

HOWICK

Population:

Altitude: 1071m/3514ft

Midlands Region

Rainfall:

On route N3, at the Howick turn off on route R617 approximately 23 km northwest of Pietermaritzburg.

Origin

- Originated as a fording place due to its location on a river.
- During the time of the Voortrekker republic of Natalia (1840-42), the ox-wagons were taken along the route of less resistance through valleys and across the mountains.
- Coming from Port Natal (Durban) on route to the interior of Natal and Transvaal, the **Allemansdrift** ('everyone's ford'), below the Howick falls (as it is known today), was used to cross the Mgeni (uMgeni) River. From here the track went north through the Karkloof River valley.
- Due to the increase of traffic, it was decided to make a new ford just above the waterfalls.
- The transport riders also needed facilities and the government bought a portion of land that was awarded to James Archbell, a Wesleyan missionary.
- In 1850, the first residential stands were sold.
- Lodge, the local innkeeper and former ship's purser, was hired by the government to operate the ferry at the new crossing point.
- Tragedy struck when Lodge's son (12 years) was swept over the falls during a flood in 1851, while attempting to take a traveller's horse across the river.
- A cairn marks the site of his grave near the pool at the bottom of the falls.
- The ferry crossing, also claimed the lives of others when the river was in flood, and in 1872, a timber bridge was built to replace the ford and ferry.
- However, the bridge did not long last and was also swept over the falls, prompting the government to build a new one in 1903.
- Currently serves as a commercial centre for a forestry and farming community.

Name

- The new village was named for Viscount Howick, later Earl Gray, the British colonial secretary (1846-52).
- The Howick Falls are known as **kwaNogqaza** ('the place of the tall one') to the Zulu.

Claims to fame

- Howick waterfalls
- Midmar mile
- Capture site of Nelson Mandela (1962).

Agriculture

- Main agricultural activities include timber plantations, cattle ranching and dairying.

HOWICK
continue...

Midlands Region

Historical sites and monuments

Cedara Agricultural College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located 5 km east of Howick. • Established in 1905 to provide agricultural training and scientific information to the farming pioneers of Natal. • It is reputedly the second oldest agricultural institution in South Africa.
Howick Local History Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covers the history of the area and has displays on concentration camps, informal settlements and the SARMCOL strike.
Laager Wall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was built in 1879 as protection against a possible Zulu attack.
Military Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both British and Boer soldiers are buried in the Military Cemetery. A concentration camp and a military hospital were also in the area during the Anglo-Boer War.
War Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated in Morling Street. • Commemorates the soldiers who were killed during both World Wars.
Midmar Historical Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located at the Midmar Public Resort and Nature Reserve. • Built in traditional Country Village Style. • Exhibits include beehive style Zulu homesteads, a blacksmith shop, a Shiva temple, 2 locomotives, a fire engine and some agricultural implements. • Another interesting building in the village is the original York Public Library that was taken apart and rebuilt, brick by brick. • The traditional Village hall has been converted into a conference venue for film shows and lectures.

Attractions and Activities

Several waterfalls in the Howick area	<p>There are two on the uMgeni River:</p> <p>Howick Falls (95 m high)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located on the side of the town and bounded on the other side by the ravine. - Legend has it that a monster resides in the pool below, and it must be a “dare devil”, as young student, Charles Booker accepted a challenge in 1960 to dive into the chasm. Needless to say, with tragic consequences. Through the years, numerous people committed suicide as well. <p>Albert Falls (7m high)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located 5km northeast of the town. - It is horseshoe shaped and immediately below the wall of the Albert Dam. - Both the falls and the Albert Dam (see below) were named in honour of
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Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria.

Two on the Gobongo River (“hollow thing”), a tributary of the uMgeni River.

- **The Cascades (25 m)**
- **The Shelter (37 m)**

Karkloof Falls (105 m)

- Located on the river by the same name, north of the town.
- The Zulu called the river **Mlambomunye** ('single stream')
- In 1854, a cart was overturned here and left as a landmark, hence the Afrikaans name **Karkloof** ('ravine of the cart').

