

# Bokong

The Bokong Nature Reserve comprises 1970 ha and straddles the northern access road at the top of the Mafika Lisiu Pass between Pitseng and Ha lejone, on the way to the Katse Dam. At more than 3000 meters above sea level, the reserve is one of the highest nature reserves in Africa. An impressive visitors' centre has been developed on the edge of a 100m cliff overlooking the Lepaqa Valley to educate visitors on the ecology of the highlands. A hiking camp and a network of walks and trails, from ¼ hour interpretative trail, ½ day and full day walks and a possible 2-3 day hike along the alpine plateau and down into the Ts'ehlanyane National Park complete the visitor facilities on the reserve. Full ecological and administrative management systems have been put in place.

The reserve contains extensive afro-alpine wetlands in the sources of the Bokong river and the Lepaqa stream as well as vast grasslands. Limited areas of heathlands are conserved in the boulder beds. There are excellent opportunities here to view the bearded vulture and a number of other bird species endemic to the afro-alpine zone. Reasonable populations of vaal rhebuck still occur on the plateau grass and heathlands and the whole area abounds with colonies of the endemic ice rat, which is heavily predated by all the small and medium mammalian carnivores and avian raptors in the area.

## Activities & facilities

- The Visitor Centre at Bokong is open from 0800 to 17h00 daily
- Overnight hiking facilities with 2 accommodation huts and 1 kitchenette and 1 ablution.
- Short walks: explore the environment first hand by walking along the valleys and into the mountains.
- Bird watching: there are many species of interest to the avid birder.
- Basotho pony rides: these locally bred ponies offer an ideal form of transport along the valleys and mountains.



- Picnic site
- Rock shelters – close to the visitor centre. These consist of overhangs and three stone buildings, all used as cattle post shelters.
- Valleyhead fens – distinct wetland areas that may be termed valleyhead fens. They are of great biological interest owing to presence of unique plant species associated with high altitude & moist conditions.
- Lepaqa Waterfall – a truly spectacular experience. The waterfall freezes in winter into a column of ice.
- Cattle posts ("metebo") - site of ruined interconnected cattle post shelters and stock kraals that were constructed from stone.

## Local Customs

The two official languages of Lesotho are English & Sesotho. It is always considered polite to greet people in their own language. The Sesotho word for "hello" is "khotso", which literally means "peace".

While Lesotho is a friendly country that welcomes all visitors, please take note that:

- Photographing Government buildings, the Palace or the airport is frowned upon.
- When photographing any person or personal items, including homesteads, remember the rules of common courtesy: ask first and expect to pay a small fee for the privilege.
- If you're in a vehicle, you have to wear a seatbelt at all times and carry two warning triangles.
- You must ask permission from the local headman or chief before camping or caravanning anywhere
- Do not pick, collect or damage any vegetation as most plants belong to someone in the Basotho land use system.

## Entrance Tari ffs:

Adults:	M5.00pp
Children:	M3.00pp
School Group: Pre + Pri. School	M2.00pp
Tertiary	M10.00pp
High School	M5.00pp
Orders: Gov. Org.	M17.00pp

## Hiking and Walks:

Interpretative Trail:	M10.00pp
Overnight hiking:	M20.00pp per night (own tents)
Guide Fee's:	M20.00per day
Hiking Huts:	M160.00pp (for max 4)

## Horse Trails:

One Hour	M25.00
Half Day	M50.00
Full Day	M75.00

Children under 12 years not allowed.

From Lesotho's Ficksburg border post, enjoy a comfortable 72km drive through Leribe to Bokong. From the Caledonspoort border, drive 8km to Butha-Butha, and then a further 80km to Bokong. (Drive 30km to Leribe, then 50km to Bokong).

