



South African
NATIONAL PARKS

MARAKELE NATIONAL PARK

A Place of Sanctuary



YOUR NATURAL HERITAGE

Marakele National Park

“Place of Sanctuary”



Setting foot in Marakele, right in the heart of the Waterberg mountains, allows one to discover a park like no other. “A place of sanctuary” is indeed what is to be expected, just like the Tswana name suggests, for this national park is located in the transitional zone between the dry western and moister eastern regions of South Africa, therefore allowing for a remarkable mixture of wildlife. A moderate and pleasant climate ensures an enjoyable stay, with perfect summer rainfalls keeping the worst of heat at bay. Visitors flocking here can expect a welcoming mixture of tranquillity, delight and overall satisfaction – and the picturesque paradise in which the park is set forms just part of the promise. Rare yellowwood and striking cedar trees, long and luscious bushveld and grandiose mountains in the background, huge crowds of Cape vultures soaring through the royal blue skies, exciting mixtures of wildlife trampling across the plains ... Certainly a bush experience unlike any other.



Tlopi Tented Camp



Guests get to relax in comfortably furnished tented units while gazing across the banks of the Apiesrivierpoort Dam. Each tent has two beds (two stretchers are available which are more suitable for children) and a private bathroom (shower, wash basin and toilet). A fully equipped kitchen, complete with a refrigerator/freezer, two-plate stove and electricity, ups the luxury level. Guests can also lazily enjoy each tent's veranda with table, deck chairs and barbeque facilities. One tent offers wheelchair access. The unfenced camp allows for a more “environmental” camping experience, and is approximately 17 km from the Reception Office.





Bontle Camping Site



It's no coincidence that bontle means 'beautiful' in Tswana. This pleasant camping site consists of 38 camp sites with power points, arranged into 3 clusters, with one communal block per cluster.

The camping site is located adjacent to the park's new reception and administration offices.



Facilities

In Park



Communal
Ablution Block



Electricity
for Appliances



Info at
Reception



Picnic Site

In Thabazimbi



Emergency
Services



Garage



Petrol
Station



Public
Telephone



Post Box



Restaurant



In an effort to keep the park's ecosystem as undisturbed as possible, most facilities are located outside the park in the adjacent town of Thabazimbi.

- Stock up on those necessities at the local shop.
- Wine and dine at the superb restaurant.
- Fill up on petrol and diesel at Thabazimbi's gas station.
- A doctor and medical services are available in town.
- Public telephones are also accessible, as well as a post office.
- The nearest police stations are located 12 km from the office and camping site in Thabazimbi and approximately 18 km north of the Kareehoeck turnoff at Hoopdal.

5 Wildlife to seek

1. Cape Vulture
2. Elephant
3. Rhino (black and white)
4. Kudu
5. Leopard



Activities

Be one with nature and experience all the enjoyment that Marakele's natural environment offers.

- Cast your eyes on the fabulous collection of bird- and wildlife species.
- A mountain pass allows you an incredible view of the surrounding areas, plus brings you in close proximity to the Cape vulture colonies.
- Morning and sunset drives take you out into the wild to see what nature offers outside of the park fences.
- Morning and sunset bush walks offer the same, but at a much slower pace, allowing the hiker more time with nature's characters.
- A two nights 4x4 eco trail – animals become your neighbours as you camp out in the remarkable natural environment.



4x4 Adventure
Trails



Guided
Bush Walk



Sunset Drive

Flora and Fauna

Game

Your typical African bush mammals can be found throughout Marakele, and visitors can expect to see beauties such as elephant, black and white rhino. Predator types like brown hyena, leopard and lion can also be spotted, as well as antelope such as sable, impala, waterbuck and many other smaller species. Guests are advised to take note of chacma baboons and vervet monkeys, who are known for their mischievous actions, particularly around the rest camps.

Birding

A stunning appeal of Marakele is the world's largest colony of Cape Vultures. More than 800 breeding pairs have made the park their home and visitors are definitely sure to catch a glimpse of a few of them. However, because of the park's location within a transition zone between the dry western regions and the moister eastern regions of the country, an interesting variety of birdlife can be encountered (closely related species and mixed). Typical birds of this region include Southern Boubou, Red-eyed Bulbul, Purple Roller, Cape Rock Thrush, raptors such as Snake and Brown Snake Eagle, Jackal Buzzard, African Hawk, and many others. In summer, Wahlberg's Eagle are prominent. Night time brings its own special mix like Freckled and Fiery-necked Nightjars, Spotted Eagle and African Scops Owl to add to the pulsating mix of crickets and cicadas. Marakele Honorary Rangers have organised an annual birding census in the park and surrounding farms, keeping track of these magnificent companions.