Woodhouse (10 m)

- Located just above Karkloof.

Albert
Falls Dam

- Situated below the confluence of the uMgeni and Karkloof Rivers.
- 290 million m³

Midmar
Dam

- On the uMgeni River
 - Visible from the N3.
 - 178 million m³
- Midmar mile**
- The largest inland swimming race.
 - The event is held at the dam every February.
 - It attracts more than 17000 swimmers every February, and every one is welcome to participate.
 - In 1973, petrol restrictions gave birth to this popular event. Three friends, Mike Arbuthnot, Dick Park and Brian Glover could not get to East London to compete in the Buffalo Mile, so they decided to have their own one at home!

Midmar Dam Nature Reserve and Public Resort

uMgeni
Valley
Nature
Reserve

- Located below the Howick falls (entrance 1km from Howick on Karkloof road).
- Host to numerous animals including giraffe, impala, wildebeest and zebra, as well as over 210 bird species.
- It specialises in environmental education.

Midlands
Meander

- Forms part of the Midlands Meander
- Hosts several artists whose products range from honey treats to kites and leather shoes.

KARKLOOF	Population:	Altitude: Rainfall:	Midlands Region
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(On a gravel road approximately 16km north of Howick and 10km south-east of Curry's Post)

Origin

- Long ago it was occupied by ancient San hunter-gatherers, followed by some Iron Age settlers.
- During the 1850s, British immigrants moved in.

Claims to fame

The world's first flight

- According to some avian historians, long before Lilienthal became airborne in his glider in Germany, or the Wright brothers made their first flights near Kitty Hawk in the USA, the world's first controlled flight (in a heavier-than-air-model) took place in Howick in the 1870s.
- **Goodman Household** came from England in 1864.
- A vulture, which he had shot on the farm, served as the model for his flying machine and material included oiled silk or paper, bamboo and some steel tubes.
- The final product was a pilot seat, hanging like a swing from the wings.
- One night, assisted by his brother and a few Zulu, he carried the glider to the 300m Karkloof krantzies (cliffs) from where he launched.
- Before crashing into a tree in the ravine, he soared about 100m over a distance of about 250m.
- His mother was quite upset about the broken leg, and respecting her wishes, he stopped his experiments with flying.

Attractions and activities

Karkloof Nature Reserve

- Offers excellent hiking trails and superb opportunities for bird-watching

HILTON	Population:	Altitude: 1141m/3743ft	Midlands Region
		Rainfall:	

On route N3, approximately 13km north west of Pietermaritzburg and 11 km south of Howick.

- Situated on a ridge 450 m higher than its neighbouring capital in the 'sleepy hollow' and therefore is considerably cooler in summer.

Origin

- In 1857, Joseph Henderson and Arthur Lucas bought the farm Ongegund ('begrudged'), located on a ridge.
- In 1860 the farm was subdivided into Upper Hilton (Lucas) and Lower Hilton (Henderson)

Name

- Renamed for Hilton Park in Staffordshire, England, where Joseph Henderson's wife had grown up.

Claims of Fame

Hilton College

- The origins of the school dates back to 1872, when Reverend WN Newnham moved his private school that was not so successful at the time, from Ladysmith to the original homestead of Upper Hilton.
- Today, it is one of South Africa's most prestigious private schools.

Attractions and activities

Mgeni Steam Museum

- Currently run by the Railway Society of Southern Africa at the local railway station.
- Offers regular train excursions with a Class-IS steam Locomotive and several passenger coaches on a portion of the original track from Pietermaritzburg.

