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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE DURBAN RAMBLERS HIKING CLUB 2ND QUARTER: APRIL TO JUNE: 2019

CHAIRMAN'S RAMBLINGS

Is there a story to tell? The usual Our AGM was held on the 9th February. It was attended by 40 members. Our finances are in good shape, thanks to Tina Regnard, and that means no increases in annual fees, which I am sure all members like. The new committee for the year 2019/2020 were duly elected. We welcome new committee members Ismail Vahed (incoming Treasurer) and Diana Patoir (incoming Publicity). Some committee members have taken on new portfolios... Ana Barbosa will now be organizing Sunday hikes. Other committee members were elected to their old respective portfolio's i.e. Coleen Seath as secretary. Ann Olds as Saturday hike organizer, Ilona Lamprecht as magazine editor, Biff Maggs as Weekends organizer and myself in the chair.

A special thanks to Colin Turner for having been our Honorary Auditor for many, many years. Colin has decided to step down from this post – he has done a superb job.

Mr. Rolf Klein has offered to be our Honorary Auditor, and we welcome him on the team.

One portfolio that is still to be filled is that of ordinary member. This is a position for someone who brings to the committee what is being said on the ground and tells us what members were dissatisfied with ... and what members would like. It is a position to be filled by someone who is interested in how it all happens, and hopefully in time to come will consider becoming the chairman. Anyone interested in filling this slot on the committee, please let us know, we need you!

The Floating Trophy went to Ilona Lamprecht for her sterling work as our magazine editor, hike leader and functions organizer. Thank-you Ilona.

Facebook has some enjoyable photos of our recent hikes. Well done to all photographers who have made contributions. When I look at them it reminds me of a BBC Travel program where the journalist sees a plane overhead and he wants to be on it. When I look at our photos I say that I want to be on that hike!

Hiking is fun, keep it that way!

Werner.

EDITOR'S NOTE

It is really overwhelming when one is recognised for their efforts, and I was completely taken by surprise at the AGM. Our first committee meeting with the new members went well, some new ideas going around. Look out for Ana Barbosa's new approach to Sunday hiking, and please step up if you would like to be mentored into leading hikes. If, as a trail runner or a mountain biker, for instance, you come across new trails you could lead, discuss them with her. We are a hiking community needing input from all of its members.

Hope you're all having a great year so far and that it only gets more fun and adventurous.

Ilona

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman	Werner Vanslebrouck	084 206 7836	031 767 2969	werner.v@iafrica.com
Secretary	Coleen Seath	082 735 7659		coleensea@gmail.com
Treasurer	Ismail Vahed	083 786 6733		ismailvahed@mweb.co.za
Sunday Hike Organiser	Ana Barbosa	082 496 2320	031 462 6492	ABarbosa.DRHC@outlook.com
Saturday Hike Organiser	Ann Olds	083 666 5630	031 767 1027	annolds2@gmail.com
Weekend Organiser	Biff Maggs	082 609 9684		Biffmaggs101@gmail.com
Publicity	Diana Patoir	083 468 6941		durbanramblers.publicity@gmail.com
Ordinary Member				
Magazine	Ilona Lamprecht	076 912 9829		ilona.tangodreams@gmail.com
Website Organiser	Abdullah Dada	084 478 6779	031 269 1921	dada@greenit.co.za
Honorary Auditor	Rolf Klein	073 982 4976		rolf.klein@telkomsa.net

MEMBER NEWS

NEW MEMBERS:

We have a number of new members that have joined us this year:

Our new single members are:

- Sue Verster
- Colleen Phillips
- Margie Pearce
- Janet Mead
- Heather Downie
- Roswitha Papendorf
- Sue Moody

And two new couples are:

- Sam Dwyer and Lorraine Johnson.
- Sagren and Charmaine Achary

Our best wishes to Gordon Tomlinson in his relocation to Cape Town to be closer to his family.

Congratulations go to Alan Karssing for having his photograph selected for the Highway Mail of 22 February 2019.



Alan Karssing captured this beautiful photo of one of the most iconic features in our community: The steam train at Kloof station.

INFORMATION

MAGAZINE:

Don't forget to send us any personal email and/or postal address changes to ensure the magazine reaches you. It has come to our attention that not everyone receives the bulk emailed magazine, if you know anyone who has not received theirs, suggest they look in Spam, and if not there, send an email to myself so I can confirm email addresses or make sure that info@durbanramblers.co.za is on your contact list.

Note: If you have been receiving the magazine by post and now want the speedier email version in full colour, advise the secretary, Coleen, and send us your email address. This helps reduce the posting costs and possible delays with getting the magazine to you.

I know a number of you have been on interesting adventures recently, we would love to read about them. Please, don't be shy, let us have your story. This is a magazine to keep our fellow Ramblers in the know, so please use this platform to share any information you may find relevant. I am looking forward to Bev's story about the Rim of Africa hike she participated in.

WEBSITE:

The website (www.durbanramblers.co.za) as well as the *Durban Ramblers Hiking Club* Facebook page may be viewed for information regarding the club, hikes, etc. It's an interesting experience to peruse the archives on our website. I have found them most entertaining. Biff is doing a great job getting them up to date. If you have any archival info you think merits being included, communicate with Biff about it.

Should you wish to contribute photos to the Facebook page please send your contributions to Diana, our Publicity person. You may also ask Diana to remove photos you would rather not be there.

MONEY MATTERS

SUBS FOR 2019:

According to our Constitution, subs are due after the close of the AGM. Members have until the end of April to pay their subs; thereafter he/she shall cease to be a member.

