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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE DURBAN RAMBLERS' HIKING CLUB

4th QUARTER: OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2014

CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

We are all asking ourselves when the first rains will come. They tell me the Midlands looks like the old Transvaal Highveld. Walking through burnt grass or dry red dusty trails is not pleasant, but then long grass can also be hazardous. Can't win this one.

I have been away visiting my daughter in America, and whilst there walked part of the 30km Perkiomen Trail, joining up with other trails, joining the various small towns along the Perkiomen River. Along the trail, joggers, walkers and bikers enjoy the scenic landscape, past former railway stops and other historical sites, and above all clean paths. This is what our D'Moss trails should be like.

I am writing this before our Potjie evening. Four cooks will be competing - Derek Pretorius, Trevor Thompson, Ann Olds and Dennis Paxton. We are looking forward to an evening of tasty food and good conversation.

Our Year end function will again be held at the Hillcrest Scout Hall. Every effort was made to find a venue closer to town, but no suitable venue was found. My appeal from members in the last magazine to help finding other venues received no response. The function will again be a BYO meat Braai. The club will provide the venue, the music (provided by Reg.), the salads and the pudding. Diarise the date 6th December 2014. Members attending should let me know early so that the organizers can plan to make the event a success.

May I again appeal to members that hot humid days are ahead of us, and it is most important to drink lots of water and it is advisable to carry a sachet of "Rehydrate" for the treatment of dehydration. To fend off those ticks "Tabbard /Bayticol spray does help.

In parting may I wish members who will not be attending our Xmas function a Merry Xmas and happy hiking in 2015.

Hiking is fun, keep it that way.

Regards

Werner

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Werner Vanslebrouck	084 206 7836	031 767 2969	werner.v@iafrica.com
Secretary	Janet Elliott	082 820 8182	031 765 3240	jelliott@iafrica.com
Treasurer	Biff Maggs	082 900 6965		biff@eastcoast.co.za
Sun Hike Organiser	Marie Gurr	082 586 0266	031 705 3122	marinev.gurr@gmail.com
Sat Hike Organiser	Philip Collyer	082 417 0204	031 201 8864	philipcollyer@gmail.com
Weekend Organiser	Jill Dunstone	084 780 0818	031 765 4520	jillyd@telkomsa.net
Publicity	Linda Smith	083 353 8319		compasshr@mweb.co.za
Ordinary Member	Coleen Seath	082 735 7659	031 202 2279	coleensea@gmail.com
Magazine Editor	Gordon Tomlinson	083 277 2690	031 708 1119	gordontom44@gmail.com

MEMBER NEWS

New Members

We extend a very warm welcome to all our new members and hope that you enjoy many happy hours hiking with us.

Ruan & Tiana Traut,
Chris Dobson,
Dave Tighe,
Ruxshana Vahed,
Marianne Duncan

Let us know if a hiker is ill or had an accident or some other newsworthy event so we can send an acknowledgement.

Note - Members on email will receive get-well cards etc from the Club with the source "123greetingcards.com"

Subs for 2015

Single Member R80
Country Single R60

Family R100
Country Family R70

Joining Fee R20
In all cases

Please pay by EFT directly into the bank account -
Standard Bank, Musgrave Rd Branch Code: 042626, Account No: 051257653

Or pay cash directly to the treasurer.

Cheques and cash both attract big bank charges, so to reduce our banking fees, only EFT deposits please.

Also note that the joining fee, in addition to the annual subs, is due if a member has been "absent" for a year or more, with a new application form.

Committee News

Further to the Database and Website:-

- Linda Smith will handle the Website
- Gordon Tomlinson will look after the Database

Annual Xmas Party

The previous venue "The Hillcrest Scout Hall" adequately ticks all the boxes required and the function will be there again. We investigated several venues closer to Durban but have been unable to find any suitable.

Details ::

Date : 6th December 2014

Time : 12 Noon

Venue : Hillcrest Scout Hall

Directions: From Old Main Road Hillcrest at Heritage Market , turn into Stonewall Road next to the Shell petrol station. Proceed under the railway bridge to the junction with Springside Road. Turn right and follow the road for 2.5 km. Turn left into Shortlands Avenue The address is 16 Shortlands Avenue.

