

Introduction

Where the red dunes and scrub fade into infinity and herds of gemsbok, springbok, eland and blue wildebeest follow the seasons, where imposing camel thorn trees provide shade for huge black-maned lions and vantage points for leopard and many raptors... this is the Kgalagadi Transfrontier National Park.

An amalgamation of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park in South Africa (proclaimed in 1931) and the Gemsbok National Park in Botswana, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park comprises an area of over 3,6 million hectares – one of very few conservation areas of this magnitude left in the world.

Red sand dunes, sparse vegetation and the dry riverbeds of the Nossob and Auob show antelope and predator species off to spectacular advantage and provide excellent photographic opportunities. Kgalagadi is also a haven for birders, especially those interested in birds of prey.

5 things to seek

- Gemsbok – these large striking desert antelope are the emblem of the park.
- Suricate (Meerkat) – these hyperactive little omnivores have a wonderfully intricate family structure.
- Black-maned Kalahari Lions – Physically impressive, they are the kings of the Kalahari Desert. Article: [Lions of the Kgalagadi](#) by Lara Raubenheimer
- Sociable weavers – the busy little birds construct huge communal nests.
- Pygmy falcons – the park is famous for its birds of prey. This is the smallest falcon in Africa and is often seen around Sociable Weaver colonies preying on the birds.

Important Notes

- Kindly note that **the roads in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park are not sedan friendly**, although the roads are maintained on a monthly basis, sedan vehicles find it difficult to cope with the conditions. Vehicles which will be using any of the 4x4 routes in the park must note that the *recommended ground clearance should be 30cm to 45cm*, to make the drive more enjoyable.
- **Tourists wanting to exit the park** *other than the point of entry must kindly note that all immigration controls must be done at Twee Rivieren / Two Rivers, and that a 2 night stay in the park is compulsory.*
- No children under the age of 12 is allowed at any of the park's Wilderness camps.
- Please also note that no firearms or wood will be cleared via the Mata Mata border control. Individuals wishing to clear firearms or wood should do so via Rietfontein border control.

Accommodation

- [Traditional Rest Camps](#)
- [Wilderness Camps](#)
- [Luxury Safari Lodge](#)

Traditional Rest Camps

Twee Rivieren



This popular rest camp offers a range of accommodation types to suit a variety of tastes and budgets including family cottages, chalets and camp sites.

Twee Rivieren is the Park's largest rest camp and administrative headquarters. It is situated on the banks of the Dry Nossob Riverbed. Activities and facilities are diverse, as are the animals and plants found both within the camp and in the surrounding areas. Twee Rivieren has a reception, shop, fuel, restaurant, information centre and swimming pool. This is the only camp with 24 hrs electricity and cell phone reception.

[Check availability at Twee Rivieren](#)

Mata-Mata Rest Camp

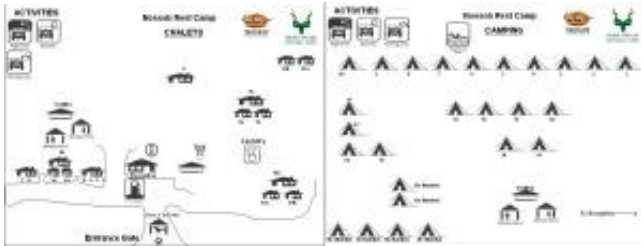


This popular rest camp offers a range of accommodation types to suit a variety of tastes and budgets including, chalets, family chalets, and camp sites.

The camp is situated on the banks of the Auob River on the western boundary of the Park. The camp borders Namibia and is surrounded by thorny Kalahari dune bushveld. Giraffe, typically adapted to these arid conditions are a favourite sight around Mata-Mata. The camp has a reception, swimming pool, shop and fuel facilities. A generator provides electricity for 18 hrs per day and there is no telephone or cellphone reception. Mata-Mata is 2,5 hrs drive from Twee Rivieren.

[Check availability at Mata-Mata Rest Camp](#)

Nossob Rest Camp



Nossob offers visitors to the Kgalagadi 2 Guesthouses, a range of cottages and camping sites to suit a variety of tastes and budgets

Nossob Rest Camp is situated within the dry riverbed of the Nossob. The camp is surrounded by tree savannah and is famous for spectacular predator sightings. The camp has a reception, swimming pool, predator information centre, shop and fuel facilities. A generator provides electricity for 18 hrs per day. No phone reception is available at the camp which add to the tranquillity and peaceful atmosphere at Nossob. Nossob is 3,5 hrs drive from Twee Rivieren.

[Check availability at Nossob Rest Camp](#)

Wilderness camps

[\(Brochure available in PDF format\)](#)

Please note:

1) In order to retain the tranquility and exclusiveness of the wilderness camps we do not exceed 8 people per camp. 2) Children under 12 years are not allowed at these camps: Kieliekrankie, Urikaruus, Gharagab, Bitterpan, Grootkolk.

Bitterpan

NB: This camp is NOT fenced and a Tourism Assistant is on duty at all times.