The fees remain the same for another year:

- Single Member R100
- Family R150 (excluding children 18 years or older)
- Joining Fee is R50,
- New members joining after 1st July will only pay half the annual subs.
- For past members wishing to rejoin Durban Ramblers after being absent for a year or more, a new membership application form needs to be submitted and the joining fee, in addition to the annual subs, is to be paid.

The Membership Form, which can be downloaded from our website, <http://durbanramblers.co.za/forms/>, is to be completed in full: Hike Names, Dates and Signatures of Hike Leaders, before handing or emailing them to the Secretary along with your proof of payment. If you don't have the facilities to do this from home, you can scan and send from your nearest PostNet. If you have completed three hikes and want to continue hiking with us, please do so as a member of our wonderful group, then we don't need to hassle you to sign the indemnity form for each hike.

Please pay by EFT directly into the new bank account – include your full name as reference - into the bank account referenced on the front page of this magazine. Cheques and cash both attract big bank charges, so to help reduce our banking fees, kindly endeavour to make EFT deposits.

HIKE DONATIONS:

On some of the hikes hikers are asked for donations and in some cases the club makes donations on behalf of the members. Here is a breakdown of recent donations made.

DONATIONS MADE ON HIKES - 1ST Q 2019						
Date	DRHC	PUB HOL	Hikers (Wed)	Hikers (Sat)	Hikers (Sun)	Hike
18/12/29				535		Iphithi Nature Reserve
18/12/29				535		Crowned Eagle Conservancy
19/01/12				1030		Alverstone Nature Reserve
19/01/19				400		Springside Nature reserve
19/02/06			340			Everton Conservancy
19/03/02				540		Palmiet Nature Reserve
Total	R 0	R 0	R 340	R 3 040	R 0	R 3 380

Following on from the AGM the committee is looking into making specific donations to some of the reserves we have the pleasure of hiking in, one of which is Pigeon Valley where we will take out membership with Friends of Pigeon Valley as a Club. Should you wish to contribute in a private capacity, contact Crispin Hemson on 082 926 5333. support-glenwoods-urban-nature-reserve/

bereamail.co.za/Community



Friends of Pigeon Valley during one of their monthly walks

Support Glenwood's urban nature treasure

BIERA residents are urged to support one of Durban's gem nature reserves, Pigeon Valley. This small urban nature reserve in Glenwood has remarkable biodiversity. It is home to two rare tree species, the Natal Elm and Natal Forest Logant, the endangered Spotted Ground-Thrush and the rare Short-billed Sapsucker butterfly.

Crispin Hemson, chairperson of the Friends of Pigeon Valley, said priorities for the Friends of Pigeon Valley in 2019 include lobbying the Natural Resources Division of the eThekweni Metro on three key issues which included replacing the existing fence with a new fence at the top of the bank.

"The replacement has been promised by Natural Resources since 2005. The costs from the failure to replace it became evident a year ago when a woman was tamed down the bank and murdered. We also aim to relocate some of the Red Dukkers. The numbers have grown rapidly, to around 60, and hikers have taken to moving

Join botanical society on Hillcrest

THE Botanical Society KZN Coastal Branch will visit Hillcrest AIDS Centre plant nursery on Saturday, 25 January. Nursery manager John Lund will read a tour of the nursery.

Meet in the Hillcrest AIDS Centre car park at 8am. Tea will be served. The gift shop, Woza Moya, will also be open. Booking is essential. Contact botsoo-kzn@mweb.co.za, 031 201 5111 or 071 8 693 693. All welcome.

outside the reserve. Last month a pregnant duiker that had moved out of the reserve was killed by dogs. The relocation was announced late last year by Natural Resources, but action has not yet been taken," he said.

Crispin said the third issue was repairing the main track. He said erosion in recent years had made part of the track unsafe and there was an urgent need for reconstruction and ongoing maintenance.

"The Friends are involved in ongoing clearing of alien vegetation. Pigeon Valley is now

largely free of invasive plants as a result of the persistent work done. The creeper *Ipomoea sp.*, which used to cover large areas of the park, is now hard to locate. The Friends also lead a monthly walk on the second Saturday of each month at 7.30am, that is open to the public," he said.

The Friends are affiliated to the Durban Branch of WESSA. Those interested in joining its members should send their name and surname and contact email and phone number to friends@pigeonvalley.org.za.

RHINO CARD

As the entrance fees for the Ezemvelo parks such as Krantzklouf Gorge and Stainbank Nature Reserve have gone up again, now at R40 pp, it might be worth your while to look into getting a Rhino card which gives you entry into these venues. Your basic Rhino Card costs you R250 per person (under 60 yrs of age) or R230 per person (over 60 yrs of age) for a year's membership. There is no juvenile rate. There is also only one loyalty card, the Rhino Card. See <http://www.kznwildlife.com/rhino%20card.html> for more information.

About Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's (Ezemvelo) mandate is derived from the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act (Act No.9 of 1997), which is to direct the management of nature conservation within the Province including protected areas (PAs). This includes the development and promotion of ecotourism facilities within the PAs.

With its headquarters at Queen Elizabeth Park in Pietermaritzburg, the provincial capital, Ezemvelo manages more than 120 protected areas and is the leader in sustainable biodiversity conservation. It has recently broadened its focus to become more relevant to communities living adjacent to their parks - primarily through job creation and sustainable natural resource harvesting.