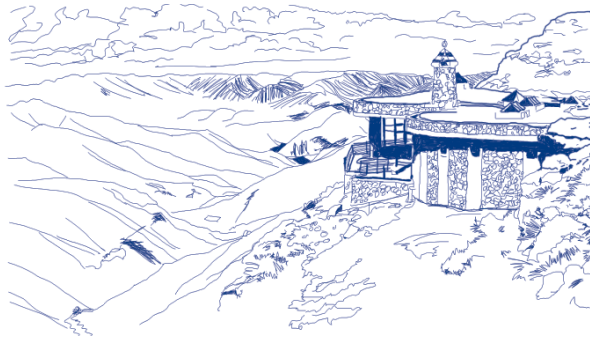


\* Be sure to visit the Dinosaur Footprints at Tsikoane, near Hlotse (Leribe)



## Essentials

Passport, traveller's cheques, pocket knife, insect repellent/anti-itch gel, antibiotic cream, sunblock (The African sun is intense), hat, fishing tackle, sporting equipment, torch, travel guidebooks, English-Sesotho dictionary, plastic bags, warm clothing, waterproof clothing, compass or GPS, water bottle, first aid kit and hiking shoes.



## What to do

Lesotho is a wonderland for nature lovers. It has a rich cultural and natural history and boundless ecotourism options. Lesotho's startling variety of flora and fauna attracts visitors with a strong interest in ecology, palaeontology, geology; or those who simply appreciate the wonders of nature.

- Dinosaur trails: 200-million year old fossilised dinosaur footprints can be found throughout Lesotho, as can forests of fossilised wood.
- Rock art: Lesotho is scattered with examples of San rock art.
- Hiking: Explore the environment by taking nature hikes along the valleys and into the mountains. Utilising the services of a local guide is compulsory in some areas.
- Mountain climbing: The more energetic and adventurous can scale their pick of an abundance of cliff faces, ridges and chimneys in the Maluti and Drakensberg ranges.
- Skiing: Skiing is available during the winter season from May to July in the Maluti and Drakensberg Mountains.
- The crystal clear waters of the Lesotho rivers are ideal for fishing enthusiasts. Trout, yellowfish and barbel populate streams & rivers.

- 4X4 trails: Lesotho has introduced the "Roof of Africa" Scenic Route, which permits trailblazing in the Maluti and Drakensberg ranges. If you are willing and able to leave tar roads behind, it will be well worth your while.
- Mountain Biking: Mountain biking is an ideal way to explore the varied terrain. Many of the hiking trails are accessible to mountain bikers.
- Horseback Riding: The locally bred Basotho ponies offer an ideal form of transport and recreation in the mountains.
- Para- and hang-gliding: The crystal clear mountain air and strong breezes make Lesotho an ideal venue for these activities.
- Camping & Caravanning: Sites are available for both of these activities.
- Birding: Species of interest include the Bearded Vulture, Alpine Swift, Lanner Falcon, Ground Woodpecker, Greywing Francolin, Malachite Sunbird, Whitenecked Raven, Rock Kestrel and Black Stork. There are also the alpine endemics, such as the Drakensberg Siskin, Mountain Pipit, Sentinel Rock-thrush and Orange-breasted Rockjumper.
- Fauna: Indigenous mammals include the Ice Rat, Cape Clawless Otter, Black-backed Jackal, Rock Dassie, Smith's Red Rock Rabbit, Porcupine, Caracal, Rhebok, Mountain Rhebuck, Baboons and Serval Cat. Keep an eye out for snakes – particularly for the Berg Adder.
- Flora: Lesotho's national plant is the Spiral Aloe, among other varied and abundant alpine flora, including over 180 flowering species.
- Shopping: The Basotho people are renowned for their crafts and traditional products. Their fine wool and mohair weaving are highly sought after. The handwoven tapestries are valued for their beauty, softness and strength. Look out for locally made jewellery, clothing, footwear, pottery, sheepskin, leather goods and basketwork.
- Currency: The local currency of Lesotho is Loti, the plural of which is Maloti.

## Bookings



All bookings for Lesotho's protected area, including Bokong, can be made by calling ++266-22913206 or ++266-22460723, or Fax ++266-22461226, or write to The Booking Officer, LHDA Nature Reserves, PO Box 333, Butha Buthe, 400, Lesotho, email: [nature@lhda.org.ls](mailto:nature@lhda.org.ls)

## Mountain Kingdom of Lesotho



# Bokong

## Nature Reserve

*"Beauty and serenity lie within our waterfalls"*

