

## Introduction

Discover...Experience...Explore a world of diversity in one Park...

Now the third largest national park in South Africa, Addo Elephant National Park has expanded to conserve a wide diversity of biodiversity, landscapes, fauna and flora. Stretching from the semi-arid karoo area in the north around Darlington Dam, over the rugged Zuurberg Mountains, through the Sundays River valley and south to the coast between Sundays River mouth and Bushman's river mouth, Addo covers about 180 000 hectares (444 700 acres) and includes the Bird and St Croix Island groups.

The original elephant section of the park was proclaimed in 1931, when only sixteen elephants remained in the area. Today this finely tuned ecosystem is sanctuary to over 550 elephants, lions, buffalo, black rhino, spotted hyena, leopard, a variety of antelope and zebra species, as well as the unique Addo flightless dung beetle, found almost exclusively in Addo. And their Addo has only just begun, with plans to expand the Park into a 264 000 hectare (652 300 acre) mega-park. In addition, plans include the proposed proclamation of a 120 000 hectare (296 500 acre) marine protected area that includes islands that are home to the world's largest breeding populations of Cape gannets and largest breeding population of endangered African penguins.

In addition, plans include the proposed proclamation of a 120 000 ha (296 500 acre) marine reserve that includes islands that are home to the world's largest breeding populations of Cape gannets and second largest breeding population of African penguins.

## Vision

Addo Elephant National Park seeks to be fully integrated into the regional landscape, conserves and enhances the characteristic terrestrial and marine biodiversity, ecological processes and cultural, historical and scenic resources representative of the Eastern Cape region for the appreciation, and benefit of present and future generations.

## Accommodation

### General Information

- For bookings at Addo Elephant National Park contact [Central Reservations](#). For bookings at Kabouga, contact Park Reception (Tel: 042 2338600).
- Have a look at the [park map](#), as well as information on each camp to locate and check in at the correct place.
- All accommodation is serviced and equipped with crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils, bedding, towels and soap. Each accommodation unit has a braai- area outside.
- Check in time for accommodation is 13:00 on the day of arrival. Check out time on the day of departure is 10:00 for accommodation and 12:00 for the campsites.
- Please note that no meals are included in the accommodation rates.
- All our accommodation units do have plug points available with a 220V electricity supply. Visitors will need to provide their own international adaptors or two-point plug adaptors. The caravan and tent sites also each have a 220v electricity supply point.
- Accommodation will be serviced daily between 09:00 and 12:00.
- Sheets will be changed every 2-3 days, and towels will be changed every day. Please do not hesitate to ask our staff for extra soap, towels, blankets, etc.

### Accommodation Types

Addo Elephant National Park offers a range of accommodation types. The list below offers a brief description of what the park offers. For more comprehensive information on accommodation types, including photographs of the our facilities and more detail on how units are equipped, please click on the accommodation unit link.



## Camps

### [Addo Rest Camp](#)

The popular main rest camp of the park offers a wide variety of accommodation units to suit all tastes and plenty of activities to keep visitors busy. A unique feature is the waterhole lookout point, floodlit at night, within the camp as well as the underground hide, allowing close encounters with wildlife at the waterhole...

### [Spekboom Tented Camp](#)

Spend a night in the middle of the bush, listening to the sounds of the wild around you. You may catch a glimpse of nocturnal animals drinking at the waterhole, gaze at the starry skies and enjoy being away from it all. The Spekboom Tents are located in the fenced area of Spekboom Hide in the Park's Main Game Area.

### [Matyholweni](#)

Matyholweni, which means "in the bush" in Xhosa is located near the coastal town of Colchester at the Sundays River Mouth, 3km off the N2 highway, Matyholweni is easily accessible and provides a second gateway into the Park. Amenities such as shops, restaurants and a fuel station are available in the nearby town...

### [Narina](#)

For a secluded experience in magical forest, spend some time at Narina Bush Camp at the foot of the Zuurberg Mountains and on the banks of the Wit River...

### [Kabouga](#)

This section of the park is surrounded by rugged mountains and densely fragrant vegetation...

### [Woody Cape](#)

Listen for the haunting calls of the rare tree dassie by night and awake to a chorus of birds in flitting through the forest canopy. The Langebos huts are available to hikers on the two-day Alexandria Hiking Trail, as well as those simply wanting an overnight stay in the forest...

### [Luxury Lodges](#)

Who said anything about "roughing it" in the bush when visiting one of our National Parks? "Indulgence" and "comfort" come to mind when viewing the concession lodges and suites that are to be found in a number of SANParks camps and parks. These lodges form part of a suite of products known as SANParks "Golden Kudus", where luxury is the order of the day.