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife - is entrusted with the long-term conservation of the regions rich biodiversity for the people of South Africa. In more than 100 years of formal conservation in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, the various departments and statutory organisations that evolved into today's KZN Wildlife have received many formal awards and words of praise for the quality of their service to conservation and for the high standard of management of the province's natural resources.

EWorld Class Resorts and Accommodation - Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Resorts invites you to enjoy the ultimate wildlife experience at our world class resorts. From the heights of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site, through the tropical savannahs of Zululand where the Big 5 inhabit Hluhluwe Imfolozi Park, and on to the brilliant coral reefs of the Indian Ocean that fringe the lakes and wetlands of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park World Heritage Site.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES

EMERGENCY CONTACTS:

While hiking and rambling 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. There is an emergency app you can download to your mobile phone from www.mysos.co.za which will provide you with all the emergency numbers in the area where you need it.

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 day pack.

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.

HIKING ETIQUETTE

Most of us don't need reminding of how to behave on a hike in such a manner that the experience remains pleasant for all involved in the adventure. Some things to remember though are:

- Stay behind the leader. Our leaders are volunteers and are sometimes leading a new route or leading a route for the first time and taking it over from another leader. Regardless of the reason, please do not add unnecessary stress on a leader by going in front and possibly missing the next turnoff.
- By the same token, lagging behind to take photographs or pick up things also creates tension in the group when they have to wait for you to catch up or send someone back to look for you.
- Please make sure you can see the person in front of you, and also the person behind you.

- If you stop to take photographs or a phone call please step off the path so that the people behind you don't bump into you and can carry on walking.
- If you bring children along on the hike, you are responsible for them. The children should be respectful of other hikers. Running in between fellow hikers, up and down the line is not only rude, but also dangerous and can cause accidents.

American Hiking Society has this to add: (from <https://americanhiking.org/resources/hiking-etiquette/>)

Be Respectful of the Land and Other Hikers

Almost every group of people have some unwritten rules to help govern their activity and make things more pleasant for all those participating. Rules such as not cutting in line at a ski lift and keeping your elbows off the table when eating at Mom's house are just two examples.

Hikers are no different. Following a few unwritten rules can help make your hike and the hike for others more pleasant. Among some commonly observed practices are:

- Hike quietly. Speak in low voices and turn your cell phone down, if not off. Enjoy the sounds of nature and let others do the same.
- If taking a break, move off the trail a ways to allow others to pass by unobstructed.
- Don't toss your trash – not even biodegradable items such as banana peels. It is not good for animals to eat non-native foods and who wants to look at your old banana peel while it ever-so-slowly decomposes? If you packed it in, pack it back out.
- Hikers going downhill yield to those hiking uphill.
- When bringing a pet on a hike, be sure to keep it on a leash and under control. Don't forget to pack out pet waste as well.
- Don't feed the wildlife. While many animals stay hidden, others are not so shy. Giving these creatures food only disrupts their natural foraging habits.
- Leave what you find. The only souvenirs a hiker should come home with are photographs and happy memories. (And maybe an improved fitness level!)
- When relieving yourself outdoors, be sure to do so 200 feet away from the trail and any water sources. Follow Trace principles.
- Walk through the mud or puddle and not around it, unless you can do so without going off the trail. Widening a trail by going around puddles, etc. is bad for trail sustainability. Just because it looks easy to cut the corner off of a switchback doesn't mean it is a good idea. Help preserve the trail by staying on the trail.
- If hiking in a group, don't take up the whole width of the trail; allow others to pass.

FIXTURES

WEEKENDS AWAY: *Organised by Biff Maggs*
Shawswood Report for January 2019, by Jill Dunstone, photos by Harry Holderness.

We arrived at Shawswood on an absolute stinker of a day – temps in the 30's and blazing sun. The early arrivals were brave enough to go out for a short walk and came back looking like they'd had a swim instead!

Our ever-hospitable hosts, Wendy and Bundy Shaw, helped us settle in and explained that another group were booked in for the same weekend: a crowd of trail bikers from Jo'burg. Fortunately the facilities are perfectly adequate for large groups and we enjoyed chatting to our new friends.





and doing our thing.

Sunday arrived dry and cloudy – perfect hiking weather and we were delighted to meet Margret Kirsten, who now lives at one of the Ambers.



Margret led us on a delightful hike up a hill and down again, mainly on forestry land. The route is the Forest Gnome Trail and sure enough, we found a little gnome in his 'hokkie'. We took a few wrong turns, which all added to the fun, and it was a very contented group that arrived back at the cars at the end of another good weekend away.

Many thanks Biff, for the arrangement of it all. And thanks to the great group of Ramblers – it's the companions that make these weekends so enjoyable.



UPCOMING WEEKENDS AWAY:

Just to confirm that

Easter weekend 19th to 22nd April is now fully booked.

Any queries Biff Maggs: 082 609 9684 - biffmaggs101@gmail.com.

After the Easter weekend has been completed, Biff will book another Venue for June or July. Will advise on Facebook.

RECIPROCITY AGREEMENTS

Keith from Midlands Hiking Club has been kind enough to extend to our members, not only an invitation to his day hikes, but also to their weekends away, including New Year. You can view their schedule on their website: <http://www.gohiking.co.za/>



Johannesburg Hiking Club.

We have been approached by Johannesburg Hiking Club to enter into a reciprocity agreement to allow our respective members to be able to join in hikes and weekends away paying only member prices for these events.

