



Shaydaa Banoo



Deon Small



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Lalitha Badul

Grey Mares Tail Falls, Shawswood, Karkloof

Leader: Deon

Date: 14 Dec 2025

Distance: 6 km

Weather: Overcast and cool becoming partly cloudy and warm max temperature 22°C.

Number of hikers: 14

Severity of hike: Steep climbs through the indigenous forest sections and easy walk on the grassy sections. Conditions under foot were slippery due to all the rain during the week.

Report by: Deon

Grey Mares Tail Falls, so named because when in flood, the falls look like the tail of a Grey Mare running through the green pasture of the Karkloof. With all the good rain we had in the Midlands, the Falls really lived up to its name, and was flowing strong, cascading over a 100m down the steep cliffs.

However, before we could enjoy this view, we had to conquer the steep uphill and narrow paths, that protected this special view.

We all met at Shawswood at 8:00, after a meet and greet and a quick briefing on what to expect, we set off. The weather did not look great to start off with, but I had faith that it would improve and that the rain would stay away. The beauty of summer was all around us, green grass miles and miles around us, with the forest canopy looking like green broccoli stems pushing up from the valley floor. Soon we were heading up our first steep incline, named Heartbreak Hill, and here your heart is tested to its fullest, and a test to see who would make it to the top and who would not. The group was strong and soon we all stood at the forest entrance.

The path was covered in leaves, but underneath the leaves was an extremely slippery layer of mud and clay. It was as if the whole forest and all its critters were purposely making it difficult for us to reach our goal of reaching the falls. We were making slow progress, slowly inching up and up the treacherous path, taking care not to slip and fall. Every now and again I would look back just making sure that the forest did not swallow one of the group, but we were all still there.

Soon we were bathed in glorious sunlight as we exited the forest and made our way to the top of the little plateau. As we summited, we were greeted by an amazing view of the KZN Midlands. It is said that on a clear day you can see all the way to the ocean, but due to the clouds we could just see as far as Albert Falls Dam.

We made our way around to the falls, and on to the view point. From here we could see the total drop of the falls and we were blessed with the full gallop of the Grey Mare running through the valley far below us. The rain caused the river to flow strongly which I have not seen this full in a very long time. We made our way back to the top of the falls, where we enjoyed our lunch before heading back down.

The trip up was just half the job done and the walk back was going to be the test of resolve of the group. Going up is always a lot easier than going down, especially in wet conditions. Soon we entered the forest and behind me I could hear the giggles and exclamations of near miss steps, and close calls. Soon we all had mud caked under our boots, making going down treacherous and soon laughter filled the air, as near misses turned into close calls, turning into slip and falls. Luckily mud washes out and bruised egos become talking points when we retell our experiences. Of course, we know that the stories will be only slightly exaggerated.

Soon we were safely back at the start. It was a good day, new friendships made and old friendships renewed. After our goodbyes were all said and done we set off back home already planning the next adventure – and as the saying goes “WE WILL BE BACK.”



Beth Bester



Deon Small



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Mehmood Kadwa



Lalitha Badul



Shaydaa Banoo



Shaydaa Banoo



Shahida Khatree



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