

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, SURVEY &
MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR ROCK ART SITES:**

NORTHDENE 1A

NORTHDENE 1B

on the farm NORTHDENE 247-IT, ROBURNIA PLANTATION

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

**PREPARED FOR
KOMATILAND FORESTS**



MAY 2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was done in the area known as Roburnia Plantation, situated near the Blairmore office, Amsterdam, Mpumalanga, on *the farm NORTHDENE 247 IT*. SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests requested that the rock art site (*NORTHDENE*) be assessed and management guidelines drawn up. It was initially thought that only one of the large sandstone boulders had rock art on, but 2 sites in the cluster were identified. The sites are included in Komatiland Forests inventory of *Areas of Special Interest (ASI)* for Roburnia Plantation. The one site is recorded under the code, ASI 737-159B.

A phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment was conducted and surveyed for archaeological and historical cultural remains in the vicinity of the rock art sites. Visibility of the area was good. The sites are vulnerable and threatened by uncontrolled visitation, mainly by the surrounding communities. Chip and scratch marks on the images are also clearly visible and natural ochre wash damage obscures the images.

The National Heritage Resources Act, no 25 (1999)(NHRA), protects all heritage resources, which are classified as national estate, and it is stated in section 27(18) that “no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site,” and in section 35(4) “No person may without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority – (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological site.

It is recommended that Management Guidelines, as set out in Part II, be implemented by the SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests Plantation Manager for the Roburnia section, and that quarterly and annual monitoring take place (see PART II for Management Guidelines), to ensure the effective management and conservation of the rock art sites.

Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Pubic document as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.

Disclaimer: *Although all possible care is taken to identify all sites of cultural significance during the investigation, it is possible that hidden or sub-surface sites could be overlooked during the study. Christine Rowe trading as Adansonia Heritage Consultants will not be held liable for such oversights or for costs incurred by the client as a result.*

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C. Rowe / MAY 2019

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**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, SURVEY & MANAGEMENT
GUIDELINES FOR ROCK ART SITES: *NORTHDENE 1A & NORTHDENE 1B*
*on the farm NORTHDENE 247-IT, ROBURNIA PLANTATION***

A. INTRODUCTION

Adansonia Heritage Consultants were appointed by SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests, to conduct a phase 1 archaeological impact assessment, as well as to recommend management guidelines for the conservation of the rock art sites on the farm Northdene, Roburnia Plantation, *NORTHDENE 1A & NORTHDENE 1B*, east of the (R33) Amsterdam-Piet Retief road, and 8km west of the Swaziland border. The sites are included in SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests' inventory of *Areas of Special Interest (ASI)* for Roburnia Plantation under the code, ASI 737-159B.¹

B. AIMS OF REPORT

The aims of this report are to source all relevant information, archaeological resources, background information and origins of the rock art on the sites near the Blairmore offices, *on the farm Northdene 247 IT*. SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests will be advised as to the current status of the rock art sites, and management guidelines will be proposed to ensure the future protection of the sites. Specifications, as set out in the National Heritage Resources Act no., 25 of 1999 (NHRA) were used as a guideline, although each site is unique with specialized requirements. The study area is indicated in Maps 1 – 4 and Appendix 1 (ASI) & 4 (site record forms).

C. METHODOLOGY

The rock art sites on the farm *Northdene 247 IT*, near the Blairmore office, were visited in January, April and May 2019, and a full investigation was conducted on the current status of the sites.

• **Fieldwork & Survey:**

The research was conducted by means of:

1. Fieldwork and survey of the study area were conducted on foot, and indicated by GPS co-ordinates;
2. The sites were photographed and site information was recorded on forms.

¹ SAFCOL Integrated Management System: ASI Record, 18/04/2018.

3. Digital photographs were used and the images were colour enhanced with a specialized computer programme (Image J / D-stretch) in order to get a complete record of the sites (see photographic documentation in text). The standard “*First Visit*” *Site Information* forms, as well as *Rock Art Site Record* forms, as currently used by the Rock Art Research Institute at Wits University, were used.
4. Research was conducted by means of collecting primary or secondary literary sources with relevant information on the prehistory and history of the area;
5. Evaluation of the status of the sites was done within the framework provided by the National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 (1999) and South African Heritage Resources Authority's (SAHRA) guidelines;
6. Personal and written information were acquired from employees of SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests.

- **Survey of the study area:**

The site is situated south of a drainage line and has a good view over the landscape below. The site is within a prominent cluster of approximately sixteen huge sandstone boulders. A large firebreak is situated towards the north and commercial plantations under the jurisdiction of SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests, are towards the east and west. The survey took place during January, April and May 2019, and visibility was good. GPS co-ordinates were used to locate the rock art sites on the property.

- **National Heritage Resources Act**

All archaeological and other cultural heritage resources are evaluated according to the National Heritage Resources Act, no., 25, 1999 (NHRA), section 3(3). A place or object is considered to be part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value in terms of:

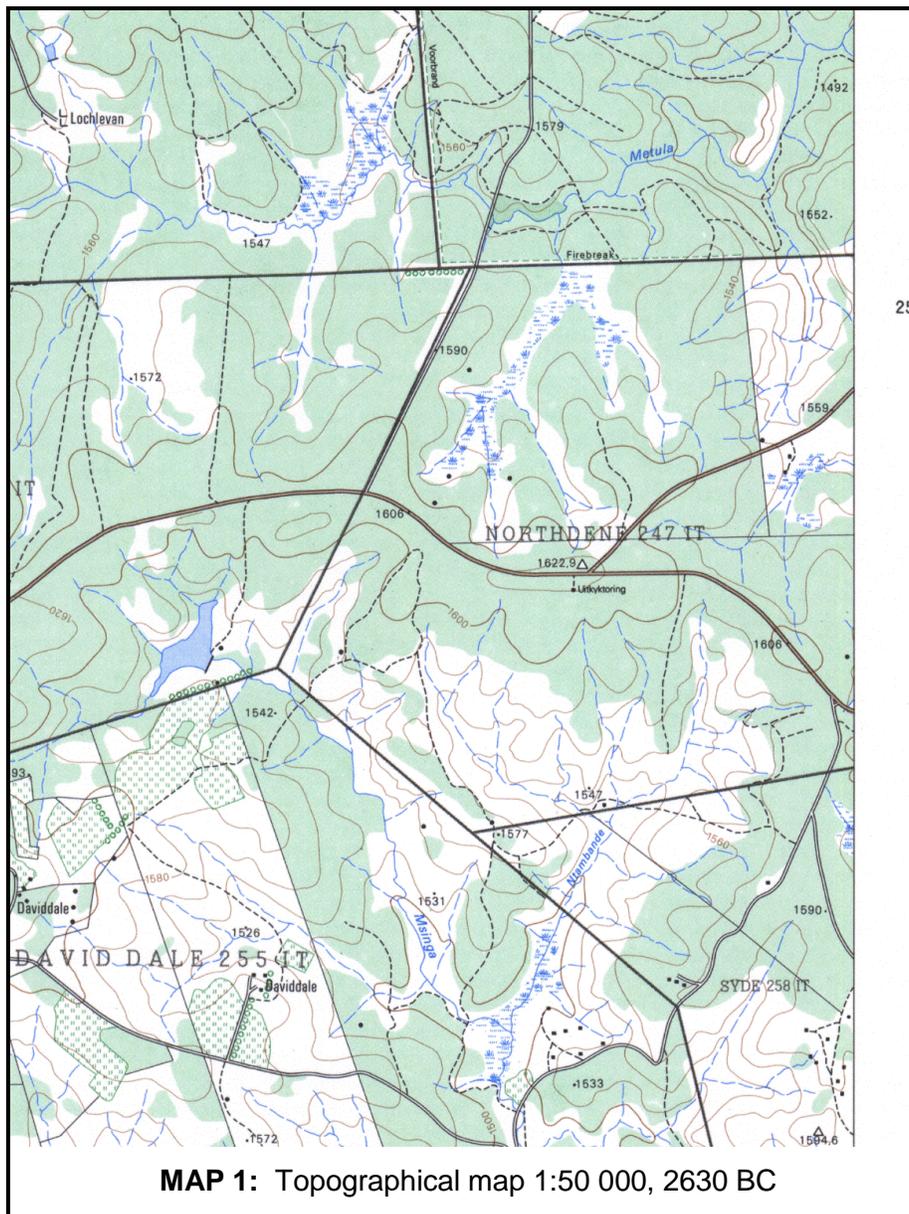
- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- (d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- (e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;

(f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;

(g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

D. LOCALITY

The study area includes the two rock art sites which were identified in a cluster of large sandstone boulders on *the farm* NORTHDENE 247-IT, on the Roburnia Plantation. It is situated on topographical map 1:50 000, 2630 BC (see Map 1).