Elevated above the red sand dunes of the Kalahari and suspended in time is Bitterpan – an exclusive, stilted camp overlooking a waterhole. Bitterpan is situated in the center of the wilderness opening up a new 4x4 route through the Kalahari dunes from Nossob to Mata-Mata and the Kalahari Tent Camp. It is on a ONE-WAY route starting from Nossob. It is approximately a 2,5 hr drive from Nossob to Bitterpan, while from Bitterpan to Craig Lockhart on the Auob tourist road takes another 2.5 hrs, and thereafter 15 minutes to Mata-Mata, or a two hour drive to Twee Rivieren. It is strictly a 4x4 route, but BIG 4x4's such as Unimogs (heavy vehicle 4x4) are not allowed.

Guests should consider staying at Nossob before their departure for Bitterpan, as it is an approximately 3 hours drive from Nossob along a one-way 4x4 route. Guests must check in to Bitterpan at Nossob. They cannot do so at Twee Rivieren or Mata-Mata. Nossob itself is at least a three-and-a-half hour drive from Twee Rivieren.

Visitors to Bitterpan should please note the following:

- NB. The camp and its access roads are strictly for the use of its residents only!
- Visitors must supply their own firewood or charcoal
- Visitors must supply their own drinking water
- No Trailers (even 4x4 trailers) will be permitted.
- Visitors should be aware that there is limited driving opportunity once at the camp.
- Only a one-way 15 km game drive, however visitors staying longer than one night may use the escape

- route to Moravet to go onto the tourist routes and back.
- The entrance and exit roads (and the 15 km game drive) are strictly one-way.
- No fuel and no shop, nearest facilities at Nossob and Mata-Mata.

[Check availability at Bitterpan](#)

Grootkolk

NB: This camp is NOT fenced and Tourism Assistant is on duty at all times.

The perfect retreat for special occasions, or simply just to get away from it all. The camp is tucked away in the dunes, overlooking a waterhole, 20 km from Union's End where the three countries South Africa, Botswana and Namibia meet. It is a wilderness camp nestled amidst red sand dunes with only the stars and silence for company. Grootkolk is 6 hours drive from Twee Rivieren and 2,5 hours from Nossob. The camp is accessible to sedan vehicles.

Visitors to Grootkolk should please note the following:

- There are 4 x 2 bed chalets with bedroom, ceiling fan, bathroom and kitchen on veranda. (One unit is accessible for visitors with mobility impairment)
- Each chalet is equipped with cutlery, crockery, linen, fridge and braai
- Communal kitchen and barbecue areas available
- The chalets are made from sand bags and canvas
- There is GAS for hot water and cooking and SOLAR for lighting
- Waterhole

[Check availability at Grootkolk](#)

Kalahari Tented Camp

NB: This camp is NOT fenced and a Tourism Supervisor is on duty at all times.

Situated high up on a red sand dune, overlooking a waterhole in the dry bed of the ancient Auob River, the Kalahari Tent Camp welcomes you to capture the spirit of the land of thirst. This exclusive getaway for the discerning visitor, boasts 15 desert tents each elegantly decorated with rustic finishes using wood, sand and canvas exteriors all in the resonate colours of the park. The tent camp is 3 km from the Mata-Mata Rest Camp where Kalahari Tent Camp residents can refuel and get basic supplies at the shop. The camp is designed in such a way that residents feel they have only themselves and the desert for company.

Visitors to Kalahari Tent Camp should please note the following:

- NB. The camp and access road are strictly for the use of residents only!
- Visitors must supply their own firewood or charcoal
- Visitors must supply their own drinking water
- No fuel and no shop, closest facilities at Mata-Mata

The camp features the following facilities:

- 1 luxury honeymoon desert tent
- 4 family desert tents (two beds and a stack bed)
- 10 two-bed desert tents (Two of the units have been made accessible to visitors with mobility impairment)
- Tents consist of a bedroom with ceiling fan, bathroom and kitchen
- Each tent is equipped with cutlery, crockery, linen, fridge and braai
- There is GAS for hot water and cooking and SOLAR for lighting



- A swimming pool is available
- Waterhole

[Check availability at Kalahari Tented Camp](#)

Kieliekrankie Wilderness Camp

Guests have to provide their own drinking water and firewood.

Situated 50 km (one-and-a-half hours) drive away from Twee Rivieren on the Southern Dune Road. The closest shop and fuel supply is at Twee Rivieren, where guests who have booked Kieliekrankie also checks in. The camp is unfenced, and there is a tourism assistant on duty. Sunk into a dune, with endless views of the red Kalahari sands. This unique self-catering wilderness camp will be accessible by passenger vehicles.

The camp has 3 x DC2 (Dune Cabin) and 1 x DC2Z (Dune Cabin - Adapted for use by the mobility impaired).

Each unit has 2 single beds, a bathroom with w/c and shower, an equipped kitchen with gas fridge / freezer, solar power for lights, gas for hot water and braai facilities on a deck.

