



## THE FORMATION OF THE BERG

The Drakensberg Range (Zulu – Ukhahlamba - meaning a “barrier of up-pointed spears”) was formed +/- 200 million years ago when the entire province was flooded with volcanic lava.

The whole of KwaZulu Natal is thought to have been at one level until the entire eastern part of the South African continent dipped towards the sea.

High peaks resulted from the slow erosion of the surrounding sandstone, leaving high caps of basalt or volcanic rock.

The Drakensberg Range is +/- 180 km in length. The highest peaks in the South African section are MAFADI (3451m) and CHAMPAGNE CASTLE (3377m), while the highest peak is THABA NTLENYANA, (3482m), which is located in Lesotho. Strangely enough, its name means “the beautiful little mountain”!

The Drakensberg is basically divided into THREE levels:

- The FOOTHILLS (up to 1200m)
- The LITTLE BERG (1200m - 2000m)
- The HIGH BERG (2000m - 3500m)



## SOME COMMON BIRDS OF THE 'BERG



Double Collared Sunbird



Lanner Falcon



Crowned Eagle



Orange breasted Rock Jumper



Darter



Red Knobbed Coot



Francolin



Bald Ibis



Bearded Vulture



Common Stonechat



Grey Heron



Blacksmith Plover



Giant Kingfisher



Black-Eyed Bulbul



Fork-Tailed Drongo



Pied Crow



White-Necked Raven



Malachite Sunbird



Cape Vulture



Black Kite



# HIKING AREAS



## SOME COMMON TREES AND PLANTS



Yellowwood



Tree Fern



Sagewood



Ouhout



Protea



Cycad



Wild Dagga

## SOME COMMON ANIMALS



Black-Backed Large Spotted  
Jackal Genet



Baboon



Porcupine



Rock Hyrax



Mountain  
Reed Buck



Eland



Rinkhals



Berg Adder



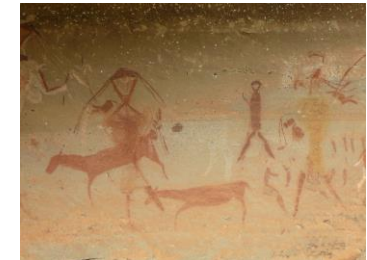
Puff Adder

## THE SAN INHABITANTS OF THE DRAKENSBERG

The San (commonly referred to as the Bushmen) were the original inhabitants of the Drakensberg, perhaps as far back as 8000 years ago. They were hunter-gatherers who did not build permanent homes, but made use of available caves (overhangs) as shelters.

It would appear that they lived in total harmony with their environment and were only forced to relinquish this by the arrival of Black and White settlers, who hunted the game and established themselves as pastoralists and cattle owners. In fact, the San were regarded as vermin and exterminated. The last reported sighting being about 1890.

However, the legacy of the San remains to this day. It is estimated that the Drakensberg possibly has up to 35% of all known rock paintings in South Africa. Most of these paintings are to be found in the shallow caves at the base of the yellow Cave Sandstone cliffs. The subject matter of 'Berg paintings falls mainly into three groups; animals, of which Eland and grey rhebuck are the most common; human-like figures performing such activities as running, hunting or entering a trance; and historical incidents.



*Acknowledgements to Pat Irwin for using extracts from his book A Field Guide to the Natal Drakensberg (1980)*