



MCSA'S 99TH ANNUAL

JULY CAMP

30TH JUNE TO 14TH JULY
CRYSTAL WATERS, SOUTHERN BERG

R330pppn | bookings: 083 321 8841 or julycampbooking@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE: The Camp dates accommodate the school holidays for all provinces.

JULY CAMP 2018

For July Camp 2018, we will be returning to the Southern Berg to the evocatively named Crystal Waters Base Camp site on the farm of Mr and Mrs Arthur Cole. We extend our grateful thanks to them for allowing us to share their beautiful farm which lies on the banks of the Mzimude River. July Camp has not been at Crystal Waters since 2010, so it will be a pleasant return to this beautiful place.

It is a wonderfully well situated Base Camp, giving good access to numerous day walks, exciting sub-camp opportunities with a number of caves in the Little Berg in which to sleep, as well as several mountain passes giving access to the Escarpment – for those who seek the challenge of longer trips or traverses in the High Berg. Above all, there are wonderful swimming pools! Base Camp will be situated within easy walking distance of the Giant's Cup Trail and also important, within easy walking distance of the car park.

The drive to the farmstead offers exciting views of the Southern Berg with which one becomes better acquainted the closer one gets to the Base Camp. The defining features of the Base Camp site are the unforgettable views of the river that forms one boundary of the Base Camp site. A number of valleys stretch into the distance and seem to beckon to you to come and explore them. In addition, there is the enticing view of the Giant's Cup Trail that tempts you to get going and hike along it. The view of the rolling hills of the Little Berg reveals gorges that enfold rivers and forests. There are waterfalls and sparkling pools to delight the brave who want to swim, or the photo-enthusiast who prefers to experience the Berg through the lens of a camera. Both the Little Berg and the Escarpment call to the hiker to come and explore them. For those who want to hike but prefer not to carry tents, there are a number of convenient caves.

For those who want to do day trips, there are an unlimited number of beautiful trips to 'there and back' as well as the more defined trips from Base Camp to specific objectives such as some of the closer caves and well-known pools.

Of course, each of these could serve as part of a longer sub-camping trip. There are a number of caves in the area. (Please note those caves with Bushman Paintings may be visited, but may not be used for over-nighting.) Caves in the area include Bushman's, Ngwagwe, Slab/Halfway, Thomatu, Vast, Lammergeyer, Gargoyle, Whyte's, Tarn, Rob's, Curtain, Wave, Engagement, Sleeping Beauty, Pillar, and last but by no means least, Sherry, which does require that you take its namesake for your sundowners! Of course, if the trip you really want to do lacks a convenient cave or caves, carrying tents is the answer.

For those who want to go up to the top and then do a traverse, or decide to come back down the same way, the main passes in the area include Rhino, Mashai, Tsepeng, Walker's, Saddle, Isicatula, Ngwangwane, Thomatu, Knuckle's Pass, Tarn Cave Pass and Bushman's Nek Pass.

Climbs in the area include, but are not limited to Rhino Peak and Mashai Fangs just for starters.



