MINERVA NATURE RESERVE

25 October 2026

Led by Renata Ruggeri



Some hikes are memorable for their scenery, others for their wildflowers, and some for the wonderful people who share the journey. Our recent hike in the beautiful Byrne Valley offered all three in abundance!

We were privileged to have the owners of OverByrne host us for the day and share some fascinating history of the Minerva Nature Reserve, which includes a portion of their own property.

There was also some very exciting conservation news to celebrate. After many years of administration and preparation, Minerva Nature Reserve has now been gazetted as a registered protected area under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act. The Reserve was originally registered under provincial legislation in 2001, and this new milestone provides it with greater protection going forward. Wonderful news for the conservation of this special part of our natural heritage!

The conditions could not have been better: sunny skies, a gentle warmth and the promise of a magnificent day outdoors.

Within minutes of setting off, we were greeted by a spectacular spray of crimson and orange Hilton Daisies. What a sight! According to our host, Malcolm, this was the most prolific display of daisies they had witnessed in the 20 years they have lived at OverByrne.

Malcolm believes the abundance may be attributed to a naturally occurring fire earlier than usual, followed by early and plentiful rainfall. The lush, green valleys certainly seemed to support his theory.

Our small group may have been modest in numbers, but it was made up of wonderful people, each contributing something special to the day.

Pat Jennings shared her incredible knowledge of the local flora and fauna, adding depth and interest to our discoveries along the way. One particularly exciting find was a rare orchid, identified as most likely Disa brevicornis a special discovery indeed!

Kostya generously offered to photograph and video our expedition, ensuring that the memories of this beautiful day would be captured for everyone to enjoy.

Our first stop was the Minerva Seat; a remarkable natural stone formation shaped rather like a seat or throne. Naturally, it provided the perfect opportunity for photographs before we continued to the Beacon, the highest point on our route, where we could appreciate the surrounding landscape.

Next came the old, rusted water trough. This has become something of an icon on the hike. It certainly provided plenty of fun and a few memorable photo opportunities

A little further on, we reached Picnic Rock. Although the shade was limited, it was a lovely place to pause, enjoy our packed lunches and snacks, and take in the peaceful surroundings. It marked both our lunch stop and the turnaround point for the return journey.

Throughout the hike, the magnificent views across the Byrne Valley and the surrounding conservancy reminded us how fortunate we are to have access to such beautiful natural spaces.

One of the day highlights came after our hike, when we returned to OverByrne to enjoy tea and delicious homemade crumpets, graciously prepared by Malcolm's wife, Judy.

After a morning of fresh air, wildflowers and walking, this thoughtful hospitality was the perfect ending to a wonderful outing. Our sincere thanks to Malcolm and Judy for welcoming us so warmly and sharing both their home and their knowledge of this remarkable area.

Until our next adventure happy hiking! Renata

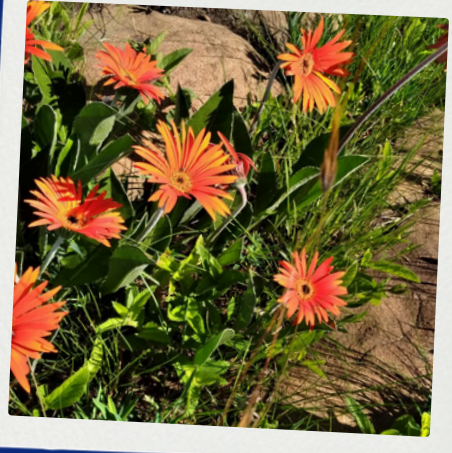














Collect moments, not things.



