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KITULO NATIONAL PARK

Perched at around 2600 meters above sea level between the rugged peaks of the Kipengere, Poroto and Livingstone mountains, the well-watered volcanic soils of Kitulo support the largest and most important montane grassland community in Tanzania. Referred by locals as The Garden of God, Kitulo National Park is “one of the great floral spectacles of the world”, a rare botanical marvel and home to 350 species of vascular plants, including 45 varieties of terrestrial orchid, which erupt into a riotous wildflower display of breathtaking scale and diversity during the main rainy season of late November to April.

One of the most important watersheds for the Great Ruaha River, Kitulo is also the first national park in tropical Africa to be gazetted largely for its floral significance-not only a multitude of orchids, but also the stunning yellow-orange red-hot poker and a variety of aloes, proteas, geraniums, giant lobelias, lilies and aster daisies, of which more than 30 species are endemic to southern Tanzania. But Kitulo is also attractive for bird watching, home to rare bird species. Big game is sparsely represented, though a few hardy mountain reedbuck and eland still roam the open grassland. Located about 100 kilometres from Mbeya town in Southern Tanzania, Kitulo National Park (413 sq km) is a botanist and hiker’s paradise. Wild flowers displays peak during the rainy season between December and April excellent time for botanists, while the sunnier months of September to November are more comfortable for hiking but less rewarding to botanists. Conditions are cold and foggy from June to August. Accommodation is available in Mbeya town.



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