[Check availability at Kieliekrankie Wilderness Camp](#)

Urikaruus Wilderness Camp

Guests have to provide their own drinking water and firewood.

Situated 72 km (two hours) drive away from Twee Rivieren on the road to Mata Mata between the veil of old camelthorn trees, overlooks the Auob River. The closest shop and fuel supply is at Twee Rivieren, where guests who have booked Urikaruus also checks in. The camp is unfenced, and there is a tourism assistant on duty. The camp has 4 x Riverside Cabins built on stilts and connected by a plank way. Urikaruus is accessible by passenger vehicles.

Each unit has 2 single beds, a bathroom with w/c and shower, an equipped kitchen with gas fridge / freezer, solar power for lights, gas for hot water and braai facilities on a deck.

[Check availability at Urikaruus Wilderness Camp](#)

Gharagab Wilderness Camp

Guests have to provide their own drinking water and firewood.

Located in the far northern region of the park, will provide guests with elevated views of Kalahari dunes and the thornveld savannah. Situated 164 km (four hours) drive north of Nossob on the road to Unions End. The closest shop and fuel supply is at Nossob, where guests who have booked Gharagab also checks in. The camp is unfenced, and there is a tourism assistant on duty. The camp is accessible by 4x4 vehicles only, travelling on a one-way access road that is open to Gharagab residents only.

The camp has 4 x LC2 (Log Cabin) units.

Each unit has 2 single beds, a bathroom with w/c and shower, an equipped kitchen with gas fridge / freezer, solar power for lights, gas for hot water and braai facilities on a deck.

[Check availability at Gharagab Wilderness Camp](#)

Tariffs

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

Luxury Safari Lodge



!Xaus Lodge

[!Xaus Lodge](#) “A place to experience, not merely observe.”

!Xaus Lodge’s isolation allows you to experience the unspoiled splendour of the vast, arid Kgalagadi Park.

Crafted to blend into the landscape, this 24 bed thatched [luxury safari lodge](#), owned by the [!Khomani San and Mier communities](#), overlooks a large salt pan. Relax on the viewing deck and observe the [animals](#) at the waterhole below, cool off in the plunge pool or browse through the curio shop.

[Join our guides](#) on a morning wilderness walk through the dunes. ‘Listen’ to the sun set on an early evening drive or enjoy an after-dinner game-drive, with the accompanying desert sounds. ‘Touch’ the stars as you gaze at the splendour of the night sky.

Meet the Bushmen, legendary hunter-gatherers, at work in the serenity of their craft village and marvel at the tastes of the Mier’s unique culinary offerings.

And then, fulfilled in spirit recall the words of Laurens van der Post: “This ancient African land seen through the eyes of the Bushmen is mystical, magical and spiritual”

For reservations and more information contact:

- info@tfpd.co.za
- Transfrontier Parks Destinations
- +27 21 701 7860 (office)
- +27 79 771 1418 (Marichen) or
- +27 83 703 7979 (Brenda) www.xauslodge.co.za

Activities & Facilities

Activities

These are the following activities when available:

- Lectures, slide shows and holiday programs are organised from the information centre at Twee Rivieren.
- **Morning and sunset drives**, as well as **morning walks**, are available at Twee Rivieren, Nossob, Mata-Mata and the Kalahari Tented Camp; enquiries can be made at the reception desks.
 - Drives require a minimum of 2 adults in order to go out.

- Walkers are restricted to 8 persons, and no children under 12 are allowed. Guests need comfortable shoes and need to take water along. *Tariff: R290 per adult (no children allowed)*
- Please note that, due to availability of staff, drives are not always available 7 days per week; please enquire at reception regarding schedules.
- [Nossob 4x4 Eco Trail](#) - for information and bookings, please contact the reception desk at Twee Rivieren.
- [Leeuwdriil 4x4 Loop](#) - The Leeudrill 4x4 is now open for 4x4 vehicle only, bookings need to be made at Twee Rivieren Reception (+ 27 (0) 54 561 2000) and the costs are R180 per vehicle. For information and bookings, please contact the reception desk at Twee Rivieren.
- [Xerry Wilderness Trail](#) - please contact Twee Rivieren Reception for bookings.

Please note: The gravel sections of the road via Vanzylsrus are badly corrugated. The road via Upington to the Park is tarred and in a good condition.

Please note that all game drives and guided walks are subject to availability.

