



Info Sheet:

GAMKABERG

NATURE RESERVE



USEFUL NUMBERS AND TIMES	
RESERVATIONS	☎ 087 087 8250
RESERVE OFFICE	☎ 087 288 0370/73 (Office hours) ☎ 072 202 3438 (Emergency number)
EMERGENCY (Tourism Duty Officer)	☎ 072 202 3438
EMERGENCY (Fire and rescue)	☎ 082 339 1240
OFFICE HOURS	07h30 – 16h00 (Monday – Friday)
CHECK-IN TIME	07h30 – 15h00
CHECKOUT TIME	16h00
GATE TIMES	07h30 – 16h00

HOW TO GET THERE	📍 33°40'17.5"S 21°53'18.4"E
<p>When coming from Calitzdorp take the Andries Pretorius turn off in a southerly direction and keep going. Eventually this will turn into the Old Cement Road (ROAD HAS BEEN TARRED) and 24 km out of Calitzdorp you will pass AMBER LAGOON RETREAT indicated with a big sign on the left-hand side. Just 200m after AMBER LAGOON RETREAT, look out for the Andrieskraal/ Rietfontein sign which is posted on the right-hand side of the road opposite the turn off. DON'T TURN LEFT BUT then about 200m later is the Gamkaberg turn off to the RIGHT, now also indicated with the ZEBRA CHEVRON. Follow the dirt road for another 5,9km to the info centre.</p> <p>When coming from Oudtshoorn take the R 62 towards Calitzdorp. Then 10.3 km out of Oudtshoorn turn left at the Gamkaberg/ Warmbad turn off onto the Old Cement Road. Approx. 18 km later you cross a bridge with white concrete railings. Then 400m later is the Gamkaberg turn off to the LEFT, now also indicated with the ZEBRA CHEVRON.</p>	

ABOUT THE RESERVE

Gamkaberg is an isolated mountain range in the Klein Karoo, lying between the Swartberg and Outeniqua mountains. The name Gamka is derived from the Hottentot word 'gami', meaning lion. The Gamkaberg Nature Reserve (10 430 ha) is located 33km south-west of Oudtshoorn and 32km southeast of Calitzdorp. It forms part of the 80 000 ha Gamkaberg Conservation Area which is made up of various categories of protected areas, including privately owned stewardship nature reserves. The reserve was established in 1974 in order to conserve a local population of endangered Cape Mountain Zebra and their natural habitat. The terrain is rugged with mountainous plateaux incised by deep ravines. The major rock formations are Table Mountain quartzites and shales, and Bokkeveld sandstone and shales

ACTIVITIES

BIRD WATCHING	No designated bird watching areas; however, a variety of birds can be found throughout the reserve.
PICNICKING	There are two picnicking areas situated under a thatch Lapa that is available for day visitors, where you can relax and soak in the unique atmosphere of the Klein Karoo after your hike or 4x4 excursion. A small braai is also available for use.
WILDLIFE WATCHING	No designated wildlife watching areas; however, a variety of small wildlife can be found throughout the reserve.
DAY WALKS / HIKING	Marked day trails available. Permit required.
4x4 ROUTE	By bringing your 4x4 to the reserve you can access the plateau where most of the herd animals occur and enjoy what the Gamkaberg has to offer.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF THE FOLLOWING:

- No cell phone reception on the trails
- No Wi-Fi on the trails
- Please remember to bring:
 - Sun Hat
 - Sun Block
 - Water – no water available on route
 - Plastic bag for the items you want to throw away – you need to take it back with you

GAMKABERG NATURE RESERVE RULES

- All access is subject to the conditions stipulated in the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (57/2003) and the Nature Conservation Ordinance (19 of 1974).
- Access to the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve is only permitted at times prescribed by the managing authority
- Access permits are required and subject to payment of conservation fees.
- Ensure you always have your permit ready for inspection.
- Only use approved trails.
- Drones are not permitted.
- Parking is only permitted in approved parking areas.
- Do not block access, this is a high-risk area for fires and emergency service vehicles (including trucks) must be able to pass easily.
- Do not feed the wild animals.
- Dogs (and other pets) are not allowed.
- Special use permits will be required for activities other than hiking.
- Do not lure, disturb, harm, feed or kill any animal in the reserve.
- Do not pick, uproot, remove, cut or in any way damage any plant or part thereof in the reserve.
- Do not deface, etch into, scratch on or in any way cause damage to any geological or historical feature or structure in the Reserve.
- Littering & dumping is not permitted, regardless of whether it is a natural item or not.
- Do not pollute any rivers and streams.
- Open fires on trails and at the overnight hut are strictly prohibited.
- Do not discard cigarette butts anywhere.
- No weapons (including firearms) are allowed.

