

# **MAGALIESBERG BIOSPHERE RESERVE**

**GPS Location:** 25°50'02"S – 27°36'03"E - 25.83388927.600833



**Preferred Contact Number:** 0832366978 co-ordinator

**Preferred Email Address:** [hello@magaliesbergbiosphere.org.za](mailto:hello@magaliesbergbiosphere.org.za)

**Website Address:** [www.magaliesbergbiosphere.org.za](http://www.magaliesbergbiosphere.org.za)

**Facebook Page of Biosphere:** @MagaliesbergBiosphereReserve

**Date registration received from UNESCO:** 9 June 2015

**Short Description of Location & Key Features:** The Biosphere Reserve is located in South Africa between the cities of Pretoria and Johannesburg to the east and Rustenburg to the west. The reserve lies at the interface of two great African biomes - the Central Grassland Plateaux and the sub-Saharan savannah - and the remnants of a third biome, the Afro - montane forest.

The rich biodiversity includes floral species such as *Aloe peglerae* and *Frithia pulchra*, and faunal species such as the forest shrew, sable antelope and 443 bird species representing 46.6% of total bird species in the southern African sub-region. The reserve also forms part of the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage site which encompasses cultural heritage and sites of archaeological interest dating back 4 million years.

Size of Biosphere: 357,870 ha

Size of Core Zone: 58 212 ha

Size of Buffer Zone: 109 561 ha

Size of Transition Zone: 190 097 ha

## **Description of Core Zone:**

The Core Area comprises formally protected areas and areas seeking formal protection within the Magaliesberg Biosphere, including any area registered or listed under an international conservation treaty, such as a: National Park, Nature Reserve, World Heritage Site, Ramsar Site, Biodiversity Site and Privately-owned land that has been placed under strict conservation management, by way of a legally established conservancy agreement and/or formal protection of private land through the Protected Areas Act. The primary land uses are conservation, research, education and limited nature-based ecotourism activities

## **Description of Buffer Zone:**

The Buffer Zone comprises of relatively undisturbed areas of the Magaliesberg Biosphere that are worthy of protection due to their generally high natural, visual and cultural quality and that underpin the core natural and cultural resource base of the Magaliesberg Biosphere. The primary land uses/activities considered suitable are conservation, research, conservation-based education, tourism (resorts and lodges) and recreational activities. It would also include existing agricultural and legal land uses

**Description of the Transition Zone:** Transition Areas are areas of stakeholder co-operation within the Magaliesberg Biosphere, which contain diversity of economic activities, settlements and other land uses and in which local communities, management agencies, scientists, non-governmental organizations, cultural groups, economic interests and other stakeholders work together to manage and sustainably develop the area's resources. It is an essential component of the economic viability of the Magaliesberg Biosphere.

### List of 1-3 biodiversity species that are either endemic, endangered, high protected or just of extreme interest

- A total of 90 indigenous mammal species have been recorded in the Magaliesberg Biosphere Reserve. These include the klipspringer (*Oreotragus oreotragus*), sable antelope (*Hippotragus niger*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and brown hyena (*Hyaena brunnea*). The bird diversity in the area is exceptional. In total, 46.6% of the bird species recorded in the southern African sub-region are found in the reserve. These include the Cape vulture (*Gyps coprotheras*), secretary bird (*Sagittarius serpentarius*), great white pelican (*Pelecanus onocrotalus*), martial eagle (*Polemaetus belliccosus*) and African grass-owl (*Tyto capensis*).
- *Aloe peglerae* (bergaalwyn) are nearly endemic to the Magaliesberg and the prosperity of most of its populations depends entirely on conservation efforts within the Magaliesberg Protected Environment. Both *Aloe peglerae* (bergaalwyn) and *Frithia pulchra* (fairy elephant's foot) are not only very restricted in their distribution but are also unique biological wonders that are associated with the Magaliesberg in particular.
- *Pyxicephalus adspersus* (Giant Bullfrog) is listed as near threatened

### Any interesting biodiversity features

The Magaliesberg region is virtually without equal in the world. It is almost 100 times older than Mount Everest and has unique geology, topography, habitats and heritage. Despite being hundreds of kilometres inland, straddling two landlocked provinces - Gauteng and North West - the rocks of the Magaliesberg bear the ripples of tides which lapped the shore more than 2 000 million years ago. The ocean then met a land surface devoid of life and an atmosphere that was unbreathable.

The region is unparalleled in its richness of history and biodiversity and reflects many aspects of South African geology, biodiversity, human evolution and history.

It lies at the interface of two great African biomes – the central grassland plateaux and the sub-Saharan savannah – with remnants of a third, Afro-montane forest in the north-facing kloofs. The landscape accommodates species from each of these biomes and the result is an exceptionally diverse fauna and flora that has drawn naturalists and explorers to the region for the past two centuries

### FLAGSHIP PROJECT/S

The MB is situated close to the largest conurbation in South Africa. Creating awareness of the ecological, cultural and aesthetic value of the Biosphere Reserve is a priority. On the western slopes of the Magaliesberg is the Tlholego Eco-village and Learning Centre. The centre has been in operation for over 25 years, and was the first learning centre in South Africa to offer training in permaculture and ecologically sound land management practices. A range of programmes have been presented at Tlholego and participants have included youths at school, university graduates, unemployed youth, and retrenched miners. Attendees come away not only with practical skills, but an experience of working as a collective and in tune with nature. The Centre produces a variety of upcycled pots and jewellery, energy saving cooka-coolas and dried organic products. A series of MB workshops have been held in Majakaneng – an informal settlement on the Northern slopes of the Magaliesberg, in the MB buffer zone. The last workshop, entitled 'The Mountain is our Future' consisted of the Biosphere Reserve roadshow presentation in Setswana, and a stakeholder information session with community feedback. Important networking was achieved with key community members and local government officials.