The farm is situated east of the Amsterdam-Piet Retief road (R33).

Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Public documents as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.

MAP 2: Google image: The Maryvale / Fernie road to *Northdene*, from the R33.

Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Public documents as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.

MAP 3: Unmarked dirt road (red line) towards the site.



Fig. a: The cluster of boulders as seen from the access road.

Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Public documents as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.

MAP 4: *NORTHDENE 1A & 1B* is indicated on the Google image (2018).

E. CURRENT STATUS: FABRIC, ASSOCIATIONS & SETTING

Rock art site names are standardised to conform to the national site names, which are also specified by the Rock Art Research Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand (RARI - WITS). The sites are officially allocated the names of the farm on which it is situated, *NORTHDENE 1A & NORTHDENE 1B*. They are grouped under *NORTHDENE 1 (A & B)* as they are in the same cluster or complex of boulders. *NORTHDENE 1A* was discovered and reported in 2018 by Mr. Willem du Toit (Plantation Manager for the Roburnia section),² and is not known by other general names. After the first visit to the site, and a thorough investigation of the boulders, *NORTHDENE 1B* was also identified by the author, Christine Rowe and Manny Antunes.

- **Background**

SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests have identified 54 *Areas of Special Interest (ASI)* on the Blairmore section at Roburnia. Most of these sites are cultural heritage features related to black (Late Iron Age & recent), or white (recent) history, with two sites identified as rock art or Stone Age sites.³

Cultural resources are those natural and modified features of the landscape associated with human activity, both past and present which includes *inter alia*, rock art. All these resources are critical to the understanding and interpreting of southern African colonial and pre-colonial history. They are fragile and may be destroyed unless proper management principles are implemented. These finite and non-renewable resources cannot be recovered, once they are lost.⁴

Rock art is a legacy left by the Bushman (San people) who lived in the area. The art was created primarily for religious and ritual purposes, and every rock art site is therefore regarded as a sacred site.

Rock art forms part of South Africa's rich history with a combination of unique features:

1. Rock art occurs in all sections of the Mpumalanga Province, but has not been extensively researched;

² SAFCOL Integrated Management System: ASI Record, 18/04/2018.

³ C. Foster, e-mail correspondence 2019-05-29.

⁴ E.J. Wahl, A.D. Mazel & S.E. Roberts, *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*, p. 2.

2. A wide range of images are depicted in the art;
3. The paintings are preserved not only in their natural setting, but also in their cultural context. The floors of painted shelters are often strewn with artefacts which were made and used by the San hunter-gatherers;
4. The rock art of the region uniquely represents a coherent artistic tradition and embodies the beliefs and cosmology of the San of this area, their contacts with other people and their changed circumstances through time;
5. Some of the rock art sites were later used by other cultural groups for protection or as places of refuge. ⁵

- **Legislative context**

The management of cultural resources in the Mpumalanga Province is mandated by the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25, 1999 (NHRA), which aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations. Heritage is unique and it cannot be renewed, and contributes to redressing past inequities.⁶ It promotes previously neglected research areas of which the study area is in crucial need of.

The NHRA protects all ancient sites and states in Section 27(18) that “no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site;” ⁷

Rock art is a priority for all custodians (in this case SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests), in terms of cultural resources management. Rock art sites can play a major role in understanding the history of San people who once lived in this area. It is stated under the general principles for heritage resources management specified in the NHRA, section (5) that “all authorities performing functions and exercising powers in terms of this Act for the management of heritage resources must recognise certain principles” such as:

⁵ E.J. Wahl, A.D. Mazel & S.E. Roberts, *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*, p. 2.

⁶ National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p. 2.

⁷ National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p. 42.

1. “the lasting value of heritage resources and the valuable, finite, non-renewable and irreplaceable aspects thereof;
2. the moral responsibility;
3. to ensure that heritage resources are effectively managed;
4. laws and procedures should be clear and available;
5. heritage resources form an important part of the history and beliefs of communities;
6. heritage resources contribute to research and education and should be developed in a respectful way”.⁸

The general protection of the NHRA, states in section 5(7) that “the identification, assessment and management of the heritage resources of South Africa must - (a) take account of all relevant cultural values...” and forms part of the national estate.⁹

“**alter**” means - any action affecting the appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or other decoration or any other means;

“**archaeological**” means:

(a) **material remains** resulting from human activity which is in a state of disuse and are in or on land and which are older than 100 years, including artefacts, human remains and artificial features and structures; and

(b) **rock art**, being any form of painting, engraving or other graphic representation on a fixed rock surface or loose rock or stone, which was executed by human agency and which is older than 100 years, including any area within 10m of such representation.

“**conservation**” in relation to heritage resources, includes protection, maintenance preservation and sustainable use of places or objects so as to safeguard their cultural significance;¹⁰

GENERAL BACKGROUND OF THE SAN PAINTING TRADITION

The San or Bushman attached special meanings to certain places, and the rock art or paintings enhanced the power of that place and the influence it had on the lives of the people. ¹¹ For the Bushman, potency flowed from the animal, via its blood, to the paintings where it was stored (they used animal blood in the paint pigment), and then

⁸National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p.16.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰ National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999, pp. 6-8.

¹¹ Deacon, J., *Some views on Rock Paintings in the Cederberg*, p. 42.

from the painting to trancing shamans. Painted sites were thus storehouses of the potency that made contact with the spiritual world possible. It guaranteed humankind's existence by facilitating healing, rain-making, animal control (hunting) etc. What we see in the San or Bushman rock art, is a blend of real and visionary elements, which was depicted by the San shamans' multi-dimensional view of reality.¹²

In general, the images at the *NORTHDENE 1A & NORTHDENE 1B* sites were done in one colour (monochrome), two colours (bichrome) and possibly even more than two colours (polychrome). Black or white paints are more fugitive than reds,¹³ and had already faded at *NORTHDENE*. The art can only be interpreted by an understanding of the culture from which it comes. (Please note that the author will not go into any depth of the culture, background, history or trance experiences of the Bushman in this report, and only focus on general explanations); (see also Appendix 2).

Dawid Lewis-Williams stated that when we look at Bushman rock art, we should always be alert to kinds of depiction that have never been found before and that represents the insights of particular shaman-artists. It was likely that many or possibly all the Bushman artists were shamans. It is probable that the shamans remembered and then depicted what they experienced during the trance experiences, while in a normal state of consciousness. Sensations such as floating, trembling, shivering, sweating, nasal bleeding etc., are depicted in several ways onto the walls of the rock shelters to communicate messages from the "other world" to the Bushman group.¹⁴

Therianthropes are representations of people with animal features who are experiencing trance. These features include hoofs, antelope heads etc., (fig. 16). Moreover, human beings are also depicted combined with a range of animals. Antelope therianthropes probably reflect a shaman's relationship with an animal from which he derives his potency and after which medicine songs are named. A man may be said to possess eland potency or gemsbok potency. A man possessing eland potency would see what the eland saw and therefore know their whereabouts.¹⁵

¹² Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, pp. 36 & 51.

¹³ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 17.

¹⁴ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 35.

¹⁵ Therianthropes: http://ringingrocks.wits.ac.za/subject/trance_dance/therianthropes Access: 2019-05-23.

