KITULO
NATIONAL PARK

The God's garden



2025/2

English



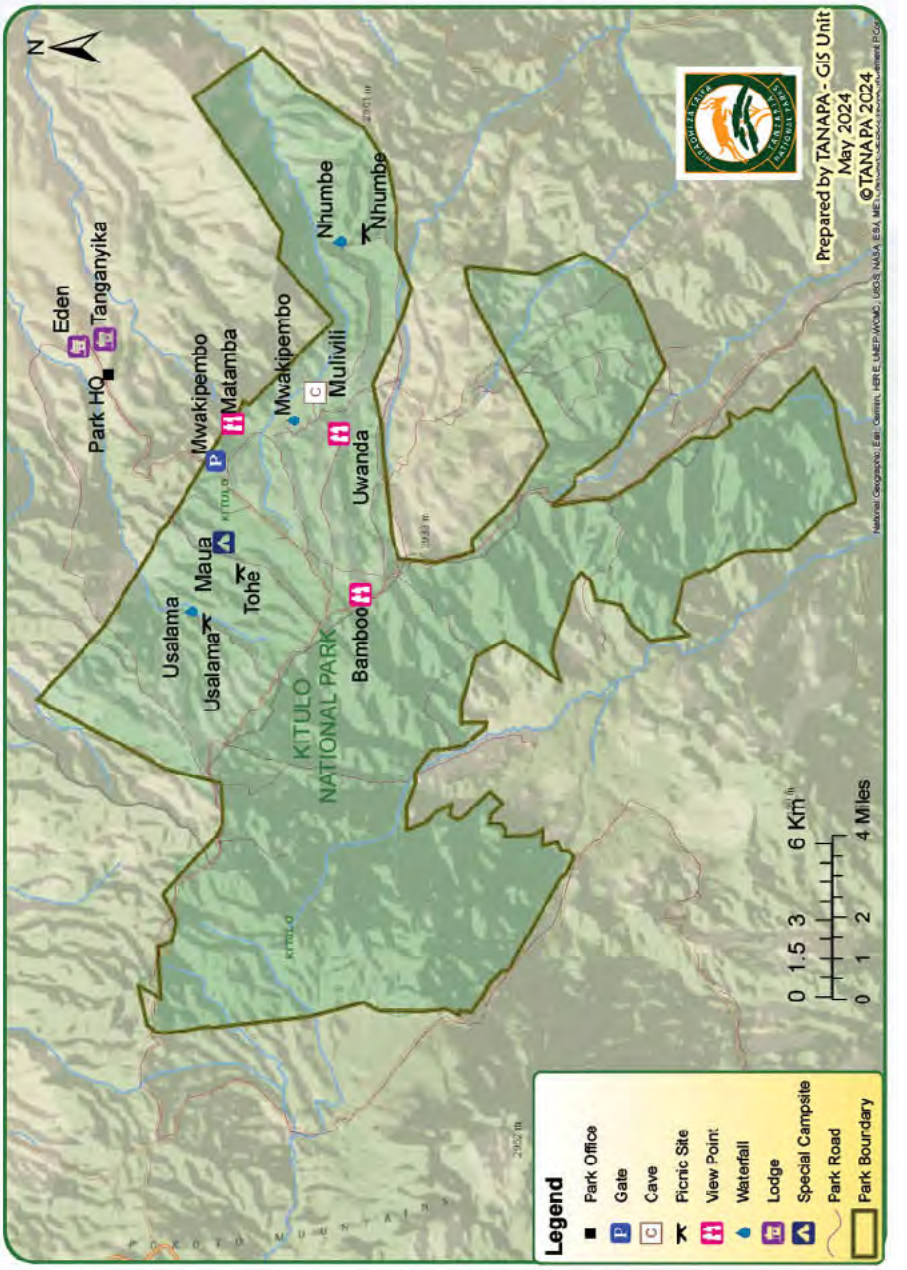
Welcome to the Park!

A wilderness worth exploring! The montane grassland and Kitulo Plateau make this area a stunning place to visit. The lovely view of plains with some flowers which are the most beautiful creations of the *ALMIGHTY* created on the purpose to spread smiles to mankind through their sweet smell and attractive appearance including the birds, all makes this place stay in someone's heart forever. Wide rolling plains and grassland, butterflies, birds, plants and great views will also make your stay an unforgettable one. The meager natural life in the park is made up by the fascinating plants, delightful birds and beautiful butterflies.

