South African
NATIONAL PARKS

Introduction

Just a four hour drive from Cape Town brings you to the ideal destination of Tankwa Karoo National Park (TKNP) for those seeking the brightest stars of Africa, a once in a lifetime glimpse of a rare endemic bird, or perhaps nothing more than a silence that reaches deep into the soul.

As luminous clouds of dust swirl through the ancient landscape, a tortoise patiently wanders in search of succulent morsels; a lizard basks in the sun while gemsbok and red hartebeest share the arid plains with mongoose, orb-web spiders, skinks and leggy toktokkies...

Main Attractions

- Stargazing
- 4x4 Trails
- Self-Drive Game Viewing
- Bird Watching
- Scenic Viewpoints

Accommodation

Paulshoek Cottage (CO6)

The Paulshoek farmstead, the first to be restored as visitor accommodation in 2003, is quaintly furnished with antique furniture and is able to accommodate up to six guests. The cottage is situated approximately 5km from the Park reception at Roodewerf and has breathtaking views of the imposing Roggeveld Escarpment and plains between.

- Two bedrooms, four beds (one double bed and one single bed per room)
- One bathroom (shower, toilet and basin)
- Open-plan kitchen and living-room
- Braai-facilities
- Fully equipped with linen, towels, cutlery, crockery cooking utensils etc.
- Two-plate gas stove and solar powered fridge
- Paraffin lamps and candles (provided)
- "Donkey' / boiler (wood supplied)
- Wood stove for lighting during cold spells

View availability

Varschfontein Cottage (CO9)

The Varschfontein Cottage is situated 45km from the Park offices at Roodewerf within the westerly section of TKNP. The desolate beauty of the area is truly a sight to behold making for an ideal getaway for those seeking a reprieve from the hustle and bustle of the city. The cottage is able to accommodate up to nine guests.

- Three bedrooms, six beds (one double bed and one single bed per room)
- One bathroom (shower, toilet and basin)
- Open-plan kitchen and living room
- Braai-facilities
- Reservoir for swimming purposes
- Accessibility by low-clearance vehicles hampered by the occurrence of water relay humps in road
- Access with sedan and 2x4 vehicles not advisable in winter
- Fully equipped with linen, towels, cutlery, crockery cooking utensils etc.
- Gas two-plate stove and solar powered fridge
- Paraffin lamps and candles (provided)
- "Donkey" / boiler (wood supplied)
- Hearth inside house for cooking or lighting of fire during cold spells
- Bookings of minimum two nights highly advisable due to remoteness of facility.

View availability

Elandsberg Wilderness Camp

Situated 18km away from the Park Reception at Roodewerf, in the hills known as Elandsberg lies the isolated and hence romantic Elandsberg Cottages. The development of the Elandsberg Wilderness Camp was initiated in September 2006 and completed by April 2008. The rustic design of the cottage gives the visitor a true bushveld experience topped with a striking evening sunset over the Roogeveld escarpment. Each cottage boasts beautiful views of the Karoo plains and imposing Roggeveld Escarpment. The cottages are spaced far enough from each other maintaining privacy, yet close enough for groups to book different cottages together.

By the use of the locally made unbaked clay-and-straw bricks with sections of walls built with rock, a bygone era is evoked, one of simpler times.vExamples of this building method can also be found in the many ruins within the park.

Download the Elandsberg Wilderness Camp layout.