## Alternate options



Should you be unable to get a booking in the park due to high occupancy levels, a variety of accommodation options are available in the area surrounding the Park, Please have a look at the following websites for information: [Greater Addo Route](#) and [www.addotourism.co.za](http://www.addotourism.co.za)

To view the accommodation prices, refer to [Tariffs](#)

## Activities

- [Guided Game Drives](#)
- [Hop-on Guides](#)
- [Self-Drive Game Viewing](#)
- [Horse Trails](#)
- [Alexandria Hiking Trail](#)
- [Zuurberg Hiking Trails](#)
- [Tree Dassie Trail](#)
- [4x4 Trail](#)
- [Bird Watching](#)
- [PPC Discovery Trail](#)
- [Activity Tariffs](#)

## Guided Game Drives

There are a number of game drive options available:

- Bookings are essential. It is advisable to book drives in advance, particularly in the high season (October to March). Drives can be booked by Telephone: +27 (0)42 233 8657 or [e-mail](#).
- Day, sunset and night drives of approximately 2 hours in duration are on offer.
- Please note that the sunrise, sunset and night drive departure times vary according to season. It's important to check the time when making your booking.
- Drives are conducted by knowledgeable, qualified guides in open-top landrovers or trucks.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before the expected departure time.
- Children under the age of 6 years not allowed on these drives. Children under 12 years pay half price.
- No refunds are given.

Type of drive	Time of drive	Minimum persons	Maximum persons	Price per person
<b>Sunrise</b>	06h00 (summer) 07h00 (winter)	2	74	R235
<b>Morning</b>	09h00	2	74	R235
<b>Midday</b>	12h00	2	74	R235
<b>Afternoon</b>	15h00	2	74	R235
<b>Sundowner</b>	18h00 (summer) 16h00 (winter)	2	30	R330 including snacks and drinks
<b>Night drive</b>	20h00 (summer) 18h00 (winter)	2	44	R270

### Sunrise drive

Departing 06:00 (summer) or 07:00 (winter) - dress warmly and watch the bush come alive for the day. Lions may still be active from the night's hunting, buffalo may be seen and kudu are plentiful.

### Day drives

Departing 09:00, 12:00 and 15:00 – viewing may include herds of elephant, antelope, zebra, warthog and ostrich.

### Sunset drive

Departing 16:00 (winter) or 18:00 (summer) – enjoy late afternoon viewing, snacks & drinks as the sun goes down and then some night time viewing – black rhino, buffalo, lions and antelope may be seen.

### Night drive

Departing 18:00 (winter) or 20:00 (summer) – dress warmly and discover the secrets of nighttime in the bush: springhares, porcupines, genets

### Hop-on Guides

Guides can be hired at affordable rates to get on your vehicle and guide you through the game area. These are local community members who have been trained as guides and now run their own small business. Meet the guides at the main game area gate of the Park or book via [addoenquiries@sanparks.org](mailto:addoenquiries@sanparks.org)

#### Per 2 hour guided drive with your own vehicle:

- For a car: R140
- For an 8-seater vehicle (condor): R180
- For a minibus (kombi): R200
- For a bus with 18 or less people: R250
- For a Bus with more than 18 people: R400

**Note:** Fees are payable directly to the guide

**Operating Hours:** 08:00 to 17:00

### Self-Drive Game Viewing

Visitors may enjoy wildlife viewing in their own vehicles during the opening hours of the park's game gate. Opening times change according to season.

In this case, the visitor pays only the conservation fee – per day, or per night for overnight visitors.

### Horse Trails (Addo and Zuurberg)

#### Addo Horse Trails

- Morning and afternoon rides are two hours long and take place in the Nyathi area, home to the Big Five and many other wildlife species. The behaviour of certain Big Five species are monitored in this area and if necessary, trails will be moved to a botanical reserve in the Park. In this case, the horse trails will be discounted to R165 per person.
- Riders need to have a moderate level of riding experience to ensure they can control horses within a big game area.
- Book and pay for horse trails at the Game Drive Office.
- Please report to stables at least 15 minutes before departure.
- All horse trails are conducted by experienced guides on sure-footed, well-trained horses.
- Riding hats are available for visitors' use.
- No children younger than 16 years may ride on the Addo Trail.

Type of Rides	Time of rides	Minimum persons	Maximum persons	Price per person
Morning: For less experienced riders	08:30* (2 hour duration)	1	7	R220

**Afternoon: For experienced riders**      14:00 (3 hour duration)      1      7      R220

*\*Please note: Departure times of Guided Horse Trails may change according to season and without notice. Kindly confirm the departure time with the Game Drive Office.*

### Zuurberg Horse Trails

In the Zuurberg Mountain section of the park - no encounters with large game, beautiful scenic views of the mountains.

- Zuurberg one-hour trail is suitable for riders of all competencies. The three-hour and five-hour trails are only for experienced riders and wind through fynbos and forest.
- One-hour trails depart at 09:00, 11:00 or 14:00.
- Three-hour trails depart at 09:00 or 11:00.
- Five-hour trails depart at 09:00 only.
- An overnight trail to Narina Bush Camp is an option – departure no later than 11:00.
- No children younger than 10 years may ride on the Zuurberg horse trails.

