



MOUNTAIN BACKPACKERS CLUB

Fixture List: April - June 2012

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Dear Members

The Berg hiking season has started! The days are cooling down and the evenings are pleasant.

Thanks to our leaders for the efforts they go to when planning and organizing their hikes. We are fortunate to have very experienced leaders who are capable of leading hikes from the very easy to the very difficult. Have you ever considered the amount of planning that goes into any hike?, transport, back-up, route planning, etc... thanks guys!

On a different note; we are having difficulties with the website, it is constantly being hacked. To overcome this we are also going to place upcoming hikes on our FaceBook site as well. Can I also ask that you put feedback of hikes on the FB site, and send me photos I can put on as well?

We are also pushing our clubs brand out through various means. One of them is via 'Geocaching'. To find out more about Geocaching look at www.geocaching.com . Mountain Backpackers medals have been ordered and we will be asking leaders to hide geocaches with the medals at various interesting places. The first to find the cache will be able to keep the medal. The cache remains in it's place for others to find and record their details.

The Social Committee is running like a well oiled machine! Well done guys! Let us all continue supporting the social functions, and if you have an interesting experience to share please contact the committee.

Having spent the weekend hiking in the Vergelegen area I must say we are really fortunate to be able to disappear into the isolation of the beautiful berg and forget our problems for a couple of days. Awesome !!

'Til next time
Cheers
Eddie

MOUNTAIN BACKPACKERS CLUB COMMITTEE

Chairman:	Eddie von Bargaen	083 2811288
Vice Chairman:	Bobby Stanton	031 4655535
Treasurer:	Bobby Stanton (temporary)	031 4655535
Fixture List / Magazine:	Bobby Stanton	031 4655535
Membership / Subscriptions:	Jovita da Silva	082 6919180
Committee member	Heidi Dinan	082 7064283
Socials Committee	Alan Etchells	082 3984103
Socials Committee	Barry Stapleton	082 6574345
Socials Committee	Brendon Cadman	082 4556986
Socials Committee	Karen Miller	082 7423266
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THE CHAIRMAN AND COMMITTEE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS TO THE CLUB

Errol Douwes	Mavis Morris
Francois Biatrix	Michael Morissey
Jonathan Newman	Michelle Massyn & Family
Lihle Qulu	Mikhail Smith & Family
Linda Seymore	Ross Skorpen

Grading of hikes

1. Very easy trip
2. Easy trip
3. Moderate trip - physical fitness advisable
4. Strenuous trip - **physical fitness essential**
5. **Very strenuous** trip requiring a high degree of fitness

Please take particular note of **distance and height** as well as the **grading of the backpacking trip** you intend doing and ensure that your level of fitness is adequate.

April 2012

Date	Description	Distance Height	Leader	Contact	Grade
31 Mar – 1 Apr	Zulu Cave from Monk's Cowl via the Sphinx, Eagle Gorge (swimming), Eagle Cave and the Cat Cave rock art site, returning via Intunja (optional climb). A head for heights is essential!	28 km 765 m	Dave Gay	031 7654246 (18h00 to 20h00 Mon-Thu only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	3-4
31 Mar – 1 Apr	Up Ka-Mashilenga Pass and down Redi Pass. Loteni area. Fitness required.	35 km 1600 m	John Pickup	072 1512031 johnpickup9@gmail.com	4
6-9	Southern Berg Traverse Day 1: Wilson's Cave via Three Pools and Castle View farm Day 2: Campsite behind Rhino Peak via Stones Pass (North) and escarpment Day 3: Traverse to Mzimude Cave, climbing Mashai Peak and Mzimude Peak en route Day 4: Return via Mzimude Pass (South) and Hidden Valley	48 km 1425 m	Dave Gay	031 7654246 (18h00 to 20h00 Mon-Thu only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	4-5
6-9	Climb Judges Pass via Centenary Hut and return via Leslie's Pass. (Injasuti area)	~50 km	Clinton Bro	082 8202139 clintsttimbers@gmail.co.za	4
21	Kloof Gorge Walks - Meet at the falls picnic site at 12 pm. Route will be announced there. Small entrance fee. Bring sun protection, hat, water, snacks and a rain jacket. Moderate fitness required. Not suitable for children.	4-5 hrs	John McGovern Karen Miller (please contact to confirm hike)	John 082 6595111 Karen 082 7423266	2
21-22	Aasvoelkrans Cave (Highmoor area). Short hike, ideal for first-time backpackers who want to experience spending a night in a large cave. There is a waterfall and pool right next to the cave. Bring your costume, if you wish.	8 km	Farouk Omarjee	031 5776336 (evenings) 083 4190196	3
Fri. 20 th April to Wed. 2 nd May	Grand Traverse 2012 Bushman's Nek to Sentinel (South to north) 230 km Grade 5. Only for the very fit and committed.		John Pickup	072 1512031 johnpickup9@gmail.com	
Sat 28 th April	GT Resupply at Organ Pipes Pass (John is still looking for a leader)	18 km 1300 m			4-5
27-29	Bushman's Nek Short (one km) backpacking to Bushman's Nek Hut for a two-night stay. Beautiful day hikes from this base to see waterfalls, Bushman paintings, caves & lovely pools for swimming. Hut has lockable rooms with bunk beds & mattresses + flush toilets & showers (only cold water but no problem) - Combined weekend with Midlands Hiking Club - please book early to secure a place.	12-15 km each day	Keith Ashton	033 2395023 082 8466179 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	2-3
29	Umgeni Valley. Joint Ramblers Club hike. Meet at Union Main, Pinetown to leave at 6.30am sharp or at the reserve at 7.45am.		Mike Kirby		