PIETERMARITZBURG	Population:	Altitude: Rainfall:	Midlands Region
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Origin

The Voortrekkers

- In 1838, the Voortrekkers founded the town as the capital of their new **republic of Natalia**.
- The site was well situated on the transport route from Port Natal (Durban) and the north, as
- They chose a site close to the **Msunduze River**, with fertile ground.
- The location also was on the transport riders' route from Port Natal (Durban) to the north.
- The town was laid out in the traditional way by **Commandant Piet Greyling**:
 - A grid consisting of eight streets intersected by six others in an area of 2 by 1.5 km.
 - The 23m-wide streets were lined with water furrows to irrigate the residents' gardens from the Dorpspruit.
- The first 300 residential stands (0.5 ha each) were sold on the condition that the owners would build and cultivate it within three years. The price at the time, was five rixdollars (about seven shillings) each.
- Initially, the town functioned like a laager in the veld.
- It was only in 1840, after the defeat of king Dingane, that the first brick-and-mortar buildings were built.
- The **Volksraad** (parliament) of the republic gathered every quarter (on the first Monday). A Raadzaal (council chamber) was erected for this purpose and the roof tiles were locally manufacture.

Britain annexed Natal

- In 1842, the British annexed the area and a garrison was stationed at Fort Napier.
- This meant the end of the Voortrekker Republic of Natalia.
- This the Voortrekker Republic of Natalia ended when the British annexed the area, including Port Natal.
- In the late 1840s, settlers from Britain and Germany also arrived, boosting the growth of the town: In 1852 the population increased to 2 400.
 - In that year there were 26 shops.
 - From 1888 to 1931 **four different stock exchanges** operated in the town.
- The railway from Durban reached the town in 1880
- Today, the city is the junction for branch lines to Grey town in the north, Richmond in the south) and Donnybrook, Underberg and Kokstad in the southwest.

Union of South Africa (1910)

- **The Legislative assembly and legislative council** was seated in Pietermaritzburg and it became the capital of Natal.
- In 1994, Ulundi became the provincial capital of KwaZulu-Natal, but has since been moved back to Pietermaritzburg .

PIETERMARITZBURG Continue...	Population:	Altitude: Rainfall:	Midlands Region
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Named

- For two Voortrekker leaders:
 - **Piet Retief** : Murdered at Mgungundlovu, “Place of the Elephant” by king Dingane, after he had “successfully” completed negotiations for land for the Voortrekkers in Natal (February 6,1838).
 - **Gerrit Maritz**: He encouraged the remnant of the Voortrekker parties in Natal, after the death of Retief and the massacres at several laagers. The spirits were lifted when Andries Pretorius defeated Dingane at Blood River on 16 December 1838.
Also known as “**Place of the Elephant**” in Zulu culture.
- **Some street name changes**
 - Longmarket : Langalibalele
 - Long Street : Jabu Ndlovu

Education Institutions

University of Natal

In 1909, the Pietermaritzburg campus was established

Allon Paton’s old school (Author of “Cry, the beloved country”).

- In 1873, it was first known as the Girl’s Model School.
- It later became known as Russel High School after Robert Russell, the superintendent of education.
- The school is strongly associated with the development of education in KwaZulu-Natal.

Agriculture

- Mixed farming (cattle ranching, timber and maize) is practised in the wider area.

Historical sites and monuments

Central Pietermaritzburg

City Hall

- Corner of Church and Chief Albert Luthuli
- It was built with red-bricks on the site of the old Voortrekker Raadzaal.
- The clock tower (47m) has a Westminster chiming clock.
- The building was completed in 1893, however, a fire destroyed it five years later.
- Rebuilt in 1901 and opened by the Duke of Cornwall and York (later King George V).
- It is reputedly the largest all-brick building in the southern hemisphere