- Three x one-bedroom cottages, double bed
- One x one-bedroom universal unit, double bed
- One x two-bedroom cottage, (one bedroom with one x double bed and one bedroom with two x single beds)

- Queen-sized sleeper-couch in living room
- One bathroom (shower, toilet and basin)
- Open-plan kitchen and living-room
- Covered Braai / Stoep
- Fireplace in living room
- Splash pool per unit
- Fully equipped with linen, towels, cutlery, crockery, cooking utensils etc.
- Two-plate gas stove and solar powered fridge
- Paraffin lamps and candles (provided)

[View availability]

Tanqua Guesthouse Complex

The Tanqua Guest House Complex is very conveniently situated on the southern boundary of the Tankwa Karoo National Park and a stone's throw away from the Oudebaaskraal Dam. Built somewhat like a desert fort, the Tanqua Guesthouse was formerly owned by Esther and Alewyn Burger and later incorporated into the Tankwa National Park in 2007. The guesthouse offers a range of accommodation and has played host to weddings, teambuilding exercises as well as film and commercial shoots. A 900m air strip is also situated next to the main building, allowing fly-ins by guests. (Section 47 of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003, Use of aircraft in special nature reserve, national park or world heritage site, applies).

Download the Tanqua Guesthouse Complex layout.

Tanqua (FA8)

- One en-suite bedroom with a double bed
- Three bedrooms, each with two single beds
- Fully equipped kitchen
- Living area
- No smoking
- Outside braai facilities
- Restricted 220V power
- Self catering
- WC, shower and bath

[View availability]

Tanqua Unit 1 (GH2)

- One en-suite bedroom with a double bed
- Braai facilities available
- Fully equipped
- Kitchen
- No smoking
- Part of a 800m square double story building
- Restricted 220V power with microwave
- Self catering
- Shared lounge,living area with fire place

View availability

Tanqua Unit 2 (GH4)

- One bedroom two single beds
- Other bedroom one double bed
- 2 bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Braai facilities available
- Fully equipped
- Kitchen
- No smoking
- Part of a 800m square double story building
- Restricted 220V power with microwave
- Self catering
- Shared lounge, living area with fire place

View availability

Tanqua Unit 3 (GH4)

- One bedroom with two single beds
- Other bedroom one double bed
- Bathroom
- Braai facilities available
- Fully equipped
- Kitchen
- No smoking
- Part of a 800m square double story building
- Restricted 220V power with microwave
- Self catering
- Shared lounge,living area with fire place

View availability

Camping facilities

Langkloof (CK6)

Formerly an informal campsite, Langkloof was upgraded with ablution facilities and running water in 2011. The campsite is situated approximately 18km from the Park Reception at Roodewerf, within the scenic upper reaches of the Langkloof Gorge. Kudu, eland and other small antelope and mammals frequent the area and, along with the guests who visit, are the only ones to experience the awesome power of thunder storms and the ensuing wonder of the Rhenoster River during a flashflood.

- Two campsites, each with own bathroom and kitchenette
- Bathroom - toilet, shower, basin, seperaeseparate toilet with basin
- Kitchen - no cooking facilities supplied
- Braai facilities, no braai grid supplied
- Carport
- Gas geyser
- Paraffin lamps
- No electrical points

- Access by high clearance 2x4/4x4
- 4x4 advisable in rainy seasons

View availability

Perdekloof (CK6)

The Perdekloof Campsite was opened in early 2012 and is situated at the mouth of the Perdekloof gorge. The campsite is a stone's throw from the Hoenderhoek rivulet, a tributary of the Renoster River.
Each of the six stands have their own bathroom and kitchenette, side-to-side with only one other stand. Stands are nestled among the natural riverine vegetation with Karee (Sersea lancea), Sweet Thorn (Acacia karroo) and various Ganna species (Salsola spp.) predominating.

- Six campsites, each with own bathroom and kitchenette
- Bathroom - shower, basin, separate toilet with basin
- Kitchen - no cooking facilities supplied
- Braai facilities - no braai grid supplied
- Gas geyser

- Limited solar lighting
- No electrical points
- Access by high clearance 2x4/4x4
- 4x4 advisable in rainy seasons
- Stand 1 and 5 best suited for roof-top tents

View availability

Informal campsites

Fully self-sufficient campers are allowed to camp at designated spots on an "only leave your footprints" - basis. Each site is for the exclusive use of the party of up to 15 individuals reserving such a site.

