

SANDVELD NATURE RESERVE

What climatic conditions can be expected?

The rainfall is mainly restricted to the hot summer months. The nights are cold during the winter, but the days are usually sunny and pleasant.

The landscape, plants and animals

Sandveld Nature Reserve lies on the Free State side of the Bloemhof Dam roughly 200 kilometers northwest of Bloemfontein. The Bloemhof Dam lies where the Vaal and Vet Rivers meet, right on the border between the Free State and North West Province. All the surrounding area of the dam is proclaimed nature reserve, confusingly resulting in the Sandveld Nature Reserve on the Free State side, and the Bloemhof Dam Nature Reserve on the North West Province side of the dam. The Sandveld Nature Reserve is roughly 37 000 hectares, named after its mostly sandy soils, although there are areas of thornveld savanna and the camel thorn tree makes its presence felt throughout the reserve.

White rhino, giraffe, buffalo, sable and roan antelope, buffalo, blue wildebeest, zebra are some of the animal species in the reserve.

For birders the main attraction is the Kalahari thornveld, which gives rise to a host of sociable weavers and occasional sightings of the pygmy falcon. But the fawn-coloured lark and the tinkling cisticola, fondly known as “rooitinktinkie”, are also easy to spot in the reserve especially in spring and summer; waxbills, gabar goshawks and tits all put in an appearance, and the pied barbet is fairly common. Even white-backed vultures breed in camel thorn trees in certain parts of Sandveld.

The open waters have their fair share of waterfowl - not quite that of the Barberspan Bird Sanctuary but good nonetheless. A highlight is the regular sightings, and the calls of a number of resident fish eagle pairs.

Bloemhof Dam is one of the best freshwater angling dams in the country. Fish species include carp, barbel, yellow fish and mudfish.

What facilities are available?

The modern holiday chalets (10) boast facilities such as air conditioning, barbecues and car ports. A furnished lapa set in the midst of lush vegetation is able to accommodate 30 to 40 people.

Power points are available at some of the camp sites. A hall is available for functions.

No shops are available and visitors must bring their own provisions.

Recreational activities

- All types of aquatic sport can be enjoyed.
- Bird watching
- Game viewing
- Fishing

Who do I contact?

The Tourism Officer
Sandveld Nature Reserve
PO Box 414
Bloemhof
2660

Tel: Reserve Office: **(053) 433 1703**
Resort/Reservations: Tel. **(053) 433 1701/2**
Fax: 053 – 4331090
E-mail: boschp@detea.fs.gov.za

What, where, when?

❖ Hours: Gate: 06h00 – 21h00
Office: 07h30 – 16h00

Sandveld Nature Reserve is situated along the Bloemhof/Hoopstad road (R34), 10 km from Bloemhof and 30 km from Hoopstad. It lies approximately 200km northwest of Bloemfontein.