<p>Monuments to commemorate those who died during various wars</p>	<p>The following are all located on the central square of Pietermaritzburg.</p> <p>Next to the City Hall</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Carbineer’s Garden of Peace It was erected on the 27th of April 2004. <i>“To honour the sacrifices made in striving for equality and liberty, and the attainment of peace in our country.”</i> • Hlubi Rebellion, under Chier Langlibalele (1873). Commemorates the men who lost their lives at Bushman’s pass when suppressing the rebellion. <p>Opposite the City Hall</p> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 • The two World Wars • Anglo Boer Wars • Cloete’s Canon Cast in Scotland, it was brought to Natal by Col. Josias Cloete to relieve the besieged British in the old Durban Fort (1942).
<p>Gandhi Statue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North western corner (as you walk through the “Two World War” arch). • This is a tribute to Mohandas Karamchand (“Mahatma”) Ghandi and his campaign of passive resistance. • The statue was erected with its back towards the Railway Station (se information below).
<p>Tatham Art Gallery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated directly opposite the City Hall. • This used to be the old Supreme Court and was built in 1871. • In 1990, it was converted into an Art Gallery.
<p>Church Street (Starting from the City hall to the west)</p>	
<p>City Hall and Ghandi Statue</p>	<p><i>See above</i></p>
<p>Presbyterian Church</p>	<p>Dating back to 1852, it is reputed to be the oldest British-built church in the country.</p>
<p>Old colonial building</p>	
<p>Widow Retief’s House</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located between the Old Colonial and Edgars buildings. • This built for the widow of Retief and she used it as a bakery.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original oven is still in the house.
Edgars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was built in 1866. • A beautiful façade with iron lace work on the balcony and a red-brick turret over the entrance, is all that is left of the building. • A modern shop was built behind it in 1978,
Harwin's arcade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Standard Bank Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Irishman, Philip Dudgeon, designed the bank based on the model of the Bank of Ireland (Belfast) and it was built in 1882. • An interesting feature of the building is that the seasons in the Northern Hemisphere are depicted on the stained-glass windows.
First National Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It functioned as the Natal Bank during the colonial days. • The octagonal dome over the corner entrance is easy recognisable. • A section of the building dates back to 1858. However, most of the red-brick building was build in 1910
St.Peter's Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built in 1857 and bishop Colenso served here until his death in 1883, when he was buried beneath the altar.
McNames	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1903, it was built by the Methodist church in the Flemish Renaissance Style
Victorian Railway Station Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built in 1892. • Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi was ejected from a train here in 1893 because of the colour of his skin. • This incident started his lifelong struggle against in justice. • A memorial marks the spot.

Langalibalele Street /Longmarket Street (west to east)

Old Natal Parliament building (Legislative Assembly building)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Langalibalele Street • From Publicity House, right into Langalibalele street. • The foundation stone was laid on 21 June 1887, marking Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. • Her statue, a replica of the marble one in Sydney (Australia), was unveiled in front of the building (1890).
Post Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located opposite the Legislative Assembly building. • Completed in 1903.
Statue of Sir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Langalibalele street : opposite Publicity House (next to the Tatham

Theophilus
Shepstone
(1815-1893)

Gallery)

- He was also known as “Sometsu”, his Zulu name, meaning “*eyes and ears of the chief*”. He was well acquainted with the Zulu and initially sympathetic towards them in the 1870s.
- However, after he annexed the Transvaal in 1877, he suddenly changed his mind.
- The Zulu was now the only stumbling block in Carnarvon’s proposed plan for a Southern African Confederation. Shepstone, who supported him whole heartedly, then started presenting the Zulu king, Cetshwayo, as a blood thirsty tyrant.
- This eventually led to the Anglo-Boer War.

The Church of
the Vow
(1841)

- Located between Church and Langalibalele Streets (Entrance from the latter).
- The first church to be built beyond the Orange River.
- The Church was built to fulfill a vow the Voortrekkers had taken before the battle of Blood River (December 16, 1838), that should God them grant them victory over the Zulus, they would build a church in honour of his Name.
- Soon after the battle was won, funds and building material was collected.
- Building only commenced in 1840, and the church was used as a place of worship until 1861.
- Thereafter, a new church was built next door and the old church sold.
- It served various purposes through the years : a school, blacksmith’s shop, factory, pharmacy and tearoom.
- In 1919, the Dutch Reformed Church bought and restored the church.
- Today, it forms part of a museum complex.

