again. Head-high cane is there one day and gone the next. The views and vistas are forever changing.

I am waxing lyrical for a reason. And the reason is "don't shoot the hike leader if a path disappears almost overnight".

All leaders want to lead a pleasant hike. They are not professional and do it as a service to the club. An unpaid service. In the normal course of events a hike might be done only once or twice a year. Paths that are obvious in winter disappear totally in summer. On a few recent hikes the path has disappeared or come to a cul-de-sac. This is what happens in hiking occasionally. So don't complain, understand.

And always remember that we want you to lead hikes as well, and we want those you are leading to be supportive.

So volunteer, you are allowed to get lost!

Jon Stevens  
Chairman

**New members**

Kevan McGregor  
Paul and Julie Curry  
Derrick and Wendy Gudgeon  
Carol Glass  
Nishana and Heemal Gianshand

**An appeal from the Treasurer**

When making a deposit into the club bank account, would people clearly state their name and the reason for the deposit. A deposit of R60 (probably subs) was made in Montclair on 29/02/2008 but no name was provided, so someone out there has paid up but we don't know who!

Also there is a deposit from a lady named Jenny Gosshawk but there is no trace of this name on our database. If Jenny reads this, would she kindly phone Biff on 0829006965 so that we can solve the mystery!

**SOCIAL CALENDAR**

Organiser - Mike Serrurier - 082 822 3106

<b>Fri 18 April</b>	Thatchers
<b>Fri 30 May</b>	German Club
<b>Mon 16 June</b>	Shongweni Dam Hike around approx 1hour and then braai afterwards - let's meet there at 10 o'clock.

**HIKING PROGRAMME - April to June 2008**

**Saturday Hikes**

Hikers may meet at Musgrave Park Medical Centre before 13h30 sharp, or earlier if indicated in the programme, to travel in convoy or to share transport to the start of the hike.

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
29 June	<b>UMHLOTI MEANDER</b> A pleasant, moderate walk in the area between Sibaya and the Umhloti River. Meet at 08.30 in Umhloti at the parking lot by the sea across the road from the Bush Tavern. R15 petrol sharing costs.	Glenys Bentley	0833752252

**WEEKEND & TRAILS PROGRAMME - APRIL TO JUNE 2008**

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

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

Date	Description	Leader	Contact Person
25-27 April	Corian's Pennington Caravan Resort R98 pppn and R15.00 per site. Power available	Merle 082 454 0521	Kim 031 2773796
13 - 15 June	Lake Eland, Oribi Gorge. Camping R70 pppn, Park home R150 pppn (sleeps 12)	Trevor 079 525 9230	Kim 031 2773796

**Members News**

It is with regret that we advise of the recent death of Cedric Biggs' wife, June in New Zealand. Our thoughts and condolences go to Cedric and his family at this sad time.

**Honorary Membership**

The committee is pleased to announce that honorary life membership has been awarded to the following members:

Edward Coogan - a country member from Johannesburg  
Gretel Hartman  
Lynda Holmes - now living in the United Kingdom.

**Club Trophy**

At the Annual General Meeting last month the Club Trophy was presented jointly to Colin Turner and Marge Blake in appreciation of all the effort they have put into the Club over the past year. Well done, Colin and Marge.

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
1 June	<b>WUTHERING HEIGHTS</b> Exploration of an old hike. Meet at Peel's Honey 08h00. Phone Jon if you want to share lifts. This is a Mountain Backpackers hike.	Grant Wilkinson	0736168789
4 June	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592
7 June	<b>CLIFTON WATCH TOWER</b> Fairly steep climb to stunning views. Meet outside Assegay Hotel car park at 13h45. Drinks at Assegay Hotel afterwards.	Dennis	083 320 4951
8 June	<b>VIRGINIA/ BEACHWOOD</b> Starting from Jon's house, thru the cemetery, coastal forest and the beach followed by drinks at Jon's House. Meet at 08.30 at 180 Park Road, Redhill. BYO.	Jon	0824591522
14 June	<b>PARADISE VALLEY</b> Shady walk, historical interest. Meet at 13h45 at the entrance. R5 entrance fee.	Philip	031 201 3592
15 June	<b>HAMMERDALE FALLS</b> It is some time since we have been this way. A pretty hike in an area that Steve knows well. R20 petrol sharing.	Steve Nel	0834540569
18 June	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592
21 June	<b>KRANTS KLOOF - UWE ROAD</b> Stiff, steep walk down to Saurus pools and back. Meet at Uwe Rd off Buckingham at 13h45. May be R10 entrance fee.	Ann	031 767 1027
22 June	<b>BARTLETTS ESTATE</b> This is a lovely hike ranging over Bartletts Estate. The views go on forever. Moderate. R20 petrol sharing costs.	Jenny Hewitt	0849520622
28 June	<b>SPRINGSIDE NATURE RESERVE</b> Easy grassland and forest walk. Meet at 1345 at reserve car park. Bring & braai at reserve. R10 donation to conservancy. Drinks at pub afterwards.	Trevor	079 525 9230

Please get to starting point by 13h45 in order for hike to begin on time. A cost of R8.00 for transport is payable. Please note that change is not always available.

For directions to the starting point, please phone the organiser between 12h00 and 12h45 on the day of the hike.

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.

Visitor's fee is R5.