Type of Rides	Time of rides	Minimum persons	Maximum persons	Price per person
<b>One-hour trail</b>	09:00 or 11:00 or 14:00	1	4	R165
<b>Three-hour trail</b>	09:00 or 11:00	1	4	R230
<b>Five-hour trail</b>	09:00 only	1	4	R250
<b>Overnight trail to Narina Bush Camp</b>	09:00 or 11:00	2	4	R440 per horse excluding accommodation

#### Please Note:

- No bookings will be taken less than 1 hour before departure time.
- No person exceeding 90 kg in weight will be allowed to ride. Only one rider allowed per horse.
- No children under 10 yrs on rides.
- For the Overnight Trail, the Narina Bush Camp must be booked with Central Reservations or with Addo Reception. *Please note that bookings at Addo Reception can only be done 24 hours or less prior to doing the Overnight Trail, otherwise bookings have to be done through Central Reservations.* The rates given above do not include the rate for accommodation.
- All Riders take part in Horse Trails at their own risk. The Addo Elephant National Park will not be held responsible for any injuries or losses.
- *Prices* are subject to change without notice.
- Booking in advance is essential.
- **Bookings: Tel: +27(0)42 233 8657 E-mail: [Addogamedrives@sanparks.org](mailto:Addogamedrives@sanparks.org)**

### Alexandria Hiking Trail

The Alexandria Hiking Trail is a 36km, two-day circular trail. The first day is 19.5km and the second day, 16.5km. The Langebos huts are situated at the trail base, providing accommodation for the beginning and/or end of the hike. The Woody Cape hut is situated at the end of the first day's walk. Hikers must carry their own provisions and equipment and the hike is not guided. The trail is well signposted.

#### More about the trail

The trail begins in magical coastal forest where ancient yellowwoods and exotic Knysna loeries can be seen, it moves then onto the beach where the stark sandy beach ecosystem and dramatic dune cliffs provide breathtaking scenery. Southern right whales can be seen just off shore in certain months and dolphins are often spotted playing in the waves. Fascinating ancient middens sites, evidence of the strandloper people that wandered these shores can also be seen. On the second day the trail traverses sand dunes in the largest coastal dune field in the Southern Hemisphere, the trail then heads back into coastal forest and then into the Langvlakte valley where a chicory stack can be seen which was built in 1820's. The trail can accommodate a maximum of 12 persons and a minimum of 3 persons.

The Langebos Huts are the base huts for the trail and it is recommended that hikers stay at the huts the night before leaving for the first day. The two newly built huts are equipped with 6 beds each with mattresses, a fridge, stove, hot water showers, toilets and a braai area.

At the end of the first day walking hikers will find the Woody Cape hut nestled in thick coastal forest on top of the cliffs with a view of Bird Island in the distance. This hut has 12 beds with mattresses and rainwater tanks. No fires are allowed at the Woody Cape hut and the hikers must carry their own cookers. Water is only for drinking and cooking as the hut relies on rainwater.

At least one or more of the hiking group should be able to read a map and compass, and to wear a brightly coloured jacket that can be seen from the air if a search and rescue is launched.

The trail costs (South African Rand) R110 per person per night. Hikers also need to pay the daily conservation (entry) fee.

#### **Bookings for the trail are administered through:**

**Camp Matyholweni:** Tel: +27 (0) 41 468 0916 / 8 Fax: +27 (0) 41 468 0949 E-mail:  
[Tanya.vanvuuren@sanparks.org](mailto:Tanya.vanvuuren@sanparks.org)

**Trail base office:** Woody Cape office of the Addo Elephant National Park Tel: +27 (0)46 653 0601

### **Zuurberg Hiking Trails**

Various options provide a perfect day outing for park visitors, at no extra cost. Choose between the:

- **Cycad Trail** - a one-hour trail (2.4km) suited for those who want a sedate walk - and the
- **Doringnek Trail**, a 3-hour trail ((8km) which takes the visitor to a beautiful natural water pool.
- The routes are clearly signposted and a map is available at the Zuurberg offices. The Zuurberg offices are located 16km from the main park entrance along a gravel road. *No bookings are necessary for the hiking trails.*

### **Tree Dassie Trail**

The Tree Dassie Trail is named after the rare tree dassie (hyrax) that lives in the Alexandria forest. This arboreal creature is nocturnal and very shy but its shrill call can be heard at dusk. Many bird species such as the Olive woodpecker, Black headed oriole and Crowned Hornbill can be spotted on the trail, making it ideal for bird watchers. The trail starts at the office and follows the grass roads to Langevlakte where the trail meets up and joins the two-day trail leading back to the office. No bookings are necessary and the trail is free of charge (apart from park entrance fees).

The Alexandria Trail and Tree Dassie Trail start at the Woody Cape offices of the park, near the town of Alexandria. Turn right out of the park entrance towards Paterson. At the Paterson intersection, turn right towards Port Elizabeth. Take the R72 to Port Alfred. Just before entering the town of Alexandria, take the gravel road to right, marked with the park signboard. Follow the signs to the park and find the offices where you can get further

assistance.

## 4x4 Trail

The Bedrogfontein 4 x 4 trail between Kabouga and Darlington areas of the park provides breathtaking views and is rich in history. This route was the scene of fierce battles between the British and Afrikaner troops during the Anglo-Boer war. Rock art paintings are found scattered throughout the area. The route travels through a variety of vegetation types, from riverine thicket, to afro-montane forest, to fynbos on the peaks and into the arid nama-karoo of the Darlington area.