4 x 4 Routes - when available

- [Nossob 4 x 4 Eco Trail](#) - 214km
- Bitterpan trail - 120 km
- Mabuasehube Wilderness Trail - 155km
- Wilderness Trail (starting at Polentswa) - 257km
- Direct Route – Nossob Riverbed to Mabuasehube - 170km
- Direct Route – Kannaguass to Kaa - 85km
- [Leeuwdriil 4 x 4 Loop](#) - Total off-road distance is 13,2km (passing the Gemsbok windmill)

Facilities

- Laundry tubs and ironing facilities (no iron) in camping area of Twee Rivieren, Nossob and Mata-Mata.
- Twee Rivieren, the largest rest camp and administrative base, has a swimming pool, information centre, shop and public telephone and cell phone reception.
- Restaurant - serves breakfast and dinner (A-la-Carte)
- Predator centre at Nossob.
- Hides at water hole at Nossob and Mata Mata.
- The camps have limited freezing facilities and cannot provide a freezing service to tourists.
- Shops in Twee Rivieren, Mata-Mata and Nossob sell commodities that you would find in your local supermarket, including fresh meat, milk, cheese, eggs, bread, wine and beer.
- Petrol (premium and unleaded) and diesel at Twee Rivieren, Mata-Mata and Nossob.
- Five picnic sites throughout the Park with barbecue facilities and communal ablution (no water available).
- Swimming pool in Twee Rivieren and Kalahari Tent Camp, Mata Mata and Nossob.

How to get there

- [Gate Hours](#)
- [GPS Coordinates](#)
- [Entry into the Park](#)
- [Directions from central Gauteng](#)
- [Other travelling distances to the Park](#)
- [Travelling distances within the Park](#)
- [Botswana](#)
 - [4x4 Routes](#)
 - [Direct Routes](#)
 - [Contact Botswana](#)

- [Useful Forum links](#)

2011 Road Closures

Due to continued construction and upgrading, the road between Samevloeïing and Kij Kij will be closed until further notice; there will however be a detour available to connect between Twee Rivieren and the Nossob River Valley via the lower dune road (Kielie Krankie Road).

Gate Hours

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| January to February | 06:00 – 19:30 |
| March | 06:30 – 19:00 |
| April | 07:00 – 18:30 |
| May | 07:00 – 18:00 |
| June and July | 07:30 – 18:00 |
| August | 07:00 – 18:30 |
| September | 06:30 – 18:30 |
| October | 06:00 – 19:00 |
| November and December | 05:30 – 19:30 |

GPS Coordinates

| Type | Name | X_coord | Y_coord |
|---------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| Entrance Gate | Twee Rivieren | 20.61320 | -26.47395 |

Entry into the Park

Access to the Park can be gained through five gates in three different countries! From South Africa access is through the Twee Rivieren gate, from Namibia through the Mata-Mata gate and from Botswana through the Two Rivers, Mabuasehube and Kaa gates. Passports are not required for entry, unless departure is planned through a different gate into another country.

Directions from central Gauteng

The Kgalagadi Transfontier National Park is situated approximately 250 km from Upington in the far northern Cape and 904 km from [Johannesburg](#). Visitors driving from [Johannesburg](#) have a choice of two routes, either via Upington (255 km tarred road) or via Kuruman, Hotazel and Vanzylrus (+/- 340 km gravel). Upington airport is the nearest airport to the Park and has car-hiring facilities. All guests intending to travel to Twee Rivieren, via Vanzylrus, must note that the gravel sections are badly corrugated and travelling at high speed is not advised. Guests travelling via Upington/Askham will be doing so on a tarred road that is in good condition.

Other travelling distances to the Park

Upington to Twee Rivieren: 265km Kuruman to Twee Rivieren: 383km Kimberley to Twee Rivieren: 621km Cape Town to Twee Rivieren: 1 076km [Johannesburg](#) to Twee Rivieren: 1 090km Durban to Twee Rivieren: 1 463km Mata-Mata to Keetmanshoop: 280km Kaa gate to Maun: 797km Mabuasehube gate to Gaborone: 533km Mabuasehube gate to Maun: 787km Mabuasehube gate to Tsabong: 115km Two Rivers to Gaborone: 810km Two Rivers to Tsabong: 310km

Travelling distances within the Park

- Twee Rivieren – Nossob: 3.5hrs

- Twee Rivieren – Mata-Mata: 2.5hrs
- Twee Rivieren – Kalahari Tent Camp: 2.5hrs
- Twee Rivieren – Grootkolk: 6hrs
- Nossob – Union’s End: 3hrs
- Nossob – Mata-Mata (over Kamqua dune road): 3.5hrs
- Nossob – Bitterpan: 2.5hrs
- Bitterpan – Mata-Mata: 2hrs
- Nossob – Grootkolk: 2.5hrs
- Mata-Mata – Kalahari Tent Camp: 4 km

General

- Roads in the park have gravel surfaces.
- Light aircraft may land on a tarred runway at Twee Rivieren. Prior permission must be obtained from the Park.
- Hired cars may be collected at Twee Rivieren provided that an advance booking is made with a car hiring company.
- When driving from one rest camp to the other, travellers should depart with travelling times in mind to ensure arrival before sunset as no travelling is allowed in the park after dark.
- **NB:** Gate times in the park are strictly adhered to.

Botswana

Camping is available at Polentswa, Rooiputs, Two Rivers and in Mabuasehube. A 4x4 vehicle is necessary to access the Botswana side of the Park.

NB: All routes within Botswana are to be travelled by no less than two vehicles.

4x4 Routes

Prior bookings are essential for these routes and can only be contemplated in a single direction as a whole.

