

DORO !NAWAS CONSERVANCY WILDLIFE & ECOLOGY

The 407 300-hectare (1 006 425-acre) Doro !Nawas Conservancy is situated a short distance inland from the stark Skeleton Coast and just north of the true Namib Desert. This is one of the driest, most desolate regions in all of Africa. In this arid environment, the ceaseless processes of life revolve around harnessing the near non-existent water in the most economical way possible. Desert adaptation is the miracle of the surprisingly rich diversity of fauna and flora surviving here.

CAMPS

- Doro Nawas

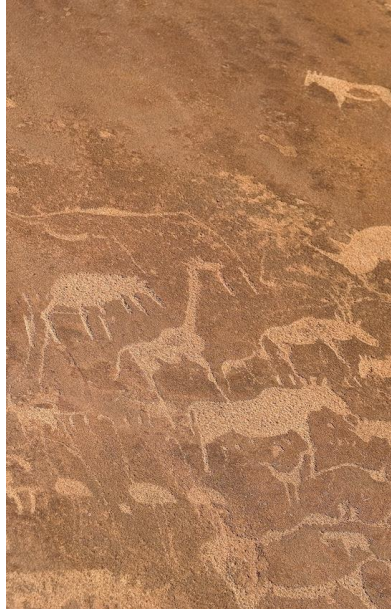


The landscape ranges from boulder-strewn floodplains, canyons and dry riverbeds to curious rock formations surrounded by sand dunes. Namibia's geological formations are amongst the oldest in the world: The Petrified Forest is a collection of 280-million-year-old fossilised tree trunks, while the Burnt Mountain and Organ Pipes (a mass of perpendicular dolerite pillars) are also ancient.

The principal source of water in the Doro !Nawas Conservancy comes from the famous Namibian early morning mists generated by the icy waters of the Atlantic Ocean colliding with the hot desert air of the Skeleton Coast. This daily cycle of airborne moisture rolls inland along the various depressions and canyons formed by ancient rivers. As the dew settles, it is eagerly harvested by plants, animals and insects before the Namibian sun climbs into the sky and burns it away.

Doro Nawas Camp rests on a sparse, rocky knoll in the breathtaking Aba-Huab River Valley, a landscape that, in times of good rainfall, is transformed into a carpet of golden grass and beautiful desert flowers.

Obviously, this scrub landscape cannot support large numbers or concentrated herds of wildlife, but nevertheless boasts a varied and surprising assortment of desert-adapted species. The Conservancy supports healthy populations of the unique desert-adapted elephant, a special highlight here. Other game species complementing this landscape include gemsbok (oryx), kudu, springbok, steenbok and occasionally the rare desert-adapted black rhino. Carnivores include brown hyaena, bat-eared fox and black-backed jackal.



Birding is varied here too. Raptors could include the secretarybird, booted eagle, black-chested snake-eagle, martial eagle, lappet-faced vulture and pale chanting goshawk. The endemic Benguela long-billed lark is common on the rocky slopes here, its plaintive whistling call an evocative sound.

Other endemics include Rüpell's korhaan, Monteiro's hornbill, Carp's tit and bokmakierie. During good rainy seasons, seedeaters like red-billed quelea can be in abundance at Twyfelfontein 'Dam' and there is always the odd Gabar goshawk looking for a tasty meal here.

The sandstone rocks of Twyfelfontein harbour fascinating reptiles such as Namib rock agama and day gecko.