- **NORTHDENE 1A** (See Appendix 4: First Visit & Rock Art Site Record & Photo documentation)

SITE NAME	GENERAL NAME	ORIGINS / TRADITION	GPS CO-ORDINATES	ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL
NORTHDENE 1A	Northdene paintings	SAN / BUSHMAN	Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Pubic documents as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.	DEPOSIT: NONE - No archaeological deposit was identified. The presence of small animals using the shelter for protection, were noted. Clay potsherds were identified under another boulder in the same cluster of boulders, but not at Northdene 1A



Fig. b: The locality of *NORTHDENE 1A* within the cluster of boulders.



Fig. c: The rock art is obscured by a large tree in front of the boulder, as well as smaller trees and bush. Many smaller rocks and boulders, are visible in the close vicinity.

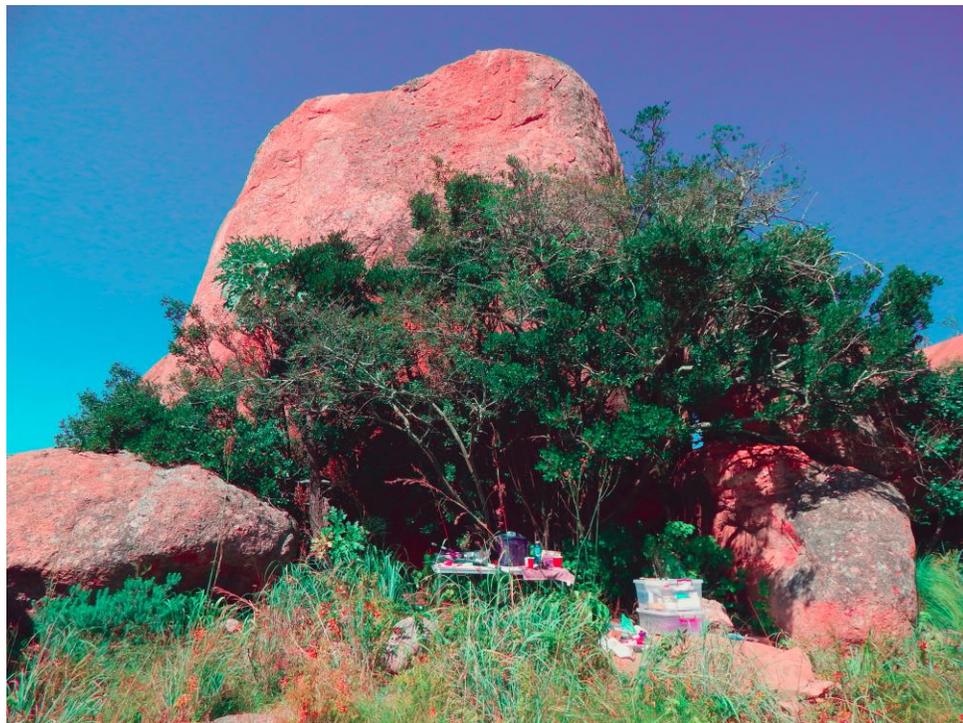


Fig. d: The photo was colour enhanced to show the boulder behind the trees and bush. The paintings are towards the lower end of the boulder (in the dark shady overhang), not higher than one meter from the ground / surface level).



Fig. e: A side or east view of the *Northdene 1A* boulder. The art is against the rock face where the tree is situated (see arrow).

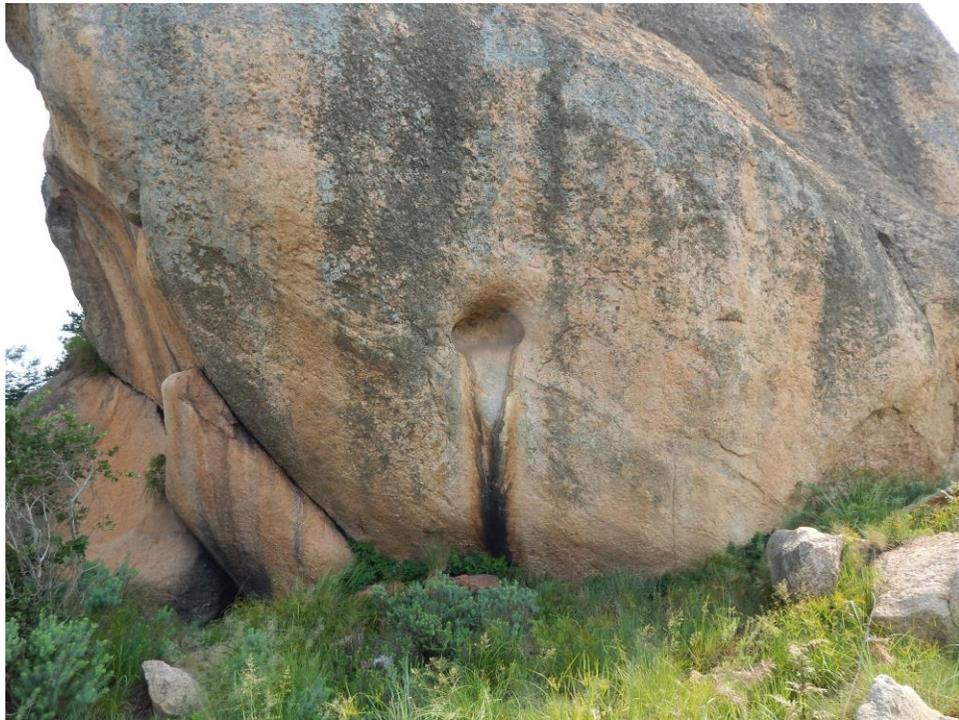


Fig. f: A distinct feature in the *Northdene 1A* boulder, which might have been significant to the San people and a possible reason they chose this as a painting site.



Fig. g: The image shows trees, vegetation and rocks in front of the boulder with the images.

DISCUSSION: *NORTHDENE 1A:*

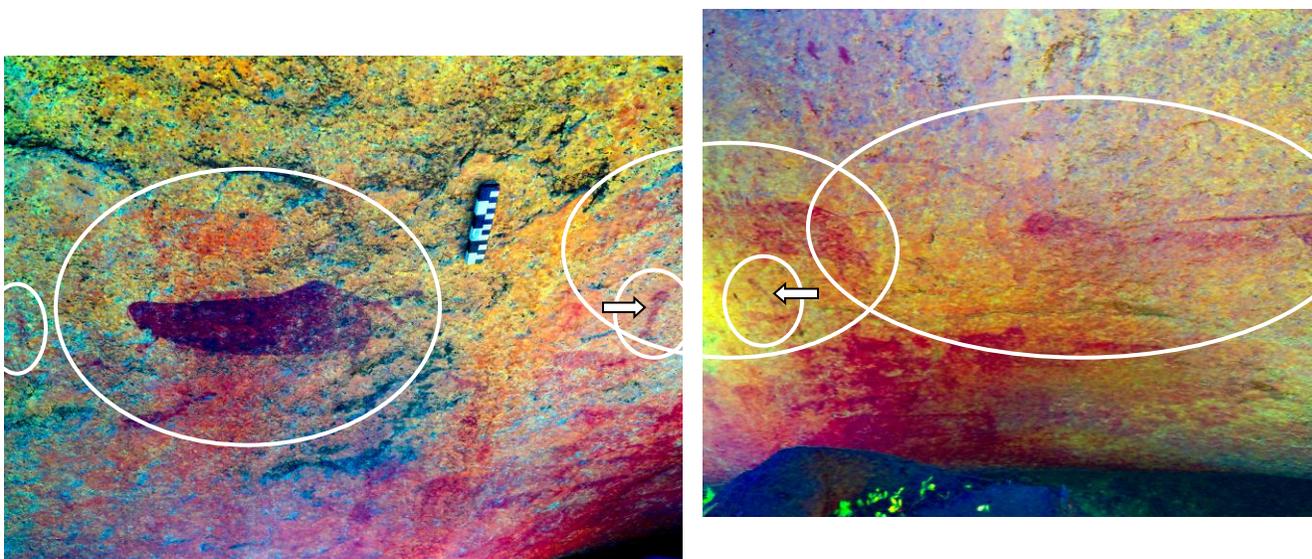


Fig. 1: The images are highlighted for easier reference. To the far left is a group of human figures. The dark red ochre animal is superimposed on other faint images (note such an image at the top). In the middle is the “trance buck,” and to the right is a “long necked antelope.” The arrow indicates a human figure (which is the same one in the 2nd photograph (see schematical drawing fig. 2).