- Mabuasehube Wilderness Trail (starting at Mabuasehube) – 155km
- Wilderness Trail (starting at Polentswa) – 257km

Direct Routes

These routes allows access to within Botswana but can only be driven with a 4x4

- Direct Route – Nossob Riverbed to Mabuasehube – 170km
- Direct Route – Kannaguass to Kaa – 85km

Contact Botswana

The Parks and Reserves Reservation Office:

- Tel: 00 (from South Africa) 267 3180774
- Fax: 00 267 3180775 or
- email: dwnp@gov.bw

Useful Forum links

- [Arid Parks](#)
- [Roads & travelling distances](#)

Vital Information

Important Visitor Information

The following information will be useful for your visit to Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.

- Shops in Mata Mata, Nossob and Twee Rivieren camps sell basic commodities.
- There are no credit/debit card facilities at any of the shops, except for Twee Rivieren.
- Only legitimate petrol cards and cash are accepted as a form of payment for fuel. No debit cards are accepted.
- Twee Rivieren is the only camp with a restaurant and public telephones (card and coin).
- The main camps do have drinking water albeit very mineralised. The Wilderness camps do not have potable water and one should provide their own drinking water.
- Guests travelling to Twee Rivieren via Upington (Askham) must note that the tarring of the road has been completed. The road via Van Zylsrus must not be driven at a high speed as the gravel section on this route is badly corrugated.
- Kindly note that the roads in the Kgalagadi are not sedan friendly, although management intervenes to maintain on a monthly basis.
- Swimming pools at Twee Rivieren, Kalahari Tent camps, Mata Mata and Nossob camps.
- Power points at camping sites, in Twee Rivieren, Mata Mata and Nossob camps.
- Hide at waterhole in Mata Mata and Nossob camps.
- Waterhole at Bitterpan, Grootkolk, Kieliekrankie, Urikaruus, Gharagab and Kalahari Tent camps.
- Info centre at Twee Rivieren camp. Predator centre at Nossob camp.
- Bitterpan, Grootkolk, Kieliekrankie, Urikaruus, Gharagab and Kalahari Tent camps are not fenced.
- Guests staying at Bitterpan, Grootkolk, Kieliekrankie, Urikaruus, Gharagab and Kalahari Tent camps must take own wood and drinking water.
- Only guests staying at Bitterpan and Gharagab are allowed to make use of 4X4 road to Bitterpan and Gharagab. **NO TRAILERS ALLOWED.**
- Closest shop to Kalahari Tent camp is at Mata Mata camp (3 km away).
- Departure time for the Nossob 4 x 4 eco-trail from Twee Rivieren or Nossob camp is 09:00.
- For trails that start in Twee Rivieren, it is advisable to book the night after the trail, in Nossob camp.
- Distance from Upington – 260 km.
- **NB:** Visitors must allow for the following travelling time from Twee Rivieren entrance gate, to the other camps:
 - Nossob - 4½ hours
 - Grootkolk - 7½ hours
 - Gharagab - Not possible in one day
 - Bitterpan - 6½ hours
 - Kieliekrankie - 1½ hours
 - Urikaruus - 2½ hours
 - Kalahari Tent Camp - 3½ hours
 - Mata Mata - 3½ hours
- **Please note:**
 - **Tourists wanting to exit the park** other than the point of entry must kindly note that all immigration controls must be done at Twee Rivieren / Two Rivers, and that a 2 night stay in the park is compulsory.
 - **Tourists crossing into Namibia:** Kindly note that the standard black and white 'ZA' vehicle sticker is required. A road levy of R120 per trailer and R240 per vehicle is payable at Namibian immigration

when entering Namibia.

- Tourists travelling from and to Namibia please acquaint yourself with the **summer and winter time differences** between South Africa and Namibia in order to plan accordingly. *Winter changes - 1hr.the first Sunday in April until the first Sunday in September*

Climate

The Kalahari is a semi-arid region with an average rainfall of 150mm in the southwest to 350mm in the northeast. The unreliable and irregular rains fall mostly during dramatic thunderstorms, often accompanied by strong winds and dust-storms, between November and April. The first rains transform the red dunes, covering them with the fresh yellow flowers of the dubbeltjie, *Tribulus terrestris*. Within two weeks fresh green grass begins to grow, but if the rains do not return, the vegetation will soon wither and the thirstland once again becomes apparent.

Temperatures vary greatly from -11°C on cold winter nights to 42°C in the shade on summer days when the ground surface temperature reaches a sizzling 70°C. During the winter months, when frost is common, the ground surface temperature can be 25°C lower than the temperature of the air. Winter in the Kalahari is a cool, dry season from September to October and then a hot, wet season from November to April.

Day travellers

There are communal ablution facilities at Twee Rivieren, Nossob and Mata Mata rest camps and picnic sites at Melkvelei, 50 km (north of Twee Rivieren), Dikbaardskolk, 56 km (South of Nossob) and at Kamqua between Twee Rivieren and Mata-Mata.

