

# Kilgobbin, the Dargle Valley

27 April 2026

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Freedom Day's hike at Kilgobbin Farm in the Dargle Valley began on a warm autumn day. Led by Libby, who expertly organised the group's logistics, we gathered at the farm gate where we were met by Barend. His generosity as a host was matched by his local knowledge and passion for conserving the indigenous forest in his care. We started in the cool forest, winding slowly upward through towering yellowwoods, with lovely sightings of Samango monkeys, turacos, vast spider webs, fungi, and other forest delights.

Emerging from the forest, we were greeted by a beautiful lookout with views towards Midmar Dam, stretching over the green Midlands farmlands and grasslands.

Continuing through farmland and patches of open grassland, we enjoyed distant views of the main Berg, including a striking view of Giant's Castle. The highest point of the hike was marked by an old oak tree—the meeting place of three stone walls built by Italian prisoners of war—naturally becoming our resting spot for snacks and conversation. From there, the walk led gently down to a quiet dam on the forest's edge, where one lone swimmer braved the chilly water. As the weather shifted, we returned to the forest, arriving at a clearing formed by a tornado, where a simple yet beautifully positioned bird hide offered views back over the canopy. A few minutes later, it was all over, leaving only the warm, satisfying feeling of a good walk, tired legs, and a day very well spent. Thanks to everyone for the stunning photos shared—I've picked out a few.

Crab Apple Cottages are available for short stays and it is possible to overnight in the bird hide: <https://www.crabapple.co.za/>