This means you can continue hiking even when you travel to Gauteng. What this agreement means for us is:

- Our respective members would be welcome to attend any of the day hikes, away hikes, and social events and pay for the cost of the hike/event only and not pay any additional fee for being a visitor. When visiting the club all you have to do is produce a valid membership card.
- Each club will have a section on their website informing their members and the public that we have an agreement. There would also be a link on the website giving easy access to hiking programmes.
- Members of both Johannesburg Hiking Club and Durban Ramblers Hiking Club can go on hikes with a local club that has extensive knowledge of the area being hiked.
- The security of being with a group of hikers.
- The comradeship of fellow hikers.
- The benefit of being able to select and undertake hikes from both their daily and away hikes, when visiting another city.

JOHANNESBURG HIKING CLUB

TEL. 078 885 6505

WEBSITE: www.jhbhiking.co.za

HAPPY HIKING AND SEE YOU ON THE TRAIL

WEDNESDAY MORNING HIKES: Organised by Coleen Seath.

Please check details of the Wednesday Hikes with Colin Turner on 031 708 3517 or Coleen Seath on 031 202 2279 / 082 735 7659 (who will co-ordinate with leaders.) Information about the Wednesday hikes is posted on our Facebook page a few days before.



Taken on recent hike around Shongweni Club

SATURDAY HIKES (AFTERNOON): Organised by Ann Olds.

- Please get to starting point by 13.45 or 13.15 on occasion (please check schedule below) 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.
- 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. It is recommended that hikers carry their own water.
- There is no need to tell the leader you will be hiking.

SUNDAY HIKES (FULL DAY): Organised by Ana Barbosa.

- Please be aware that 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 the day before at the latest, to confirm details and let him/her know to expect you on the hike. Be mindful that the leader is also preparing for the hike on the Sunday morning.
- Please note that the meeting point and or time in the programme might change, or the hike route might change, or it might be raining and the hike cancelled therefore **you must phone the leader** or you might find yourself left out and left behind
- 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. It is recommended that hikers carry their own water
- Keep Rehidrat in your pack in case of dehydration in the hot months.
- Use tick spray.

Hikes are described as being Easy, Moderate or Strenuous and are graded from 1 to 5, as follows:

1. A flat even walk
2. A hike without big and steep inclines
3. A hike with some steep inclines - Fitness recommended
4. A hike with steep inclines and rock scrambling - Fitness essential
5. A hike with many inclines and rock scrambling - Fitness very essential

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY HIKING PROGRAMME 1st QUARTER 2019

Check on Facebook for changes

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	GRADE
Sat 6 Apr	Umhlanga Promenade, dune forest and lagoon.	Ilona	
	Park at Durban View Park parking lot (Marine Dr. and Durban View Rd) 13.45. Hike along prestigious Umhlanga Promenade, through indigenous dune forest, and out onto beach to Lagoon, and return to car park. Drinks afterwards enjoying the sea breeze.	076 912 9829	1, easy +8 km.
Sun 07 Apr	Hill 'n Dale (Bartlett Estate), Hammarsdale	Jenny	
	Sat hike adapted for Sun hikers. Hike through the conservancy, grassland and cane fields with views far and wide in the Hammarsdale area. Donation R20 pp to conservancy. Meet at 07.45 at the Hammarsdale Road/D657 intersection towards the Estate from where we will drive in convoy to start hike at 08.00 (from N3 take exit 43 to the left towards Hammarsdale (Mr385 Rd), first main turnoff to the right is D657 Rd).	084 952 0622	3, moderate ±12km
Sat 13 Apr	Krantzkloof Nature Reserve – Nkuthu to Nkonka Crack (Forest Trail)	Ann	
	Waterfall end of Krantzkloof Nature Reserve: Kloof Falls Rd from Kloof, past main picnic site. Road becomes Bridle Rd, continue to 3-way stop in Waterfall, turn right into King George, over speed bumps, road becomes Valley Rd. In dip Nkuthu picnic site on right. Meet 13.45. R40.00 entrance or Rhino Card. Hike over grassland, steep in parts, through forest, wonderful views across gorge to Kloof, and east to ocean. BYO refreshments for afterwards – Reserve closes at 18.00.	083 666 5630	3, strenuous 9km
Sun 14 Apr	Virginia Walkabout/ Danville Dawdle (Durban North)	John van Zyl	
	John will set off at 08.00 on a circular ramble, mixing street and bush walking in Danville Park and other green areas, with wonderful views of the sea. Meet and park before 08.00 at Danville Park Girl's High School (21 Middlebrook Ave, Dbn N.)	083 799 8382	2 ±15km
Sat 20 Apr	Hillcrest Rail to St Hillier	Sue	
	Meet at Station Masters Arms, Inanda Rd, Hillcrest at 13.45. Donation R20.00. Walk along "reclaimed" railway line through Hillcrest, alongside old stone wall farm boundary, then down to St Hillier Dam. Rail and road walk. Uphill return to Hillcrest and the pub, and carpark.	079 980 0488	2, easy 8 km.