Official hours

Office Hours: 07:30 to sundown

Tips & Hints

- Pets are not allowed in a National Park.
- Kindly note that **no firearms** will be allowed to **cross borders** either via Mata Mata, Kaa or Mabuasehube **nor allowed in the park**. Tourists with firearms are advised to use Rietfontein or Bokspuits borderposts into Namibia and Botswana.
- Shoes are essential on summer evenings for protection against the possibility of scorpion stings.
- Keep an emergency supply of 10 litres water in your vehicle.
- In the event of a breakdown, remain in your vehicle – it is the safest place.
- This is a low risk malaria area. Consult your chemist.
- Roads in the park have gravel surfaces.
- Light aircraft may land on a tarred runway at Twee Rivieren. Prior permission must be obtained from the Park.
- Hired cars may be collected at Twee Rivieren provided that an advance booking was made.
- The travelling time from the entrance gate at Twee Rivieren to Nossob Rest Camp is 3.5 hours and to Mata Mata is 2.5 hours. When driving from one rest camp to the other, travellers should depart with travelling times in mind to ensure arrival before sunset as no travelling is allowed in the park after dark.

Visitors to Botswana

Camping is available at Polentswa, Rooiputs, Two Rivers and in Mabuasehube. A 4x4 vehicle is necessary to access the Botswana side of the Park.

Contact Information

In case of emergency in South Africa: Contact our staff at reception or at staff houses.

Upington Medi-Clinic tel: (054) 3388900

Botswana: Maun tel. 00267 6860444 or Gaborone tel. 00267 3901999

Medical Rescue: tel. 00267 3901601 or contact your nearest camp with radio communication

For enquiries e-mail [Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park](#) or phone us on the following numbers:

- **Park tel:** + 27 (0) 54 561 2000 (Twee Rivieren)
- **Fax:** + 27 (0) 54 561 2005
- **Tourism Manager:** [Dupel Erasmus](#)

Park Rules

Gathering of firewood

You are not allowed to collect firewood in the Park.

The trees of the Kalahari are slow-growing, producing a very hard wood. When a tree or even a branch falls and dies, it becomes a new home for a wide variety of seedlings, rodents, reptiles and insects. Removing the dead wood would be robbing these organisms of the little protection they have from the natural elements. As a tree grows it draws nutrients and minerals out of the soil. When the branches die and decompose they are returned to the soil as the very nutrients and minerals that are necessary to supply the tree again.

For this reason plants are able to survive well without the need of artificial fertilisers as long as this cycle is not interrupted.

Feeding of animals

No wild animals must be fed at any time.

In camps, beware of animals such as jackals who, if allowed, will even scavenge food from your fireplace.

Speed

Please adhere to the speed limits of 50km/h in the Park and 20km/h in the rest camps.

Speeding on dirt roads is detrimental to the environment. Animals often stand motionless next to the road and are not easily seen when driving at high speed. Numerous animals are run over by fast-moving vehicles. By travelling slowly, you also produce less dust. Further, the roads are narrow with sharp turns and are dangerous when travelling at high speed.

Off-road driving

For the benefit of organisms living in the dunes and riverbeds, and for your own good, please stay on the roads.

Off-road driving has a marked impact on the sensitive ecosystem, not only biologically, but also from an aesthetic point of view. The tracks made in the riverbeds and in the dunes are unsightly and take a very long time to disappear.

Birding in Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

General Birding

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park has a list of approximately 280 species of which only about 92 are resident. The remainder comprises mainly nomadic, migratory and vagrant species, which number about 17, 50 and 121 respectively.

A variety of raptors may be seen, the commonest being *Tawny and Black-breasted (cheded) Snake Eagle, Bateleur, White-backed and Lappet-faced Vulture*, as well as smaller species such as *Pale Chanting Goshawk, Gabar Goshawk, Pygmy Falcon and Greater Kestrel*.

Less common are *Martial Eagle and Red-necked Falcon. Barn, Spotted and Verreaux's (Giant) Eagle Owl* are common, while *Pearl-spotted Owlet, White-faced and African Scops-Owl* may also be seen.

Larks and Sparrowlarks (Finchlarks) are abundant particularly after good rains which is also a good time to see seed-eaters such as *Violet-eared Waxbill, Black-throated Canary, Shaft-tailed Whydah and Lark-like Bunting. Kori Bustard* is common along both the Auob and Nossob riverbeds with *Ludwig's Bustard* being relatively common during summer.

Twee Rivieren

Species that can be seen throughout the year include *White-browed Sparrowweaver* (which breeds in the camp), *Crimson-breasted Shrike, Brubru, Pririt Batis, Black-chested Prinia, Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Common Scimitar-bill, Red-eyed Bulbul, Marico Flycatcher, Red-headed Finch* and *Yellow Canary*. These species are however all widespread in the park.

During the summer months species such as *Diderick Cuckoo, Willow and African Marsh Warbler*, as well as *Barn (European), Greater Striped, South African Cliff and White-throated Swallow* amongst others may be seen. All occurring swallows are widespread in the park during summer.

Rufous-cheeked Nightjar can also be heard at night during summer.

