

Fauna

You might encounter one of these animals, however some of them are extremely shy or nocturnal:

Aardvark, Jackal, Cape fox, Cape hare, Baboons, Grey duiker, Grey rhebok, Klipspringer, Kudu, Leopard, Meerkat, Porcupine, Honey badger, Dassie, Genet, Springbok, Steenbok, Mongoose, Eagles.

Snakes (cape cobra, puff adder) are rare due to scarcity of small mammals to feed of but do occur as do scorpions.

Flora

The Tankwa Karoo is within the Succulent Karoo Biome. The Succulent Karoo Biodiversity Hotspot covers some 116,000km² of desert stretching along the Atlantic coast of Africa, from south-western South Africa into southern Namibia. It is one of the 25 richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life on earth and the only arid region recognised as a biodiversity hotspot. Compared to other hotspots, the vegetation remains relatively intact. The Lowland Succulent Karoo is described as very sparse shrub land and dwarf shrub land. Dwarf Shrubland (Ganna bush) dominated by leaf succulents is found throughout the Tankwa Karoo.

The Succulent Karoo is vulnerable to several land use pressures, particularly overgrazing on communal lands, ostrich farming in the southeast, mining and the illegal collection of plants and animals for trade. Grasses are uncommon, making most the biome unsuitable for grazing. The low rainfall, in fact, discourages most forms of agriculture. Climate change is also expected to have a serious impact on the region's biodiversity.

Herbivory by domestic livestock has probably altered species composition of large sections of the Tankwa. There appears to be no rapid reliable or economically feasible method for restoring function and species diversity to such rangelands.

Climate

The Tankwa Karoo is one of the most arid sections of the Karoo (25-100mm rain p/a). The extremely arid summers make large parts of the Karoo unsuitable for farming. The Doring and Tankwa rivers, which rise in the Klein Roggeveld region, drain the Tankwa Karoo. These rivers are non-perennial, experiencing occasional floods during heavy rainstorms. The Tankwa river flows through Stonehenge nature reserve.

The mean July (winter) minimum temperature is 6°C (lowest measured -1°C), and the mean January (summer) maximum temperature is 38°C (highest measured 50°C). The highest average maximum temperatures occur from November to March with the hottest months being January and February. The highest wind speeds occur from October to March.

In May days are usually pleasantly warm, nights can be chilly. Most likely there is no or little rainfall, however if it rains it's often a rainstorm. Dust or sandstorms do occur.

Best time to visit Stonehenge nature reserve and Tankwa Artscape is from March to November.