Vegetation

More than half the park is characterized by the Waterberg Moist Bushveld vegetation type, which occurs in the intermediate to high lying areas in the southern and south-eastern parts of the park. Another major vegetation type is the Mixed Bushveld, which covers approximately 42% of the park. This vegetation type is mainly found in the north-western and isolated south-western park areas. Game such as black rhino, elephant and wild dog are associated with this vegetation type. This vegetation type is characterized by species such as silver cluster leaf (*Terminalia sericea*), sickle bush (*Dichrostachys cinerea*) and round-leaved teak (*Pterocarpus rotundifolius*). This picturesque vegetation can also be seen around the camping site and tented camp.



General Information

Climate

Summers are hot but the area does not suffer from the stifling humidity so typical of the eastern Lowveld. The park is situated in the summer rainfall region and rainfall occurs in the form of heavy thunderstorms or soft rain. Winter is moderate with frost occurring in the low-lying regions only. Mornings and nights can be cold, but day temperatures are pleasant.

Day Visitors

Reception is open from 07h30 till 16h00.

Gate times: May to August 07h30-17h00, September to April 07h30-18h00. No need to book in advance. Currently there is no limit on number of people per day. 4x4 routes as well as routes for sedan vehicles are open to day visitors.

Tariffs

All tariffs are available from reception or on our website: www.sanparks.org

Handy Hints

Remember to bring a camera, binoculars, bird and wildlife reference books, a hat and sunscreen lotion. Cool and warm clothing - the region is subject to sudden changes in weather, particularly in the mountains.

Travel / How to get there

The park is situated in the Waterberg mountain range in the Limpopo Province (formerly the Northern Province) near Thabazimbi, approximately 250 km north of Johannesburg, in a malaria-free area. Travelers can take either:

1. The N1 to Warmbaths and from there follow the R516 via Mabula and Leeupoort to Thabazimbi
2. Or travel to Brits and follow the R511 via Beestekraal to Thabazimbi.

Some Interesting Facts

A narrow tar road takes visitors up to the top of the Waterberg massif. The views and scenery are spectacular.

Warnings

Please ensure that your stay is happy and safe by taking note of a few simple warnings. You will be sharing your stay with many exciting and unusual creatures, but without knowledge some of them could be dangerous!



Beware
Bats



Beware
Spiders



Beware
Snakes



Beware
Scorpions



Beware
Wasps



Beware
Bees

If you must walk around at night please **DO NOT DO SO WITHOUT A TORCH.**

REMEMBER BY FEEDING ANY WILDLIFE YOU ARE SIGNING THEIR DEATH WARRANT, AS THEY BECOME AGGRESSIVE.

General Rules



Gravel
Roads



Tarred
Roads



Declare
Firearm
at Gate



Drive on
Marked Trail



Feeding the
Game is
Prohibited



Fire Free
Zone



Hanging Out
of Vehicle is
Prohibited



Litter Free
Zone



Noise Free
Zone



Pet Free
Zone



Removing
Flora is
Prohibited



Stay in your
Vehicle



Smoking
Free Zone



Touching the
Game is
Prohibited



Failure to observe these simple rules is a criminal offense

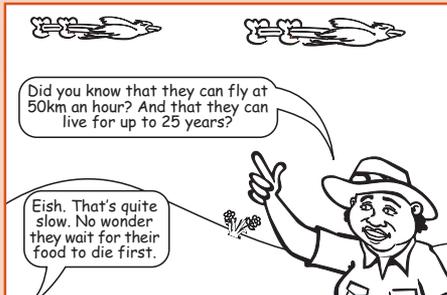
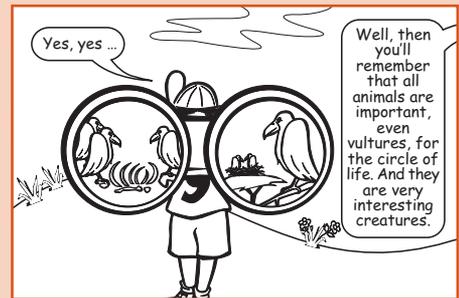
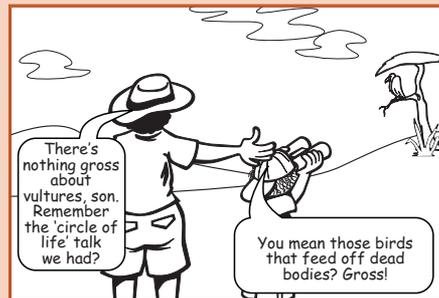
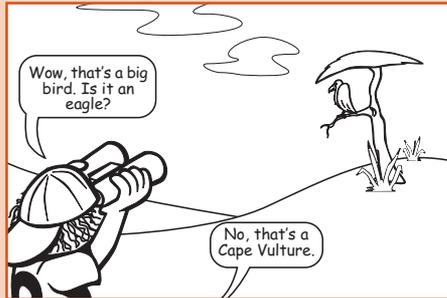




MELUSI AND MILO Marakele's Cape Vultures

Melusi and his dog Milo (SANParks unofficial envoys of conservation and biodiversity) are always keen to teach about the importance of nature.

Here Melusi visits Marakele and learns a valuable lesson about one of its main attractions - the vultures.





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Marakele

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