Cost : R 75.00 per person

Payment to Ramblers, with your name, number in party and Xmas as reference.

Book with Werner on 084 206 7836 or 031 767 2969, not later than 1st December 2014 for catering purposes.

Bring: your own braai meat, drinks , cutlery , crockery

The club provides the salads and sweets.

Music by Greg.

Magazine

Don't forget to send us any email and postal address changes to ensure your magazine reaches you.

If you have been receiving the magazine by post, and now want the speedier email version, send me your email address. It also helps reduce our very substantial posting costs to email the magazine to you.

WEEKENDS AWAY

November 2014

The last official Ramblers' weekend away for 2014 is to one of our most popular venues: Bushwillow in the Karkloof area - Date: 14/15/16th November.

This is not a long weekend (there are none this quarter) but most people will come up on the Friday and leave on the Sunday.

Accommodation:

Campsites, all with power R110 /p/p/n

Cottage #1 - 1 bedroom, sleeps 2. Can put 3rd bed in lounge if required.

Cottage #2 – 2 bedrooms, 5x single beds.

Both cottages are R225 p/p/p/n/ for pensioners; R250 for young 'uns.

The cottages come with own shower and toilet and fully equipped kitchen – just bring food. There are log fireplaces in the lounges and table & chairs on the verandahs, ready for sundowners.

The campsites are all electrified so bring your special plugs. As I have asked for the long site just above the cottages, I would advise campers / caravaners to bring long extension cables as well.

The ablution block for camping is very well appointed.

Bushwillow has a lovely big communal room / deck on the small dam. We will braai there both nights – bring mozzie repellent. Swimming / tubing is allowed in the dam. Lots of walking & birding opportunities in the area.

We'll hike up Mt Gilboa on the Saturday – those not wanting to camp Friday night are welcome to join us on Saturday morning in time for the 08:00 start.

EASTER 2015

Next year Easter weekend is 3-6 April. We are booking at Injasuti – time we had a good 'Berg weekend.

The fees are:

Camping (no power): R80 per person per night

4-bed cottage: Minimum 3x people and R870 pp. R145 pn for the 4th person

8-bed cottage: Minimum 4x people and R880 pp. R110 pn per person thereafter

Note: The cancellation fee may be anything from 0% to 100% (if less than 14 days notice)

BOOKINGS:

Unfortunately we have had a few problems with bookings and payments this year, so we have to insist on the following procedure: Bookings will only be accepted when FULL PAYMENT is received into the Durban Ramblers bank account. For both these weekends, this is required no later than Saturday 11 OCTOBER 2014 in order for us to secure the number of sites / cottages that we have provisionally reserved. We can cancel nearer to the time if required but depending on exactly how much notice you give, the cancellation fee will anything from nil to 50%.

PLEASE BOOK by sending an email or SMS ONLY (DO NOT PHONE) to jilld@telkomsa.net or 084 780 0818. I am going to be away, so please do not expect a response until 5 October.

HIKES

While this is usually all good fun we should also be aware that sometimes something can go amiss and we might find ourselves in a stressful situation.

Please, if you're a regular Rambler, make good use of the personal name badge you've been given - fill in the appropriate details so that if there is a mishap we know who to contact, and if medical assistance is required we're able to get help promptly.

If you're not a regular hiker you should still have all this information available and it's a good idea to let someone in the group (maybe the leader) know whether it's on your cell, in your pack or in your pocket.

PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Please have your emergency contact number(s) under ICE (In Case of Emergency) in your cell phone and on **the new cards issued**, or a label of some sort attached to your daypack.

Details should consist of your name, ID number, name of medical aid and membership number (your medical aid card should be with you too) and the name/number(s) of someone to contact.

Emergency personnel will look for your ICE details.

Hospitals will not send an ambulance/paramedics if your medical aid details are not available.

Please carry these important details with you on each hike.