Please note:

- All visitors are required to report at the Roodewerf Reception on arrival.
- Closest water source Langkloof/Renoster river (+/- June-November only) or at Roodewerf Reception.
- Road to Pyper se boom, Langkloof and Oom Rickert se Huis crosses the Renoster River and its Hoenderhoek tributary - potentially flooded in winter/after summer thunder showers.
- For further information, contact the Park Office on tel: (027) 341 1927, fax: (027) 341 2814 or email Tankwa Karoo National Park.

2x4 Pyper se Boom (CK15)

- Accessible only by 2x4/4x4
- No ablutions or water.

View availability

Steenkampshoek (CK15)

- Accessible only by 2x4/4x4
- No ablutions or water.

View availability

Skaapwagterspos (CK15)

- Accessible only by 2x4/4x4
- No ablutions or water.

View availability

Oom Rickert se Huis (CK15)

- Accessible only by 2x4/4x4
- 4x4 advisable in rainy seasons
- No ablutions or water.

View availability

Volmoesfontein

- Accessible with normal sedan vehicles
- No ablutions or water

View availability

Biesjiesfontein

- Accessible with normal sedan vehicles
- No ablutions or water

View availability

Gannaga Lodge

The Gannaga Lodge is situated on the striking Roggeveld Escarpment at the summit of the Gannaga Pass. This private property situated within the Park, approximately 24km from the park offices at Roodewerf, features a conference venue, guesthouse, restaurant and licensed bar and is managed by the owners Johan and Norette Visagie.

Contact details:

- For bookings and further enquiries please contact Johan Visagie at:
  Tel: +27 (0)79 922 1688 / +27 (0)87 802 5206 / +27 (0)79 922 1688
  E-mail: gannaga@hantam.co.za
  Website: http://gannagalodge.blogspot.com/

Vital Information

General Information

- **Travelling times**: There are restricted travelling times in the park. *No travelling is permitted* within Tankwa National Park during the following times:
  - 1 October to 31 March 19:00 – 05:30
  - 1 April to 30 September 18:00 – 06:30
  - *Exemption granted to visitors arriving on a Friday by no later than 21:00 at reception, to travel by means of most direct route to the reception and from the reception to their booked accommodation.*
- Only Diesel available in Park. Last stops for petrol (measured from Park offices) are Ceres (180km), Sutherland (120km - closed from Saturdays 13:00 for weekend), Calvinia (110km) and Middelpos (52km).
- Vehicle fuel is available in all parks (or is available on the park periphery) - South African legislation stipulates that fuel stations will accept legitimate *petrol/fuel/garage/credit/debit cards* or cash as a form of payment for any fuel purchase.
- Motorcycles are allowed in the park.
- Arrivals for accommodation from 14:00 only, departure at 10:00.
- No shops, restaurants, public phones or ATMs in the park.

- General Dealer and Bottle Store in Middelpos.
- No cellular reception within the Park as well as main access roads.
- Wi-Fi available at Roodewerf Reception.
- Credit card facilities are available.
- *Prosopis/Mesquite* wood for sale in Park.

Office Hours

- Monday - Thursday: 07:30 - 17:00
- Friday: 07:30 - 21:00
- Saturday: 07:30 - 17:00
- Sunday / Public Holiday: 10:00 - 16:00

Please do:

- Ask for plant and animal species lists at Reception.
- Bring a torch/headlamp as outdoor lighting in camps is limited.
- Bring along insect repellent and sun-block.
- Bring birding books and other plant and animal field guides as well as binoculars.
- Invite a friend to appreciate the beauty of daybreak and the wonders of the Tankwa night sky.
- Remember to bring lots of warm clothing in winter.
- Bring lots of cool goodies for summer!