The route is only suitable for vehicles with 4x4 and low range facilities, both because of terrain and to cause minimum impact on the environment. The route is graded 2-3 but a grade 5 river crossing is an option (river conditions should be checked with the ranger). This 45km route can be easily traveled within six hours.

The route is self-driven and can be followed either from Darlington to Kabouga or from Kabouga to Darlington. Kabouga is situated about 40 km (one hour's drive) from the main park entrance, near the town of Kirkwood. Darlington is situated about 150km (two hour's drive) from the main park entrance.

Accommodation is available at Kabouga House or Mvubu campsite (camping only) on the Kabouga side. On the Darlington side, the luxury Darlington Lake Lodge is available.

**Cost:** R375 per vehicle per day plus conservation fees per person.

### **Kabouga Mvubu Camping** (max 4 persons per site)

- R100 for the first 2 persons/ R28 per additional person
- To book the whole camp: R530 for up to 12 persons plus R28 per person more than 12

### **Kabouga Cottage** (sleeps 6 people)

- R380 for the first 2 persons
- R138 per additional adult
- R72 per additional child under 12

### **Darlington Dam**

4 bed rustic Fishermans Huts

- R240 for 1-4 persons per night (*plus a once off conservation fee of R10 per person applies*)

### **Camping**

- R40 per person per night (*plus a once off conservation fee of R10 per person applies*)

### **\*\*\*Please note\*\*\***

*The 4x4 Trail and Accommodation at Kabouga and Darlington Dam can be booked via Addo Main Camp Reception on tel: (042) 233 8619 or e-mail: [addoenquiries@sanparks.org](mailto:addoenquiries@sanparks.org)*

## **Bird watching**

The SASOL Red Bishop Bird Hide is located opposite the waterhole in the main rest camp, offering watchers a view of red bishops, weavers, herons, coots and terrapins. The main game area boasts a list of 170 bird species, while the expanded park may contain as many as 450 species in a diversity of habitats.

## PPC Discovery Trail

The PPC Discovery Trail is a short walk through the valley thicket where you can learn more about the plants and animals of this region. The first loop is suitable for visually-impaired and wheelchair-bound visitors.

A picnic and braai area is situated near the waterhole in the main camp. The waterhole is floodlit at night.

### Other activities at no extra cost (except for conservation fee payable by all visitors)

- SASOL Red Bishop Bird Hide: in the main camp, suitable for wheelchair-users
- Floodlit waterhole: at main camp
- Picnic and braai site: at main camp
- Swimming pool: at main camp, only for overnight guests
- Restaurant and curio shop: at main camp
- Holiday programmes for children: during July and December holidays, for children of overnight visitors

## Facilities

### The following facilities are available at the main rest camp:

- A lookout platform and an underground hide provide views over a waterhole which is floodlit at night.
- A swimming pool is available for overnight visitors, situated near the chalets.
- A picnic and braai area is available for day visitors overlooking the waterhole in the rest camp.
- A picnic site situated within the botanical reserve in the Main Game Area provides picnic, braai and ablution facilities.
- The SASOL Red Bishop Bird Hide, overlooking a small wetland area.
- The [PPC Discovery Trail](#) for short walks where you can learn about the plants and ecology of thicket vegetation. The first loop is accessible to all, including the visually and mobility-impaired.
- A shop selling curios, snacks and basic supplies is open between 08:00 and 18:00 (winter) or 08:00 to 19:00 (summer).
- An [al-la-carte restaurant](#) is available in the main camp and is open for all meals from 07:30 to 22:00. Bookings are advisable, especially for dinner. Telephone: +27 (0) 42 233 8674 or email: [addo@tourrest.co.za](mailto:addo@tourrest.co.za)
- A fuel station selling petrol and diesel is available between 07:30 and 16:30.
- There is a public telephone and a post box near the reception. Post is collected for delivery every week day morning before 07:00. A post office is situated in the town of Addo, approximately 15km from the park.
- Credit cards are accepted for payment of accommodation & activities (except for the Alexandria Hiking trail, Zuurberg horse trails, Kabouga accommodation and 4x4 trail), shop purchases and restaurant meals.
- First National Bank with ATM is situated in the town of Addo, 15km from the park. Other banking facilities are located in the town of Kirkwood, 35km from the park and Port Elizabeth, 75km from the park.

### Please note:

*Camp Matyholweni does not have restaurant, shop or swimming pool facilities situated at the rest camp. Shop and fuel station facilities are available in the nearby town of Colchester.*

## Natural & Cultural History

In the early centuries, when great herds of wild animals roamed the Addo region, the Khoesan of the Iqua, Damasqua and Gonaqua clans lived in the area.