One of the interesting exhibits are stones that were pointed out by President FW Reitz, as those erected by General AWJ (Andries) Pretorius on the banks of the Umfolozi River (February 10, 1840). *“This served as a token of lasting peace and friendship between the Voortrekker and the Zulus. Here, General Pretorius at the same time, proclaimed Umpande, King of the Zulu nation”.*

Places of
worship

- Located in Langalibalele Street and East Street
- The Shri Siva Soobramair and Mirriamen hindu temples are located at the bottom end of the street. A fire-walking event takes place every year.
- The Nizamia Madressa Islamic School (East street). A large mosque is situated to the right.

Jabu Ndlovu Street / Loop Street (from East street to the west)**Natal Museum**

- Located in Jabu Ndlovu Street
- This is one of the largest museums in the country and focus on the natural and cultural history of Southeast Africa.
- Its origin can be traced to the founding of the Natal Society in 1851.
- Initially, the aim was to establish a comprehensive library, but soon all kinds of specimens were collected, classified and displayed.
- The display and books moved several times, until the Natal government built a proper museum that was opened in 1904.
- Apart from the natural exhibits (mammal, birds, reptiles, etc.), the cultural history of several southern African people are on display. The focus is mainly on the Zulu, the early white settlers and the Indians that arrived.

Macorie house

Built in 1862, and the home of Bishop William Macrorie, who came to Natal during the conflict of Bishop John William Colenso's position. The latter opposed some basic teachings with the Anglican Church, but the peace was later restored with the construction of St Saviour's cathedral.

Colenso stayed on as Bishop of Natal at St Peter's cathedral, which was consecrated in 1857.

On his death in 1883, Bishop Colenso was buried beneath the altar of St Peter's.

Bishop Macrorie's private chapel as well as several items dating from the Victorian period are contained within the house

Fort Napier

- At the town's southern entrance
- It was named for the governor of the Cape colony, Sir George Napier, governor of the Cape Colony (1838-44).
- In 1843, after Britain annexed Natalia, the fort was erected.
- Initially, it was used as a temporary encampment for the soldiers that came marching into town, but thereafter it served various purposes:
 - A mental hospital
 - South African Railways administration
 - Military hospital
 - Imperial headquarters
 - Detention camp for Germans.

Others

The “oldest house in town”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located in 333 Boom street • The double-storey, thatched home with yellowwood beams and ceilings, was originally built for Petrus Pretorius in 1846.. • Today it serves as a museum.
Garden of Remembrance	It is said, that the 'weeping cross' 'cries' every July by oozing sap in mourning for the South African soldiers who fell in the battle for Delville Wood, France, in July 1916.
Old Government House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence for the Governors of Natal until the Union of South Africa was established in 1910. • Among the famous people who visited here were Winston Churchill and the Empress Eugenie of France, mother of the Prince Imperial of France, Louis Napoleon, who was killed in 1879 during the Anglo-Zulu War.
Comrades Marathon House:	Houses the archives of South Africa’s most famous ultramarathon
World’s View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 1083- m hill, overlooking the city and countryside from the west provides magnificent views. • The Voortrekker came this way during the days of the Republic of Natalia and the original wagon tracks down the slopes can still be seen, and have been proclaimed a national monument.
Ekukanyeni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East of Petermaritzburg • In 1854 Bishop Colenso established his first mission station. • Missioners were instructed in the Zulu language and large sections of the Bible into Zulu was translated. • An elitist school provided education for the sons of chiefs. • The existing buildings of the mission have been proclaimed a national monument

Attractions and activities

Queen Elizabeth Park 93 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 km north of the city • The headquarters of the KwaZuluNatal Conservation Services. • It was founded in 1860 to accommodate several antelope species, many birds (including blue and crested cranes), as well as a variety of indigenous plants and trees.
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The National
Botanic
Gardens of
Natal
44.5 ha
Originat

- ed in 1870 on the initiative of the Botanic Society of Natal.
- The collection u trees from all over the world includes a 46-m fig tree and an avenue of planes.
- The indigenous section developed from 1969:
- Displays plants from the eastern regions of South Africa, especially watsonias, clivias, red-hot pokers and grasses.
- Rare and endangered species form an important part of the collections.
- Over 100 species of birds and several species of small mammals can be seen while on the following trails:
- The Turraea trail
- The forest footpath

There is also a medicinal garden with an authentic traditional Zulu hut.