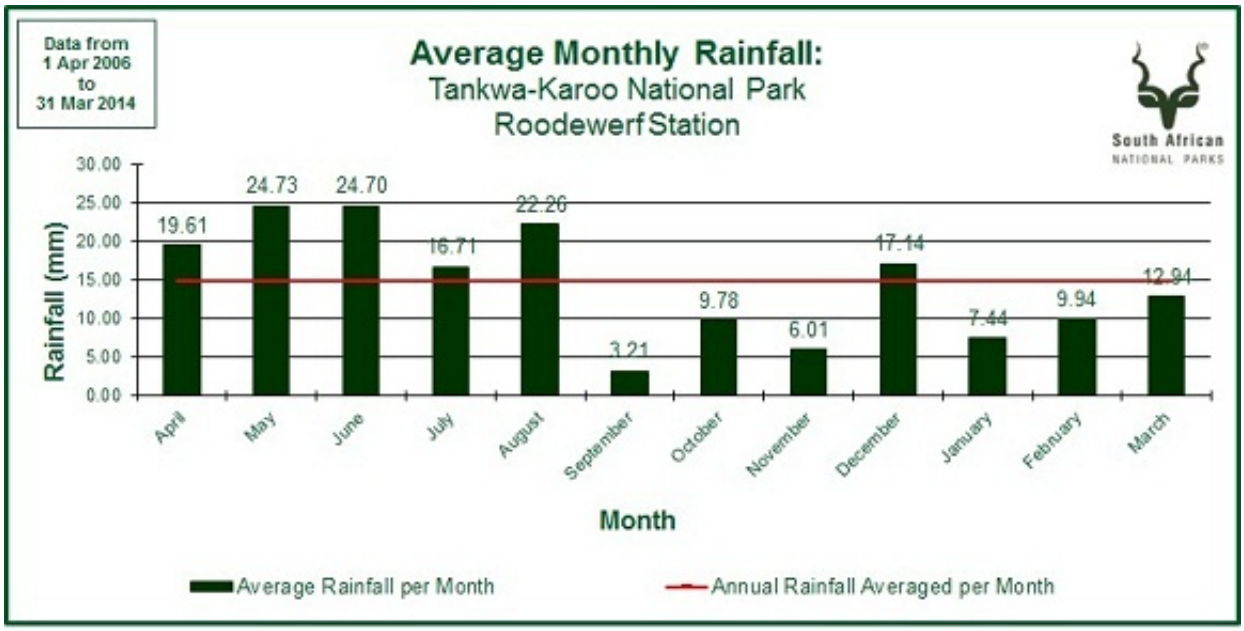
Please don't:

