Marakele National Park

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Welcome to Marakele National Park

Setting foot in Marakele, right in the heart of the Waterberg Mountains, allows one to discover a park like no other. Like the Tswana name suggests, “A place of sanctuary” is indeed what is to be expected, for this national park is located in the transitional zone between the dry western and moister eastern regions of South Africa, therefore allowing for a remarkable variety of wildlife. A moderate and pleasant climate ensures an enjoyable stay, with perfect summer rainfalls keeping the worst heat at bay. Visitors flocking here can expect a welcoming mixture of tranquillity, delight and overall satisfaction – and the picturesque paradise in which the park is set forms just part of the promise. Rare yellowwood and striking cedar trees, grand mountains in the background, Cape vultures soaring through the royal blue skies, exciting mixtures of wildlife roaming the plains ... Certainly a bush experience unlike any other.

Accommodation
Tlopi Tented Camp

Guests get to relax in comfortably furnished tented units while gazing across the banks of the Apiesrivierpoort Dam. Each tent has two beds (two stretchers are available which are more suitable for children) and a private bathroom (shower, wash basin and toilet). A fully equipped kitchen, complete with a refrigerator/freezer, two-plate stove and electricity, ups the luxury level. Guests can also laze on a private veranda with table, deck chairs and barbeque facilities. One tent offers wheelchair access. The camp allows for an authentically wild camping experience, and is approximately 17 km from the Reception Office.
Bontle Camping Site

It’s no coincidence that bontle means ‘beautiful’ in Tswana. This pleasant camping site consists of 36 sites with power points, arranged into three clusters, with one communal block per cluster. The camping site is located adjacent to the park’s new reception and administration offices.

Bontle Tented Camp

The rest camp also has 10 tented units for those who want the romance of sleeping under canvas without the hassle of pitching a tent. There are four family units sleeping four people each and six two-sleeper units. Each unit has an en-suite bathroom with shower and a fully-equipped kitchen.

Facilities

In Park

- Communal Ablution Block
- Electricity for Appliances
- Info at Reception
- Picnic Site

In Thabazimbi

- Emergency Services
- Garage
- Petrol Station
- Public Telephone
- Post Box
- Restaurant

In an effort to keep the park’s ecosystem as undisturbed as possible, most facilities are located outside the park in the adjacent town of Thabazimbi.

• Stock up on necessities at the local shop.
• Wine and dine at the superb restaurant.
• Fill up on petrol and diesel at Thabazimbi’s gas station.
• A doctor and medical services are available in town.
• Public telephones are also accessible, as well as a post office.
• The nearest police stations are located in Thabazimbi, 12 km from the office and camping site, and at Hoopdal, approximately 18 km north of the Kreehoek turnoff.
Things to seek

Wildlife
Elephant
Black Rhino
White Rhino
Kudu
Leopard
Brown Hyena
Lion

Birds
Cape Vulture
Southern Boubou
Red-eyed Bulbul
Purple Roller
Cape Rock Thrush
Snake Eagle
African Harrier-hawk

Trees & Plants
Sickle Bush
Silver Cluster Leaf
Round-leaved Teak

Activities
Be one with nature and experience all the enjoyment that Marakele's natural environment offers.

• Keep your eyes peeled for the fabulous assortment of bird and wildlife species.
• A mountain pass allows you an incredible view of the surrounding areas, plus brings you in close proximity to the Cape vulture colonies.
• Morning and sunset drives take you out into the wild to see what nature offers outside the camp’s perimeter.
• Morning and sunset bush walks offer the same, but at a much slower pace, allowing the hiker more time with nature's characters.
• A two-night 4x4 eco-trail – animals become your neighbours as you camp out in the remarkable natural environment.

Flora and Fauna

Game
Your typical African bush mammals can be found throughout Marakele, and visitors can expect to see beauties such as elephant, and black and white rhino. Predators like brown hyena, leopard and lion can also be spotted, as well as antelope such as sable, impala, waterbuck and many other smaller species. Guests are advised to take note of chacma baboons and vervet monkeys, who are known for their mischievous actions, particularly around the rest camps.

