

Kingdom Trails

Hiking Trails

Hiking trails lead from camp to camp with a good day's hike between each. The trail can start from any of the following camps: *Kingdom Camp*, *Slagthoek House* and *Klip/Stone Camp*. *Grootdraai Hut* is only a walk as part of an overnight option.

Different options with different degrees of difficulty are available. Hikers can look at the main hiking trails map and plan their preferred hikes.

Kingdom Trails offers two main hiking trail routes, each with various options. These are some of the possible options:

A. Kingdom Camp Trail

1. **Snaakse Krans Loop** (13 km)
2. **Paradors Loop** (12 km)

B. Slagthoek Trail

1. **God's Window Loop** (12 km)
2. **Cycad Loop** (11 km)

A suggested two-day hiking trail would overnight at *Klip/Stone Camp* and a hike on to *Grootdraai Hut*. Each hiking trail is approximately 12-14 km.

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Kingdom Camp Trail

From **Kingdom Camp** there are three trails options:

1. **Paradors/Donkerkloof Loop** (± 8 km/ ± 4 hrs) - circular route ascending steeply behind camp in a westerly direction to open bushveld. The route also goes through a shady kloof and past a natural fountain surrounded by tree ferns. Mountain zebra and eland are often seen. Typical trees along this route include naboom and proteas.
2. **Overnight Hike** – Snaakse Kransloop has two possibilities: a hike to (a) *Slagthoek House* or (b) *Grootdraai Hut*.
 - a. **Hike to Slagthoek House:** Crossing the Olifants River is necessary for this hike. Route starts from *Bosvark Hut* in *Kingdom Camp* with a gentle climb along the banks of a stream before ascending steeply onto the high ridge. There is a magnificent view of the Olifants/Wilge Confluence and the path then descends down to the river itself. There are rocks and boulders to negotiate, but the scenery is breathtaking with several rapids and pools. The trail then crosses the Olifants River and after rain or during the rainy season the current can be quite strong when the river is high (for a hike to *Slagthoek House* the safest river crossing is at the low level bridge during or after heavy rains. To access the low level bridge crossing you need to hike in the direction of *Grootdraai Hut* and then follow the road to *Slagthoek House*).

After the river crossing the trail heads east along the river to a lovely gorge.

To reach *Slagthoek House* hikers must climb this steep gorge with numerous boulders.

- b. Hike to Grootdraai Hut:** There are two options on this hike. The first does not involve a river crossing and the second crosses the river twice. Please take note that there are crocodiles in the river and therefore a crossing will involve some risk.
- i. **Option 1:** Route starts from *Bosvark Hut* in *Kingdom Camp* with a gentle climb along the banks of a stream before ascending steeply onto the high ridge. There is a magnificent view of the Olifants/Wilge Confluence and the path then descends down to the river itself. At the first fork in the trail turn right up a gentle climb to the foot of the ridge where the trail leads to the top. The trail then follows the natural contours of the land through some lovely mountain landscape. After crossing one of the farm roads the trail continues uphill to a beautiful lookout over the Grootdraai Island in the river bend. At this point the trail forks again. The trail to the right goes along the mountain's edge to *Grootdraai Hut* while the trail to the left goes to the low level bridge over the Olifants River.
 - ii. **Option 2** Crossing the Olifants River is necessary for this hike. This route should not be attempted if the river levels are high and river flow is fast.

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After the river crossing the trail heads east along the river to a fork in the trail. Turn right at the fork onto the '*farm car road*'. Follow the road passing the trail turnoff to Klip Camp and the road turning left to *Slagthoek House* all the way to the low level bridge crossing. Cross the Olifants River at the bridge then follow the road heading west up the mountain again. Halfway up the mountain the trail to *Grootdraai Hut* will turn off the farm car road to the left. Follow the trail up to the top of the mountain from where there is a great view of Grootdraai Island at the bottom. Follow the trail along the mountain edge to the *Grootdraai Hut*.