#### Sunday Hikes (Full Day)

Please try to get to the meeting places at least 10 minutes earlier to help with arranging lifts.

Bring the correct amount of money as change may not be available.

It is advisable to bring at least 2 litres of water, mid-morning snack, lunch and a hat.

Visitors' fee is R5.

**Meeting Place** : Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown to depart at 08h00.

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

If it is pouring with rain, please check with the hike leader before setting out for the meeting place.

**NB** : 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.

#### Wednesday Walks

Colin Turner and Philip Gatenby organise a morning hike every other Wednesday. All are welcome. Please phone Colin on 708 3517 or Philip on 201 3592 before the day for details.

**NB: It has been noticed that people are not sticking together on hikes. Gaps are still forming where hikers lose sight of each other. Please at all times make sure you can see the person in front of you and be aware that the person behind you is keeping up.**

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
5 April	<b>ST. HELIER / UPPER GIBA GORGE</b> A circuit taking in grasslands and Macintosh Falls view site, returning via Giba Gorge forest road. Park in St Helier parking area. BYO sundowners. Moderate.	Colin	031 708 3517
6 April	<b>SUMMERVELD/SHONGWENT</b> A hike in the conservancy and beyond taking in the Clifton watch tower. Petrol sharing cost R15	Colin	031 708 3517
9 April	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592

Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
12 April	<b>KLOOF NKONKA FALLS</b> Moderate grasslands walk to falls, lovely views. Meet at Kranskloof picnic site at 13h45. R10 entrance fee. Bring & braai at Dennis & Kim's afterwards.	Ann	031 767 1027
13 April	<b>SHONGWENI/SUMMERVELD CIRCUIT</b> A very different hike from last week. Starting from the Castle in the Shongweni Valley, past the station and up the hill. Moderate once you are on top. Then down again. R15 petrol sharing.	Dieter	031 462 7445
19 April	<b>NEW GERMANY NATURE RESERVE</b> Easy grassland walk, some game viewing. Meet at reserve car park off Otto Volek Rd at 13h45. Optional drinks/supper at Black Forest Inn, Pinetown.	Philip	031 201 3592
20 April	<b>KLOOF GORGE</b> Tough hike through Kloof Gorge, some steep sections. Water is essential. Bring and braai afterwards. Meet at 07h30 at Stokers Arms. This is a Mountain Backpackers hike.	Greg Walker	082 0531315
23 April	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592
26 April	<b>VIRGINIA NATURE RESERVE</b> Easy indigenous bush walk. Park in Kensington Drive outside reserve. Meet at 13h45.	Gerald	031 205 1089
27 April	<b>CORIAN, PENNINGTON</b> Join the weekend away crowd for a hike thru the Umdoni Reserve at Pennington. Lunch at the river and back along the beach. Leave Durban Musgrave at 07.45, meet at exit 104 N2 (Umzinto & ParkRynie turn off) at 08:30. R40 petrol sharing.	Merie McKenzie	082 454 0521
3 May	<b>THORNRIIDGE FARM</b> Grasslands and riverine forest walk. Moderate to stiff. Meet 13h30 at Assegay Hotel. Bring & braai at farm afterwards. R10 donation to Conservancy.	Trevor	079 525 9230
4 May	<b>INHLOSANE</b> Long distance day Walk. (From Philip's house to Everglades Hotel). Very long walk over rough terrain. Excellent views. No path. Fitness absolutely essential. Booking essential by Wednesday 30 April. Places limited. This is a Mountain Backpackers hike.	Philip Grant	033-9971817 or 0824179163

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7 May	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592
10 May	<b>GIBA GORGE</b> Pretty valley with streams & waterfalls. Meet at 13h45 at the cycle track. Phone Lois for directions. Entrance R10. Safe parking.	Lois & Werner	031 767 2969
11 May	<b>THORNRIIDGE FARM</b> The reccy party went to great deal of trouble and personal hardship to bring you this new and exciting hike. Be there! BYO drinks afterwards in the boma. R20 petrol sharing and R10 to the farm.	Jon Stevens	0824591522
17 May	<b>LOWER BURMAN BUSH</b> Shady walk through indigenous bush. Meet at 13h45 at Rose Garden opposite Mitchell Park.	Werner	031 767 2969
18 May	<b>VERNON CROOKES RESERVE UMZINTO</b> Easy hike in this lovely reserve. Leave Durban Musgrave at 08:00, meet at exit 104 N2 (Umzinto&ParkRynie turn off) at 08:45. R10 entrance fee to reserve. R40 petrol sharing.	Dieter	031 4627445
21 May	Wednesday walk	Colin or Philip	031 708 3517 031 201 3592
24 May	<b>ASSEGAY MEANDER</b> Easy walk through Assegay suburbs and farming area, lovely views. Meet at Sugar Loaf Centre, bottom of Botha's Hill at 13h45. Enjoy pizzas at Paparazzi afterwards.	Lois	031 767 2969
25 May	<b>RECCY</b> This weekend is set a side for a reccy. Where has not been decided yet. Call to find out.	John van Zyl	0731281928
31 May	<b>UMHLANGA ROCKS MEANDER</b> New walk. Meander over rolling hills through cane fields and indigenous bush. Meet at 13h45 in Sharks Board parking lot in Herrwood Drive to drive on to starting point. Drinks at Somewhere Else, Sunningdale.	Jenny	031 303 3258