Thank you!

Brief History

The history of the park goes back to 1870, when Fredrick Elton, an Explorer visited the area. In 1960's a large area was taken by United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization for Wheat and Sheep Schemes. Since neither wheat nor sheep thrived in the area, in 1972 the area was turned to a dairy farm, which remains active to date. As a result of concerns from conservation bodies and various stakeholders, part of the farm, Livingstone and Nhumbe Forest Reserves were declared as Kitulo National Park on 16th of September, 2005 by Government Notice no. 279. Kitulo covers an area of 465.9 sq km and is a botanist's fantasy with more than 350 types of vascular plants including 45 earthly orchids. Local people allude to *"Bustani ya Mungu"* which signifies *"God's Garden"*



Getting there

By Air: Through Songwe International Airport then via road of which is 83km via Isyonje junction at the Uyole-Kyela road and 125km via Chimala junction at the Mbeya-Makambako road.

By Road: Mbeya city - Isyonje - Kitulo is 67km: Mbeya city- Chimala- Kitulo is 103kms: Njombe town-Ikonda-Makete - Kitulo is 165km.

By Railway: Through railway, using Tanzania Zambia Railway (TAZARA) and drop at Makambako or Lyunga stations.

Climate

Kitulo experiences a temperate climate which is influenced by altitude and the presence of Lake Nyasa. The maximum daily temperature varies from 14.5°c to 18°c and minimum ambient temperature ranges from 7°c to 8°c between December and April, and can go as low as 0.5°c during June to August, where frost occurs. Warm clothes are therefore advised during a visit to the park. The average annual rainfall is 1600mm ranging from 1500 – 1700mm. The rain season begins from October to May.

Attractions

The park has vast expanses of rolling upland grassland, rounded hills stretching away to the horizon, waterfalls, wildlife, forests, rivers and crater lakes.

- **Kitulo plateau**

  The plateau is characterized by three main vegetation types:
  - Well drained grassland on volcanic soils with species like *Aster tansaniesis*, *Kniphofia Grantii* etc
  - Seasonally or permanently in undated bogs with species such as *Lobelia spicies* and *Gladiolus spicies.*
  - Rocky ridges and associated talus slopes on soil derived from metamorphic rocks with species like *Moraea callista* and *Romulea companuloides*.

- **Flowers**

  The park is one of the great flower gardens of the world with over 40 species of ground orchids alone. Flowers come out in their thousands making unparalleled carpet of color especially from late November to April.





- **Physical Features and Vegetation**

  The park is floristically rich with 350 species of vascular plants recoded so far from the plateau. Kitulo highlands appear to be a major geographical ground for species typical of Eastern and Southern Africa region and so extremely rich in endemic and rare species not protected elsewhere in Tanzania.

- **Livingstone Forest**

  The forest is rich in tree species like *Hagenia abyssinica*, *Ocotea usambarensis*, *Juniperus procera* and *Khaya anthoceca*. The forest is also characterised by mountain Bamboo (*Sinarundinaria alpina*). Kitulo is rich in flora species with 350 species of high plants recorded, including 45 species terrestrial Orchids, of which 31 species are endemic to Tanzania, 16 are endemic to Kitulo area and Poroto Mountains and two species are only known to be in Kitulo national park and adjoining forest. The abundance of plants in the wet season has been described as the *Greatest Flora Marvel of the World*.

- **Nhumbe Valley**

  This is often referred as the jewel of the park where small streams emerge from the grassy hill sides sometimes cascading down in little waterfalls, thus forming the head waterfall for Nhumbe river, one of the main tributaries of the Great Ruaha River. The gap of the valley is occupied by Juniper forest, one of the most extensive in East Africa. They tower to 50m high and are indeed the tallest Junipers in the world.





- **Nhumbe Waterfall**

  Its height is approximately 100m located 20 km from Mwakipembo main gate and takes one hour to walking down the waterfall and up to the picnic site. You can cool your body there and take brilliant photos.

- **Mwakipembo waterfall**

  It is located along the road to Nhumbe valley 4km from Mwakipembo main gate, its height is 8m. The area is characterized by orchid flowers, everlasting flowers, Erica plants and *Clematopsis uhehensis*.

- **Dhambwe lake**

A small volcanic lake at the midst of the park. The lake can be accessed by a 3km walking trail from the Kimodo - Kikondo road inside the park. While on the trail, the astonishing bamboo forest can be witnessed and upon reaching the lake different water birds such as the Common teal can be spotted.