Many of the colours at the *NORTHDENE 1A* site have already faded, and damage by chip marks and severe ochre wash make identification even more difficult (figs. 53 – 56). A large antelope (dark red ochre) is the most prominent and visible animal in the panel (fig. 17 – 18). A (very faint) *trance buck* is roughly situated in the middle (figs. 24 – 25), and another large *long necked* antelope (very faint), is towards the right (fig. 27). More large antelopes are in the panel below, but severe ochre wash and chip marks make it difficult to identify (figs. 33 – 36). Only a few human figures are visible in this panel and no weapons or sticks can clearly be identified (figs. 22 & 32).

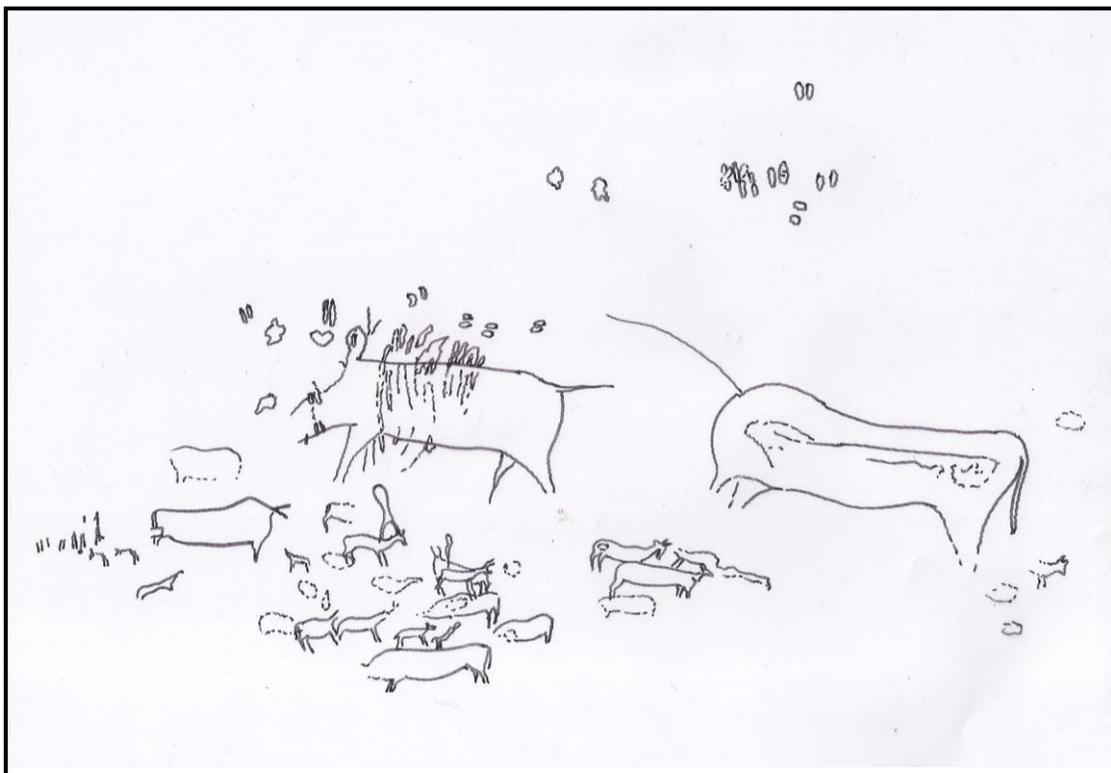


Fig. 2: Schematical drawing of the *Northdene 1A* panel (Non-contact tracing: C. Rowe / not to scale).

The images in the *NORTHDENE 1A* panel are extremely faded and indistinct and it is not easy to identify with the naked eye. A dark red ochre image (figs. 17 – 18), possibly of an eland, is more visible, and has not faded as much as other red ochre images. It is also clear that a second colour (possible white), was used for the neck and head of some of the animals, which had already faded. Light brown and orange ochre colors are very indistinct throughout the panel. Digital photographs were used and the images were colour enhanced in an attempt to get a better understanding of the images. However, the panel has deteriorated to such an extent that even with the enhancements, it was not easy to record.

The most visible antelope in the panel is a dark red ochre antelope (figs. 17 - 18). There is another faint image (antelope) above this image. A group of faint human figures are visible to the left (fig. 22). This antelope is superimposed on a smaller buck / antelope (see fig. 3). Chip marks and ochre washing obscure the images above and below. (Chip marks in fig. 3 are indicated in white). A fugitive colour such as white, was most probably used for the head.

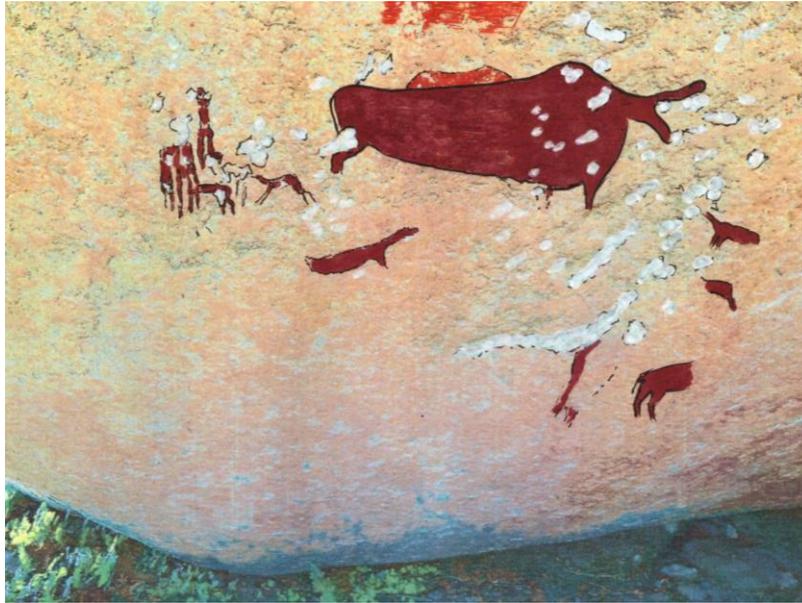


Fig. 3: Dark red ochre antelope, superimposed on a lighter orange ochre buck. A group of human figures are to the left.

Super-positioning is not uncommon in the rock art, and was deliberately done, although the specific meaning is not clearly known. The placing of one painting on top of another was important to the artists, and was part of the trance experience. ¹⁶ (See also figs. 25, 33 & 34).

A clear image of antelope horns, as well as a prominent red line is visible above, and to the left of the dark red ochre antelope (see figs. 20 & 21). This animal was also probably done in two colours, of which the body has faded. Chip marks and ochre washing further obscure all other images (figs. 36, 50 – 56).

¹⁶ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 150.



Fig. 4: A group of indistinct human figures. One figure is bending forward and possibly supporting itself on sticks.

A group of faint human images are visible to the left of the dark red ochre antelope (figs. 4 & 22). Ochre wash damage and chip marks make identification very difficult. One of the images below the group, is in a forward bending posture, an important feature. As a shaman's potency begins to 'boil', his stomach muscles contract into a tight, painful knot and he bends forward, sometimes with the torso at right angles to his legs. In this position he often supports his weight on one or two dancing sticks.¹⁷ A similar image was noted at the **Lochiel 2** site which is near Northdene (see fig. 5, below).

