



a Mountain to call your own

VERLORENKLOOF MOUNTAIN CALL XMAS 2017

After we recorded an all-time low rainfall total of 493 mm during the 2015-16 season, last summer yielded 828 mm of wonderful rain. The fountains and the veld recovered and Verlorenkloof looked beautiful.



R36 under Construction

Wonderful news: the contract for rebuilding the R36 from the N4 at Bambi past our Verlorenkloof turn-off to Kwena Dam was awarded in September and construction has progressed considerably. The detours are well constructed and will be a minor inconvenience for the next 18 months considering the long-term advantage of a safe access road for Verlorenkloof owners, guests and for the whole community. The R286 million grant for the project was initiated when the Lydenburg Business Chamber facilitated a technical presentation by Eric on the state of the regional trunk roads to National Treasury in 2016. Our thanks to all concerned.



This is Daniel Factor, a Protea fisherman who regularly visits Verlorenkloof to judge both river and dam fishing.

Fishing

Daniel Fourie, who is actually the Yoghurt man, took over the fishing in 2016 and here is his report:

“The dam fishing has been great this year after the difficult drought conditions experienced for the last 3 years. The rains early in the year ensured that there was enough flow into the dams during the winter and we were able to procure healthy 1-1.5kg stock fish to replenish the dams. Our catch and release policy is starting to yield results with several trophy fish of 2kg+ being caught.

The Crocodile River presented a bigger challenge. We did not stock the river this year as we were interested to see if the wild fish population would be able to bounce back after the drought. A bio-aquatic survey showed the water quality is still high with an overall bio-diversity score of over 75% being achieved.”

Birding Big Day

Always held on the last Saturday in November, for the 12th consecutive year, we welcomed Geoff Lockwood to share Verlorenkloof's rich bird life. Not even the very welcome rain could dampen the enthusiasm! A record number of 133 species of birds were counted on the day. Some highlights were the Crowned Eagle pair on their nest, the beautiful Purple Turaco and our special Broad-tailed Warbler.

SAVE THE DATE for BIRDING BIG DAY WEEKEND: 23 - 25 NOVEMBER 2018



Croc2Croc

In May we hosted the second Croc2Croc MTB cycle race as the accommodation partner. Even with the unexpected May rains, it was a great success and a full house of 200 MTB riders participated under challenging circumstances. Spirits were high, the fires burned at the lodge, the kitchen managed to keep everyone well fed and Verlorenkloof was exposed to a new group of people who will hopefully visit the valley again and again.

Upcoming Events

Botany Weekend: 2 - 5 Feb 2018

Another great weekend to explore the botanical wealth of Verlorenkloof with some very professional "amateurs". Orchid 'hunter' Frans Krige will join, maybe we will find another new species and Eric will introduce us to some of the special archaeology sites. We also hope to host our first dedicated Archaeology Weekend in mid-June 2018 - watch this space!





Verlorenkloof Hlokomela Crèche

Hlokomela means “to care” and throughout this year we became very aware that two generations of mothers are now fully employed at Verlorenkloof. We need a place where their very young children can play, grow and learn in a safe environment. After wonderful and enriching engagement with our management and staff, the idea of a crèche was born at the beginning of this year. We started small in the farmhouse, in one room with one full-time lady and 7 children between the ages of 3 and 4 but now we want to grow!

We have broken ground at Matsepo Staff Village (just above the dairy), our architect drew up the plans and we will be launching a campaign with more information early in the new year. The Shareblock Company has provided the seed funding for the project but we need all the further help and support we can muster. We are thrilled that 2018 will be greeted with such a visible symbol of hope, collaboration and giving back to the people and the community who make up the spirit and heart of Verlorenkloof each and every day.



News on the Farm and Dairy

If 2017 could be themed, it would be, without doubt, the year of people. From new staff joining, the incredible growth and development of our young staff, visitors sharing their experiences - all enriching our lives..... to the great sadness of losing our beloved guide Karel Letsoalo to an accident in June, during the annual firebreak work. The outpouring of goodwill and assistance from our friends, Verlorenkloof owners and families was incredible and helped to soften the blow to all of us but especially to his wife, Hannie, and their direct family.

The new yoghurt business is providing a bright future to the dairy and in January we welcomed Hennie and Nadine Prinsloo and their 3 young boys to the farm: Hennie, to manage the farm and Nadine to take on the small independent school started 2 years before.

Douglas and Jeanne continue to do a sterling job to make Verlorenkloof what it is. Their two children, Daniel (12) and Anna (11), thrive at the school, sometimes with a good dose of farming thrown in! Daniel and Jo-Anne, who are growing the yoghurt business, had a healthy son, Jacobus in February. Eloise, who is responsible for Verlorenkloof's ever-increasing marketing presence, became engaged to a very eligible young farmer, Andrico Schoeman, last month and so will shortly be a neighbour!

Eric, myself and Toffee the Spaniel are well and continue to walk the trails or roads a few early mornings every week, our greatest pleasure in the world! Henry and Cherie and Erica and Werner are still happily living in Johannesburg and thrive on their chosen paths. We are very blessed that they continue to visit often.

The entire Verlorenkloof team wish you a blessed Christmas and festive season and, borrowing my friend, Leigh's words - a peaceful and interesting 2018; with good health, lots to read, a place to sit and stare, and friends with whom to share it.