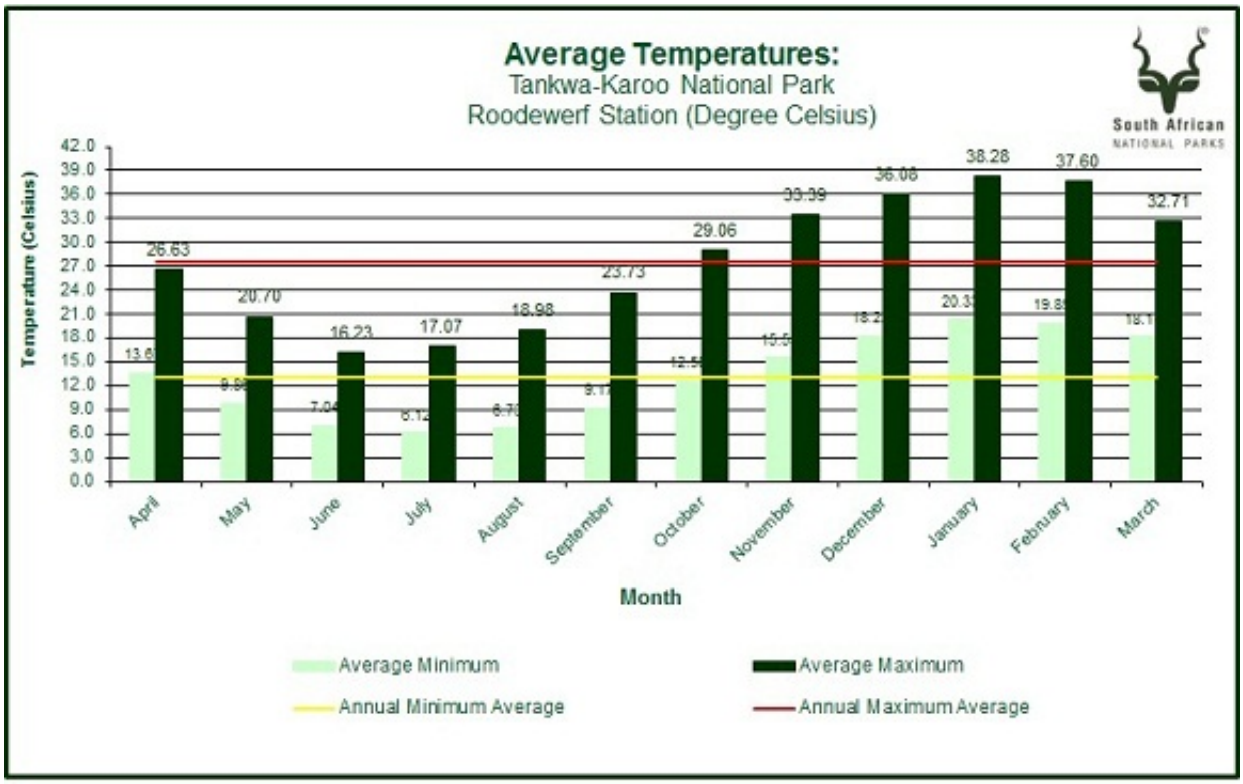
- Litter.
- Feed, disturb or injure any animal.
- Bring any pets into Tankwa Karoo National Park.
- Take any firearms into Tankwa Karoo National Park.
- Stay or overnight at any other place than those designated as camping or overnight facilities.
- Damage, remove or destroy any natural item (seeds, plants, animals or rocks) or human artefacts.
- Light any fires at places not designated as camping, picnic or overnight facilities, where fires may be restricted at such areas due to fire hazard.
- Leave the road at any point.

Climate and Vegetation

The duration and temperature of the growing season separates the Succulent Karoo from other biomes. The Tankwa Karoo (Region) is one of the most arid sections of the Karoo. Isohyets of mean annual rainfall (mm) for the Karoo indicate that the Tankwa-Karoo National Park falls into the 0-100mm range (Venter et al. 1986), with 25% of the mean annual precipitation in summer. In contrast, the higher lying regions within the Roggeveld Escarpment, receive up to five times more rain annually.

The mean July minimum temperature is 6°C (lowest measured -1°C), and the mean January maximum temperature is 38°C (highest measured 50°C). The highest average maximum temperatures occur from November to March with the hottest months being January and February. The highest wind speeds occur from October to March.





Planning Your Visit

Birding

Birding season is at its peak from August to October, when the region may also unpredictably burst into flower. However, the majority of the specials (with the possible exception of Black-headed Canary, Ludwig's Bustard and Black-eared Finchlark) are accessible year-round with a little effort.

Not to be missed is the annual Tankwa Birding Bonanza held during April, where birders, beginners to expert twitchers, can have a friendly competition to test their knowledge against others'. The event is hosted by the SANParks Honorary

Rangers and has various sponsors. For more information please go to www.sanparksvolunteers.org/boland-region/.

Roads

Please take care when driving in this region. All main access roads and roads within the Park are gravel. The road gravel is sharp and often loose, and a great deal of caution needs to be taken with corners and sudden stops. Sudden downpours can also cause damage to roads.

Furthermore, please give some thought to your fuel and water requirements, bearing in mind that there are no proper towns in the Tankwa Karoo, and the closest refueling points are Ceres, Sutherland, Middelpos and Calvinia, all exceeding 50km from the Park. Those with thirsty engines may consider packing a (full) jerry-can to guard against potential concerns over those interesting detours.