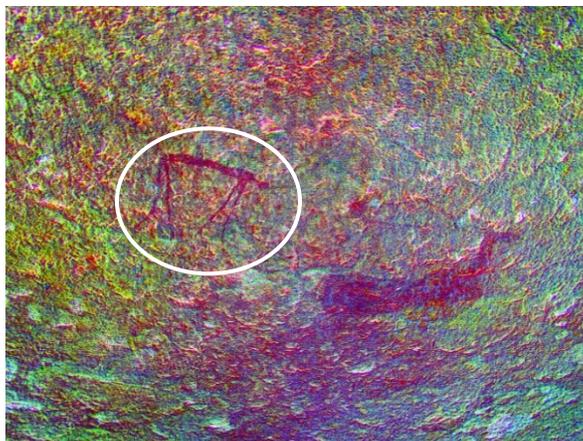


Fig. 5: A similar image at the **Lochiel 2** site, close to Northdene, clearly balancing on sticks for support.

¹⁷ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 40.



Fig. 6: A “trance buck.” Dots and stripes (in pairs), are on and above this antelope. (Chip marks on the image are indicated in white).

Two other prominent (but extremely faint) images of antelope are situated to the right of the dark red antelope. For the purpose of this report, the one is called a “trance buck,” (figs. 6, 24 & 25), and the other a “long necked” antelope (fig. 27). Both antelope were originally done in more than one colour (bichrome or polychrome) of which one colour has faded completely and / or the other colours are very faint.

Many stripes and dots (of which some could possibly have been human figures), are visible on and above the *trance buck* (figs. 24, 28 & 29). The neck line of the *trance buck* is clearly visible, which suggests that the head of this animal was probably done in a white colour which had already faded. The commonest Bushman metaphor for trance is ‘death’. They say that shamans’ die (during trance), when they cross over in the the spirit world. One of the ways in which the artists depicted this metaphor was through animal behaviour. They noticed a striking similarity between a ‘dying’ shaman and a dying antelope (dying from the effects of a poisoned arrow). Both the shaman and the animal tremble violently, stagger, lower their heads, bleed from the nose, sweat excessively and finally collapse unconscious. The animals’ hair stands on end. Many of these features are depicted in the art.¹⁸ The *trance buck* at *NORTHDENE 1A*, (metaphor for what the shaman is experiencing), is dying, lowering its head, the dots and stripes are possibly indicating a trembling sensation which is part of the dying process. This explanation is also relevant to the discussion at the image of the therianthropes at the *NORTHDENE 1B* site (fig. 42).

¹⁸ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 50.

At least two human figures are visible below the *trance buck* image (see figs. 6 & 32). One arm (of the more prominent figure), is barely visible and is bended in a slightly upward position, which may indicate a dancing posture.¹⁹ The legs and lower body of another figure are visible to the left (fig. 32). Two straight lines next to it are possibly sticks or weapons.

Detail of the section below the *trance buck*, is largely obscured by chip marks and ochre wash damage (figs. 26 & 32). It was difficult to photograph these images with the presence of a large tree in front of the panel (figs. 43 - 47).



Fig. 7: *Long necked antelope.*

The *Long necked antelope* (figs. 24 & 27) is extremely faded. The long neck line is more prominent and highlighted. The head of the *Long necked antelope* was done in another colour which has already faded. Very indistinct images (possibly smaller buck) are superimposed in the body of the antelope (fig. 7). This might perhaps be a suggestion of fertility as the images remind of a fetus / unborn mammal (author's observation). David Lewis-Williams has suggested that a line connecting other images (such as the line in the body of the *long necked antelope*) may represent lines of potency or magic force.²⁰

¹⁹ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 42.

²⁰ Deacon, J., *Some views on Rock Paintings in the Cederberg*, p. 45.

The images are extremely indistinct, and crucial features are not visible - therefore clear interpretations are not possible (fig. 43).

A series of dots, in distinct pairs are visible above the antelope. The dots probably depict potency (figs. 6, 28 & 29). At a dance, only trancing shamans can see potency (in this case the dots and stripes).²¹

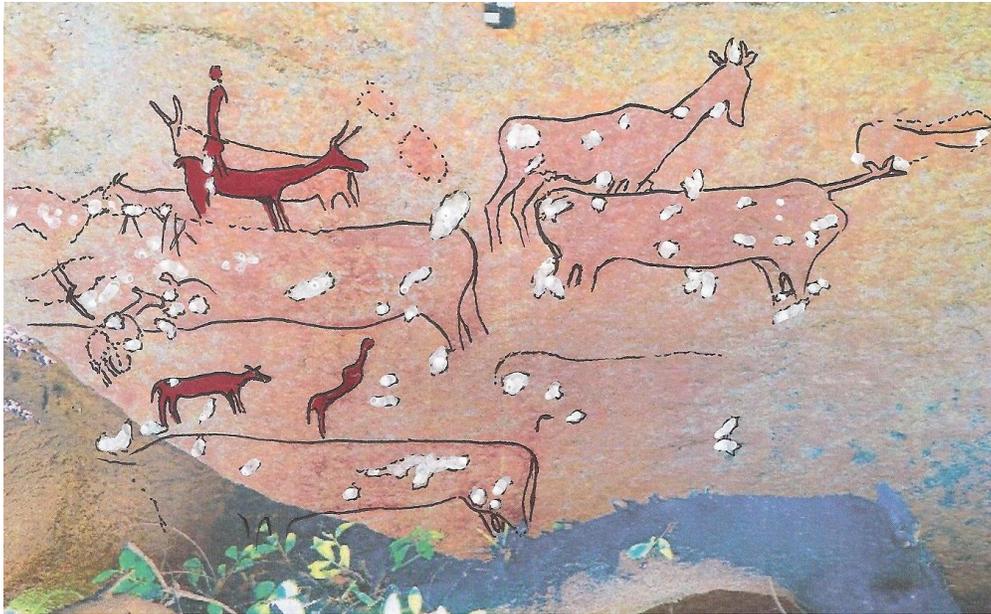


Fig. 8: Images below the *trance buck* are extremely indistinct. This is also just above ground / surface level. Chip marks on the images are indicated in white.

Many superimposed images are visible in the panel below the *trance buck*. The images have been damaged by chip marks and ochre washing. Note the two distinct superimposed buck which are done in different colours (figs. 8, 26, 32, 33 – 36 & 50 - 56).

One of the animals in this panel seems to be a depiction of a hartebeest, as it is identified by its horns and square snout (figs. 8 & 34). Another buck / antelope is visible just below the hartebeest (fig. 35). This antelope has a distinct outline on the back and the neck. Even the ears are depicted. The neck and head were done in a different colour which has faded.

²¹ Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 45.

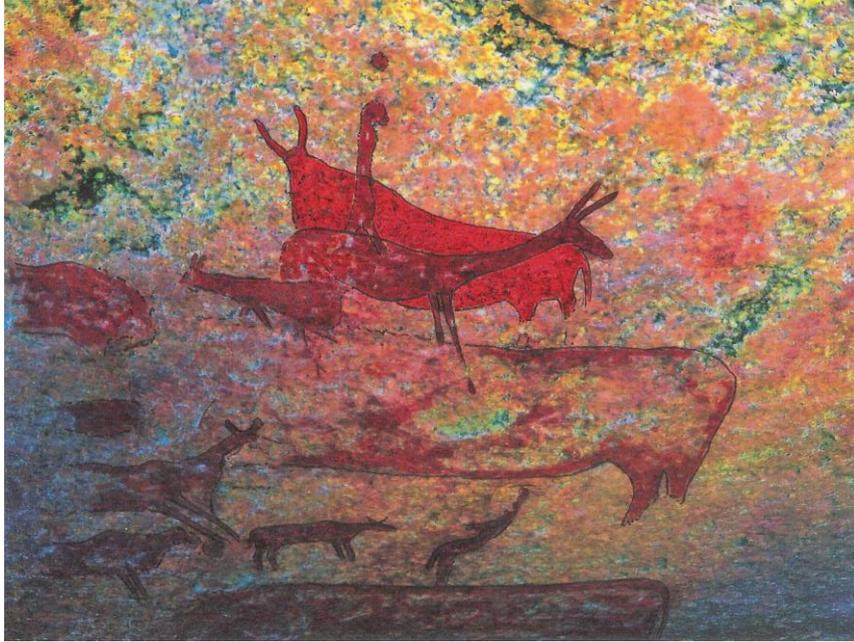


Fig. 9: Superimposed buck and a human figure.

