

**MIDLANDS HIKING CLUB FIXTURE LIST: JANUARY - MARCH 2012**

DATE	TYPE	GRADE	APPROX. DIST.	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	LEADER & CONTACT DETAILS	APPROX. COST
Fri-Sun 13-15Jan	COTTAGE	2-3	12-15Km each day	<b>DRAKENSBERG GARDENS - Cottage weekend</b> - Fully equipped & 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). DSTV for news & sport etc - <b>Please book early to secure your place.</b>	Keith Ashton – 033 239-5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R150 total per person (R75 pppn)
Tues 17-Jan	CLUB NIGHT			<b>OUT OF AFRICA'</b> - Mark and Mary have returned from a wonderful trip through Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. They will be sharing their experiences with us. Don't miss it! <b>UPCOMING ACTIVITIES</b> – Leaders will answer questions on upcoming hikes. Meet at Church of the Ascension Hall, Brindy Road, Hilton at 7:30. Refreshments will be served from 7:00.		
Sun 22-Jan	DAY HIKE	2	8Km	<b>BLESBERG FARM near Lidgetton</b> - Morning hike on the slopes of Blesberg through indigenous bush and across grassland with beautiful scenery. After a leisurely picnic lunch at the dam, a short hike to the ridge above Dargle valley.	Brian Henwood – 082 655-6359 brian@hn.co.za	R30 pp donation for the development of the trails
Sat-Sun 28-29 Jan	CAMPING	2	13Km	<b>NHLOVINI MOUNTAIN (2026m) in the Cobham Nature Reserve</b> - A hike to the top of the mountain reveals stunning views in all directions. Return via Pinnacle Rock or shorter route. Accm also available in Pholela Hut.	John Fourie – 072 871-1252	R60 pppn for camping or R25 for day visitors
Sat-Sun 4-5 Feb	CAVE	3	10-12 km each day	<b>HIGHMOOR</b> - Backpacking to & overnight in Aasvoelkrans Cave - Ideal for first time backpackers as distance to the cave is only about 5 km - however we will do explorations of the area from the cave - lovely pool & waterfall adjacent - Bushman paintings nearby - Combined weekend with Mountain Backpackers.	Keith Ashton – 033 239-5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R45 pp incl. entry & levies
Fri-Sun 10-12 Feb	COTTAGE	2-3	10-15Km each day	<b>MONK'S COWL - Mary Clover's Cottage "Makulumane"</b> - Champagne Castle/Monks Cowl area set high above the Drakensberg Boys Choir. Comfortable accommodation in lovely setting - day hikes from cottage or just relax. Book early to secure your place. Vehicles with high clearance needed, but lifts can be arranged.	Mary Clover – 083 700-6199	R70 pppn
Sun 12-Feb	DAY HIKE	2	16Km	<b>PLEASANT PLACES at Lidgetton</b> - A hike to Swissland Cheese in the heartland of the Midlands Meander across picturesque farmlands, and visiting other popular venues. Good quality B&B accommodation also available.	Christie Exall – 083 233-1998	
Sun 19-Feb	DAY HIKE	3	17Km	<b>OTTO'S BLUFF DAY HIKE</b> - A circular route from Ferncliffe Nature Reserve to Otto's Bluff and return. Spectacular views of the city & Albert Falls Dam. Meet in the reserve at the top of Town Bush Road in Pietermaritzburg.	Brian Henwood – 082 655-6359 brian@hn.co.za	no charge
Sat-Sun 25-26 Feb	CAVE	3	20Km	<b>SINCLAIRS CAVE</b> – fairly easy walk from Kamberg Ezemvelo offices. 20 kms round trip, climb 600m, some of the way is on Eland tracks. San Rock Art on the way back. NB: Last booking date 21 Feb.	Dave Sclanders 082 443-4287	R45 pp for overnighting in the cave, share fuel expenses
Sat-Sun 3-4 Mar	TRAIL HUTS	2+		<b>BLINKWATER – on the</b> Greytown road from Pmb. Land of indigenous forests, upland grasslands, vleis, streams and commercial plantations – home to the endangered Oripi and rare Blue Swallow. Island Dam is the breeding ground for the rare and endangered Wattled Crane. Max 12 people, so book early.	John Fourie – 072 871-1252	R65 pppn
