



Bwabwata National Park

“People have come to live with the animals as opposed to the days when they were enemies... The dream I had in the past has come true in the Bwabwata National Park.”

*Chief Joseph Tembwe Mayuni • Namibia Nature Foundation
Conservationist of the Decade award winner*



Republic of Namibia
Ministry of Environment and Tourism



Discover the Bwabwata National Park

Welcome to the future. Pitch a tent in one of the neat, well-organised community campsites in and around the Bwabwata National Park and watch the hippo-frequented rivers flow gently by, knowing that you are in an area where both local people and wildlife are benefiting from sharing in the future of this spectacular area. A lush contrast to the rest of the country, the Caprivi panhandles, rivers, flood plains, wetlands and forests are part of a five-nation conservation area that is home to the largest population of elephants in the world. With red lechwe, sitatunga and reedbuck on the plains and hippos and crocodiles patrolling the waters, almost everything you could expect to see in the famed Okavango Delta you can see here.

Soak your feet in the spray at Popa Falls, Namibia's gem on the Okavango River. Take unaccompanied or guided

game drives across dramatic flood plains, through mature Kalahari woodland and along the shores of the temporary pans (omurambas). Fill your Big Five tick list by visiting the Buffalo Core Conservation Area. With close to 1 000 animals, this is the best place in Namibia to see buffalo.

Seasonal rains, often accompanied by dramatic displays of thunder and lightning, create temporary pans on the floodplains, and a greater chance of getting stuck in the mud! They also provide a lush environment for the area's abundant bird life, so grab your binoculars! Over 400 bird species have been recorded here with the greatest concentration seen in the Mahango Core Area. Experience dramatically close encounters of the elephant kind, and meet the very hospitable local people. They run the camps, protect the wildlife and craft some of the most exquisite basketry and woodcarvings in Namibia.



A people's park

The Bwabwata National Park is very special in that it supports a large wildlife population and a large human population. The lion does not lie down with the lamb, and there is inevitably conflict between people and animals (particularly elephants). Nevertheless, the major accomplishment of the Bwabwata National Park is that human and wildlife are now living in a status quo that offers tremendous benefits to both conservation and rural community development. Described by Namibian president Hifikepunye Pohamba as 'one of a new generation of parks', the Bwabwata National Park is pioneering 'a live and let live' conservation ethic.

In Bwabwata National Park co-management between the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, resident community and conservancies is key to long-term conservation initiatives and the quality of life for local people. It is a win-

win situation. With community game guards and resource monitors in place, the local people have new opportunities in ecotourism and conservation, while wildlife benefits from protection and an increase in numbers. With conservation ethics growing in the region, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism has been relocating and restocking rare species such as sitatunga and red lechwe in the area.

Bwabwata National Park now enjoys stability and stands as a remarkable success story of community and Ministry of Environment and Tourism co-operation for local development and conservation.

And remember, your visit will not just be personally rewarding but will also bring tangible financial benefits to the local community, fostering a harmonious co-existence between inhabitants and neighbours of the Bwabwata National Park.



Environmental Care Code

Please adhere to the following:

- Keep your distance from elephants, particularly those grazing or resting between the road and the river. They may feel trapped if you try to drive past them, so it is best to give them time to move away first.
- Do not drive off designated roads and tracks.
- Camp only in designated areas.
- Fishing and boating are prohibited in the park.
- Remove all your litter.
- Please be aware that you enter the park at your own risk.
- Follow the rules and regulations on your park permit.

Have a great time exploring this fascinating park!

How to get there:

Access to the Bwabwata National Park is easy. The park is located 200 km east of Rundu on the B8 Trans-Caprivi Highway, which runs the length of the park (180 km) to the Kwando River.

Facilities:

Most tourist infrastructure – lodges, camp sites, boating/driving safari concessions are on the periphery of the park, but three community-run campsites lie within the boundaries of the park: Bumhill and Nambwa are on the Kwando River in Bwabwata East and the community campsite at N//goabacha is located in Bwabwata West on the Kavango River. Namibia Wildlife Resorts operates a lodge at Popa Falls with ten river cabins, camping, a restaurant and bar. For details, contact (www.nwr.com.na).

Fact File:

Proclamation date: 2007

Size: approximately 6 100 km²

Number of permanent rivers: two

Dry Season: April–October

Rainy Season: November–March

Rainfall: 550–600 mm per year

Average monthly temperature: 30°C

Malaria: The park is located within a high-risk malaria area. Precautions are essential.

www.met.gov.na

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