- **Mtorwi peak**

  It is located Eastern side of the park with an altitude of 2,961 m.a.s.l. The peak can be accessed from the Nhumbe valley on an ascending natural trail. Hiking can be done to the peak while enjoying the unique floral features.

- **Cultural attractions**

  Mlivili cave is located along Matamba Ridge after Mwakipembo water fall while Usalama cave is about 8km away from Common Works Junction, the road to Mbeya via Isyonje. During those days of intertribal war, the caves were used as the hiding point by indigenous people from Wawanji, Wakinga and Nyakyusa tribes from Mwakaleli.

- **Birds**

  An important bird area (IBA) with wintering site for various bird species from South Africa and Europe. Some species from North Africa, Abdim's Stock in particular use Kitulo as a wintering area. The plateau is also a home of breeding colonies of blue swallow and denham's bustard. Other endemic bird's species includes: lesser kestrel,



pallid harrier, cisticola njombe, kipengere seedeater and uhehe fiscal. a number of waterbirds can be found at dhambwe crater lake including yellow billed-duck, white-faced whistling ducks, common teal, open-billed stocks and red knobbed coot.

- **Wildlife**

  Africa's first new species of monkey for over 20 years has been discovered in remote mountains in Southern Tanzania. (*Rungwecebus kipunji*). This long-forest primate was first discovered by conservation biologist from the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) on the flanks of the 2,961m (10,000 ft) Mt. Rungwe and in Kitulo national park. Other wildlife animals are bush duiker, klipspringer, abbot's duiker, mountain reedbuck, bushbuck, rungwe galago, zebras, black and white colobus monkeys and impalas.

Tourist activities

The park has a wide range of activities that cater for every one's interest especially visiting the flower gardens which blooms from November.

- **Game viewing**

  This is an adventure that entails viewing wildlife while in a vehicle. Kitulo offers tourists an opportunity to explore plateau, Matamba ridge, montane grassland, bamboo forest and Mt. Livingstone trees, waterfalls and around nature flower garden. They mostly take place in early morning, late afternoon or evening because animals are more active during cooler times of the day. A game drive ensures a unique and thrilling safari experience.

  "Enjoy the thrilling predator chase by choosing a day game drive in Kitulo".

- **Bird watching**

  This will enrich you with bird species endemic to Kitulo and migratory birds coming from South Africa and Europe. Bird watching is done on Lake Dhambwe, grassland plains and Nhumbe valley. The best time to see the birds is early morning and, in the evening.

- **Walking Safari**

  This gives you a more learning experience about animals in the wilderness and a better way of spotting animals at a close range. It is mostly done in the morning and evenings and brings about a different scope and sense of adventure. It also conveys a different dimension in the whole safari experience.

- **Camping**

  Camping in the nature garden flowers provides an exceptional experience. Mwakipembo public campsite with flash toilet, shades and fire place makes your stay more comfortable. Maua special campsite in its natural environment reserved to provide exclusivity to users.

- **Cycling**

  Grab your bicycle and heads out to the road networks that connect various attractions within the park. Two loops making a distance of 22km, starts from Mwakipembo gate via Nguzo mbili, Uwanda picnic site, Mlivili cave, Mwakipembo waterfall then back to Mwakipembo gate.

- **Hiking**

  The park is a hikers' paradise with vast attraction to see while on foot like the Matamba ridge, numerous waterfalls and Mtorwi peak (2,961 M).

Available tourist facilities

Inside the park: The park has cottages where prior booking is advised. Also has public campsite (Mwakipembo) equipped with washrooms, dining and fire place area.

Outside the park: Guest houses and Lodges are available at small town of Matamba.





Park Rules and Regulations

Please do not:

- Enter the park without a valid permit;
- Litter;
- Block other visitors access, disturb or the animals they are watching;
- Exceed the speed limit of 50k.p.h;
- Take pets, plant seeds or fire arms into the park;
- Uproot, pick, cut or damage or be in possession of any part of the plant from the park;
- Kill, harass, disturb or feed any wild animals in the park;
- Feed animals;
- Ignite wildfires;
- Enter or leave the park at points other than the official entry/exit gates stipulated in your permit.

Visit and support!

Visit and experience the beauty of this amazing park. You can support the park and the surrounding communities by visiting and contribute to conservation projects.

Thank you!



For further information, please contact:

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