Other species present in summer are *Spotted Flycatcher, Cape White-eye and Long-billed Crombec*.

The winter season is a good period for spotting *Fairy Flycatcher and Dusky Sunbird* that move into the park. *Spotted Eagle Owls* are resident in camp and *Pearl-spotted Owlet and Whitefaced Owl* may occasionally be heard or seen. *European, White-rumped, Little and Bradfield's Swift* may be seen during the rainy season while passing through.

Mata Mata

This camp exhibits a variety of typical woodland birds that may also be found in and along the dry river courses of the park.

Species that are present year round include *Cardinal and Golden-tailed Woodpecker, Hoopoe, Pied Barbet, Swallowtailed Bee-eater, Ashy Tit, Glossy Starling and Southern Grey-headed Sparrow*.

Pearl-spotted Owlet and Whitefaced Owl are also common while *Scops Owl* can be seen or heard in some years.

Striped Kingfisher occurs throughout the year and may be heard calling from the riverbed outside the camp. *Great Spotted Cuckoo* can also be seen in summer during some years.

Nossob

Nossob Camp and its surrounds exhibit a blend of species typical of the other camps, and has the added attraction of a wide variety of raptor species.

Typical birds of the camp include *Southern Yellow-billed Hornbill*, *Glossy and Burchell's Starling* (mainly in winter), *Cape (Black) Crow*, *Fork-tailed Drongo*, *Kalahari Scrub Robin* and *Violet-eared Waxbill*.

A special to look out for is the *Great Sparrow* that frequents the campsite as well as the surrounding waterholes.

Summer migrants include *European Golden Oriole*, *Jacobin Cuckoo*, *Lesser Grey and Red-backed Shrike*. Other species that move into the area during summer are *Marico Sunbird* and *Long-billed Crombec*.

Riverbeds

The two dry riverbeds in the park, namely the Nossob and Auob, support a wide spectrum of bird species and are the focus points of bird activity.

The higher number and density of bird species may be primarily attributed to the large camel thorn trees (*Acacia erioloba*) found along these river courses, which provide important nesting and roosting sites for a variety of birds. Although the two riverbeds essentially support similar bird populations, some species are more likely to be encountered in one or the other.

Nossob Riverbed

The Nossob Riverbed is rated as one of the best places in South Africa to view raptors, particularly during the summer months when large numbers of migratory eagles, kites and falcons move through the park. Resident raptors are few and often far between throughout the whole park, although some species may be common during the summer season.

Resident eagles to be seen include *Martial*, *Tawny*, *Bateleur*, *Black-breasted (-chested)* and *Brown Snake Eagle* (which is somewhat uncommon), while the migrant species include *Steppe*, *Wahlberg's*, *Booted* and *Lesser Spotted Eagle*.

Other migratory raptors include *Black and Yellow-billed Kite*, *Steppe Buz za rd*, *Montagu's* and *Pallid Harrier*, *European Hobby*, and a number of kestrel species.

Black Harrier and *Gymnogone* occur as vagrants and can be seen at any time throughout the year.

Species that are irregularly seen in the extreme northern reaches of the Nossob are *Rosy-faced Lovebird* and *Grey Hornbill*. The latter has also been recorded from Twee Rivieren during the winter months when there appears to be some northward movement of these birds from areas south of the park.

Groundscraper Thrush is reasonably common and can be found under or near the canopies of Camel Thorns, where they feed on the ground.

Bokmakierie is a species not easily seen and appears to be shyer than the birds in the southern and eastern parts of its distribution. *African (Grassveld/Richard's) Pipits* may be seen during particular years in the patches of short grasslands of the riverbed, and where the patches of grass are dense and long, one is bound to find *Desert Cisticola*.

The wet season (November to March) marks the time when numerous migrating storks and other water related

birds find their way into the park.

Large numbers of *White and Abdim's Stork* can be seen feeding on insects along the riverbed, while less common species such as *Black and Marabou Stork* may be found in limited numbers near waterholes. Unusual species which are either migrating or that are blown off course by strong winds may also be found by chance, such as members of the heron, egret and duck families.

Waders such as *Little Stint, Ruff, Black-winged Stilt, Three-banded Plover* and sandpipers amongst others, may also stop over to utilise the waterpoints for feeding.

Auob Riverbed

Birds that should be looked out for in the riverbed include *Striped Kingfisher, Green (Red-billed) Woodhoopoe, Purple Roller, Capped Wheatear, Mountain Chat and Short-toed Rock Thrush* (the latter two species are only occasionally seen in winter).

Verreaux's (Giant) Eagle Owl can be spotted in dense camel thorn trees, particularly along the short loop roads along the northern part of the riverbed. The waders as described for the Nossob River may also be found after rainstorms either at large water pools or waterholes,

Dune Roads

There are 2 roads that cross the duneveld in the park, the one being 55 km long the other 35km. These roads traverse mainly through open grassland with occasional shrubs and trees, and provide many birders with good views of a number of species.