They hunted and kept cattle but tragically were largely wiped out in the 1700s by the smallpox epidemic. Nomadic Xhosa tribes had kraals in the area, including Chief Cungwa of the Gqunukhwebe (near the Sundays River mouth

and inland) and Chief Habana of the Dange (near the Wit River). The Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) was proclaimed in 1931 to protect the remaining 11 Addo elephants. The great herds of elephants and other animal species had been all but decimated over the 1700s and 1800s by hunters. In the late 1800s, farmers began to colonise the area around the park, also taking their toll on the elephant population due to competition for water and crops. This conflict reached a head in 1919 when farmers called on the government to exterminate the elephants. The government even appointed a Major Pretorius to shoot the remaining elephants. He shot 114 elephants between 1919 and 1920. Public opinion then changed, leading to the proclamation of the park in 1931. The original size of the park was just over 2 000 hectares. Conflicts between elephants and farmers continued after proclamation as no adequate fence enclosed the park. Finally in 1954, Graham Armstrong (the park manager at the time) developed an elephant-proof fence constructed using tram rails and lift cables and an area of 2270 hectares was fenced in. There were 22 elephants at the time. This Armstrong fence, named after its developer, is still used around the park today. Although the park was originally proclaimed to protect a single species, priorities have now changed to conserve the rich biological diversity found in the area.

## Domkrag

The Domkrag Dam in the game viewing section of the park is named after a giant mountain tortoise that once roamed the park. Domkrag is the Afrikaans word for jack, and this tortoise had a peculiar habit of walking in behind cars and lifting them up with enormous strength. Domkrag came to a sad end when he fell into an aardvark hole and couldn't get himself out. His shell is still on display in the reception foyer.

## Hapoor

The magnificent Elephant head which is mounted in the restaurant is that of Hapoor, the legendary dominant bull in the park for 24 years. The waterhole in the southwestern section of the game area is named after him. Hap means 'nick' in Afrikaans, while 'oor' means ear and it is believed the distinctive nick in his ear was caused by a hunter's bullet. Hapoor retained a deep hatred of humans throughout his life. On more than one occasion park-staff were forced to flee to safety when Hapoor made his appearance. His dominance stretched from 1944 to 1968. During the second part of the 1960's a few younger bulls reached maturity and challenged Hapoor. These upstarts were unsuccessful until one bull named Lanky finally deposed Hapoor in 1968. Hapoor was driven from the herd and became a loner. Later that year he succeeded in climbing the park's 'Armstrong Fence', which for nearly 20 years had been elephant proof. His freedom was to be short lived as because of his aggressive nature, it was determined he would have to be shot.

The Alexandria dunefield is home to many archeological sites – the middens of the nomadic Strandloper (“beach walker”) people. These middens contain shells and bones of animals eaten by the people as well as fragments of pottery and stone implements. Interestingly, the white mussel shells found in these middens are also found in the caves of the Zuurberg Mountains, proving that these people journeyed over vast distances and stored their food.

The caves in the Zuurberg Mountains also contain rock art and stone implements.

The natural and cultural heritage of the park has been studied by the Albany Museum, recording hundreds of sites of significance. Part of the current Greater Addo World Bank project will be to formulate a policy on conservation of these sites and access to them by interested parties, especially local communities.

## Park Maps

- [GPS Coordinates](#)

## Main Camp



### Camp Matyholweni



### Brochure Map



### Full Addo Map



## 4x4 Trail Map



## Addo Main Game Area & Colchester Road Map



## Tariffs

- [General Tariffs Information](#)
- [2011/2012 Tariffs](#)
- [Pensioners' Discount](#)
- [Daily Conservation Fee](#)
- *Members of SANParks' loyalty programme WILD do not pay conservation fees provided that proof of Identity and their WILD card are shown on arrival.*
- [Cost of a Wild Card](#)
- [View accommodation pictures and availability for Addo Elephant National Park](#)
- [Activity tariffs](#)

### Daily Conservation Fees for 1 November 2011 to 31 October 2012

South African Citizens and Residents (with ID): R38 per person, per day R19 per child, per day

SADC Nationals (with passport): R76 per person, per day R38 per child, per day

Standard Conservation Fee (Foreign Visitors): R150 per adult, per day R75 per child,

per day

*Wild Card:* Year Permits available for all our guests

**Kabouga and Darlington Enquiries should be directed to [the park](#). This accommodation is associated with the [Addo 4x4 Trail](#).**

Kabouga Mvubu Camping	R90	1-2	max 4 persons per site	R25	R25
Kabouga Cottage	R350	1-2	sleeps 6 people	R126	R65

#### Darlington Dam

4 bed rustic Fishermans Hut	R220	1-4	sleeps 4 people	n/a	n/a
Camping	R35	1		R35	R35

## Hapoor Restaurant



Deep within the shadows of the dense valley bushveld of the Sundays River region of the Eastern Cape lies the Addo Elephant National Park which is where you'll find the Hapoor Restaurant.

Here, the evenings are punctuated by the strident howl of the black-backed jackal, and the francolin's call heralds each new dawn. Safe from relentless persecution in the past, the grey leviathans of the bush now roam in peace.

Come join us for a delectable breakfast at the Hapoor Restaurant and start your day off right. It really doesn't matter what time of the day you visit us, as we have a wide variety of meals to suit any occasion from light meals and salads for the nibblers to larger fish, poultry meat & venison options for those with a bigger appetite. Expect anything from Lamb Curry & Surf & Turf to a Venison Hot Pot.

