

MIDLANDS HIKING CLUB FIXTURE LIST : JANUARY TO MARCH 2014

DATE	TYPE	GRADE	APPROX DIST	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	LEADER	APPROX COST
January Tues 31-Wed 1	Cave	2-3	12-15kms each day	HIGHMOOR. Your chance to celebrate New Year's Eve (& N Y Day) with Keith and Margaret. Short backpacking to the cave, then explorations of the area from the cave - lovely waterfall & pool. Bring swimming gear and all your goodies to celebrate in style. Book early to secure place. (12 Max)	Keith Ashton 2395023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R45 pppn inc entry & levies. R90 total pp.
January Sunday 5	Day Hike	2	12 kms	MINERVA HEIGHTS Byrne area. Combined day hike from Minerva Heights Farmhouse through grasslands and indigenous forest. Meet by 8.00 at the Byrne Church. Phone to confirm attendance.	David Tighe 031 4649033 or 076 0280708	R10
January Sun 12	Day Hike	4	10kms with 100m climb	Day walk to ROMAN BATHS AT KAMBERG. New hike for MHC ONLY as cannot handle large numbers at the pool. Bring costumes, towels, and sunscreen. Lovely big pool to swim in and flat rocks to sunbathe on. PRE BOOKING ESSENTIAL book before 8th Jan by phoning after 19.30 hrs only	Dave Sclanders dave@bergfree.co.za 0824434287	R30.00 entry. Share petrol
January Tues 21	Social			Social Evening - Presentation by Margret Kirsten on Annapurna. 19h00 start.		
January Sat 25-Sun 26	Cave	3	28kms with 600m climb	MKHOMAZI/McKENZIES CAVE. Meet at Mkhomazi EKZN Wildlife Office. Sunday return via a different route. Hopefully new route back. It is a long climb. Fitness needed. Book by email only.	Dave Sclanders dave@bergfree.co.za	R45.00 Last booking 20th Jan 2014
January Sun 26	Day Hike	2	12 -15m kms	UMGENI VALLEY NATURE RESERVE near Howick. Lovely local day hike in a beautiful area. Great views & chance to see plenty of game and birdlife. Several trail variations. Combined hike with Mountain Backpackers. Last booking by 22nd Jan.	Keith Ashton: 239 5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R24 Entrance fee
February Sun 2	Day Hike	2	12kms	CUMBERLAND NATURE RESERVE. Combined hike along cliffs to bottom of waterfall, return through grasslands. Meet at the entrance of the reserve at 8.00. Phone to confirm attendance.	David Tighe 031 4649033 or 076 0280708	R10
February Sat 8-Sun 9	Cave	3	12kms each day	BUSHMAN'S NEK. Backpacking to & overnight in Sherry Cave (new). The hike is a similar route to Whyte's Cave but we will do variations & also visit Bushmen's paintings. Spectacular views from cave. As access to the cave is along a ledge & there is a drop of many metres in front of cave it is not suitable for children. Sleeping space is also limited. Visit 4 caves during weekend. Combined weekend with mountain Backpackers. Last bookings by 3rd Feb.	Keith Ashton: 033 239 5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R45pp incl entry & levies.
February Sun 9	Day Hike	3	8kms	NHLAZANE - Dargle. Hike up to the beacon and enjoy splendid views of the Midlands and the Berg. Meet at Mount Park Guest Farm.	John Fourie : 0743708189. john4ie@gmail.com	
February Sun 16	Day Hike			To be advised	Bushy Kirby	
February Sat 22-Sun 23	Cave	3	28kms with 600m climb	Visit CAT CAVE on Saturday afternoon. If weather permits climb Intunja on Sunday morning. Return via Keartlands Pass. Fitness needed.	Dave Sclanders email dave@bergfree.co.za	R45 Last booking 18th feb
February Sun 23	Day Hike	2+	11.5kms	GREY MARE'S TAIL FALLS -Karkloof. A cool walk in indigenous forest up to the falls. Meet at Bushwillow Park.	John Fourie : 0743708189. john4ie@gmail.com	R35pp
February Fri 28-Sun 2	Hut	2+	12-15kms each day	GARDEN CASTLE NATURE RESERVE near Drakensberg Gardens Hotel. Stay in Swiman Hut and enjoy an exploration weekend with the Ashtons. Lovely large variety of hikes from base. Swiman Hut has electricity, bunk beds with mattresses, hot water shower & bath, flush toilets, indoor fireplace and outdoor braai area. Combined weekend with Mountain Backpackers Club. Book early to secure places in hut. Last bookings by 21 Feb.	Keith Ashton 033 2395023 email keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R80pppn. R160pp total for weekend
March Sun 2	Day Hike	2	12kms	KILLARNEY ROCKERIES, Cato Ridge. Take exit 53 at Cato Ridge, turn left and follow High Stakes sign to 4x4 track and store. Combined hike starts at High Stakes, Cato Ridge at 8.00. Phone to confirm attendance.	David Tighe 031 4649033 or 076 0280708	
March Sun 9	Day Hike	2	12 kms	CHASE VALLEY - Meet at Cascades Shopping Centre. Circular route through the Chase Valley plantations along farm roads to the top of Chase Valley Heights and admire good views of the city. All invited to braai at the Leader's house afterwards. Bring meat and drinks only. Can buy at Checkers or Woolworths after the hike.	Brian Henwood: 082 655 6359 brian@hn.co.za	
March Sat 15-Mon 17	Weekend	2+	6 - 8kms per day	BLINKWATER TRAIL on the Greytown Rod to Pmb, 50 kms from Howick. A marked trail through beautiful grasslands with a great variety of vegetation. Home to endangered Wattled Crane. Comfortable accommodation with hot showers.	John Fourie : 0743708189. john4ie@gmail.com	R80pppn. R160pp total for weekend
March Sat 15-Sun16	Cave	3	25kms 750m	LAMMERGIER CAVE - A cave visited very seldomly. Wonderful views of lower valleys. Sunday climb to Goat's Cave and look into Lesotho. Down via Tomatu Cave. Fitness needed. Last booking on 11 March.	Dave Sclanders dave@bergfree.co.za	R45pp
March Tuesday 18	Social			A slide presentation of Keith & Margaret Ashton's visits to St Helena Island, one of the most remote islands in the world, situated in the South Atlantic Ocean, over 2000 km from the nearest landmass - a small volcanic island rich in history & heritage.	Keith Ashton 033 2395023 email keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	
March Sat 22	Day Hike	2	7kms	KENNETH STAINBANK NATURE RESERVE Yellowwood Park. The hike will be lead by an Honorary Officer. It is a reasonably easy walk taking about 3 hours. Ideal for beginners of people wanting to explore a reserve in the Durban area.	Debbie Jager svendebs@sai.co.za 082 5109486	R20pp
March Fri 28-Sun 30	Cottage	2-3	12 -15kms each day	DRAKENSBERG GARDENS. Fully equipped and very comfortable. Beautiful area in the heart of the mountains. Max 10 members. Day hikes from cottage or simply unwind on the property (10 acres). Hot baths and showers. Combined with Mountain Backpackers. Please book early to secure your place. Last bookings 19 March.	Keith Ashton 033 2395023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R160 total pp. R80 pppn
March Fri 28-Sun 30	Weekend			CANNIBAL TRAIL, CLARENS - The Trail is on a privately-owned farm 5km from Clarens. Spend Friday night in an ox wagon or dormitory. Hike to a massive cave where toilets, hot showers and foam mattresses are provided. Stay overnight and return to base by midday Sunday.	Carolee Thompson 072 469 0712	R270 for accommodation

