

Sevilla Rock Art Trail

Winding alongside the Brandewyn River in the Cedarberg region of the Western Cape, the 4 km long Sevilla Rock Art Trail incorporates nine rock art sites, providing intriguing insight into the lives of the San people who lived in the area for thousands of years.



While there is still some debate about the age of the rock art, the latest dating techniques claim the different sites are between 8,000 and 800 years old. The experience of walking the trail is a treat for history buffs and nature lovers alike as

the area is home to springbok, eland, dassies, baboons and a host of bird species, while the indigenous flora is a delight to see, particularly in spring and early summer.

Visitors to the Sevilla Rock Art Trail must obtain a permit from the Traveller's Rest farm stall, where they will receive a leaflet with details on each of the nine rock art sites. The trail is self-guided, with white painted boot-prints showing the way. Visitors will note that some of the images appear to have been painted on top of older images, a practice that makes dating the paintings accurately a challenge. While some paintings depict scenes of daily life and the animals the people encountered, others are thought to depict spiritual rituals.

Odd dinosaur-shaped creatures are found at one of the sites,

while paintings of headless animals at another site can only be viewed by lying down and looking upward as they are painted on the underside of a rock shelf. A row of generously proportioned dancing figures adorn a flat cave wall, while hunters on the move and the animals they are pursuing are found on another. Handprints and seemingly random daubs of paint are also featured.

Tools of the trade used by San artists most likely included the indigenous reed-like grass growing throughout the Cederberg region, while ochre, charcoal and blood served as paint, with plant sap adding to its durability. There are approximately 2,500 rock paintings scattered throughout the Cederberg, many on private land.

The Sevilla Rock Art Trail presents an interesting collection of San artwork, in beautiful surroundings, making it a worthwhile excursion when exploring this region of the Western Cape.