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	GRADE
Sun 21 Apr	Public holiday		
Easter Sun.	No Sunday hike scheduled - join Saturday hikers		
Mon 22 Apr	Everglades to Inhlazane	Francois	
Family Day	Public holiday. Join Pietermaritzburg Ramblers on an all day hike. To Inhlazane from Everglades in the Dargle area. Steep, grade 4 for a short distance. Refreshments after. Everglades asks a fee. Meet @ Sasol Service Station Merrivale 07.15 depart 07.30. Fuel levy R50.	083 983 8007	4, steep ±10km
Sat 27 Apr	Burman Bush, Morningside.	Philip	
	Hike was rained off 1st quarter. Park in Nimmo Rd between Jameson Park and Mitchel Park. (Car guards) 13.45. Hike through Morningside to main gate in Burman St. Guard will accompany us as we do several loops of this gem in suburbia. Return past some stately residences.	082 417 0204	2, moderate, longish +8km.
Sun 28 Apr	Monteseel	Philip C	
aQuelle Tour Durban 2019	Monteseel, situated on top of the 'Inchanga Hill' is known for its extensive climbing routes with panoramic views of the surrounding areas, mostly the Valley of 1 000 Hills. On KZN Sandstone Sourveld (an endangered grassland ecosystem) there is a small valley with grassland on one side and scarp forest on the other. Hike follows the contours of the escarpment and then steeply down to the valley and back. Donation to conservancy R20 (members) R25 (non-members). Meet at 07.45am at Union Main Centre, 45 Old Main Rd, Pinetown, or at 08.30am at Drum and Bell (10 Old Main Rd, Drummond). Petrol sharing R20.	082 417 0204	Grade 3-4 Vertigo ±17km
Sun 28 Apr	The Ambers, Howick (Midlands Hiking Club)	Keith	
	Day hike around the Ambers. Donation. R20pp. Very popular – bookings by e-mail only.	033 239 5023/ keimarg@iunca.pped.co.za	Grade 2-3; ±14km
Wed 1 May	Monks Cowl, Little Berg	Francois	
Labour Day	Public holiday. Join Pietermaritzburg Ramblers on an all day hike. Monks Cowl, Little Berg hike past the Sphinx to Blind Man's Corner and down Keartlands Pass. KZN Wildlife day fee. Meet at Sasol Service Station Merrivale 06.00 departing 06.15. Fuel levy R100	083 983 8007	Grade 4; ±15km
Sat 4 May	Clifton Circuit, Shongweni.	Werner	
	Exit 33 from M13, left into Kassier Rd, left onto MR599 (Shongweni Dam sign). Park at Mushroom farm (tip security guard) 13.45. Hike through cane fields and uphill to Clifton Tower. Views east to city and ocean. A few steep hills. Well-earned drinks afterwards at Shongweni club.	084 206 7836	3, strenuous 9 km
Sun 05 May	Beach Bums (Casuarina Beach), Westbrook	Margie	
	Hike up and down the hills, across a nursery, through some bush and along a bit of beach. Variety and fun guaranteed! Hike will finish around lunch time. Optional swim/ drinks/ lunch at Beach Bums afterwards. Meet at 07.00 at Virginia airport or Beach Bums, Casuarina Beach in time to start hike at 07.30. Petrol sharing R20.	073 437 6915	Grade 2 ±15km

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	GRADE
Sat 11 May	Nkonka Trust and Tanglewood Conservancy, Kloof.	Werner	
	New route! Maytime Centre from M13, Haygarth Rd to Nkonka Trust. Drive down to parking by 13.45. R40.00 for 2 conservancies. Great views west, south and east. New trails cut over grassland, down to Motala, along road to Tanglewood. Into Tanglewood for tea break and up to cliff ledge, under waterfall. Steep path out of Tanglewood, and return to Nkonka Trust. BYO drinks to enjoy at view site.	084 206 7836	3, moderate Vertigo(?) 7km.
Sun 12 May	Longshadow/ Everton Circuit	Ana/ Margie	
	We need hikers to volunteer to lead hikes. Training will be provided and there will always be an experienced hike leader to back up new leaders. Margie has agreed to help lead this relatively easy hike for anyone that would like to become involved in leading hikes. This hike goes upstream from Krantzkloof NR into the Everton Conservancy (oldest urban conservancy in SA) taking both seldom used and new routes to various waterfalls. The area is renowned for its outstanding natural beauty and rich biodiversity. Entrance fee R40. Meet at 08.00 at the KKNR main picnic/ parking area (152 Kloof Falls Rd).	082 486 2320 073 437 6915	Grade 2-3 ±10km
Sat 18 May	Stainbank Nature Reserve.	Steve	
	Coedmore Rd, Yellowwood Park. 13.30 as entry process is slow. R40.00 cost or Rhino card. Hike through pleasant grassland, bush, a few river crossings, grazing game. Steve knows this reserve inside-out. BYO refreshment for afterwards.	083 956 1556	3, moderate 8 km
Sun 19 May	Mzinyathi Falls, Inanda (Green Corridor)	Philip C	
	This is a lovely walk with stunning views over the dam up to the Falls, which plunges 100m down a beautiful sandstone amphitheatre into the forested gorge. Going down to the bottom of the falls, a circular route is followed back out of the gorge. A Green Corridor initiative. Members R30 Non-members R50 for the guide. Meet at 08.00 at Mozambik restaurant parking area at 9 Inanda Rd, Hillcrest to drive in convoy alternatively meet 08.45 at Durban Green Corridor's eNanda Adventure Park (directions available from their website). Petrol sharing R30.	082 417 0204	Grade 2 Mod Strenuous Vertigo ±12km
Sat 25 May	Infinite Adventure/Park Run, Wootton Rd, Botha's Hill.	Werner	
	Meet at Pot & Kettle, Botha's Hill 13.30, before proceeding, in convoy, to Infinite Adventures for hike. Start at 14.00. Donation R20.00. Hike down to dam, up grassy hill near Phezulu, along "park run" tracks. Beautiful views of Valley of 1000 Hills	084 206 7836	3, strenuous 9 km.
Sun 26 May	Best of Palmiet (Westville)	Linda	
	A new Sunday hike. A walk through to the top of this beautiful reserve with spectacular cliffs, river, indigenous bush and grassland. Hiking pole recommended to assist with various river crossings. The reserve and river is named after the riverine plant <i>Prionium serratum</i> (Palmiet) which was formerly abundant in the area. Optional drinks/ lunch afterwards at Waxy O' Connors. R30 donation to reserve. Meet at 08.00 at the Palmiet Nature Reserve, off Old New Germany Rd, Westville.	083 353 8319	Grade3 Mod Vertigo; ±10km