Two distinct superimposed buck were done in different colours and an elongated human figure is also superimposed on these animals. The buck facing to the right might be a rhebuck as it has distinct large ears (figs. 9 & 33).

Most of the images have been damaged by chip marks and ochre washing (see the discussion above (figs. 50 - 56)).

- **NORTHDENE 1B** (See Appendix 4: First Visit & Rock Art Site Record & photographic documentation)

SITE NAME	GENERAL NAME	ORIGINS / TRADITION	GPS CO-ORDINATES	ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL
NORTHDENE 1B	Northdene paintings	SAN / BUSHMAN	Please note that the directions and GPS co-ordinates are not included in the Pubic documents as requested by the forestry company SAFCOL / KLF.	DEPOSIT: NONE - No archaeological deposit was identified. The shelter below the painting is 5m x 5m and human presence was noted (fires etc.) Small animals also use the shelter for protection. Clay potsherds were identified under another boulder in the same cluster of boulders, but not at Northdene 1B



Fig. h: The cluster of boulders where the Northdene paintings are situated.



Fig. i: A front view of *Northdene 1B*. A small bush is directly in front of where the images are situated. The shelter is behind the bush, underneath the boulder.



Fig. j: Side view of the boulder. Note the small shelter underneath the boulder.

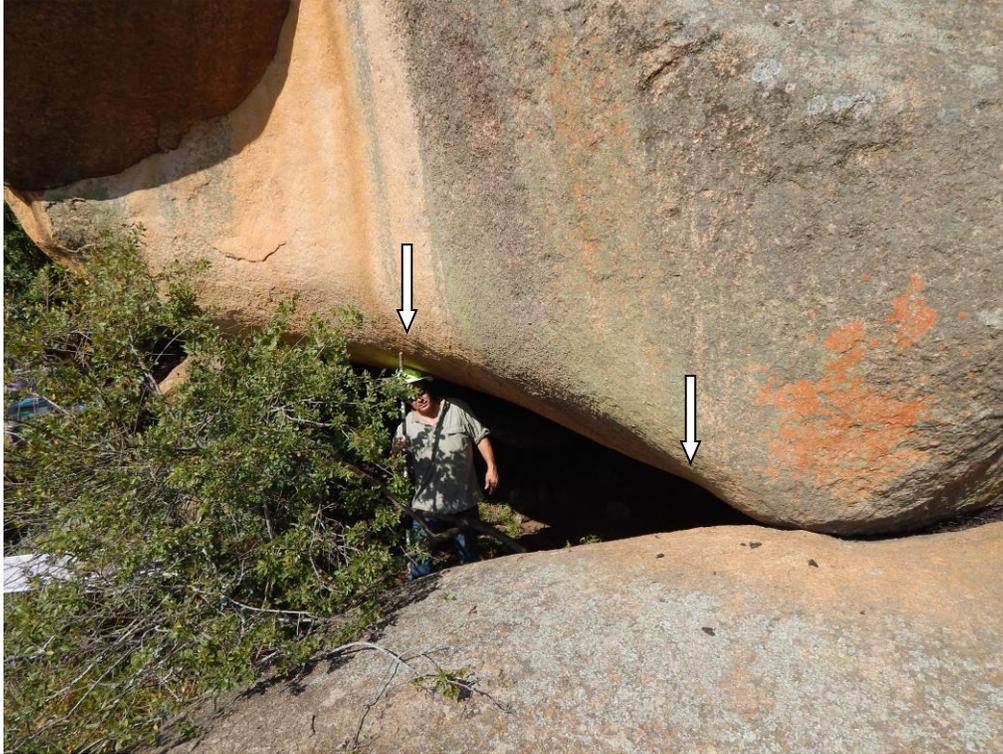


Fig. k: Most of the images are fully exposed and situated between the two arrows. Some of the images are on the roof of the overhang. Water seepage and lichen growth are visible which directly affects the images



Fig. l: The panel is approximately 1200mm x 1200mm in extent.

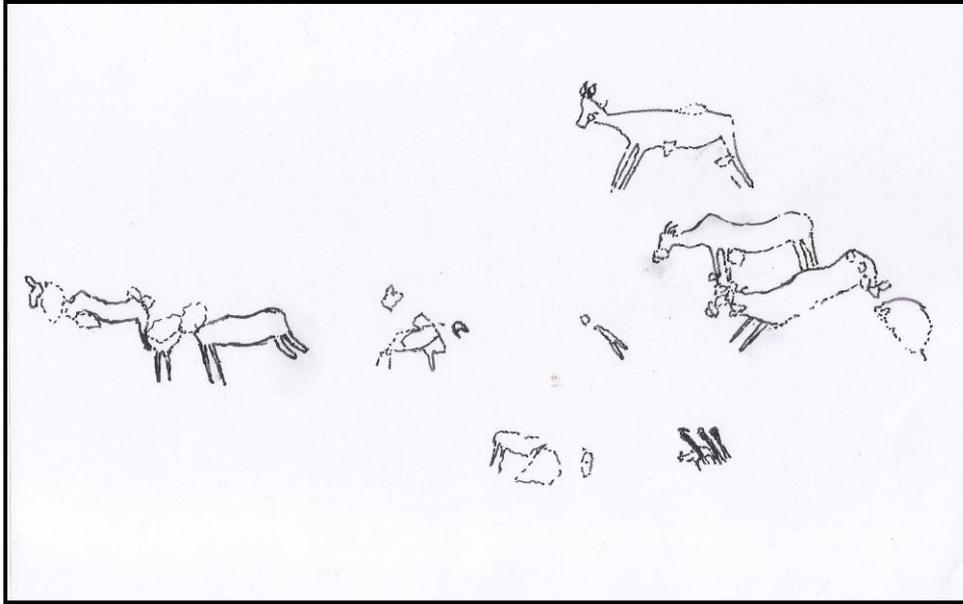


Fig. 10: Schematic drawing of the *Northdene 1B* panel (Non-contact tracing: C. Rowe / not to scale).

DISCUSSION: NORTHDENE 1B



Fig. 11: *Northdene 1B* consists of images of buck as well as a group of therianthropes.



Fig. 12: Possible rhebuck images.

A group of buck on the far left of the panel are very indistinct (fig. 10, 12 & 37). The big ears of the first animal suggest that these are rhebuck. The chip marks on the buck are enhanced in white to show the extent of the damage on these images.

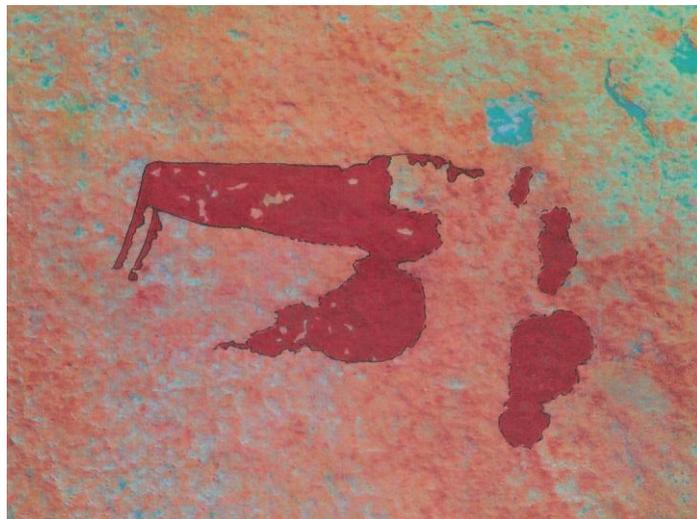


Fig. 13: A very faint image of the posterior of a buck or antelope.

The images in this section are barely visible, as they are obscured by ochre washing and chip marks (figs. 10, 11, 13 & 38). They are roughly situated in the middle of the panel. They were only identified by the hind legs (posterior) of one of the animals.