In case of Snake Bite - The basic Rules

- **Keep the number of your nearest hospital on your phone database.**
- **If you're in the bush, be aware at all times and check where you walk, sit or place your hands.**
- **If there's snake food about (lizards, rats, mice, frogs, nesting birds etc.) there will be snakes.**
- **If you see a snake, STAND STILL - don't panic. Tell others where it is and enjoy the sighting.**
- **Do NOT throw things at it or try to kill it or pick it up.**
- **If possible, slowly move away from the snake without disturbing it.**
- **If you accidentally stand on, or grab a snake, it might try to bite you, a perfectly natural reaction.**
- **If you get bitten, remain calm and move away from the snake, don't try to catch it.**
- **Tell someone that you've been bitten.**
- **If possible, get someone with First Aid experience to attend to you.**
- **Administer a full bandage wrap of the affected limb - not too tight - allow blood flow.**
- **Immobilise the limb and get to the hospital. Warn them of your impending arrival.**
- **No cuts, injections, stimulants - liquid refreshments only - monitor patient breathing.**
- **Remain calm and try not to move around too much.**
- **Venom in the eyes must be washed out with as much liquid as possible - water is best.**

3 snake experts to contact in an emergency:

Jenna Taylor 083 631 4816

Arno Naude 083 739 9303

Johan Marais 082 494 2039

Wednesday Morning Hikes

Please check details of the Wednesday hikes with Colin on 031 708 3517 or Philip on 031 201 3592 / 082 417 0204 .

If no response is obtained from the first leader phoned, please phone the alternate leader.

Saturday Hikes

- Please get to starting point by 13:45 in order for the hike to begin on time.
- For directions to the starting point, please PHONE the organiser between 12:00 and 12:45 on the day of the hike, don't SMS.
- Or Saturday hikers from Durban can phone Philip Gatenby on 031 2013592 prior to leaving and arrange a pickup or to travel in convoy with him.
- Children are welcome but check suitability of the hike with the leader.
- Please bring at least 1 litre of water, a snack for half time and a hat.
- There is no need to tell the leader you will be hiking.

Sunday Hikes (Full Day)

- Please be aware a certain level of fitness is required to do Sunday hikes. If you don't exercise regularly, or aren't an experienced walker please complete three Ramblers' Saturday afternoon hikes before joining the longer Sunday hikes.
- Always phone the hike leader beforehand to confirm details and let him/her know to expect you on the hike.
- 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.
- Keep Rehydrat in your pack in case of dehydration in the hot months.
- Use tick spray.
- Meeting place will be noted in the hiking schedule below.
- If it is raining, please check with the hike leader in case the hike has been cancelled.

Hikes are graded from 1 to 5, as below.

- 1 Easy = A flat even walk
- 2 Moderate = A hike without big and steep inclines
- 3 Strenuous = A hike with some steep inclines - Fitness recommended
- 4 Difficult = A hike with several steep inclines and some rock scrambling - Fitness essential
- 5 Very difficult = A hike with many inclines and rock scrambling - Fitness very essential

HIKING PROGRAMME

SATURDAY and SUNDAY PROGRAMME ----- 4th QUARTER 2014			
Date	Description of Hike	Leader	Tel
Sat. 4 October	Bayhead Natural Heritage Site	Philip	031-201-8864
	Walk along the mangroves in Bayhead – easy flat hike. Meet just past the Fullham Bakery on Manning/Lena Arenal Rd at 13.30 to drive through. Donation of R20 pp.	Easy	Grading [1-5] 1
Sun 5 October	Everdon Estate, Karkloof	Guest leader: Cecil Hackney (Estate manager)	Marie 082 586 0266 031-705-3122 Or Mike Kirby 079 672 9109 033-239-5247
	A joint Pietermaritzburg/Durban Ramblers' hike. Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown in time for a prompt 6.45am departure to drive to Howick. (Suggest R75pp petrol-sharing.) Or meet Mike Kirby (Honorary Durban Rambler) in Karkloof Road, Howick, outside Amber Glen (opp. WESSA head office) at 7.45am for 8am to drive in convoy to the Estate. Enjoy hills and vales and stunning views of the Karkloof and Umgeni Valleys from this lovely avocado farm.	Distance 13km	Grading [1-5] 3
Sat 11 (Day of Amashova)	Msinsi Conservancy University	Linda	083 353 8319
	Meet at the parking above the Elizabeth Sneddon Theatre at 13.45. Those wanting to do a shorter hike, meet at 13.30 at Msinsi Nature Reserve, gate 10 on Francious Road to leave cars (leave at 13.35 for UKZN).	Distance 10	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun. 12 October	Valley of a Thousand Hills	Stella Wells	078 319 8979 031-563-9356
	Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown in time for a prompt 8am departure to drive in convoy to The Pot and Kettle at Botha's Hill. (Suggest petrol-sharing R20pp.) Hike will start at 8.30am, going down a steep dirt road, following the river and then climbing up, through some local houses. The route then goes back down to the river and steeply out again, part on dirt road/part on path, passing a dam. (The hike forms a figure of eight.)	Strenous Approx. 18km	Grading [1-5] 3
Sat 18	Alverston Conservancy	Trevor	079 525 9230
	Grasslands and up and down dale with some game viewing. Entrance is R20. Meet at the Hotel Assagay at 13.30, then drive though to Alverston at 13.45. After hike braai at the Boma.	Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun 19 October	Giba Gorge Mountain Bike Park	Philip Swart:	031 465 2776 or 072 606 6599
	A joint Durban Ramblers/MBC/Midlands Hike. Meet at Giba Gorge Mountain Bike Park at 07h30 for 08h00 sharp!! (Note R10pp entrance fee for safe parking.) We will follow the old road up to the Eagle Trail and on to Macintosh Falls. We will then decide if conditions are favourable for a visit to the Umhlatuzana Shelter and	Strenous 12km	Grading [1-5] 3