The original Elephant section of the park was proclaimed in 1931, when only eleven elephants remained in the area - today this finely tuned ecosystem is sanctuary to over 450 elephants, Cape buffalo, black rhino, a variety of antelope species, as well as the unique flightless dung beetle, found almost exclusively in Addo.

In addition, plans include the proposed proclamation of a 120 000 ha (296 500 acre) marine reserve that includes islands that are home to the world's largest breeding populations of Cape gannets and second largest breeding population of African penguins.

**Reasons to visit not only Addo Elephant National Park but also the Hapoor Restaurant:**

- Mouthwatering venison dishes at the Hapoor Restaurant.
- Addo is home to one of the densest African elephant populations on earth!
- The park boasts the Big Seven, (elephant, rhino, lion, buffalo, leopard, southern right whale and great white shark).

**Trading Hours:**

Monday – Sunday: 7:00 – late (Kitchen closes at 20:30)

**Contact Details:**

- Tel: (042) 233 8674
- Fax: (042) 233 8675
- E-mail: [addo@tourrest.co.za](mailto:addo@tourrest.co.za)

## Scientific Services

Although the park was originally proclaimed to protect the one species - the elephant - conservation priorities changes over the years.

In the 1980s, the conservation of five elements took priority: the elephant, the black rhino, the buffalo, the flightless dung beetle and the thicket vegetation. These days a more wholistic approach of conserving biodiversity is the aim. "The mission of the Addo Elephant National Park is to conserve the faunal and floral assemblages and ecological processes that characterise the unique Eastern Cape region, and to actively present this for the appreciation by visitors.

**The Conservation Services Office in Port Elizabeth has two divisions:**

1. The Park Planning Division, is staffed with a Head of Park Planning responsible for land consolidation and development of parks nationally, a Coordinator for Park Planning and Development of the Greater Addo project and Garden Route Initiative, a Marine Coordinator for the Greater Addo MPA, an Administration & Finance officer Finances and the Project Management Unit responsible for implementation of Greater Addo World Bank project.
2. Scientific Services is part of the Arid Ecosystems Research Unit (AERU) and is staffed by an Animal Ecologist responsible for the large mammal monitoring and research, a Rehabilitation Ecologist who is assessing habitat threats and rehabilitation requirements and a Landscape Ecologist who interested in spatial processes linking biological and physical aspects across landscapes. AERU as a unit is responsible for providing the scientific input into park management through research, monitoring and planning processes. The unit focuses their attention on the following parks; Addo Elephant, Mountain Zebra, Karoo, Namaqua, |Ai-|Ais/Richtersveld, Augrabies Falls, Kgalagadi, Vaalbos, Golden Gate and shares responsibility with the Scientific Services teams of Rondevlei and Skukuza for the inputs into Tankwa Karoo, Bontebok, Table Mountain, Agulhas, Marakele and Mapungubwe. AERU has assigned principle scientists to each park responsible for coordinating the ongoing research and monitoring activities both from within SANParks as well as from outside institutions.

Please see [here](#) to find out how Scientific Services is staffed.

## Research & Monitoring

### *Published Literature*

The Addo elephants are probably the world's most comprehensively recorded elephant population. Elephant research began in earnest in 1976 when Dr. Anthony Hall-Martin researched the Addo elephant population. In this study he built up a complete photographic identification file for the population (a total of 96 elephants in May 1978), documented the sex, estimated age, and developmental status of all individuals, and kept records of births and deaths within the population. Additionally, notes were kept on observed association patterns and social behaviour.

Further intensive research began in 1996 when Anna Whitehouse identified, named and compiled photographic identification files of all elephants. When Anna completed her work in 2001 she had identified 325 individuals. This identification work continues as a component of other projects currently being undertaken on the elephant by the Terrestrial Ecology Research Unit (TERU) at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Association patterns were observed to determine which elephants belonged to which family group and which calves belonged to which cows. Maternal family trees dating back to the creation of the park in 1931 were reconstructed using photographs and written records. Other factors investigated included ranging behaviour, impact on vegetation and population genetics and paternity. Students from the TERU are currently continuing with elephant research in the park in the Nyati concession area and main camp looking at size sex, and population specific foraging behaviour as well as social organisation within the family groups.

Research funded by the National Science Foundation in the USA determines how elephant use chemical signals to communicate. A number of projects have already been completed at Masters level. Research includes topics such as determining if adult male African elephants discern between receptive and non-receptive urine from cycling female African elephants, which would suggest the presence of a pheromone that signals sexual readiness.

Researchers from the University of Oldenburg in Germany have studied the breeding colony of the Southern Red Bishop bird since 1993 in terms the environmental factors that influence the breeding success of the population, as well as factors influencing reproductive success of individuals. Reproductive behaviour and sexual selection of breeding males are key focal areas in this research. Territories, pair bonds, number of eggs per nest and number of fledglings are recorded. This research has mostly been conducted at the wetland area near reception.