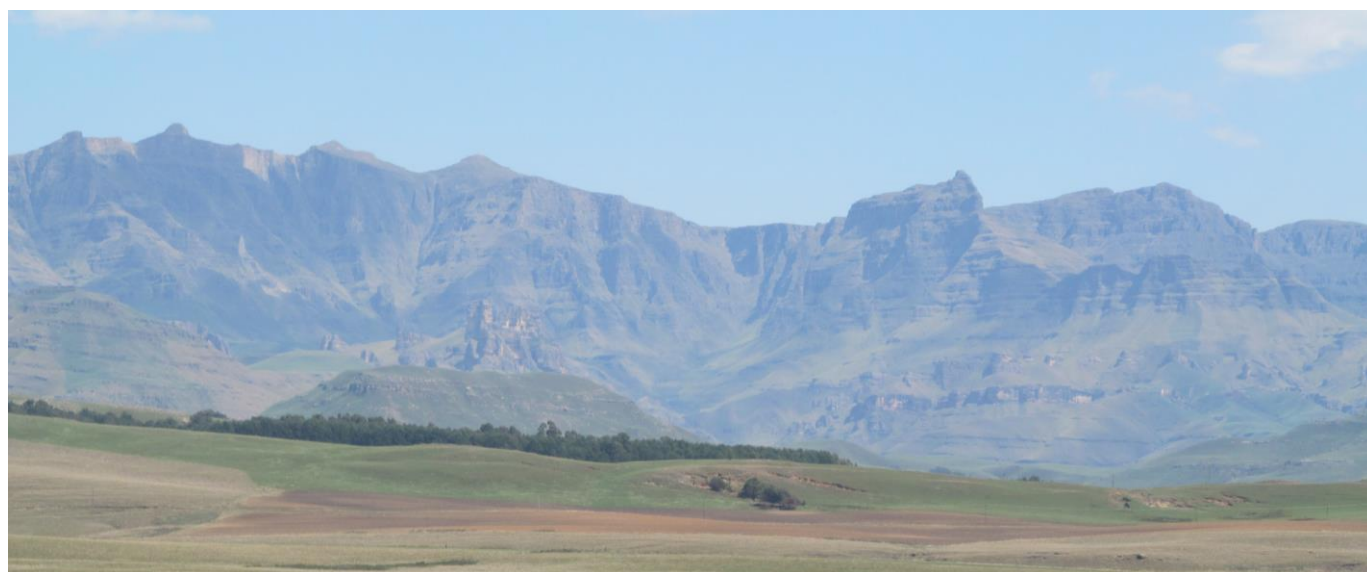
It is still early days, but so far **Graham Smith** has offered to lead a 4 or 5 night Escarpment trip, **Margaret Brown** is eager to do a Little Berg caves trip each week, and **Gerhard Venter** would like to do a four day trip taking in Pillar Cave, Sleeping Beauty Cave, and Tarn Cave. Would-be leaders are asked to let me know the details of the trips they would like to lead. One of our stalwart day walk leaders, **Dave Morgan**, is eager to get walking in an area of which he has fond memories and will be leading day walks.

FEATURES OF JULY CAMP 2018

We shall be enjoying the regular refinements that have become the accepted standard of our July Camp. These include the solar lighting system, the gazebo shelters that do such a great job of sheltering us from the rain or the sun at meal and tea times. Of course, if you are sun-seeker, you are welcome to move beyond their shelter. As usual, the bathrooms, no doubt, will be the subject of much conjecture among new Campers. There will be one outstanding difference – sadly, after many years of faithful service, we had to dispense with the larger and older of the two baths and so will have a brand new bath. We are thinking of running a lottery for the privilege of enjoying the first bath in the new tub! N.B. Photographs may be required for publicity purposes!

This year there will also be ample opportunities for:

- satisfying day walks with interesting views of forests, waterfalls, wildlife and streams
- superb mini sub-camps, longer sub-camps in the Little Berg and more ambitious hikes on the Escarpment
- excellent opportunities for bird-watching and Berg photography
- comparisons between Berg grassland, Protea open woodland and patches of indigenous forest
- game viewing could include eland, oribi, reedbuck, grey rhebuck, blesbok, duiker, jackal and caracal
- bird watching (if that is your calling, please bring binocs, books and your list!)
- climbs, if leaders come forward to take on this role
- campfires and sing songs in Base Camp, if the weather permits
- fishing (there are no sales points for licences on site, **so please come prepared with your own licence**)
- access to the painted caves of the area.



Campers are not required to attend the entire Camp and may attend for any period that they wish. However, Campers arriving or leaving at times other than those printed below will be responsible for getting all their own kit to and from the Base Camp.

Please note: there are no porters! But relax, the walk to the Camp is only a modest distance (30 to 40mins) and could easily be repeated if you need multiple porterages of your gear. Thirsty? No worry, always tea and coffee on the fire.

DIRECTIONS - HOW TO GET THERE

I have been gently informed by some of the Committee members that nowadays no-one, but no-one, gives written instructions of how to get to a place – it's all done by GPS and Google! Alas, I am doomed to be forever lost when I am driving!



The GPS co-ordinates, according to Google Earth are: S 29° 47' 18.61" E 29° 13' 42.68"
Elevation is 1766 metres.