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	Kirkland Falls. Return on trail via Giba Lake and Falls back to the car park. Please bring snacks and lots of drinking water.		
Sat 25	Mount Edgecombe	Jon	082 459 1522
	Meet at Remo's (SPAR) in Mount Edgecombe in Flanders Drive at 13.45. Around Marshall dam and rolling hills.	Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun. 26 October	Salimba Farm, Richmond	Jon Stevens	082 459 1522
	Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown in time for a prompt 7.30am departure. (Suggest petrol-sharing R70pp.) A lengthy drive, but a beautiful circular route up and down rolling hills, through a bit of forest and across lush grasslands. Stunning views over the Umkomaas River and maybe sightings of game.	Strenous Approx. 18km	Grading [1-5] 3
SAT Nov 1	Monteseel Conservancy	Linda	???????
	Meet at the Happy Ender Pub in St Andrews Street, Monteseel at 13.45. Some cliff edges and boulder hopping, definitely fitness required. Down into the valley of a 1000 hills and back again. Donation of R20 to the Monteseel Conservancy.	Difficult Vertigo Warning	Grading [1-5] 4
Sun 2 November	Westville/Palmiet Nature Reserve	Margie Forbes	073 437 6915 031-266-3149
	Park and meet outside the Westville Hotel in time for a prompt 7.30am start. A mix of street walking, some on the varsity campus and through the nature reserve. Optional BYO braai at Margie's afterwards.	Strenous Approx. 15km	Grade 3
SAT Nov 8	Barn Swallows, Mount Moreland	Jenny	???????
	R20 donation to the Conservancy per person (R10 for conservancy, R10 for braai). Bring a chair, drinks and things for braaing. Binoculars essential for viewing the swallows. If it is raining, they must phone the hike leader if it is still on. 10 km walk around the area, getting right up to the fence of King Shaka airport and then have a braai before going down to view the swallows, which arrive just before sunset.	Moderate	Grading [1-5] 2
Sun 9 November	Killarney Rookeries	Philip Swart Co-leader Dave Tighe	072 606 6599 031-465-2776
	Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown in time for a prompt 07h00 departure for Cato Ridge. (Suggest R28pp petrol-sharing.) (Use Exit 53 off-ramp from N3, then left, carry on straight to Thomas Ammann N27 Herb Farm Cato Ridge.) The hike starts at 08h00 at the Herb Farm. We trust that we shall have the old horse-cart trail re-opened as a hiking trail to the Umlazi River Ravine, then back via the Rookeries and rock-art on the way to the car park. Note: this is an arid trail. Bring ample water and snacks for a +/- 4hr hike.	Strenous 12km	Grading [1-5] 3
Sat Nov 15	Giba Gorge	Werner	084 206 7836
	Meet at Giba Gorge, entrance fee of R15 per person. The hike is along the hilly terrain in Giba Gorge. A shorter hike will be available.	Strenous Distance 12 km	Grading [1-5] 3