Black rhino research has included research funded by the San Diego Zoological Society to determine how black rhino use chemical signals to communicate, specifically by means of olfactory reception will hopefully shed light on how this species adapts to new environments after translocation into areas with or without resident rhino. Another TERU project focuses on the different browse strata used by black rhino; the effect that elephants have on rhino habitats and the competition between elephant and black rhino in terms of feeding. The implications of such interspecific interactions are likely to affect how the species are managed in future.

SANParks own rehabilitation ecologist, Ayanda Sigwela was recently awarded his Ph.D. in Zoology and conducted research in Addo that investigated the ecosystem services associated with transformed and untransformed thicket using forage value and seed dynamics as indicators of such services. Ayanda currently works within the Arid Ecosystems Research Unit based in Port Elizabeth.

Following the inclusion of the Alexandria dune field and Bird and St. Croix island groups into the park there are also a number of projects that monitor the populations of seabirds and marine fish and mammals in Algoa Bay.

Most recently, new research projects have begun on the newly introduced large predators (lion and spotted hyena) in the park. A post-doctoral researcher affiliated to the TERU is looking at their behaviour, diet, social interactions and habitat use while AERU researchers are investigating the prey response in terms of behaviour and habitat use to the release of the predators.

Monitoring of the ecological parameters within national parks is an integral part of park management. Monitoring effort is usually focused on the vegetation communities and large mammal components as it is felt that these will

act as surrogates for many species, habitats and processes that cannot be monitored as easily.

Annual total count aerial helicopter surveys of all large mammal species has been carried out in the AENP since 1978. Additional surveys are also undertaken to monitor the performance of threatened species such as the black rhino. These surveys were largely restricted to the original elephant camp that has grown slowly over the years but recently these surveys have been expanded to include the Greater Addo sections such as Darlington Dam, Zuurberg and Nyati.

Additional monitoring activities include assessing the population status of African black oystercatchers along the stretch of sandy beach between the Sundays River mouth and Wood Cape, as well as vegetation monitoring programmes that have been initiated to look at the long terms structural changes using aerial photography.

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*Dr. Matt Hayward is studying the newly introduced lions. The Southern Red Bishop has been the subject of more than 10 years of research in the park.*

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Dr. Matt Hayward is studying the newly introduced lions

The Southern Red Bishop has been the subject of more than 10 years of research in the park

## Greater AENP Project

- [GAENP planning process](#)
- [Findings and subsequent actions](#)
- [Expansions](#)

SANParks as the country's premier conservation organisation has been mandated by the national government to expand South Africa's protected areas from the present 6% to 8% of the country's surface area and up to 20% from 2% of the coastline by 2010.

This has entailed a shift in conservation philosophy from one of preservationism to an ecosystem-focused approach incorporating the interwoven ecological patterns and processes concepts. National parks as megabiodiversity repositories primarily serve conservation purposes, but also have an enormous potential for economic development, so much so that when fully developed they should be viewed as an asset and not a liability to South African society. In meeting both conservation and socio-economic obligations SANParks is attempting to address the issue of conserving a healthy environment, thus combining the objectives of restitution with conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity. One such project is the greater Addo Elephant National Park project (GAENP).

### GAENP planning process

SANParks initiated a planning process in 2000 to investigate the expansion of the Addo Elephant National Park (AENP), situated in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. This region is biologically diverse and presents an excellent opportunity for expanding the South African protected area network.

The project, funded by the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** focused on ecological and socio-economic analyses required to drive the implementation process. A **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** was commissioned to consolidate existing data to facilitate the development of a strategic conservation plan for the expansion project.

This section summarises these activities over the past three years and presents milestones that have already been achieved in terms of implementation and the road ahead.

#### Objectives:

- To guarantee the long-term conservation of the regions unique biodiversity, patterns and processes through expansion.
- To reduce critical threats facing the park.
- Efficient & effective management.
- To promote a sustainable & inclusive "eco-tourism" industry.
- To promote capacity building in neighbouring communities and institution.

### Potential:

- To expand to 270 000 ha, exclusive of a 120 000 ha Marine Protected Area.
- To conserve elements of 5 of South Africa's 7 biomes.
- The first National Park to boast of the Big 7 (elephant, buffalo, rhino, leopard, Southern right whale & great white shark).
- A disease (malaria) free ecotourism destination.
- Economic development in impoverished Eastern Cape region.
- The gateway to the Garden Route.

**Socio-economics:** It was soon clear that the implementation of the conservation plan for the region needed to be overlaid within the socio-economic environment. As part of the SEA, a number of specialist studies sought to consolidate the information from the socio-economic environment in order to identify areas where SANParks could improve or initiate action. The impact of the gAENP, especially in terms of land purchase, resettlement, cultural heritage and the creation of job opportunities on the region was assessed.