Coming from **Underberg**, pass the turn-off to Drakensberg Gardens, cross the river and then take the **first** turn-off sign-posted to Bushman's Nek. Travel for 20km, then turn off to the right and continue, following the July Camp signs. On arrival at the Crystal Waters farm, please follow the **MCSA July Camp** signs that direct you **past** the farm house and to the **Dump Site** where you unload your kit and then park your car at the **Parking Area**. Both these areas will be clearly sign posted. **PLEASE DO NOT DRIVE BEYOND THE CAR PARK SIGN.**

As a guide, the travelling time from Pietermaritzburg is about two and a half hours to three hours

Coming from **Kokstad**, take the **second** turn-off to Bushman's Nek and proceed as above.

MAPS

1. Our Base Camp site will be just beyond the farmstead of Crystal Waters (which is clearly marked on the maps of the area) and close to the river.
2. To acquaint yourself with the area in advance, we suggest you purchase the relevant map which is the **KZNatal Drakensberg Park Hiking Map no. 6, Bushman's Nek**. It is available from Ezemvelo KZNWildlife, P O Box 13609, Cascades, 3202 or customerservice@kznwildlife.com. **N.B.** There is **NO** Ezemvelo KZNWildlife shop on the way to July Camp.
3. Also very useful, if you still have it, is the older Department of Forestry Map of the Southern Berg. This map is out of print, but a fortunate few old-timers still have these gems.
4. The relevant black and white MCSA July Camp Berg maps will be available in Base Camp.
5. Of course, Google may also suffice.

TRANSPORT OF CAMPERS' KIT

N.B. The transport of packs *etc.* from the Dump Site to the Base Camp will be *via* a few **pre-designated** private 4x4 vehicles and for this reason we ask you to keep your luggage to a **MINIMUM** and ensure that it is **well-packed**. Experience has proved that **plastic shopping bags** are not suitable.

No other July Camp vehicles will be allowed beyond the Parking Area.

- Campers are not required to attend the entire Camp and may attend for any period that they wish.
- However, Campers arriving or leaving at times other than those printed below will be responsible for getting all their own kit to and from the Base Camp. Please note: there are no porters! But the walk to and from the cars is moderate and several trips can be made.
- In the event of very bad weather and if the arranged transport cannot access the Camp, or is involved in fire fighting, it may be necessary for Campers to carry **ALL** their own kit to and from the Base Camp so, in your own interests, please limit your kit to a sensible minimum and pack it securely.
- Folding armchairs may be used only next to your tent. They are not appropriate in the communal areas. Moreover, since transport space is severely limited, they will not be carried on the **DESIGNATED** bakkies. You will be asked to carry such chairs between your car and the Camp.
- Official transport for kit will leave at the following times, sharp:

Saturday 30 June 2018, from the Dump Site to Base Camp – 11h00 and 14h00

Saturday 7 July 2018, from Base Camp to the Dump Site – 08h30

Saturday 7 July 2018, from the Dump Site to Base Camp – 11h00 and 14h00

Saturday 14 July 2018, from Base Camp to the Dump Site – 08h30

MCSA CARDS, PASSPORTS and RESCUE PROTOCOL FORMS

- MCSA members are encouraged to carry their **current membership cards** with them.
- Campers intending to go up to the Escarpment **MUST** carry **valid passports** with them.
- For every excursion out of Base Camp, no matter how long or short, every Camper **MUST** complete the **Mountain Rescue Register** before leaving the Camp.
- **The Leader of every party must carry the relevant Mountain Rescue information that will be available.**
- **This provides vitally important details of the protocol in case of an accident.**

BASE CAMP

- All campers bring their **own mountain tents** - sub-zero temperatures can be expected. Strong winds, snow or rain are not uncommon.
- If you take your tent sub-camping, there is a **MCSA tent** where you may store your excess kit.
- Base Camp meals are prepared and served by the **Camp staff**.
- We all wash what we use at meal times. Hot water is provided for this purpose and for rinsing.
- Hot water will be available at the camp-style **bathrooms**.
- In Base Camp, weather permitting, after supper we gather around the **campfire for our own drinks and snacks**, a chat or sing-song and a hot drink after supper.
- Base Camp is protected by **firebreaks**.