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	GRADE
Sat 1 Jun	Casino to Umgeni Bird Park.	Biff	
	Park at Casino (R10) or Pirates Parking, and meet on Promenade in front of Wimpy at 13.45. Walk along Promenade to Umgeni River, over bridge and up-stream to Bird-Park. Drinks and supper options abound.	082 609 9684	1, easy 7 km
Sun 02 Jun	Rocky Bay (Park Rynie)	Anne Wilson	
Ironman 2019	Terrain is easy and mainly through sugarcane and coastal forest. It's a fairly exposed hike so a hat and sufficient drinking water essential. Bring binos in case you are lucky enough to spot a whale! Entrance fee R20. Drinks in the pub afterwards. Meet at 07.30 in road at Glenwood Village, 397 Che Guevara (Moore) Rd or Rocky Bay Resort (exit 104 from N2) in time to start hike at 08.30. Petrol sharing R50	079 850 0206	Grade 2 ±19km
Sun 02 Jun	Umgeni Valley (Midlands Hiking Club)	Keith	
Ironman 2019	Day hike in Umgeni Valley. Day entry R30pp. Very popular – bookings by e-mail only.	033 239 5023/ keimarg@iunca.pped.co.za	14-16 km
Sat 8 Jun	Krantzkloof Nature Reserve – Beacon Trail.	Abdullah	
	Meet in main picnic site in Kloof Falls rd, Kloof at 13.45. Entrance R40.00 or Rhino card. Enjoy wonderful views of Kloof Gorge, and east to ocean and city. A few challenging steep parts en route and grassland on top. Drinks at Nature Cafe afterwards.	084 478 6779	3, moderate Vertigo 7 km.
Sun 09 Jun	Wilson's Wharf to Point Waterfront	Jonathan	
Comrades 2019	Comrades Marathon road closures to the West of Durban so we explore Durban to the East. This walk will include stops at a few museums either on way to or from Point Waterfront and Durban promenade. Drinks afterwards at Wilson's Wharf. Bring some money for entrance to museums or refreshments along the way. Durban Holocaust & Genocide Centre (North Beach) 8.30am–4pm; Port Natal Maritime Museum 11am–3.45pm; Durban Natural Science Museum 11am–4pm. Meet and park at 08.00am at Wilson's Wharf (Boatmans Rd)	082 420 9577	Grade 1 Easy +10km
Sat 15 Jun	Roosfontein, Westville.	Ismail	
	Park at entrance to Westville Prison, off Spine Rd. 13.45. A good winter hike over grassland, view over Umbilo River, Queensburgh.	083 786 6733	3, moderate 8 km
Sun 16 Jun	Killarney Rockeries/ Highstakes (Cato Ridge)	Margie	
Youth Day	Steep in places, but rewarded with flowering aloes in winter. Possible entrance fee (R20?) which is normally refundable on purchase of refreshments. Meet at 08.00 at Union Main Centre, 45 Old Main Rd, Pinetown or at 08.20 at Cato Ridge turn off (N3 exit 53), or follow signboards to Highstakes. Hike will start at 08.30. Petrol sharing R30.	073 437 6915	Grade 2-3 ±14km
Sat 22 Jun	Summerveld - Shongweni Circuit	Jon	
	M13, exit 33, left and first right into Cliffdale, left into Hawkestone, right into Summerhill Rd, park at Summerveld Lodge. Trail along "horsey" country roads, and through grassland. Drinks at Lodge afterwards.	082 459 1522	2, easy 8km.

DATE	DESCRIPTION OF HIKE	LEADER	GRADE
Sun 23 Jun	Valley of 1000 Hills (Botha's Hill)	Stella	
	Steep in parts. Hike into the valley and follow the river before scrambling back up to the dirt road then back down to river before the final climb out of the valley, via the dam. Drinks afterwards at the Chef School. Meet at 08.00 at 1000 Hills Chef School, 2 Wootton Ave, Botha's Hill.	078 319 8979	Grade 3-4 18km
Sat 29 Jun	Sugar Loaf – Botha's Hill rail - Assagay	Ann	
	From Old Main Rd, Hillcrest, through robot at Kassier Rd, Sugar Loaf Centre on left at bottom of Botha's Hill. Park at 13.45. Hike along railway up to historic Botha's Hill Station, continue past Heidi's Farm Stall, refreshment break at river, return through small holding land and suburb of Assagay.	083 666 5630	2, moderate 9 km
Sun 30 Jun	Old Baldy (iSithumba) – Green Corridor	Abdullah	
	Scenic hike through Isithumba village, along the Umgeni River followed by a steep climb up Old Baldy (400m alt) to some spectacular views of the valley. The path is steep and in one section scrambling is required. Hike is best done during the cooler conditions of winter with flowering aloes adding charm to the experience. A Green Corridor initiative – R40 members and R50 non-members towards the guide fees. Meet at 08.15 at iSithumba Adventure Park (15030 D1004 Rd, Ximba). Option for ride-share, contact hike leader.	084 478 6779	Grade 4 Strenuous Vertigo; ±10km

OTHER RAMBLERS ACTIVITIES

As some of you may know, Lee D'Eathe founded the Palmiet River Watch in order to monitor the health of the river. Here is an article on a recent activity hosted by this River Watch:

palmiet-river-watch-hosts-international-scientists/

Palmiet River Watch hosts international scientists

FIFTY-FOUR international climate change scientists visited the Palmiet Nature Reserve last Wednesday, a perfect example of biodiversity under threat.

