

GROOTVADERSBOSCH NATURE RESERVE

This is a World
Heritage Site



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 southwestern 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. The reserve was designated a World Heritage Site in 2015, as part of the extension to the Cape Floral Kingdom Protected Areas World Heritage Site.

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 050mm. 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

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. Be sure to spend some time in the new Interpretation Centre to learn more about the reserve.

Accommodation

Self-catering accommodation is available in *Scolopia*, a wooden house, and in 11 refurbished self-catering cabins. The cabins are all 4-sleepers, with two bedrooms, an inside braai area, kitchen, lounge with fireplace and an outside braai area. Units 1-3 have Universal Access with garages, while units 8-11 also have garages. Kitchens are fully equipped with an electric fridge, freezer, microwave, toaster and gas stove with four burners. Bedding and towels are provided.

Scolopia sleeps six guests in two bedrooms (one with a double bed and one with two single beds) and on a double sleeper couch in the lounge. The kitchen is fully-equipped and bedding and towels are provided. There is an indoor fireplace and an outdoor braai area.

Grootvadersbosch has 10 campsites, each with a power point and braai place, overlooking indigenous forest. Communal ablution facilities are offered with hot water showers, as well as a thatched communal braai area with fridge, and a children's play area/jungle gym. Visitors should bring their own firewood and braai grids.

For campers looking for more privacy, there are two fenced-off private campsites with exquisite views of the Langeberg mountains, each suitable for a maximum of 6 people and two vehicles. Each campsite has a shower, flush toilet, lighting, scullery and braai place.

Guests must bring their own food as there is no shop on the reserve. Firewood may sporadically be purchased at the office but bring your own to be safe.

ENQUIRIES: Tel 028 492 0001

RESERVATIONS: Tel 021 483 0190

or book accommodation online at www.capenature.co.za



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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.



CapeNature

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LEGEND

GRYSBOK TRAIL	15km	
BUSHBUCK TRAIL	10km	
CYCLE TRAIL	6 km	
Trail markers		
		
Cycle trail reference points		
		
Reserve boundary		
		
Parking		
Information		
Trail start		
Campsite		
		
		
Birdhide		
		
Reserve road		
		
Contour (100m)		
		
Forest		
		
Transitional (Ecotone)		
		
Fynbos		