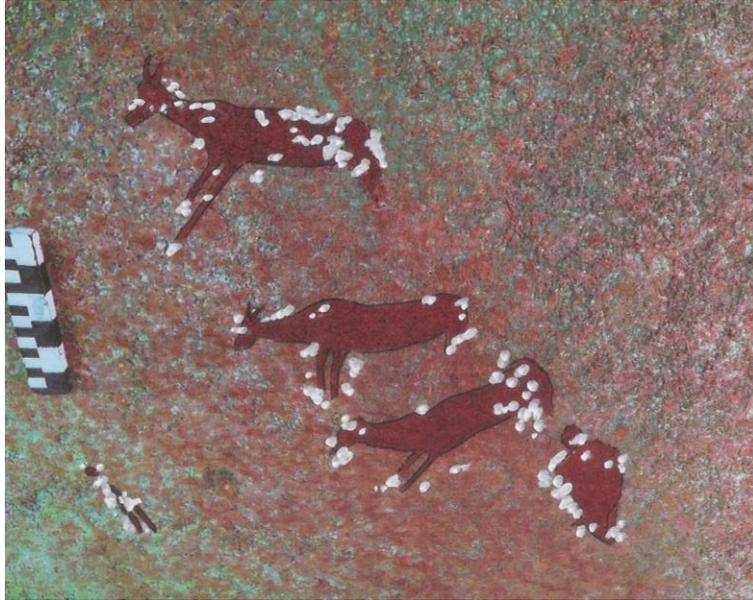


Fig. 14: A group of buck with a human figure to the left. (Chip marks on the images are indicated in white).

Three distinct buck (the fourth buck at the bottom has almost faded completely), painted one above the other (figs. 10, 11, 14 & 40). The second buck from the top has distinct horns (bending backward) (fig. 41). Note the faint human figure to the left of the animals, fig. 40 (see oval in figs. 11 & 15). Chip marks and ochre washing obscure the images.



Fig. 15: A very faint and damaged representation of a human figure. (Chip marks on the image are indicated in white).

A single faint human figure is situated to the left of a group of buck (fig. 15). This figure is damaged by chip marks to such an extent that it is hardly visible.



Fig. 16: A group of at least three therianthropes.

A group of at least three therianthropes - elongated figures (transformed to have animal features – antelope / buck heads and hooves), superimposed on a small buck (figs. 10, 11, 16 & 42). Chip marks have damaged these images extensively. The suggestion in this panel is that the shamans draw their potency from possibly the rhebuck, a buck that was abundant in the highveld area. The buck is in a dying posture (with its head lowered). The human figures are shamans who have been transformed so that they share the dying bucks' features (hoofs, and animal – rhebuck? heads). The animal characteristics of these figures show that their 'death' is analogous to the death of the buck with which they are painted and that in this 'death' they become like the buck.²²

F. PREHISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE SAN (BUSHMAN) IN THE HIGHVELD AREA OF MPUMALANGA

In academic terms, the word "Bushmen" was replaced with "San", although both terms are now currently accepted. The San people or "Bathwa" as the black people also refer to them, inhabited the Mpumalanga Escarpment long before black societies began to enter the region.²³ Remains of stone tools and rock art sites have been found throughout the province of Mpumalanga.²⁴

²² Lewis-Williams, D., & T. Dowson, *Images of Power*, p. 50.

²³Tlou Makhura, Early Inhabitants, in P. Delius (ed.), *Mpumalanga, History and heritage*, p. 91.

²⁴PRMA: Information file 9/2.

Rock art of southern Africa was part of a remarkable religious tradition. The art was not simply decorative or a record of daily life. Its purpose was deeper, and the trance dance was the central religious ritual of the San. Shamans, or medicine people used supernatural power obtained during trance states to make rain, heal the sick and maintain social harmony. Many rock paintings are depictions of visions experienced while in a trance. Others depict ritual occasions or the animals whose power the shamans hoped to use. The art is also a monument to the San who struggled to retain their rights and their land.²⁵

The disappearance of the San people in this region may be attributed to the greatly increased and rapidly expanding population of black settlers who immigrated to this area, especially since the 17th century, and the arrival of Europeans during the 19th century. Rock paintings and stone artifacts are the main records which remain of the San people's presence.

Some interesting information was obtained from the National Archives of South Africa, about the fascination with indigenous groups, at the beginning of the 20th century, as the following section shows. Please note that terms are kept in the original context of when it was first written during this time in history:

The British Association was to visit South Africa (Johannesburg) at the end of August 1905 and for this gathering a selection of the various native tribes, and papers on subjects regarding initiation ceremonies and diseases amongst natives,²⁶ were prepared as part of the program of events.

In early 1905, the Department of Native Affairs were enquiring at all their regional offices as well as District Magistrates offices, about the possible existence of "thoroughbred bushmen in the old Transvaal area"²⁷ (currently North-West, Gauteng, Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces). This information was needed for the planned visit of the Anthropological section of the British Association, in August 1905.

²⁵SAHRA, Rock Art, <http://www.sahra.org.za/rockart.htm> Access 2008-10-16.

²⁶SNA: 260 Letter from Central Division Native Commissioner, NCP 264/1905, 19 July 1905.

²⁷SNA: 260 Letter from Resident Magistrate Ermelo to Secretary for Native Affairs, 13/494, 21 July 1905.

The Resident Magistrate in Ermelo reported that “there are several Bushmen who appear to be thoroughbred” on the farm Bothwell 140, Chrissiesmeer area. He also reported that “a small tribe of wild Bushmen were discovered in the krantzes along the” Ingwempizi river, bordering Swaziland (Amsterdam area).²⁸ Most of them were already intermarried with Swazis but mention was also made of “Bushman families which are as near as possible thoroughbred” on the farm Florence of Mr. JW Grimes.²⁹ The Native Commission communicated to the resident magistrate to get some of these “Bushman” for the British Association’s visit, railway fares and subsistence allowance was to be paid by the Native Commission. The resident magistrate of Ermelo sent a telegram on 24 August 1905, to the Native Commission that Mr. Grimes stated the “bushmen absolutely refused to go to Johannesburg” as “they have superstitions if they leave [the] farm their children will die...”

There is very little known on the history of the San people in the Chrissiesmeer area but pioneer work has been done by anthropologist Frans Prins, of the Natal Museum who did some research on the current population of about 50 San individuals still living in the area. Mr. Frans Beets, (Plantation manager at the Redhill Plantation), was also aware of a worker nearby who claims to be of Bushman decent.³⁰ Further information was also discovered in the memoirs of a German, Jacob Filter who described that some “Bushman left the foothills of the Central KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg in 1879.” Jacob Filter was a transport rider between Natal and the then Eastern Transvaal. He described two groups of Bushmen – the ‘black’ Bushmen of Natal and the ‘yellow’ Bushmen of Lesotho. Both groups traveled together, and after four years, reached the Lake Chrissie area in Mpumalanga. Jacob Filter became well-known to these Bushmen groups and he also transported them on his ox-wagon.³¹

It is thought that their choice of destination was based on long-standing trade relations with Bushmen already resident in the area. The many overhanging shelters overlooking the famous pans found in the Lake Chrissie area, provided natural habitations and safe havens for the San. The pans themselves were used by the San to conceal themselves

²⁸SNA: 260 Letter from Resident Magistrate Ermelo to Secretary for Native Affairs, 13/494, 21 July 1905.

²⁹SNA: 260 Letter from Von Dessauer to Marwick, Undated.

³⁰F. Beets, Personal communication 2011-11-11.

³¹E. von Fintel (Red.), *Die Nachkommen van Johann Heinrich Jakob Filter 1858-2008: Die Geschiede einer Pionierfamilie in Nordnataal*, p. 405.

from the Swazi *impis* and Boer commandos. Tradition has it that they could remain submerged for hours at a time, breathing through reed pipes.

The current small Bushman community at Lake Chrissie was known to few ethnologists, but it is clear that they were the last remnants of the great painters of the Drakensberg. They have lived in this area for almost five generations and worked as farm laborers on sheep farms and have almost completely lost any link with their rich cultural heritage.

