



## Entabeni Hiking Trail

### Location

The Entabeni Hiking Trail is located in the Levubu area, in the eastern Soutpansberg range of the Limpopo Province on the Entabeni plantation.

### How to get there

On the R524, drive 40km east of Makhado (Louis Trichardt). Turn left at the Entabeni sign and follow the gravel road to the plantation gate. Continue through the plantation for approximately 1.5km to the first Entabeni Hut sign where you turn right. Keep following the signs until you reach the hiker's hut, which is on the edge of an indigenous forest, 15km from the entrance gate.

### Trail options

The Entabeni Hiking Trail is a two-day, figure-eight overnight trail. Each loop runs for 16km with the option of shorter loops, in each circle, back to the hut.

### General information

Some highlights on this delightful trail include the Klein Australie Kop (1300m) from where you have a magnificent view of the Levubu tropical farming area, Ebbe Dam (named after Mr Ebbe Domisse), Vera Lookout (named after the land surveyor's wife), Vera's Tears Waterfall and the Mativha Peak with its breathtaking view over the Lwamondo area (named by the BaVenda tribe).

### Special precautions

- Hikers must carry their own first-aid kit.
- Malaria does sometimes occur and hikers are advised to take the necessary precautions.
- For assistance during emergencies, contact the police at (015) 583 0121 or call for an ambulance at (015) 583 0387.

#### **Komatiland Ecotourism**

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**Please note:** Visitors must take at least two litres of their own drinking water on hikes during the dry season. Do not drink from the streams.

### Main attractions

- **Birds.** The Soutpansberg area is known as the finest birding spot in the country. Birds occurring here include the blue-mantled crested flycatcher, African broadbill, African goshawk, olive woodpecker, black eagle, African olive-pigeon (rameron pigeon), forest canary, jackal buzzard, forest buzzard, Aryes' hawk-eagle, bat hawk, lemon dove, orange ground-thrush and black-fronted bush-shrike.
- **Mammals.** The red duiker, hyraxes, African civet, Soutpansberg flat lizard, samango monkey and bush buck, to name a few.
- **Flora.** On this trail, there are 60-year old redwoods, pine plantations, a blue gum plantation and indigenous forests with trees such as Cape beech, lemonwood, yellowwood, bushwillow, wilver wugarbush, *aloe vossii* and *aloe vogtsii*, red currant (bostaaibos), water berry (waterbessie) and camphor. There are also many brightly coloured and interesting fungi to be found, including the beautiful Forest Star, and magnificent specimens of tree ferns.

### Hut facilities

This comfortable and well-equipped hut has:

- Three rooms with 22 bunk beds
- Donkey to provide hot water for the showers
- Flushing toilets
- Kitchen area with an inside braai facility, kettle, iron pans and a table with benches
- Braai area with grids and firewood
- Vehicles can be parked at the Entabeni Hut.

### Difficulty

Moderate to difficult. A fair amount of fitness is required for this mountainous terrain.

### Trail options

The trail starts and ends at the Entabeni Hut on both days. The trail is a figure eight hiking route and each circle is 16km long. For a leisurely walk, hikers must start early.

### Day one. Redwoods Route

- Start from the cement dam at the Entabeni Hut.
- Hike through an indigenous forest to the plantation road and continue through the pine plantation.
- Continue through various indigenous forests where many endemic plants and trees such as red currant (bostaaibos), water berry (waterbessie) and camphor can be seen.
- Walk through the majestic redwood trees that were planted in about 1917.
- Follow the trail through more indigenous forest to reach the plantation road.
- Cross over the plantation road to another indigenous forest.
- Cross various streams in the pine plantation.
- Continue through indigenous forest, past the Vera's Tears waterfall to reach the plantation road once again.
- Follow the trail over the hill that is covered with indigenous forest.
- Continue past the Ebbe Dam, up the grassy incline through a portion of pine plantation to the Entabeni Hut.

### Day two. Thate-Vondo view route

- Start from the lapa at the Entabeni Hut.
- Continue downhill through the pine trees past the Ebbe Dam.
- Walk through open grassland to the plantation road.
- Turn right onto the plantation road and cross over the bridge.
- Turn left to cross the stream and continue to the plantation road.
- Follow the footprints that turn right from the plantation road.
- Continue until you reach the pine plantation on your left and the indigenous forest on your right.
- Continue through the indigenous forest to the river where you will have to remove your shoes to cross.
- Put your muscles to work again as you climb the incline to the top of the plantation.
- Cross another stream to climb the next hill in the plantation. (The thick carpet of pine needles may present some difficulty.)
- Continue through grassland and another pine plantation to the plantation road. Notice the Kliphuis Guest House ahead of you.
- Turn right, past the Kliphuis Guest House that is now on your left.
- Continue with the main plantation road that eventually turns right through the plantation.
- Follow the incline, through the indigenous forest to the Entabeni Hut.

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## Rates

R85.00 per person per day

## Reservations

Reservations are done at the Komatiland Ecotourism office in Nelspruit Tel: (013) 7542724.

We advice that you do your reservation well in advance.

## T-Shirts & Badges

T-Shirts (R55.00 each) and badges (R8.00 each) can be purchase from our Komatiland Ecotourism office - Pretoria, 13 Stamvrug Street, Val de Grace Tel : (012)-481 3623 or Komatiland Ecotourism office - Nelspruit Tel: (013) 7542724. Email purchase are accepted.

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