KIT REQUIRED – Please keep to a MINIMUM, but include:

1. Lightweight tent and bedding suitable for sub-zero temperatures with wind, snow and/or rain
2. Clothing (generally, the days are sunny and mild, but the nights are intensely cold)
3. Waterproof and windproof gear (rain and or wind can be expected)
4. **Personal first aid kit, sun-hat, sun-barrier creams, plasters and any medication you regularly require**
5. **If you are prone to blisters, please bring your own blister plasters and carry them with you whenever you leave Camp.**
6. **Torch and spare batteries are essential.** Headlights are most convenient.
7. Toiletries including **biodegradable** soap/ shampoo which can also be used for washing clothes! It is available from camping and outdoor shops
8. Boots - sturdy, supportive, water-repellant, strong Vibram-type soles. Takkies are not suitable
9. Water bottle
10. Self sealing plastic bags for food and other purposes. These are NOT provided by July Camp
11. Rucksack appropriate for intended activities
12. Two eating kits - one for use in Base Camp (to be retrieved at the end of Camp), the other for your trips
13. Plastic bucket/ basin to carry water, to have water at your tent and to wash clothes and hair
14. A clothes' line and a few pegs are useful
15. If required, a folding stool or **small folding chair (NO ARMCHAIRS)** for use in communal areas
16. **Money for tips for the staff of five. They all do a marvellous job and work long hours under very difficult conditions and, otherwise, are unemployed except for occasional' togt' labour. Three of them are retired and one is disabled**
17. Your own sweets, chocolate, your favourite tippie/drinks and snacks to share at the campfire or while out on sub-camps and/or day trips
18. Two large rubbish bags – the 'carry in, carry out' principle applies. Please keep all the rubbish you generate whether in Base Camp or on day-trips/sub-camps and take all of it (including personal hygiene items in Ziplock bags) away with you. Chewed chewing gum is classed as rubbish!
19. If you plan to join a **sub-camping party**, please bring **cooking utensils/billy cans, matches, containers, plastic bags, stove plus all your fuel, and gas** if using a gas stove. The leader will then select the best equipment for the trip. These items are NOT provided by the Camp
20. **Neither open fires nor candles of any description are allowed anywhere in the Berg**
21. **Camping stoves may not be used in Base Camp nor any open flames, and that includes candles and candle lanterns, because of the fire hazard**
22. All Campers, for their own convenience and safety, should be reasonably fit and well equipped with, and should carry, **all medical supplies that they know they might need**
23. **Large volumes or weights of luggage are strongly discouraged. Plastic shopping bags are not suitable containers**

FOOD

- Camp fees include a standard selection of food for **all** meals in Base Camp, on day trips and on sub-camps
- **Simple, pre-packed, lightweight food is provided for sub-camping trips**
- Leaders wanting to plan their catering, can request a copy of the food list to be sent to them *via* e-mail
- Campers with **specific dietary needs** are advised to provide for their own **dietary** requirements
- Although cell reception in the area is very poor, if you are dependent on your cell phone **kindly bring your own power bank. The July Camp solar system cannot cope with the demands placed on it to recharge personal cell phones**
- **Please note that there is no cell phone reception at either the farm or the Base Camp site. One will have to walk uphill to find it**



APPLICATIONS TO ATTEND JULY CAMP 2018:

N.B. Bookings close on Friday 15th June 2018: Please book early to avoid disappointment.

- Please use a separate copy of the application form for each applicant, and indicate preferences, abilities, and membership status of MCSA, as requested
- Non-member visitors, children under 12 (accompanied by a responsible adult), and teenagers are potential members of the MCSA and so are **MOST WELCOME**
- Please **indicate clearly** whether you would like to join **day trips** or **Little Berg hikes** or **Escarpment hikes**. **This is important because all the walking will be on KZN Wildlife land and we are required to pay the requisite fees in advance, R40 per adult (R20 per child under 12) per day walk or R70 if camping over night.** These charges are included in the July Camp fees
- If you would like to lead a party, **please indicate the type of trip/s** you would like to lead
- Leaders of overnight trips should **let the Organiser know, well in advance**, if they want to book caves

COSTS

- Camp costs are **R330 per adult per night and R220 per child under 12 per night**
- **In respect of late cancellation**, the Camp reserves the right to retain **20% administration fee**
- If you are **not** a member of MCSA, or an affiliated Club, there is an additional **visitor's levy of R80.00**, which can be redeemed against future membership of the KZN Section of the MCSA

- **Please note**, refunds will only be made if **cancellations are received before Friday 15th June, 2018**, as at this point most of the catering, Ezemvelo, transport and other expenses will have been incurred.