27 Apr – 1 May	Southern Berg Traverse Day 1: Bird's Nest Cave via the Nhlangezi River Day 2: Climb Mkhomazi Pass and camp behind Nhlangezi Peak Day 3: Climb Thabana Ntlenyana (the highest peak in southern Africa at 3 482 metres), then camp at the top of Mangaun Pass Day 4: Kaula Cave via Ntshintshini Pass Day 5: Return via the ka-Ntuba and Nhlangezi rivers	48 km 1980 m	Dave Gay	031 7654246 (18h00 to 20h00 Mon-Thu only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	4-5
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May 2012

Date	Description	Distance Height	Leader	Contact	Grade
6	Dargle Conservancy - New day hike through indigenous forest on private land - climbing to above forest for magnificent views of surrounding areas - prolific bird life. We will be guided by the owner who is very knowledgeable about the local plants, trees, birds & animals - stunning location, not to be missed.	12 km	Keith Ashton	033 2395023 082 8466179 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	2
5-6	Gxalingenwa Cave via Emerald Stream. Return via Ndlovini mountain. Please book by Monday , April 30th.	25 km	Dave Sclanders	082 4434287 bergfree@absamail.co.za	3
12-13	Highmoor. Tenting hike to campsite near upper Mooi River. Bushman paintings.	15 km	John McGovern	082 6595111	3
12-13	Birdsnest Cave from Vergelegen. An interesting hike in a less visited area. Road to Vergelegen is not good, vehicle with high clearance required. Leave at 08h00 from Vergelegen. Cost: R45-00 to overnight in the Cave. There is a stream running next to cave, suitable for beginners.	24 km 250 m	Eddie von Bargaen	083 2811288 after hours	3
19-20	McKenzie's Cave (Mkhomazi area) McKenzie's Cave via a rock art site, returning via Cyprus Cave.	23 km 705 m	Dave Gay	031 7654246 (18h00 to 20h00 Mon-Thu only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	3-4
26	Kloof Gorge Walks - Meet at the falls picnic site at 12 pm. Route will be announced there. Small entrance fee. Bring sun protection, hat, water, snacks and a rain jacket. Moderate fitness required. Not suitable for children.	4-5 hrs	John McGovern Karen Miller (please contact to confirm hike)	John 082 6595111 Karen 082 7423266	2
26-27	Ash Cave (Loteni area). Exploratory hike. Leave Loteni at 08h00, find way to Ash Cave, explore vicinity. Cost R65-00.	~20 km 500 m	Eddie von Bargaen	083 2811288 after hours	3

June 2012

Date	Description	Distance Height	Leader	Contact	Grade
2-3	Backpacking and overnight in Lower Injasuti Cave (Injasuti area) . Joint Midlands Hiking Club event. Ideal for first time or less experienced backpackers. Please book by Monday 28 May.	20 km	Dave Sclanders	082 4434287 bergfree@absamail.co.za	3

