

## Riebeek Valley – Kasteelberg Directions

Approximately 32 km – tarred and gravel road. RM indicates a Road Marker where the route changes direction. **Please do not enter private property without permission from owners.**

1. Start at the Tourist Information Centre in Riebeek Kasteel – get a permit to traverse the Pieter Cruythoff Hiking Trail before leaving. Permits can be obtained at Kloovenburg Wine and Olive Estate as well. From the R311 turn SW onto R46 (S33°23.626' E18°53.588') and proceed towards Malmesbury – Kloovenburg is on the right at the turn off. Proceed over the Botmas Kloof Pass. Stop at the Pieter Cruythoff Memorial (it is hiding on the right of the road in a new olive grove which is part of the Kloovenburg Estate. The hiking trail may produce some interesting fynbos birds.
2. Proceed on the R46 towards Malmesbury after the hike and turn off onto the gravel road at Riebeeksrivier (S33°24.183' E18°50.718'). Along this road are many dams and seasonal water features to be scouted for waterfowl. The slopes of the mountain may deliver the resident pair of Verreaux's Eagle. Stop at the larger dams and scout the fringes of the water for waders. Around these coordinates S33°21.041' E18°48.999' the Horus Swift is spotted in season.
3. Turn NE at the Riebeek Rd junction (S33°19.604' E18°48.647') and proceed to the where you can rejoin the R311 tarred road. Look out for Black Sparrowhawk in the alien Eucalyptus stands. Turn NE towards Ongegund farm at RM PPC Rd and follow markers to the Smuts House – birth place of The Hon JC Smuts. The gardens at the farm may be productive with garden species. The facilities are closed to the public on Mondays.
4. Return to the R311 and turn SE towards Riebeek West. Stop at Pulpit Rock Winery (S33°20.318' E18°51.020') and obtain permission to do the hiking trail up the slopes of the mountain. The slopes are covered with Fynbos which may deliver interesting species. A detour through the small town of Riebeek West may be productive for garden species. Be on the lookout at all the water bodies along the road for waterfowl and waders. Return to Riebeek Kasteel along the R311.

**Birds:** LBJs are present all along the road. The hiking trails on the slopes of Kasteelberg may be productive for fynbos species. Blue Crane is present in the open fields and waterfowl abound at the numerous dams and small river crossings. In season the Horus Swift may attract attention of birders – other swallows and swifts can be observed along the route as well. Raptors include the regulars – Jackal Buzzard, Black-shouldered Kite and Rock Kestrel, with summer visitors in the Yellow-billed Kite and Steppe Buzzard. A resident pair of Verreaux's Eagle may be spotted along the slopes of the mountain. Booted Eagle had been spotted as well.