Slagthoek Trail

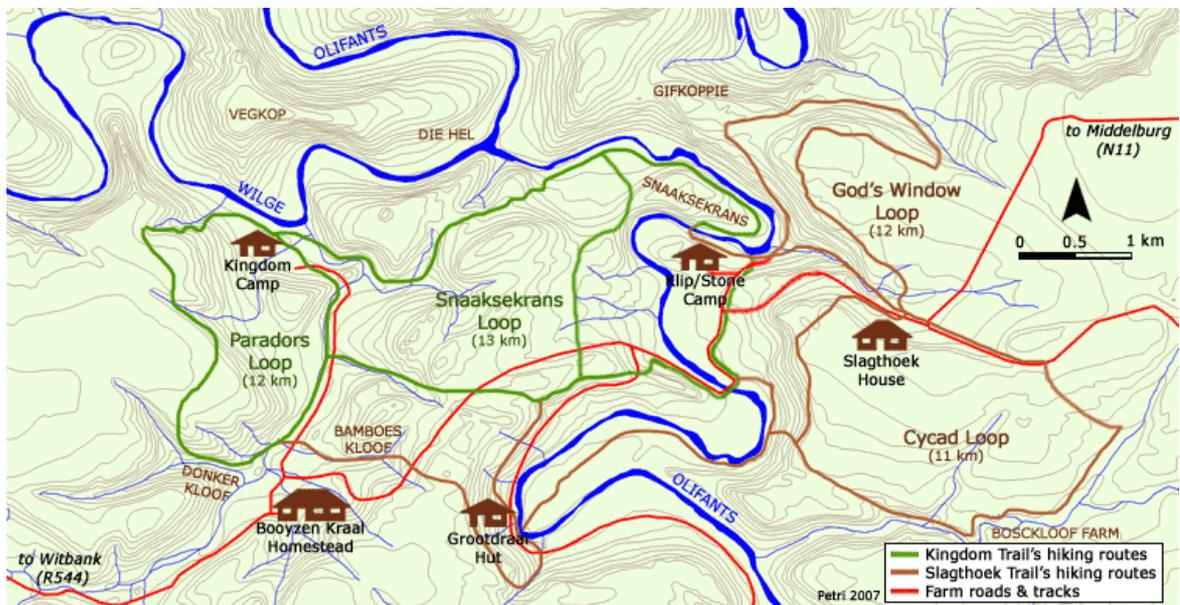
Two circular hiking routes can be followed from *Slagthoek House*:

1. **God's Window Route** (± 12 km): The route starts at the entrance gate of the house and it starts in a northerly direction. Climbing gently from *Slagthoek House* the track continues to a viewpoint high above the Olifants River. There are magnificent views of the steep cliffs descending vertically down to the Olifants River far below. Eventually the track drops down via Gifkoppie to a large pool in the Olifants River. From there the track continues up a steep rocky ravine back to *Slagthoek House*.
2. **Cycad Route** (± 11 km): This route starts at the farm shed and it heads out in an easterly direction. It is a steady walk along an old farm road leads into Boschkloof farm to the south where a permanent, natural stream cascades down numerous waterfalls on its way down to the Olifants River. The route follows its course and eventually ascends through a cycad garden to a series of grass-covered valleys higher up. At the fork in the trail a left turn connects with

the island crossing to *Grootdraai Hut* if preferred. For those opting to return to *Slagthoek House* the path turns right to the top of the mountain with magnificent views to the west of Snaaksekrans and distant hills before descending back to *Slagthoek House*.

General Notes:

- Hikers must bring their own sleeping bags, all food and drink. Charcoal and firewood can be supplied if arranged in advance (depending on availability of wood).
- “Donkey” boilers provide hot water for showers (*Kingdom Camp, Klip/Stone Camp & Slagthoek House*).
- There are exciting abseiling opportunities. Visitors must bring all their own equipment. Climbing is, as for all other activities, at own risk.
- Angling is available at additional cost, but must be pre-arranged.
- River rafting is seasonal. Several large quiet pools interspersed with cataracts and faster flowing water are ideal for summer rafting.
- River crossings are not advisable during the summer months. Crocodiles, and occasionally hippo as well, are present and pose a potential danger when the river flow is high.



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