

GROOTVADERSBOSCH NATURE RESERVE

Grootvadersbosch Nature Reserve is situated in the Langeberg, about 22km northwest of Heidelberg and comprises 250ha of forest. The indigenous forest is the most precious in the south-western Cape and the largest remaining example in the Langeberg. Two day walks and a short cycle trail wind through Knysna high forest and mountain fynbos, with excellent bird watching opportunities.

History

The land on which the forest lies was originally called Melkhoutskraal, and was assigned to Roelof Oelofse in 1723. He was known as the 'Groot Vader', a title subsequent owners inherited. The adjoining Boosmansbos Wilderness area was proclaimed in 1978 and Grootvadersbosch was placed under the management of CapeNature in 1986.

Climate and geology

The Langeberg lies in the transitional zone between winter and all-year rainfall regions. Grootvadersbosch has an average annual rainfall of about 1 050 mm. Drier periods are from May to July and December to January. Berg wind conditions prevail from May to July. The southern slopes are covered with sandy soils derived from Table Mountain sandstone and are often strewn with rocks and boulders.

Plants and animals

Most of the thirty-five typical forest tree species are present, including stinkwood, yellowwood, red alder and the dominant ironwood. During 1896 to 1913 exotic trees such as camphor, Australian blackwood, bluegum, ash, Californian redwood and oak were planted to cover the areas de-forested by woodcutters.

CapeNature is reclaiming these areas for indigenous forest.

A variety of animals are found here. Bushbuck are abundant and were described in 1780 from a specimen collected at Grootvadersbosch. Cape grysbok occur on the forest fringes and in the adjacent fynbos. Baboons and small mammals are plentiful while evidence of leopard is also occasionally found. Birds are abundant and 196 bird species have been recorded. A subspecies of the ghost frog and a unique forest emperor butterfly occur only in this forest.

Activities and facilities

Please note that visitors are not able to explore the reserve by car. The Bushbuck and Grysbok Trails offer day walks varying from 2 to 15 km. A short section of the Grootvadersbosch Conservancy's cycle trail falls within the reserve boundary and may be utilised by reserve visitors. Cycling groups are restricted to 12 people and cycling is only permitted on the specially marked cycle route. Permits for walks and cycling are available from the reserve office. A small campsite and a self catering cottage are available for overnight visitors.

ENQUIRIES:

Tel: 028 722 2412 or gvbosch@telkomsa.net

RESERVATIONS:

Tel: **0861CAPENATURE**(227 362 8873)

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

All persons entering this conservation area and using its facilities, do so entirely at their own risk. The Western Cape Nature Conservation Board and/or its employees and/or agents and/or its successors in title shall not be liable for any damage, loss, theft, injury, accident or death suffered by any person, howsoever caused.

Right of Admission Reserved.



GROOTVADERSBOSCH NATURE RESERVE



Day Walks Grootvadersbosch NATURE RESERVE