### Findings and subsequent actions include:

- Ecotourism could create 4 times as many jobs as currently in agriculture.
- The gAENP could generate as many as 1500 additional jobs, contractual jobs through Poverty Relief and Working for Water.
- Expanded opportunities for especially the farm workers through capacity building. A detailed capacity building programme will be initiated in 2005.
- A Resettlement Action Plan and Policy Framework, a first for SANParks and regarded by the World Bank as Best Practice, was developed to plan for the future of the farm workers who have lost their jobs as a result of the gAENP.
- The park plays a major role in the region's economic development, especially through ecotourism. Already various numbers of B&Bs and associated activities had sprouted in the Sunday's River Valley. The University of Potchefstroom is currently conducting a desk-top study to ascertain precisely what AENP's impact is on the region's economy.
- The park plays a major role in development projects in accordance with the affected municipalities' Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).
- Continued communication through the Addo Planning Forum with relevant stakeholders, including government departments, local municipalities, business, tourism, local communities, farmers and farm workers goes a long way in dispelling fears about the project.

Since 2000, the Addo Elephant National Park (AENP) has been undergoing a process of expansion. New land purchase has been made possible by funds from the government and overseas donors. This process as well as the rehabilitation and fencing of the new land, is still underway.

The process of expansion began in 1997, when the **Terrestrial Ecology Research Unit** at the University of Port Elizabeth published a report: "A proposal for a Greater Addo National Park" (Kerley & Boshoff, 1997) calling for the amalgamation of the AENP and the Woody Cape Nature Reserve and further expansion into the surrounding areas to stimulate sustainable development and contribute to the conservation of biodiversity.

In 2000, a proposal was made to the **Global Environmental Facility (GEF)** for funding for planning and implementation of the Greater Addo Project. In 2001, the **Department of Environmental Affairs & Tourism (DEAT)** approved the expansion principle.

With funding from GEF, a detailed research process took place in order to determine which land should ideally be included in the AENP. A **Conservation Planning Framework** identified the land classes in the proposed area and then took into account factors such as ecological processes, potential threats and vulnerability of each land class, as well as conservation targets for populations of fauna.

Money for the purchase of land comes from the **Park Development Fund**. This is an internal cost centre where funds are generated through the sale of wildlife assets, DEAT and donors. It is also the first time in many years that central government has allocated funds for land purchase to expand national parks.

Land purchase always occurs on a willing buyer - willing seller principle. In some cases, a landowner's land inside the AENP area is exchanged for land outside the AENP area (i.e. SANParks purchases the land outside the area in order to exchange it). SANParks can invoke the right to compel a landowner to sell land but this has never occurred within the history of purchase of land for the AENP and SANParks avoids this situation at all costs.

SANParks is compelled by law to look after the interests of any workers who are affected by the land purchase. Consultants were engaged to track down and create a database of all workers who were affected by SANParks' purchase of land since 1997. SANParks must ensure that all these workers have the same or better housing, salary and benefits (e.g. rations, right to keep livestock on land etc.). Either the worker moves to a new farm with the original landowner or SANParks must give the worker employment - permanent or, if this is not available, contractual.

Once land has been purchased, the process of rehabilitating the land must begin. Since 2000, SANParks has received R55 million from the government (DEAT) for this purpose. This money was given through a Poverty Relief programme, which employs previously unemployed people from local communities in a two-year project. During this time, workers undergo training to equip them with skills to help them to secure work after they exit the programme.

## Expansions

Recently, the Park has also been expanded by means of public-private contractual partnerships such as River Bend (about 1 000ha) and the Kuzuko Contractual Area (just under 15 000ha). Here, private landowners have signed a long-term contractual agreement with SANParks, bringing private land under the management of the national park. Indigenous wildlife is introduced into the contractual area and it is managed in terms of SANParks conservation policies while the contractual partner operates a tourism business in the area.

The park is currently about 170 000 hectares (one hectare = 100 metres x 100 metres) in size, making Addo Elephant National Park the third largest national park in South Africa, after Kruger National Park and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. It stretches from Woody Cape (between Bushman's River mouth in the east and Sundays River mouth in the west) in the south, moving northwards across the Colchester area (originally known as Olifantsplaat and Vetmaakvlakte), across the original elephant enclosure or Main Game Area, across to the Nyathi Concession area, encompassing a large part of the Zuurberg mountain range, moving westwards, and then northwards across the Zuurberg to the Darlington Dam area and Kuzuko Contractual Area up to the R400 (between Jansenville and Paterson).

The Bird and St. Croix island groups and a small Marine Protected Area around Bird Island, which protects a large variety of marine life, were proclaimed part of the Park in 2005. Bird Island is home the world's largest breeding colony of Cape gannets St Croix Island is home to the largest breeding colony of African penguins.

The expanded park is rich in biodiversity, conserving five of South Africa's nine biomes (Mucina & Rutherford 2006) - namely Albany Thicket, Fynbos, Forest, Nama Karoo and the Indian Ocean Coastal Belt. It is also the world's first Big Seven conservation area, home to the traditional Big Five plus the Southern Right whale and Great White shark.

Once the process of expansion is completed, it is envisaged that the park will cover some 240 000 hectares on land with a proposed further 120 000 hectares of marine protected area. Although the Park is divided in places by roads, fences and railways, the long-term goal is to consolidate and expand the Park and link up the sections with corridors to ensure that the Park can be managed in as natural a state as possible.



## **People with disabilities**

### **Wheelchair Access**

An in-depth [accessibility profile](#) for Addo Elephant National Park has been compiled.

Please see additional information on [Wheelchair Accessibility](#).