



Photo: Sue Gow



Photo: Tanya Adey



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Photo: Katy Guiot



Photo: Mandy Watson



Photo: Kevin Gow



Photo: Katy Guiot



# Bishopstowe Aloe hike : 21 June 2025 : 25 Hikers

This hike was intentionally timed to coincide with the last weekend of Femma Hackland's Blackwood's Open Gardens, and with the Aloes flowering in all their fiery glory it did not disappoint! 25 hikers braved the early morning cold and set off early from the Hackland's Aloe Garden to ensure we had plenty of time to enjoy the aloes and treats on offer later. Despite icy fingers & toes at the start, we were blessed with clear skies and the sun soon made a lazy appearance. The first 5kms was a relatively gentle trek along some dirt roads and through a sugarcane plantation (many paths now impassable due to flattened sugarcane caused by last week's big storm). We briefly stopped at a little dam where we were fortunate enough to spot a large reeduck (whilst there is a lot of wildlife in the area, there is unfortunately a serious problem with poachers and illegal dog hunting which has greatly reduced the numbers). A quick squelch across a muddy stream crossing and up, up, up, through the sugarcane before following a dirt road back to the Hackland's, passing some curious horses on the way. After some snacks and coffee 23 of us set off again in the other direction. This next 6km involved a few rather steep climbs through another sugarcane plantation but we were rewarded with fantastic views of Bishopstowe and surrounds, including our very own Table Mountain! A last stop for a snack-and-chat at another tranquil dam before looping back via another dirt track, pausing for a quick group photo op with the gorgeous views below us and peeking in through the fence of the little Lutheran church graveyard ([https://www.graves.eggssa.org/kwazulunatal/PIETERMARITZBURG-Rural/24%20mar%20202013\\_006/](https://www.graves.eggssa.org/kwazulunatal/PIETERMARITZBURG-Rural/24%20mar%20202013_006/)). We were all quite excited to return in anticipation of cold beer, warm food and lovely home-baked treats for sale by the One Life Foundation and a stroll amongst the Aloes.

**Thank you to all the hikers who made this a fantastic day out and if you missed this opportunity, the gardens are still open for picnics by appointment and the Aloes should still be blooming for another month.**

**Contact Femma Hackland on 083 636 0881 or [info@hacklandaloegarden.co.za](mailto:info@hacklandaloegarden.co.za)**

Photo: Beth Bester



Photo: Charles Guiot



Photo: Tanya Adey

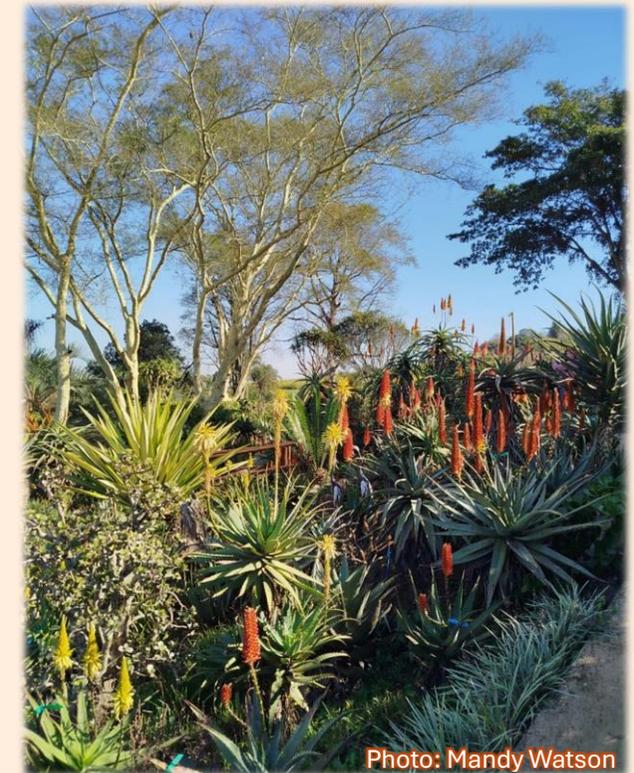


Photo: Mandy Watson