CLOSING DATE for APPLICATIONS and PAYMENTS—Friday 15th June, 2018

One application form per person and full e.f.t. payment **must be received on or before Friday 15th June, 2018**.

- **No cheques are accepted.** Cash deposits attract a bank fee (R60) which is to be included in the deposit
- **Account details are:** MCSA (KZN) Branch, Standard Bank A/c No. 051207141 Branch Code: 051001
- **As your reference, please use the letters JC (for July Camp), followed by your surname and your initials**
- **Please include proof of payment with your application**
- For additional application forms and booking queries, please refer to Mike Coke on 083 321 8841 or julycampbooking@gmail.com

For further information and general July Camp queries please contact:
The Organiser, July Camp Sub-Committee:
Rikki Abbott Wedderburn, (Cell) 082 538 5389 | E-mail: ronwedd@netactive.co.za
Or
Margaret Brown, (Cell) 082 055 2143 | (Home) 033 347 2009

URGENT MESSAGES:

From **Monday 25th June to Friday 29th June 2018**, the July Camp Advance Party will already be in the Berg setting up the Base Camp.

There is no cell phone reception at the Base Camp site or on the farm itself.

For urgent messages, during this period and during the Camp itself (30th June to 14th July, 2018), please call: Mr and Mrs Arthur Cole: 033 7011751.

APPLICATION TO ATTEND JULY CAMP 2018 -

PLEASE: DELETE alternatives that are not applicable, Use BLOCK LETTERS, Use a separate form for EACH person

Dr/ Mr/ Mrs. / Miss/ Phone:.....
 Address..... Cell:.....
Code..... E-mail:.....

In the case of a child, age.....yrs. Countersigned by parent/guardian

I wish to spend only one night in Camp on	 2018
I wish to attend Camp	Arrive on 2018	Leave on 2018

I am / am not a member of theSection of MCSA/ Mountain/Hiking Club		
I wish to sub-camp with some nights on the Escarpment	YES	NO
I wish to hike/sub-camp in the Little Berg, with optional one-day trips to the Escarpment	YES	NO
I go on regular sub-camping trips	YES	NO
I wish to go on day trips, returning to Base Camp each night	YES	NO
I go on regular day-hikes	YES	NO
I offer to lead sub-camp party/parties to.....	YES	NO
I offer to lead day-trip party trips	YES	NO

CAMP CHARGES

Camping fee for ... nights @ R330 per adult (over 12yrs), or R220 per juvenile (under 12 yrs), per night. (Please delete what is not applicable)	R
Non-member levy: R 80.00	R
Cash deposit fee, if applicable	R
TOTAL DUE:	R

PAYMENT

I have made a direct deposit/transfer to: Mountain Club of South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal Section, MCSA (KZN) Branch, Standard Bank A/c No. 051207141 Branch Code: 051001 References must start with JC (for July Camp), then surname and initials For a cash deposit, I have included R60 to cover bank fees	R
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PROOF of PAYMENT

Proof of payment has been POSTED to Mike Coke at: Unit 423 Amberglen, Pvt Bag X 004, HOWICK 3290	YES	NO
Proof of payment has been E-MAILED to: <u>julycampbooking@gmail.com</u>	YES	NO
SIGNED: DATE:		

PLEASE return booking form & confirmation of payment **ON, OR BEFORE, Thursday 15th June 2018** to:

MIKE COKE, Unit 423 Amberglen, Pvt Bag X 004, HOWICK 3290

Email: julycampbooking@gmail.com Cell: 083 321 8841 Tel: 033 239 4623

GENERAL ENQUIRIES: Rikki Abbott Wedderburn OR e-mail: ronwedd@netactive.co.za

Cell: 082 538 5389 Tel: 033 239 2374