8-10	Boston T-Party in Boston - This is a really lovely spot not far away & we had great times there last year. Local day hikes will be done from our base. Accommodation includes :- Five private en-suite rooms, two 8-bed dormitories, lovely outdoor campsites - self-catering fully equipped kitchen-cum-lounge, communal showers with plenty of hot water. The owners (Rory & Sue) go the extra mile to make our stay enjoyable. Strongly suggest we have good value dinners Fri & Sat nights organised by Sue - no own cooking required. Combined weekend with Midlands Hiking Club. Please contact Keith as soon as possible to secure the accommodation you require & for more details.	8-15 km each day	Keith Ashton	033 2395023 082 8466179 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	2+
9-10	Bollard Pass to Rhino Pass (Garden Castle area) Climb Bollard Pass via Cod's Eye Cave and tent overnight on the escarpment. Return via the escarpment, climbing Rhino Peak and then descending via Rhino Pass	24 km 1100 m	Dave Gay	031-7654246 (18h00 to 20h00 Mon-Thu only) cougar1@telkomsa.net	4
16-17	Whyte's Cave from Bushman's Nek. See Bushman paintings at Painter's Cave and White Horse Cave on the way. Please book by Monday 11 June.	21 km	Dave Sclanders	082 4434287 bergfree@absamail.co.za	3-4
23	Kloof Gorge Walks - Meet at the falls picnic site at 12 pm. Route will be announced there. Small entrance fee. Bring sun protection, hat, water, snacks and a rain jacket. Moderate fitness required. Not suitable for children.	4-5 hrs	John McGovern Karen Miller (please contact to confirm hike)	John 082 6595111 Karen 082 7423266	2
23-24	Mc Kenzie's Cave (Mkhomazi area). A large herd of eland were spotted in this area on a previous hike. We will take it easy walking up on the first day. Return via the same route.	16 km 640 m	Farouk Omarjee	031 5776336 (evenings) 083 4190196	3
23-24	Climb Amakhehla Pass from Lakes Cave (Cobham area)	36 km 1250 m	Christine Bro	082 7826025 christinebro3@gmail.com	3-4

Advance Notices

Date	Description
22-24 September	Club Campout at Mahai campsite - Royal Natal Park
31 September	Close of Annual Photo Competition . Start Clicking Now! (New multi category format. Details in next magazine or on website)

Note: It is the prerogative of a hike leader to accept or reject members or other applicants from participating in his or her hike, after questioning the applicant on their fitness and experience. It is a privilege not a right to participate in a hike. Day hikers are requested to phone the leader beforehand to confirm their attendance and that the hike is still on schedule.

HambaNathi

“Walk with us” Guided Wild Coast Hikes

HambaNathi offers guided hikes along the Wild coast, South Africa’s most beautiful, wildest and most exciting stretch of coast. Camp on unspoilt beaches, swim in magical rock pools, see an abundance of marine and coastal life. All hikes are fully catered. Transport and last night’s accommodation in Mbotyi are arranged. Visit our Website at <http://www.wildcoasthikes.co.za> or phone 031 202 9994.

Southern Secrets Hiking and Backpacking

Discover some of the exquisite secrets of the Drakensberg Mountains and Lesotho, including visits to rock art sites, with a fully qualified and registered Mountain Guide (KZN0904) and Nature Guide (KZN1025). Single or multi-day trips.

Contact Philip or Christeen Grant 033 9971817 cell 0824179163/2 email pgrant@yebo.co.za or visit www.southernsecrets.co.za

Berg Free Adventures

David Sclanders runs single and multi day guided trips into the Berg, visiting rock-art sites, sleeping in tents, caves and mountain huts. He is a member of the South African Mountain Guide Association registered as a guide with the Department of Tourism, Registration Number KZN0050. He can be contacted on telephone or **fax 033 239 5013, Cell 082 443 4287** or visit www.bergfree.co.za.

NAVIGATION TRAINING WORKBOOK

NAVIGATION Anyplace Wild – by Andrew Friedemann This very practical workbook has tasks to complete in it, & is aimed at anyone who travels in the outdoors and needs to navigate. Although written primarily for walkers, it will work for anyone including horse riding, cycling, military teams etc. It has been fully revised and updated to be applicable anywhere in the world, so no matter where you are it will work for you.

