

Hanglip Hiking Trail



Soutpansberg / Hanglip Hiking Trail

Forming part of the Soutpansberg mountain range in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, the Hanglip mountain peak stands out as a prominent landmark which is visible from the N1 national road and the nearby town of Makhado. The Soutpansberg / Hanglip Hiking Trail winds its way through the beautiful indigenous forest, pine plantations and bushveld fauna of the Hanglip Reserve and State Forest, offering hikers some stunning scenery and the opportunity to spot majestic crowned eagles that breed in the area.

The two-night trail starts at the Soutpansberg Hut on the Hanglip Plantation and covers a total distance of just over twenty kilometers. The first day starts off with quite a steep climb through old indigenous forest. The path is well marked and some interesting trees, such as the Knobthorn, can be seen along the way. The steepest parts of the trail have wooden steps making the climb a little easier. The path passes by two cave-like rock overhangs which are a good place to stop and rest up a bit.

Trees and roots have grown into and around one another over the countless years that this indigenous forest has been left undisturbed, giving the trail an otherworldly atmosphere. The

steep climb rewards hikers with spectacular views of the surrounding areas, before continuing to the overnight hut below the rocky Hanglip outcrop. The facilities offer comfortable sleeping quarters, ablution facilities and an area to braai. Day two of the hike, which covers the 7.2 kilometers back to the basecamp, is much easier than the first day and hikers can take extra time to appreciate the scenery. Vegetation includes fynbos foliage and indigenous forest, as well as commercial plantations of pine trees and grassland.

There are around four hundred species of birds in the Southpansberg area, and birding enthusiasts can look out for crested guinea-fowl, narina trogons, purple-crested loeries, rock kestrels, black eagles, rock pigeons, rock martins, jackal buzzards and red-winged starlings, as well as African goshawks, African hawk eagles and crowned eagles. The area has around 540 tree species, as well as unusual fungi, and a diverse range of reptiles, mammals and insects may be seen along the route. South Africa is known for its natural beauty, and the Soutpansberg/Hanglip Hiking Trail, managed by Komatiland Forestry, offers outdoor adventurers an opportunity to discover some of the country's natural treasures.