

DE HOOP NATURE RESERVE

Contact numbers

RESERVE OFFICE
087 087 4004

RESERVATIONS
087 087 8250

EMERGENCIES
082 496 3443

Gate times

POTBERG
Mon – Sun: 07h30 – 16h00
No day visitors after 16h00

DE HOOP COLLECTION
Sat – Thurs: 07h00 – 18h00
Fridays: 07h00 – 19h00
No day visitors after 17h00

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CapeNature

Conserve. Explore. Experience.

The glittering jewel of De Hoop

Just three hours' drive from Cape Town, De Hoop Nature Reserve is one of CapeNature's flagship reserves and has a well-deserved reputation as a truly magical wilderness. The reserve lies at the southernmost tip of Africa, where mountains meet the sea and create a fusion between freshwater and marine habitats that support a staggering array of terrestrial and aquatic life.

Encompassing roughly 36 000 hectares, this World Heritage Site is one of the largest natural areas managed by CapeNature and is a favourite destination for hikers, cyclists and bird watchers. The Marine Protected Area at De Hoop covers an area of 29 000 hectares and stretches along a coastline of 57km.

Climate



A typical Mediterranean climate prevails in the region - summers are warm and winters mild. Annual rainfall is about 380mm and August is usually the wettest month. Sea mists also occur. The most frequent summer winds are east, west and southeast, while westerly and south-westerly winds prevail in winter.

Flora



De Hoop Nature Reserve forms part of the world's smallest and most threatened plant kingdom - the Cape Floral Kingdom. Fynbos is the dominant vegetation within this kingdom - largely confined to nutrient-poor soils in the winter rainfall areas of the Western Cape. Fynbos is adapted to fire and drought, and characterised by four growth forms:

- **proteas** - tall shrubs with large leaves
- **ericas** - heath-like shrubs
- **restios** - wiry, reed-like plants which are always present in fynbos
- **geophytes** - bulbs that store moisture in fleshy underground organs

De Hoop is important for the conservation of lowland fynbos as it contains the largest conserved area for this rare type. The Bredasdorp/Agulhas and Infanta area, of which De Hoop is a part, has an estimated 1500 plant species of the approximately 9000 species found in the Cape Floristic Region. Of these 1500 species:

- 108 species are rare or threatened
- 34 species occur nowhere apart from the De Hoop Nature Reserve
- 14 species were recently discovered and are still undescribed

Fauna



De Hoop's many terrestrial habitats support a diversity of animal groups. The reserve has 86 mammal species, most notably the rare bontebok and Cape mountain zebra, as well as eland, grey rhebok, baboon, yellow mongoose, caracal and the occasional leopard.



The marine environment is likewise home to a variety of life forms. Marine mammals such as dolphins and seals occur in the waters off the coast, and southern right whales calve and mate in the sheltered bays of De Hoop each year between June and November. At least 250 species of fish occur in the Marine Protected Area.



De Hoop is famous for its variety of resident and migratory bird species and more than 260 species have been recorded on the reserve. The De Hoop vlei attracts large numbers of water birds while the only remaining Western Cape breeding colony of the rare Cape vulture can be found at Potberg.

It extends three nautical miles (5km) out to sea, and is one of the largest marine protected areas in Africa, providing a sanctuary for a vast and fascinating array of marine life. It also encompasses the breeding grounds of the southern right whale.

These whales return to the waters of De Hoop every year to calve and mate. The sight of these massive mammals leaping out of the sea or simply wallowing in the azure waters is definitely one of the highlights of a visit to the reserve. The high dunes at Koppie Alleen offer an excellent vantage point for whale watching.

Activities

Activities at De Hoop are plentiful and diverse. Visitors may choose between mountain bike rides, scenic game drives and various day walks along the pristine coastline. Relax on the beach, or take a leisurely walk along the vlei which is a birder's delight.



This beautiful and diverse nature reserve is a hiking paradise. De Hoop's day trails allow visitors to explore the reserve's rich plant and wildlife. There are routes along the coast - perfect for exploring rock pools and the beach - and in the interior, across the Potberg mountains with breathtaking views of the Breede River Valley (see day trails map overleaf).



Enjoy De Hoop's natural beauty from your saddle on one of the many mountain bike trails through the reserve. Please use sunscreen, riding gear and make sure you have plenty of water on the trail. (see routes on map overleaf).



Bring along your binoculars for a closer look at some of the 260 bird species in the reserve. Of special interest is the breeding colony of rare Cape Vultures at Potberg.



At night stargazers can experience the magnificent stars and constellations of the clear De Hoop night sky.



Swim and snorkel in De Hoop's large, clear rock pools, the reserve has excellent examples of some of the finest inter-tidal ecosystems in the Western Cape.



The entire length of the De Hoop coast is a Marine Protected Area (no take zone) and fishing is not permitted. Visitors should take care not to disturb or remove marine organisms.