The book is 160 pages in full colour with great pictures from all around the world where we have travelled, our guided trips and training courses – making it a great coffee table book too. It comes with a pull out map on which most of the tasks are completed and the website will have additional free tools available for download and in the near future additional tasks and maps for you to continue practicing skills and gaining knowledge once you have finished the book. Chapter 1 is downloadable for free from the website (*4mb*)

There have been a number of variations of the book over the years with each new one being tweaked after use on courses and from feedback received from people who have used it. Reviews of the book can be seen at www.navigationskills.com For all South African orders, please contact Mammoth Outdoor in Cape Town 086 100 0370 or hello@mammothoutdoor.co.za

Discounts For Members

CAPE UNION MART offers members 5% discount - **membership cards must be produced.**

OUTDOOR WAREHOUSE offers 5% discount when presented with a **valid membership card.**

BACKPACKING EQUIPMENT

In the past some members have not hiked because they did not have the necessary equipment, particularly winter gear. Our club has a full range of backpacking items, making it unique in KwaZulu-Natal. In addition to the backpacks and tents, there are sleeping bags, rain gear and gas stoves. Comfortable, warm jackets are for hire on club trips by MEMBERS only.

Hiring Fees

Deposit	Item	Daily Fee
R100	Tent	R20
R100	Backpack	R20
R50	Sleeping Bag + Liner	R10
R50	Gas Stove	R10
R50	Jacket	R10
R25	Mattress	R5
R25	Groundsheet	R5
R25	Poncho	R5

Example

For a weekend hike, to hire one backpack you will need to put down a R100 cash deposit. You will be charged R20 per day, so the hiring fee will be R40 provided you return the backpack by the end of the Wednesday following the hike. If you return the backpack on the Thursday you will be charged an additional R20. You will therefore be charged a total of R60, which will be taken from the deposit. The balance of R40 will be refunded to you in cash.

All arrangements regarding the hiring of Club equipment are to be made with **Piet Smit (Tel. 031-2662881)** and the items must be collected from / returned to him at **4 Bohmer Place (off Knoll Road, off Blair Atholl Road, Westville).**

Items must be checked (i.e. count pegs, poles etc.) and cleaned (i.e. wash inner sheet of sleeping bag). Tents, sleeping bags etc. are to be hung out and shaken before returning. If it has rained on the weekend, hang items out to dry as soon as possible after your hike.

SOCIAL CALENDAR – PLEASE NOTE THE VENUE

Directions to Sherwood Bowling Club - 860 Jan Smuts Highway

From Durban - Take N3 out towards PMB, after Tollgate take the Sherwood off-ramp and turn right under the freeway in to Jan Smuts Highway, up the hill, past Jungle Nursery on the right, turn right under the pedestrian bridge into Tropical Nursery parking, follow the road past trees to the back of the nursery.

From Westville - take the M13 towards Durban, past Westwood Shopping centre, through 45th Cutting traffic lights, down Jan Smuts Highway, turn left under the pedestrian bridge (in front of Naked Ladies) in to Tropical Nursery parking, follow the road past trees to the back of nursery.

From PMB, from Hillcrest take the N3 past the Pavilion and four-level interchange, take the Sherwood glide-off, keep left in to Jan Smuts Highway, past Jungle Nursery on right, turn right under pedestrian bridge in to the parking of Tropical Nursery, follow road to the back of Tropical Nursery.

SOCIAL CALENDAR	
MBC Socials take place every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Sherwood Bowling Club, 7:30 for 8:00pm Wors rolls or Hamburgers are sold at the venue for R15 each.	
DATE	DESCRIPTION
12th April	Walking on the wild side. Rick Wilson will talk about walking in the Mfolozi Wilderness Area.
26th April	Cancelled due to long weekend on Friday
10th May	Join Lisa Smith for a presentation on a brief visit to the Kenyan coast including Mombassa, Watamu and Wasini Island (near the Tanzanian border), a mini-safari to East Tsavo and Amboselli National Parks, the latter of which lies below the impressive Mount Kilimanjaro, and a surfing trip to the Maldives.
24th May	Eddie & Marie von Barga n will deliver a presentation on the recent Woodcliffe Cave Trail in the Transkei. This was a five day hike in the picturesque area near Maclear. Come and hear about all the adventures that the team experienced.
14th June	Karen Miller and John McGovern . Part 2 of our talk on Nepal and Tibet , including a very brief revision of the Basecamp Trek, followed by our Kathmandu City tour and our experiences in Lhasa, Tibet including the Dalai Lama's Potala Palace.
28th June	Bring and Braai plus Open Screen Night . Bring your pictures on a usb stick or CD and claim your moment of glory while showing your outdoor adventures. Fires will be ready at 7pm. Bring meat and salads.