This was one of several excursions for the scientists to see activities or projects around Durban with relevance for climate change and sustainability in the African context.

The scientists were in Durban attending the first meeting with about 240 authors from around the world, putting together the massive sixth Global Assessment Report for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Palmiet River Watch founder and champion, Lee D'Eathe, shared some fascinating geological, archeological and historical facts from the area; and how natural areas were continually being lost.

The Palmiet River Watch is a voluntary group of local individuals who regularly assess river health, run a flood warning system for the Quarry Road community downstream, and monitor and report pollution events, enabling the authorities to respond and minimise the impact. More than 100 pollution events are reported and registered every year.

"The appointment of a service provider, with the skills and experience to address the root causes rapidly, is awaited. They would need to ensure there are continual, meaningful, significant, sustainable and measurable reductions of environmental impacts within the Palmiet River Valley," said Lee.

Smiso Bhengu, from Environmental



Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change visitors exploring the Palmiet Nature Reserve.

Planning and Climate Protection Department (EPCPD), spoke about the connection between the municipality and climate change. The Palmiet River being included as a proof of a concept project in the uMngeni Ecological Infrastructure Partnership (UEIP).

Bheka Nxela (EPCPD) spoke about Ecosystem Restoration Interventions across Durban, including invasive vegetation control, reforestation and grassland management.

Kloof Conservancy's chairman, Paolo Candotti, accompanied by a group of eco-champs from the Aller River Rehabilitation

project, spoke about successes and failures in addressing river water pollution, illegal dumping and invasive alien vegetation; and the challenges of providing adequate rubbish bags for residents to dispose of household waste and nappies responsibly.

Other local experts included Nicholas Saunders (live snake exhibit), Alan Smith (geologist), Himansu Baijnath (author of *Strife of the World*), Johan Bodenstern (expert on the polyphagous shot hole borer), Mahomed Desae (Aquatic Ecosystem Research and assessments) and Marlies H Craig (author of *What Insect are You*).

MEMBERS' STORIES

Gordon Tomlinson has also been investigating the Palmiet; that is the Palmiet Nature Reserve. He sent me the following interesting information on its geology, which he most likely found on <http://www.palmiet.za.net/geology.htm>: Gordon provided the photos.

Geology of the Palmiet Nature Reserve

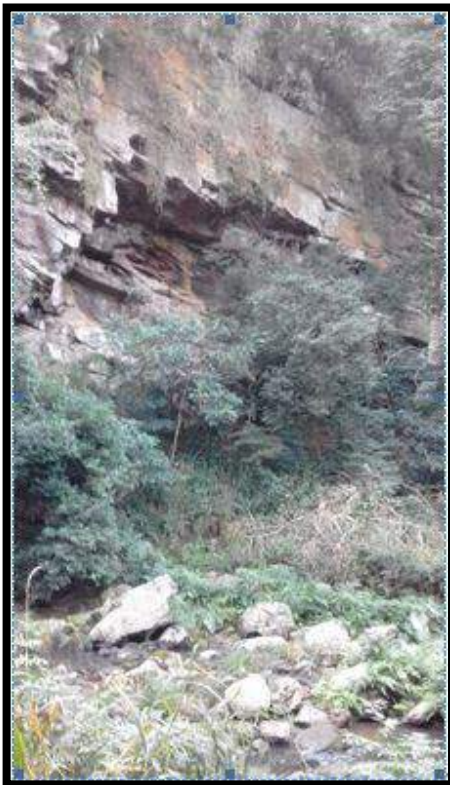
To understand the rocks that make up the cliffs and gorge walls of the Palmiet Nature Reserve it is necessary to think in terms of a very different environment than exists today. The Natal Group, to which these sandstones belong, was formed about 600 million years ago. Well known geographical features such as the Drakensberg and Cape Mountains were still to be formed. KwaZulu-Natal lay near the heart of the supercontinent Gondwanaland (the Indian and Atlantic Oceans had not been formed). Animal life was only just beginning to evolve in the warm seas and plants had yet to colonize the land.

The Palmiet area and most of KwaZulu-Natal, must have resembled a desert similar to Gobi Desert in China which is cold and arid. The total lack of plants (other than algae) and animals made the region much harsher than any modern equivalent and the climate one of even greater extremes. There were no soils and vegetation to retain water, and even the atmosphere was different, being richer in carbon dioxide and containing less oxygen.

So; envisage a long, flat-bottomed, sand-filled valley stretching from a major lake or inland sea near Port Shepstone, north-eastwards to a mountainous area in what is now southern Swaziland. Along the western edge of this valley (by Pietermaritzburg) barren rolling hills rose and stretched away to the far distance. On the eastern margin, which lay out past the present-day coast, similar hills stretched several hundreds of kilometres to the area that is now the Antarctic. A large river drained the highlands to the north east and smaller tributaries flowed in from both margins. However, as there was no soil or vegetation to form wetlands and retain water, the flow rate and river level was highly variable. When rains fell in the highland or hilly margins there was rapid runoff causing flash-floods to sweep down the valley, scouring out new river channels during peak discharge and depositing sheets of sandy alluvium after the flood. These layers of sand, now converted to sandstone, preserve the ripple marks and cross bedding caused by the flowing water during their deposition.