HIKING SAFETY TIPS

- Wear comfortable walking shoes, sunscreen, and a hat.
- Do not hike alone.
- Carry enough food and water with you.
- Make sure you know what the weather conditions are before you depart.
- Take a warm jacket/raincoat in winter.
- Make sure you have a relevant map of the area.
- Take a field medical kit with you for emergencies.
- Obey all signage.
- Stay in a group and on the trails.

CHECKLIST: WHAT TO BRING

- Comfortable walking shoes/boots
- Warm jacket/top – temperatures can drop quickly on top of the mountain
- Sun Hat
- Sun Block
- Water – no water available on route (clients should bring sufficient water to drink)
- Plastic bag for the items you want to throw away but that you need to take back with you



DAY TRAILS / WALKS

GUARRIE TRAIL

This short trail takes one through the lowland succulent Karoo vegetation. The 20 most common and interesting plant species are demarcated for ID purposes and interpretation is provided in the info brochure.

Maximum people allowed on trail per day:	32
Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Total distance in km:	0.7km
Type of route:	Circular
Degree of difficulty:	Easy
Estimated time to complete:	20 min
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes
Is a permit required?	Yes – available CapeNature Central Reservations System –via telephone or at the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office

PIED BARBET TRAIL (LONG HERITAGE TRAIL)

Experience the heritage trail with interpretation boards along the trail about the plants, animals, geology and fossils, and where guests can visit an authentic rock art site.

Acacia Pied Barbets are often seen and heard along this trail. It branches off from the Mousebird trail and continues further up in the sweet thorn thicket along the valley bottom. Returning at a higher level through the spekboom veld it allows one a view over the sweet thorn treetops. Also great for birding but offering a glimpse into the Tierkloof Ravine where the real wilderness starts.

An option is to branch off into the Tierkloof for a km or two, as your time or fitness levels dictate, just to experience the change in surroundings as the high cliffs on either side with forest vegetation in the valley bottom makes an appearance. Just turn back and join up with the Pied Barbet trail when you have taken in the pristine views.

Maximum people allowed on trail per day:	32
Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Total distance in km:	4.1km
Type of route:	Circular
Degree of difficulty:	Easy
Estimated time to complete:	2.5hours
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes
Is a permit required?	Yes – available CapeNature Central Reservations System –via telephone or at the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office

MOUSEBIRD TRAIL

Explore this heritage trail with interpretation boards along the trail about the plants, animals, geology, and fossils, and where guests can visit an authentic rock art site. This trail takes you mainly through the sweet thorn thicket along the valley bottom. It's a great trail for observing the wide variety of bush birds which occur on Gamkaberg. (Bird list provided in the info brochure). The 20 most common and interesting plant species are demarcated

Maximum people allowed on trail per day:	32
Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Total distance in km:	2.5km
Type of route:	Circulated
Degree of difficulty:	Easy
Estimated time to complete:	1.5hours
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes

SPEKBOOM TRAIL

This trail branches off the Guarrie trail and takes you higher up onto the foothills into the spekboomveld. It offers a wonderful view of the Klein Karoo vlaktes as well as the Swartberg Range in the distance. The 20 most common and interesting plant species are demarcated.

Maximum people allowed on trail per day:	32
Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Total distance in km:	1.5km
Type of route:	Circular
Degree of difficulty:	Easy
Estimated time to complete:	30min
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes
Is a permit required?	Yes – available CapeNature Central Reservations System –via telephone or at the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office

OVERHANG AND BACK TRAIL

This trail is highly recommended for those with a bit of extra time and fitness levels. It covers the two longer day trails (Mousebird and Pied Barbet) as well as the continuing deep into the Tierkloof which has remnants of evergreen forest vegetation below spectacular sheer sandstone cliffs all along the way. At the overhang you can have a picnic and a rest while looking over the dense vegetation further up the ravine before turning around to complete the route back to the start at the info centre. Best time to hike is early morning, depending on weather conditions and there are no water points available on the trail or at the start/finish

Maximum people allowed on trail per day:	32
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Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Total distance in km:	14.4km
Type of route:	Circular
Degree of difficulty:	Easy
Estimated time to complete:	6hours
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes
Is a permit required?	Yes – available CapeNature Central Reservations System –via telephone or at the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office