Birding
A stunning appeal of Marakele is the world's largest colony of Cape Vultures. More than 800 breeding pairs have made the park their home and visitors are sure to catch a glimpse of a few of them. However, because of the park’s location within a transition zone between the dry western regions and the moister eastern regions of the country, an interesting variety of birdlife can be encountered (closely related species and mixed). Typical birds of this region include Southern Boubou, Red-eyed Bulbul, Purple Roller, Cape Rock Thrush, raptors such as Snake and Brown Snake Eagle, Jackal Buzzard, African Harrier-hawk, and many others. In summer, Wahlberg’s Eagle are prominent. Night time brings its own special mix like Freckled and Fiery-necked Nightjars, Spotted Eagle and African Scops Owl to add to the pulsating mix of crickets and cicadas. Marakele Honorary Rangers have organised an annual birding census in the park and surrounding farms, keeping track of these magnificent companions.

Vegetation
More than half the park is characterised by the Waterberg Moist Bushveld vegetation type, which occurs in the intermediate to high lying areas in the southern and south-eastern parts of the park. Another major vegetation type is the Mixed Bushveld, which covers approximately 42% of the park. This vegetation type is mainly found in the north-western and isolated south-western park areas. Game such as black rhino, elephant and wild dog are associated with this vegetation type. This vegetation type is characterised by species such as silver cluster leaf (Terminalia sericea), sickle bush (Dichrostachys cinerea) and round-leaved teak (Pterocarpus rotundifolias). This picturesque vegetation can also be seen around the camping site and tented camp.
**General Information**

**Climate**

Summers are hot but the area does not suffer from the stifling humidity so typical of the eastern Lowveld. The park is situated in the summer rainfall region and rainfall occurs in the form of heavy thunderstorms or soft rain. Winter is moderate with frost occurring in the low-lying regions only. Mornings and nights can be cold, but day temperatures are pleasant.

**Day Visitors**

There is no need to book a day visit in advance. Gate and reception times are:
- May to August: 07h00–17h30
- September to April: 07h00–18h00.

**Tariffs**

All tariffs are available from reception or on our website: www.sanparks.org

**Handy Hints**

Remember to bring a camera, binoculars, bird and wildlife reference books, a hat and sunscreen lotion. Cool and warm clothing – the region is subject to sudden changes in weather, particularly in the mountains.

**Travel / How to get there**

The park is situated in the Waterberg mountain range in the Limpopo Province (formerly the Northern Province) near Thabazimbi, approximately 250 km north of Johannesburg, in a malaria-free area. Travellers can take either:
1. The N1 to Warmbaths and from there follow the R516 via Mabula and Leeupoort to Thabazimbi.
2. Or travel to Brits and follow the R511 via Beestekraal to Thabazimbi.

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**Marakele National Park** is home to a diverse range of South African wildlife and plant species.

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**Some Interesting Facts**

A narrow tar road takes visitors up to the top of the Waterberg massif. The views and scenery are spectacular.

**Warnings**

Please ensure that your stay is happy and safe by taking note of a few simple warnings. You will be sharing your stay with many exciting and unusual creatures, but without knowledge some of them could be dangerous!

- **Beware** Bats
- **Beware** Spiders
- **Beware** Snakes
- **Beware** Scorpions
- **Beware** Wasps
- **Beware** Bees

If you must walk around at night please **DO NOT DO SO WITHOUT A TORCH**.

**REMEMBER, BY FEEDING ANY WILDLIFE YOU ARE SIGNING THEIR DEATH WARRANT, AS THEY BECOME AGGRESSIVE.**

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**General Rules**

- **Declare Firearm at Gate**
- **Stay on Marked Trails**
- **Feeding of Animals is Prohibited**
- **Fire Free Zone**
- **Hanging Out of Vehicles is Prohibited**
- **Litter Free Zone**
- **Noise Free Zone**
- **Pet Free Zone**
- **Removing of Flora is Prohibited**
- **Stay in your Vehicle**
- **Smoking Free Zone**
- **Touching the Game is Prohibited**

**FAILURE TO OBSERVE THESE SIMPLE RULES IS A CRIMINAL OFFENCE**
Marakele National Park
Reservations:
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