Birds to look out for on these roads are *Ant-eating Chat, Rufous-eared Warbler, Chat Flycatcher, Cape Penduline Tit, Clapper, Spike-heeled and Fawn-coloured Lark*.

Grey-backed and Black-eared Sparrowlark (Finchlark), Pink-billed and Stark's Lark may be found after good summer rains where there is an abundance of grass seed. *Chestnut-backed Sparrowlark (Finchlark)* has been recorded in the park and may also be seen.

One should also look for *Burchell's and Namaqua Sandgrouse* that frequent the verges of these roads. With luck some *Buffy Pipit* may be found in limited numbers in the dune areas.

Kurrichane Buttonquail, Common and Harlequin Quail have all been recorded and may be seen (with an exceptional amount of alertness and luck) where grass patches are dense.

The *Northern Black Korhaan* and the less obtrusive *Red-crested Korhaan* may be seen anywhere in the duneveld together with the *Double-banded Courser* which is easily overlooked while driving.

Thornveld and Botswana Wilderness Trail (including the Mabuasehube area)

The Acacia thorn savanna that characterises the areas covered by wilderness trail and the Mabuasehube section of the Kalahari Transfrontier Park, supports additional species that are rarely encountered along the wooded riverbeds.

These species include *Southern Pied Babbler, Bennett's and Bearded Woodpecker, Brown-crowned (Three-streaked) Tchagra, Helmeted Guineafowl, Red-billed Francolin and Little Banded Goshawk*.

Species such as *Golden-breasted Bunting and Black-faced (Black-cheeked) Waxbill* have been recorded but are

not easily found.

Mammals

Kgalagadi offers premium mammal viewing destinations anywhere because of the sparse vegetation and concentration of animals in the dry riverbeds of the Auob and Nossob Rivers.

It is especially renowned for predator watching and for the seasonal movement of large herbivores such as blue wildebeest, springbok, eland and red hartebeest. Ground Squirrel and Suricate (Meerkat) are two more of the park's more prominent species.

Both these ground dwelling species live in large family groups for added protection and can easily be seen throughout the park. Honey Badger (Ratel), Pangolin (Scaly Anteater) and Bat-eared Fox are some of the park specials to search for. But it is the predators that are the park's biggest attraction. Excellent chances of seeing cheetah, leopard, brown and spotted hyena and the definitive black-maned lion exist.

Article: [Lions of the Kgalagadi](#) by Lara Raubenheimer

Checklist of mammals

Species

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| African Striped Weasel | African Wild Cat |
| African Wild Dog (Painted Wolf) | Antbear (Aardvark) |
| Bat-Eared Fox | Black-Backed Jackal |
| Black-Tailed Tree Rat | Blue Wildebeest |
| Brant's Whistling Rat | Brown Hyena |
| Bushveld Elephant-Shrew | Cape Golden Mole |
| Cape Hare | Cape Serotine Bat |
| Caracal | Chacma Baboon |
| Cheetah | Common Mole Rat |
| Damara Mole Rat | Desert Musk Shrew |
| Egyptian Free-Tailed Bat | Egyptian Slit-Faced Bat |
| Eland | Gemsbok |
| Giraffe | Grass Climbing Mouse |
| Grey Duiker | Ground Squirrel |
| Hairy-Footed Gerbil | Highveld Gerbil |
| Honey Badger | Kudu |
| Large-Eared Mouse | Leopard |
| Lion | Namaqua Rock Mouse |
| Pangolin | Porcupine |
| Pouched Mouse | Pygmy Mouse |
| Red Hartebeest | Round-Eared Elephant Shrew |
| Short-Tailed Gerbil | Silver (Cape) Fox |
| Slender Mongoose | Small Spotted Cat |
| Small-Spotted Genet | South African Hedgehog |
| Spotted Hyena | Springbok |
| Springhare | Steenbok |
| Striped Mouse | Striped Polecat |
| Suricate | Vervet Monkey |
| Warthog | Woosnam's Desert Rat |
| Yellow Mongoose | |

People with disabilities

Wheelchair Access

An in-depth [accessibility profile](#) for Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park has been compiled.

Accommodation

One chalet at Twee Rivieren, one reed-cabin at Bitterpan, one sand-cabin at Grootkolk and two desert tents at Kalahari Tented Camp have access ramps and accessible ablutions (roll-in shower).

All these units have certain access flaws. The park management has been given corrective instruction how to upgrade these and perhaps users will find some of these executed. There is also an accessible ablution block (roll-in shower) at Nossob Camp for campers, while accessible camping ablutions were added to Twee Rivieren in 2005. Mata-Mata has an accessible public toilet. Of the 3 Wilderness Camps launched opened in November 2004, only Kieliekrankie has a cabin that is adapted for use by people in wheelchairs. Urikaruus, up on stilts and Gharagab, on top of a sand dune (4x4 only) have no accessible units.

Access Attractions

The park's appeal is certainly its wilderness. Limited facilities exist for all guests. The predator centre and hide at Nossob and the information centre at Twee Rivieren are all accessible.

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