During major floods the mass of water also caused movement in the layers of sand in the river bed, distorting the fine structures and sometimes folding and deforming the bedding. The sequence of events during each flood followed a very similar pattern. First the water would sweep down the almost dry, or slowly flowing, river bed washing away obstacles and often cutting new channels. As the power of the flood waters waned, first the coarsest sediment (pebbles and coarse

sand), then progressively finer and finer material was deposited, so that in most sandstone beds the grain size systematically decreases from bottom to top.



Although most of the material carried by the rivers was sand and gravel, after the floods some pools of muddy water remained. The mud settled in these ponds to form lens-shaped bodies of mudstone and siltstone while some ponds evaporated completely producing mud flakes, just like those formed when modern puddles dry out. In most cases the next flood eroded and destroyed the mud layers before depositing another bed of sand, but occasionally a mudstone layer was preserved, or the mud flakes survived long enough to be incorporated into sandstone beds. Often river channels filled with sand during repeated minor floods, so that during the stronger floods the river would overflow and cut new channels through the layers of sand.

This environment existed for many millions of years, with movement along fault lines at each side of the valley allowing the base of the valley to sink so that the several hundreds of meters of sand and pebbles accumulated, and were converted into rock by burial. However, during this time continental drift was slowly moving the supercontinent Gondwanaland towards the South Pole. The climatic change generated glaciers in the highlands, which steadily grew until about 350 million years ago Arctic conditions prevailed. At this stage the landscape must have appeared as a wasteland of snow and ice, much like southern Greenland or Ellsworth Land (Antarctica), with only the tops of a few rocky hills (nunataks) peeping through the ice.

During the cooling and initial glaciation much of the Natal Group was eroded as the debris-rich ice sheets scoured the country side. This erosive phase formed glacial pavements, such as the one in the University of Durban-Westville, and the scratch marks made by boulders frozen in the base of the glacier clearly indicate the direction of ice movement. Continental drift finally carried the area past the pole and into slightly warmer climates where the eroded debris could accumulate at the base of the glacier. In some parts of KwaZulu-Natal there is evidence that this glacial debris, termed the Dwyka Group, was reworked by flowing water, but in the Palmiet Nature Reserve area the mass of blue-grey rock containing many exotic pebbles and boulders is unsorted.

Although the deposition of the Dwyka Group marked the start of a major geological episode called the Karoo Era, in which many hundreds of meters of sediment accumulated, there is virtually no evidence of this phase in the Palmiet area. Only when the Gondwanaland began to break up some 200 million years ago did geological events again impact on the nature reserve. At this time the rocks that are now exposed on the land surface were far underground, and magma from deep in the earth (about 20 km) was able to escape upwards along the fractures in the splitting continent. Much of the magma escaped onto the surface to form the basaltic lava's, remnants of which are preserved in the Drakensberg and Lebombo region, but some was trapped in the fractures where it solidified to form dolomite. *(According to Werner, The dolomite should be dolerite ...*

Dolomite is formed in seas by organisms whilst intrusive rocks described are DOLERITE} Occasionally fragments of sediments were caught up in the flow of magma and these xenoliths (fragment of rock differing in origin composition structure etc from the rock surrounding it) were altered to granite-like lumps by the heat of the magma.

After the initial deep-seated fracturing that split Gondwana into the African, Australian, Antarctic and Indian continents, there was a prolonged period of seismic activity as the continents adjusted to the new configuration.

In the upper crust vertical and lateral movement occurred along fracture planes known as faults to compensate for mass movement. The fractured rock along the faults, called breccia, provided a pathway for the circulation of ground water.



This ground water carried dissolved minerals, most commonly quartz, which were deposited in the breccia and associated fractures. In many cases the breccia was cemented by the minerals deposit or the fracture completely filled to form a vein, but in some cases the cavities were not completely filled and crystals can be found.

The geological history of the Palmiet Nature Reserve during the last 10 million years is one of erosion and the development of the various African Land Surfaces. However, in the most recent 50 000 years there have been dramatic changes in sea level related to the Ice Age. The massive sea level drop to about 120 m below the present level approximately 20 000 years ago caused the rivers meandering across the flat land surface to cut down in to the plain. The sudden increase in gradient, due to the change in sea level, combined with higher than present rainfall caused the rivers to cut down into their existing channels creating a pattern of incised meanders, and not the straighter lines associated with young or high gradient drainage patterns.

Thus, the topographic features visible today, whereby a relatively small river occupies a very deep and highly sinuous valley is a curious combination of both the rocks formed many millions of years ago and the events of relatively recent geological history.

CLASSIFIEDS

Sometimes we find out things that could be useful to fellow hikers such as places to buy reasonably priced hiking goods or were to get good service. Please feel free to share your own bits of useful information here.

Christine Horley is wanting to sell a few backpacking items. They have hardly been used:



75l backpack, hardly used, R700



Sleeping bag, made in Scotland, R300



Camping lamp, R150

Or make an offer

Contact Christine Horley, christinehorley@gmail.com,
084 564 0003



And that is it from me, Ilona. If you have a story you would like to share, or know something different about another reserve we frequent, please send it to me.