ADVANCE NOTICE						
May or September	Trail Hike			NUM NUM TRAIL in Mpumalanga. 5 day trail. Price for this slack-packing hike is reasonable and route looks amazing and varied. Shuttle bus to Nellspruit or share lifts.	Ingrid Hardman manhard@telkomsa.net	costs to be advised

GRADINGS OF HIKES		SOME IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT HIKING			CLUB NIGHTS	
Grade 1	Very easy. Minimal fitness required	1. Hikes are graded so that members can select the activity best suited to their own level of fitness and do not cause unreasonable delay to fellow hikers.			Our Club nights are held on the third Tuesday of every second month in the Church of the Ascension Hall starting at 19:00. Tea & coffee served. Come along early and meet your fellow members. Plenty of parking next to the hall, accessed from Brindly Road, Hilton. A R5 tip for the car guard would be very much appreciated.	
Grade 2	Not too strenuous. Moderate fitness	2. Contact the leader of a day hike at least 3 days in advance of your intention to participate.				
Grade 3	Moderate. Physical fitness advisable	3. Contact the leader of a camping weekend at least one week in advance of your intention to participate.				
Grade 4	Strenuous. Physical fitness essential	4. If accommodation bookings are required please contact the leader at your earliest convenience to secure yourself a booking.				
Grade 5	Very strenuous - high level of physical fitness is essential	5. Leaders have the prerogative to exclude a member if they doubt their health condition, physical fitness or suitability of their hiking gear for a particular activity.				
		6. Advise the leader of any medical condition prior to any hike & carry the necessary medication - The leader will not administer First Aid.				
		7. Carry your medical aid, doctor and close family friend contact details in your backpack at all times.				