GAMKABERG 2-DAY OVERNIGHT TRAIL

Degree of difficulty:	Moderate
Best time of the year to hike:	April, May, September and October
Maximum no. of people allowed on trail per day	8
Minimum no. of people allowed on trail per day	2
Duration (Number of days):	2 or more days.
Total distance in km:	24.8 km

DAY 1	13.2km
<i>The 13.2 km trail starts at the Welcome Centre which is a moderately strenuous trail taking hikers through a deep, forested ravine onto a fynbos-rich mountain plateau. Here they overnight at the remote Oukraal site and enjoy spectacular views of the Swartberg and Outeniqua Mountain ranges.</i>	
Latest start time:	08h00
Estimated time:	8 hours
Degree of difficulty:	Moderate

DAY 2	13.2km
<i>The trail leads down into the Tierkloof gorge, which takes hikers through a deep, forested ravine pass the beautiful overhang along the trail</i>	
Latest start time:	08h00
Estimated time:	8 hours
Degree of difficulty:	Moderate



ZEBRA CROSSING 4X4 ROUTE

ZEBRA CROSSING

This moderate ±3hour out-and-back route starts at the reserve office and winds its way up Gamkaberg for about 16km to Oukraal camp. Alternatively, take the road to Southern Gate where the newly added 11km Fontein Loop is one of the highlights, offering a good chance of seeing zebra and eland herds near the waterpoints

Maximum no. of vehicles allowed on route per day:	4
Minimum no. of vehicles allowed on route per day:	2
Total distance in km:	27 km
Type of route:	Out and back
Degree of difficulty:	Grade 2
Estimated time to complete:	3 Hours
Must trails be booked before arrival at reserve?	Yes
Is a permit required?	Yes – available CapeNature Central Reservations System –via telephone or at the Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office
Provide by Cape Nature	Viewpoint with wood deck along the route where visitors can have a picnic.
Overnight accommodation:	Guests can book the Oukraal Herders Huts (at the 16 km mark) as overnight accommodation.

USEFUL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Gamkaberg Nature Reserve Office	087 288 0373
Mountain Search & Rescue	10177/083 339 1240
South African Police Services	10111 Oudtshoorn: 044 203 9014 Calitzdorp: 044 213 3320
Hospital Services	Oudtshoorn Provincial Hospital - 044 203 7200 Mediclinic Klein Karoo - 044 272 0111
Ambulance	Metro – 10177 or 044 272 0111 ER 24 – 082 372 5290
Fire Department	044 203 7800



OVERNIGHT HIKING HUTS

- Ensure you provide accurate information on your safety form.
- A normal hiking pack should have a minimum of 2 litres of water.
- Make sure you know what the weather conditions are, current and forecasted, before you depart.
- Always take a warm jacket/ raincoat with you as the weather changes quickly, especially as you climb into the mountains.
- Make sure you have a good hiking map (showing contours & place names) of the area.
- Take a field medical kit with you in case of emergencies.
- Obey all signage and any instructions you may receive from reserve staff.
- Make sure you have informed a reliable person of the hike you are doing and when they should expect your return.
- Please remember to bring:
 - Warm cloths
 - Sun hat
 - Sun block
 - Bedding
 - Towels
 - Toiletries
 - Food
 - Utensils
 - Water – is available at the huts but none on route.
 - Torch or headlamp
 - Toilet paper
 - Plastic bag for the items you want to throw away – you need to take it back with you
 - No cooking utensils available – clients should bring their own gas/gel stove/burner for cooking purposes (available at all Outdoor shops and Game) .
 - Demarcated fireplace in the kitchen.

OUKRAAL OVERNIGHT HUTS

Please note that this is a rustic hiking facility so please be advised of following provisions at all the huts and what you should bring from home.

Sleeps a total of:		8 people
Number of rooms:		4
Beds		2 single wooden beds per hut
Facilities:	Provided by CapeNature:	Bring your own:
BEDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beds and mattresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bedding and Pillows

COOKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Braai grid 3-legged Pot (No 3) Water tank with rainwater (use sparingly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooking utensils Black garbage bags Eating and drinking utensils Washing up supplies All food, drink, Flashlight Bedding & Towels Firelighters, Charcoal or Eco-logs. No wood allowed. Warm clothes
ABLUTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enviro Loo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toilet paper Towel Toiletries
HEATING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any warm clothing and blankets required <i>Demarcated fireplace in the kitchen.</i>
LIGHTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torch or headlamp

OUKRAAL OVERNIGHT HUTS FLOOR PLAN