Dirt Road Driving Tips:

- Slow down when you see approaching traffic.
- Do not allow wheels to lock when applying brakes.
- Never exceed 80km/h. Take note of the Park's speed limits.
- Be aware of slippery conditions during wet weather.
- Be aware of flash floods crossing roads as well as road surface possibly washed away.
- If you need to overtake, avoid loose gravel at the side of the road.
- Take along enough drinking water, especially during hot conditions.
- Inform your host of your route and approximate arrival time.
- Check pressure of spare wheel and ensure tyres are at the correct pressure.
- Drastically reduce speed when transferring from tar to gravel and when approaching a motor grid.
- Drive in the existing tracks on the road.
- Keep to the left when approaching a blind hill.
- Put your lights on in the dust of passing traffic.
- See complete list of tips for driving on gravel roads.

Contact Information

For enquiries email Tankwa Karoo National Park or phone us on the following numbers:

- Tel: +27 (0)27 341 1927
- Fax: +27 (0)27 341 2814
- Address: Tankwa Karoo National Park, P.O. Box 299, Calvinia, 8190

Park Map

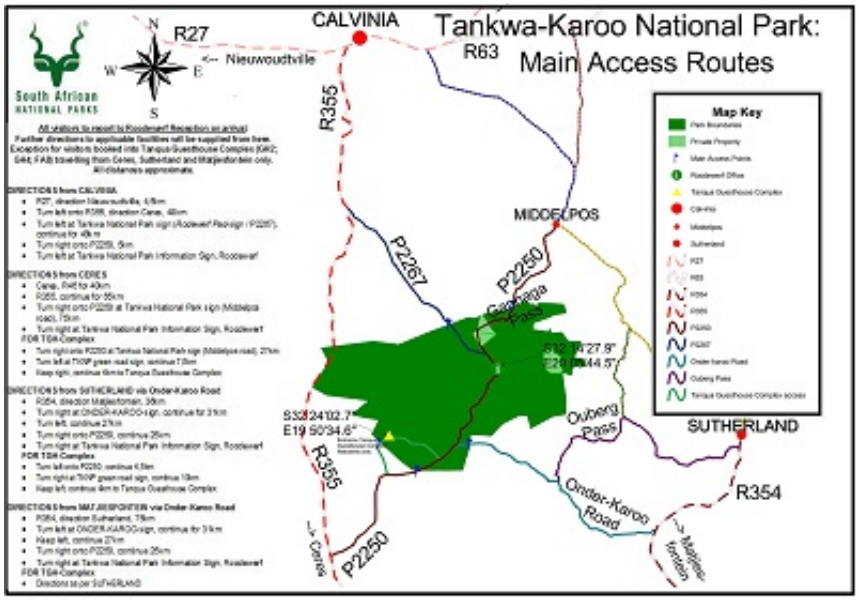
How to get there

Gate Times

- There are no formal entrance or exit gates for this Park.
- **No travelling is permitted during the following times:**
    - 1 October to 31 March: 19:00 - 05:30
    - 1 April to 30 September: 18:00 - 06:30
    - *Exemption is granted to visitors arriving on a Friday by no later than 21:00 at reception, to travel by means of most direct route to the reception and from the reception to their booked accommodation.*

Main Access Routes

From Calvinia, Ceres, Sutherland and Matjiesfontein



All distances indicated are measured to the Park's Roodewerf Reception, with travel times based on speed-limits and average road conditions. Actual travel times may vary.

- Calvinia to Tankwa approximately 110km, 1h45min.
- Sutherland to Tankwa approximately 120km, 1h40min.
- Matjiesfontein to Tankwa approximately 160km, 2h15min.
- Ceres to Tankwa approximately 180km, 2h20min.
- Nearest petrol-point will be Middelpos at 52km, 1h00min.

GPS Waypoints

- Roodewerf Office: S 32° 14’ 27.9”
  E 20° 5’ 44.5”
- Oudebaaskraal Airstrip:
  S 32° 24.044
  E 19° 50.576

Tariffs

- General Tariff Information