Sun 16 November	Giba Gorge	Colin Turner	031-708-3517
	A completely different route to the earlier one in this programme... Meet and park at Giba Gorge Mountain Bike Park in time for a prompt 8am start. (R10pp for safe parking.) Colin will lead us up and down, in and out of the Park, along upper slopes and lower, old paths of the Gorge itself.	Strenous 15km	Grade 3
Sat Nov 22	iSimbithu	Abdula	084 478 6779
	Meet at the Assagay Hotel at 13.30 and drive to parking spot at 13.45. iSimbithu is an authentic Zulu Village, we will be hiking in this area – valley of 1000 Hills. No Shorter Hike. Cost of R20 per person will be given to Durban Green Corridor Project.	Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun 23 November	Karkloof Falls	Max Ramseier	083 968 4434 031-783-7876
	Joint Durban Ramblers/MBC/Midlands hike. Meet outside the Howick Hotel (in Howick) at 8.15am sharp, to drive in convoy to Karkloof Country Club and the start of this scenic hike through woodlands. (R25pp for safe parking.)	Strenous Approx.14km	Grade 3
Sat Nov 29	Variation on Bux Farm	Jon	082 459 1522
	Meet at the Assagay Hotel at 13.30 and drive to parking spot at 13.45. No shorter hike planned. Steep descents in parts. Braai afterwards, bring your own meat and salads, R15 for braai and plates etc.	Vertigo Warning Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun. 30 November	Assagay	Jon	082 459 1522
	Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown in time for a prompt 8.00am departure, or at the Chantecler Hotel, Botha's Hill, at 8.30am. (Suggest R20pp petrol-sharing.) The hike entails a meander around Assagay following some old routes which may or may not still be there! Drinks at the hotel afterwards.	Strenous Approx. 18km	Grading: 3
Sat 6 Dec	CHRISTMAS PARTY Please book by 1st December		
Sun. 7 December	Railways and Plantations, Pietermaritzburg	Guest leader: Francois Marais	Marie 031-705- 3122/0825 or Francois 0839838007
	Meet at Union Main Centre, Old Main Road, Pinetown, in time for a prompt 7.30am departure (suggested petrol-sharing R50pp), or outside Botanic Gardens, Mayor's Walk, Pietermaritzburg at 8.30am for 8.45am. We'll travel up Zwartkop Road to Boughton Station and go on a hike that touches old and present railway lines, the new tunnel under Hilton and an old historic tunnel near World's View.	Strenous 17km	Grade 3

SAT Dec 13	“Bartlette Estate”	Trevor	079 525 9230
	Combination of grassland and cane in the Hammersdale area. Meet at the Assagay Hotel at 13.30 to leave 13.45 to Bartlette Estate, cost of R20 per person.	Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun. 14 December	Minerva Heights, Byrne Area	Dave Tighe	031 464 9247 or 076 028 0708
	This is a combined Ramblers/MBC/Midlands hike. Walk through plantations, indigenous forests and grasslands. Approx. 6hrs. R10pp to be paid to the farmer. Meet at BP Garage on the main road (Shepstone Road) through Richmond at 08h00.	Strenous Approx. 12km	Grade 3
Sat Dec 20	eNanda - Durban Green Corridor	Philip	031 201 8864
	Hiking on trails next to the iNanda Dam, mixture of grassland and forested areas. R20 per person for the Durban Green Corridor.	Strenous	Grading [1-5] 3
Sun. 21 December	Walkabout Durban North and Social Braai	Jon	0824591522
	Many thanks, once again, to Jon who will be leading a morning “magical mystery tour” before hosting our annual bring-and-share braai and get together. Please BYO (including a chair/swimming gear) and meet at Jon’s house at 8.30am.	Difficult Distance: Approx. 16km	Rating: Grade 4
Sat Dec 27	Steinbank Nature Reserve	Linda	083 353 8319
	Meet at the Steinbank Nature Reserve Car Park at 13.45. Reserve Entrance R20. There will be a shorter hike and braai afterwards.	Strenous	3
Sun. 28 December	No Sunday hike. Please join Saturday Ramblers.		

This is the official newsletter of the Durban Ramblers’ Hiking Club.

Contributions are very welcome, but the right to edit is reserved.

If you have any tales to tell, we would love to hear them.

Please email your copy to the Editor at ---- gordontom44@gmail.com