Sun 4-Mar	DAY HIKE	2	12-14 Km	<b>UMGENI VALLEY NATURE RESERVE</b> near Howick - Lovely local day hike in a beautiful area - great views & chance to see plenty of game & bird life. Combined hike with Mountain Backpackers.	Keith Ashton – 033 239 5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R18 entrance fee
Sat-Sun 10-11 Mar	CAMPING & CHALETS	2	12Km on Sat 7Km on Sun	<b>MIDDELDRIFT</b> – 24Km from Mooi River on the way to Greytown. Camping and chalet accommodation on the banks of the Mooi river. On Saturday walk to the top of the ridge for spectacular views of the surrounding area. A shorter walk on Sunday to Zulu Falls, 2 <sup>nd</sup> highest falls in KZN.	Darrell Munday – 072 743-8863 darrellmunday@greytown.co.za	Camping R50 pppn Chalet R110 pppn
Sat-Sun 17-18 Mar	CAVE	3	12Km each day	<b>BUSHMAN'S NEK</b> - 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 the cave it is not suitable for children. Sleeping space is also limited. "Combined weekend with Mountain Backpackers Club".	Keith Ashton – 033 239-5023 keimarg@iuncapped.co.za	R45 pp incl. entry & levies
Tues 20-Mar	CLUB NIGHT			<b>SPEAKER</b> - If you know of someone with an interesting story let us know. <b>UPCOMING ACTIVITIES</b> – Leaders will present photo show and answer questions for the upcoming hikes in the next quarter. Meet at Church of the Ascension Hall, Brindy Road, Hilton at 7:30. Refreshments will be served from 7:00.		
Sat-Sun 24-25 Mar	CAMPING	2	8-10Km each day	<b>PARK RYNIE @ Rocky Bay Caravan Park</b> - Camp sites right on the coast. Day hikes to Pennington Tea Garden and Vernon Crookes Nature Reserve. Or just chill-out & relax - swim in the pool or in the sea - explore the rock pools - have a social braai or indulge with a restaurant meal.	Bushy Kirby – 083 757-2660 bushchip@mweb.co.za	R97 pppn
28-Mar	TRAIL	3	54Km	<b>WHALE TRAIL</b> - This awesome hike through the De Hoop Nature Reserve near Cape Agulhas over 5 days takes you over the Potberg Mountain with its colourful fynbos onto coastal cliffs and a 28 km hike along the pristine coastline = spectacular scenery. The environment is of special ecological interest and an exceptional hiking experience with clean and comfortable accommodation. Option of not carrying a backpack. Fully subscribed but you can put your name on the standby list.	Teresa Whitfield – 082 374-1793 tkc@hiltoncollege.com	R1050 pp
Sat-Sun 31Mar-1Apr	MOUNTAIN HUT	3		<b>GIANTS CASTLE</b> - overnight in Bannerman's Hut. Return route optional depending on the group. Hut only takes 8 people - early booking required. Evemvelo requires deposit with booking, Last booking required by 14 March so the hut can be booked.	Dave Sclanders 082 443-4287	R45 pp for overnighting in the hut, share fuel expenses

ADVANCE NOTICE						

<b>GRADINGS OF HIKES</b> Grade 1 <b>Very easy - so minimal fitness required</b> Grade 2 <b>Not too strenuous; moderate fitness desirable</b> Grade 3 <b>Moderate - Regular exercise advisable</b> Grade 4 <b>Strenuous - Physical fitness essential</b> Grade 5 <b>Very strenuous - A high level of physical fitness is essential</b>	<b>SOME IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT HIKING</b> 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. 2. Contact the leader of a day hike at least 3 days in advance of your intention to participate. 3. Contact the leader of a camping weekend at least one week in advance of your intention to participate. 4. If accommodation bookings are required please contact the leader at your earliest convenience to secure yourself a booking. 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.	<b>CLUB NIGHTS</b> Our Club nights are held on the third Tuesday of every second month in the Church of the Ascension Hall starting at 19:30. Tea & coffee served from 19:00. Come along early and meet your fellow members. Plenty of parking next to the hall, accessed from Brindy Road, Hilton. A R5 tip for the car guard would be very much appreciated.
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