Facilities



Tourism facilities (excluding the Whale Trail), are managed by public-private partnership (PPP) with De Hoop Collection, Morukuru Family and Natural Selection. De Hoop Nature Reserve has something for everyone, from families travelling on a tight budget to couples seeking a comfortable and affordable breakaway. There is a wide range of accommodation; ranging from camping and caravanning sites, to self-catering chalets to luxurious self-catering and five-star fully-catered lodges.

The Potberg Eco-Venue is a facility that encourages the appreciation and nurturing of nature and the environment. Learners are provided with opportunities and facilities for nature-orientated programmes and interpretation. Guided or self-guided environmental programmes for schools and research institutions are available.

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.

Stay safe when venturing outdoors

- Wear comfortable walking shoes, sunscreen and a hat
- Don't hike alone
- Carry enough food and water for the trip
- Make sure you know what the weather conditions are before you depart
- Take a warm jacket/raincoat in winter
- Make sure you have a map of the area
- Take a field medical kit along for emergencies
- Obey all signage
- Stay in a group and keep to marked trails

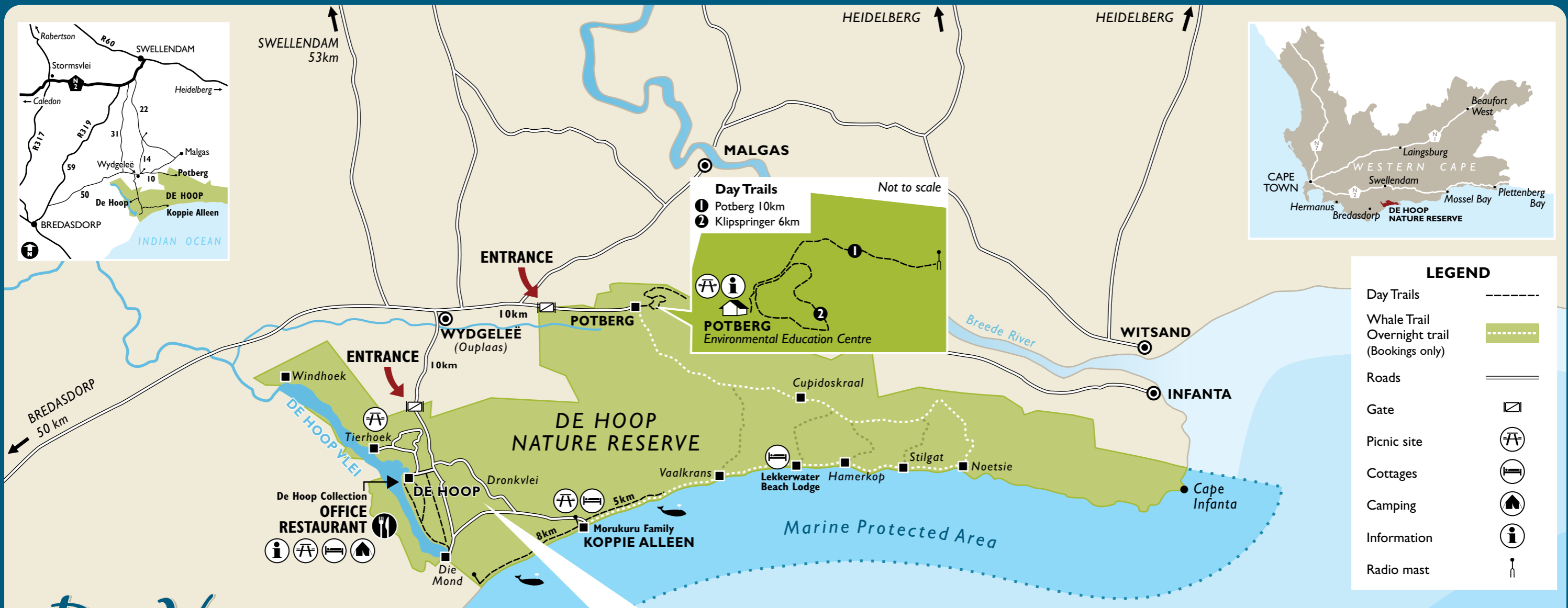
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PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR
PROTECTED AREAS PRISTINE





Day Trails (Not to scale)

- 1 Potberg 10km
- 2 Klipspringer 6km

LEGEND

- Day Trails: - - - - -
- Whale Trail: - - - - -
- Overnight trail (Bookings only): - - - - -
- Roads: ————
- Gate: [Gate icon]
- Picnic site: [Picnic site icon]
- Cottages: [Cottage icon]
- Camping: [Camping icon]
- Information: [Information icon]
- Radio mast: [Radio mast icon]

De Hoop

NATURE RESERVE & MARINE PROTECTED AREA