Alexandra
Park
65 ha

- Founded in 1863
- **Named** for Queen Alexandra.
- The park includes
- Several sportsfields
- Rock gardens built by unemployed people during the Great Depression of the 1 930s
- A Victorian pavilion and bandstand built in the 1890s.

Other Parks

Allison Park bird sanctuary

- Wylie Park (8 ha) for indigenous plants and azaleas (the town's emblem). Also proteas.
- Doreen Clark Nature Reserve (65 ha), which conserves an evergreen forest.

Bisley Nature Reserve

- Several trails that lead through the savannah bush and is inhabited by several different kinds of birds and game.

Valley of a Thousand Hills

- The final 65 km of the journey, from Albert Falls Dam to the Indian Ocean, the Mgeni ('the place of acacia trees') River finds particularly tortuous way through this beautiful area..

Nagle Dam

- The Mgeni is impounded here
- Built in 1950 to supply water to Durban.
- Named for William Nagle, chairman of the works committee of Durban municipality
- The dam is dominated in the southwest, by **KwaZulu-Natal's own Table Mountain** (960 m)
 - The Zulus call the mountain *emKhambathini*l ('the place of giraffe acacia trees').

Ecabazini
Zulu Cultural
Homestead:

Run by Cedric Hood, a white man who has adopted the traditional Zulu way of life. The village offers accommodation in the form of traditional beehive huts and food is prepared over open fires. True to its authenticity, there is no electricity. Tours are conducted into the nearby farmland to show how traditional crops are grown.

Annual events

The Comrades
Marathon

- Take place in May / June .
- One year the race is from Pietermaritzburg to Durban, the next year it starts at Durban.
- The first race was run in 1921 to commemorate the men who died in the First World War.

Dusi Canoe
marathon

- The city is the starting point for this event.
- The course run along the Msunduze River up to its confluence with the Mgeni, and from there along th Mgeni to its mouth at Durban's Blue Lagoon.

CAMPERDOWN	Population:	Altitude: 742m/2434ft	Midlands Region
		Rainfall:	

(On route N3 approximately 50km west of Durban and 23km east of Pietermaritzburg)

- Situated in the valleys and the banks of the Mzunduze, Mgeni and Mlazi rivers.

Origin

- Founded in 1865 on the farm with the same name.

Name

- To commemorate the victory of British Admiral Adam Duncan over the Dutch fleet. (October 1797).

Agriculture

- Main agricultural products are dairy, maize and poultry.

Mining and industries

The Wattle Industry in Natal

- It all started with a fiancée, a ship named Louisa, Voortrekkers that needed to be rescued, and a few seeds.
- **John VanderPlank** arrived in Port Natal (Durban) with his own ship, **the Louisa**, named for his bride-to-be, who did not want to follow him to Tasmania.
- While he was still at anchor there, the Voortrekkers requested that he sail to Lourenco Marques to rescue of what remained of Louis Richard's party.
- Upon his return, he decided to stay on in Natal.
- He bought the farm, Camperdown, and some others, in the 1840s.
- His brother, living in Australia, supplied him with some seeds of the black wattle shrub to use as windbreaks and hedges as they do in Australia.
- However, the scrubs turned into trees as the soil and the climate were so conducive to their growth.
- It took some years before the wattle industry was launched.

Uses

- The tannic acid content is excellent for use in the tanning industry.
- Wattle pulp is used in manufacturing fine papers.

The Afrikaans naam for "Plank" refers to a piece of cut timber, thus an appropriate name for this entrepreneur.

Resources and further reading

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Visit and Explore South Africa CD version 2.3

<http://www.midlandsreservations.co.za/midmar-public-resort.html>

Visits and photos

Exploration-research Field Trips. Makiti Guides & Tours (Pty) Ltd. May & Sep 2007