

Table Mountain Sleepover 1 - 3 April 2011 - Written by Geoff Tinker



Led by Rosemary Paul

With: Cybil, Rosemary D, Diana, Anthony, Mary, Aileen, Gale, Lynette, Geoff

We had perfect weather for the three days of hiking and a group that fitted in well together. This made for a memorable and very enjoyable experience.

Day One: We met at Constantia Nek and drove into Orange Kloof where our cars were left and our baggage was transferred to a TMNP vehicle for transport to the top. We started at 12:30hrs and hiked up to Constantia Nek and then on past Eagles Nest and Belle Ombre. We joined the concrete road and got to the old overseers house opposite De Villiers Dam where we were to spend two nights. The house has been renovated and is

a hikers dream. Stone tiled floors, inside fireplace, comfortable braai area, flush toilets, thick mattresses, hot showers, space etc - what more could one want? Several of us explored the area and even went to the top of Nursery Ravine before settling down to a feast of braai meat, wine, beer and delicious side dishes. The city lights below us looked like Adderley Street at Xmas time. We hiked 4.5kms.

Day Two: After a good breakfast we set off over Rooikat butte and Vaalkat ravine to the top of Nursery ravine. The fynbos had greened up and smelled great after the recent rain. We went over the back of Nursery butte to the top of Skeleton gorge, around and over the dam to the waterworks museum for tea. The only dam of the five to have any water was the Woodhead dam. Let's hope for a wet winter. The partly cloudy and cool weather was perfect for hiking. We went along the old railway embankment to the top of Kasteelspoort where the views down to the sea were wonderful. We hiked past Woody ravine and turned off at the path to Tranquillity cracks. After a bit of searching we passed through the cracks to spectacular views and rock formations and to our lunch spot. Tranquillity cracks are one of the gems of the mountain. We returned to our accommodation via the Woodhead wall and the concrete road. We had another raucous braai and turned in at 21:30hrs. We hiked 12.8kms.



Day Three: We had an early breakfast and packed our bags for the TMNP pick up. We hiked to the Magic forest which is opposite the Victoria dam. The forest was damp, green and beautiful. We met a group of cavers from the Cape Speleological Society who were exploring caves in the area. We were told that there were 5km of caves along that ridge. We saw several cave entrances in the forest. We then hiked to the opposite side of the Woodhead dam and descended down the rugged Disa gorge into Orange Kloof. The descent was steep with thick forest in the valley between the mountains. A long trek followed through the Kloof and we reached our cars and bags in the safe hands of the TMNP at 13:00hrs. We hiked 9.35kms.

Thanks to Rosemary for organising another good one.