According to Prins, their original *Xegwi* language has been completely forgotten except for two very old men who could still remember fragments of this speech. They remember stories about their forefathers painting on the rocks and hunting with bows and arrows but had no idea of how to do this themselves. But, in spite of this, they regard themselves as Bushmen, “amaBushmana”. They still have the generic traits typical of the San, short body stature and a slant to the eyes, but there is an acute sense of loss of their original cultural identity and way of life.³²

Specific information on the *NORTHDENE 1A & 1B* sites are not obtainable.

NORTHDENE 1A was discovered by the Plantation Manager for Roburnia, Willem du Toit.^{33 34} Willem du Toit described that the site was (and is) not easy to see, as a large tree in front of the panel obscured the already faded images.³⁵ The images are indistinct and are easily overlooked.

Activities by local people were observed at the cluster of boulders where the rock art is situated. The shelter at the *NORTHDENE 1B* site, is spacious and protected and the remains of a fire was noted underneath. A cloth sachet (fig. 17), and a clay potsherd (fig. 18), were observed at another boulder just behind *NORTHDENE 1B*. It is possible that traditional medicine people attached a special meaning to the *NORTHDENE* boulders and might use it regularly for certain rituals.

³² Personal information: F. Prins, Anthropologist, Natal Museum. Interview by Sian Hall, Sept 1999.

³³ Personal information: C. Foster, Komatiland Forests, e-mail correspondence, 2018-05-16.

³⁴ SAFCOL Integrated Management System: ASI Record, 18/04/2018.

³⁵ Personal information: W. du Toit, Komatiland Forests, Roburnia, 2019-04-11.



Fig. 17: Cloth satchet which was observed near the rock art sites.



Fig. 18: Clay potsherds were observed at one of the boulders near the rock art sites.

G. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The two painted sites at *NORTHDENE*, are in need of management requirements due to unauthorized visits by possible traditional medicine people or cattle-herders. Signs of uncontrolled visitation at both sites are visible and activities such as fires and chip marks are a direct threat to the images. Chip and scratch marks on the art, are clearly visible at both sites. Both sites are facing north / north-west. Some of the images are covered with water stains from natural seepage in the rock as well as lichen growth (especially *NORTHDENE 1B*).

Although the images at *NORTHDENE 1A & 1B*, are already very faded and indistinct, the documentation and recording in this report sheds some light on the life of the SAN people who lived in this area, and the importance they attached to these sites. These images are non-renewable and should be carefully managed to preserve what is left.

Some images were noted at these sites which are of particular interest, such as a human figure balancing on sticks, the *Trance buck*, dots and stripes, the *Long necked antelope*, superimposed figures (*NORTHDENE 1A*) and Theriantropes (*NORTHDENE 1B*). As many rock paintings are depictions of visions, or ritual occasions experienced while in a trance, these images are thought to be connected to the shaman hoping to use the power of the antelope or buck (eland or rhebuck), for the continuous benefit or well-being of the group.

These two rock art sites, at Roburnia Plantation, as in the case of all rock art sites, are extremely important in terms of its pre-historic connection with a heritage that is no longer with us. What makes it more valuable is the fact that the descendants of the painters, are still living in the vicinity, although they have lost much of their heritage by intermarrying other groups.

H. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

All heritage features which are identified in the area as a whole, are protected under the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999, and changes are subject to professional research and impact assessment.

In the light of the above information as well as the specifications as stipulated in the NHRA, it is recommended that **Management Guidelines, as set out in Part II**, be implemented by the SAFCOL: Komatiland Forests Plantation Manager for the Roburnia section, and that quarterly and annual monitoring takes place (see PART II for Management Guidelines).

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- SNA: 260 Letter from Von Dessauer to Marwick, Undated.
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NATIONAL LEGISLATION

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PERSONAL & WRITTEN INFORMATION

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MISCELLANEOUS

- SAFCOL Integrated Management System: ASI Record, 18/04/2018.

APPENDIX 1:

AREA OF SPECIAL INTEREST (ASI) RECORD					
Type:	Activity	Name:	M33y Rock Art	ASI Number	737-159B
Latitude:		Longitude:			
Date Recorded:	18/04/2018	Recorded by:	Willem Du Toit		
Description					
			Several bushmen paintings depicting animals and people hunting. Panels hidden on large boulder behind indigenous tree.		
Other Important Information:					
			Stakeholder identified and consulted	YES	NO
			Name of stakeholder		
Management Prescriptions					
			Refer to IMS FC 001		
			Five meter buffer to be maintained		
			Conduct annual weed control programme (Slashed weeds to be removed out of the buffer.)		
Restrictions					
			Adjacent operational activities are not permitted within the 5m buffer.		
			No demarcation required, inaccessible to high risk activities such as harvesting.		
			Protect from fire		
Museum/Institution Accession Number					
			New site		

Known History	New site
Literature references	

Photograph(s) and maps to be included as part of the record (Photos 2018)



APPENDIX 2

SAN ROCK ART (PAINTINGS)

- Extract from: <http://www.bradshawfoundation.com/rari/page6.php>

One of the San shaman's tasks was to make rain. The San thought of the rain as an animal. The shamans would capture this imaginary animal, lead it to the place where they wanted rain and kill it. Its blood and milk would then become rain. This painting, from the KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg, shows a group of trancers in the process of capturing the "rain-bull".



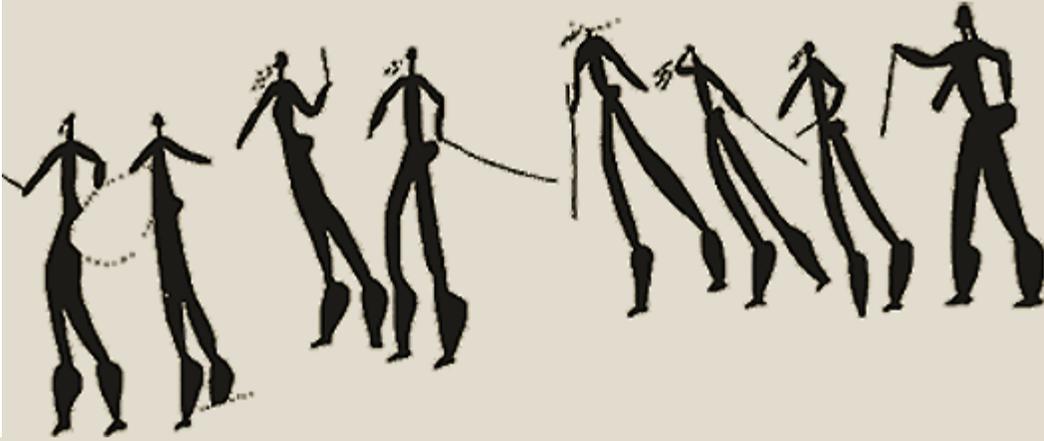
Dancing figures with sticks



Capturing the "Rain-Bull"

Moving away from Drakensberg, to other areas of South Africa images of the dance remain common. This painting from the Eastern Free State is one example. The central figures are dancing, supported by dancing sticks. The dancer often bends forward during the dance as his potency begins to 'boil' in his stomach. In this position he supports his weight on one or two dancing sticks. The women on the left hand side are depicted in a characteristic clapping posture.

Below a Rock painting of a line of dancing shamans, from the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Some bleed from the nose; some carry dancing sticks. The figures of the leading figure extend onto the roof of the rock shelter. The lines radiating from his fingers probably represent sickness being cast back to the world of the spirits. The eland head probably symbolises the eland n/om, or power, that shamans are harnessing.



Nasal bleeding, hand-to-mouth postures, and the arms-back posture are all signs of depictions of trance experience in San rock paintings. Paintings of dances often depict blood flowing from the noses of shamans whose ecstasy has reached a climax. Nineteenth-century San who spoke of this phenomenon say that shamans smeared their nasal blood on people in the belief that its smell (that is, its power), would protect them from arrows-of-sickness. A hand raised to the nose is a typical, widely-painted shamanic feature.

Sometimes the **painted dancers are shown with their bodies bent forwards** so that they are almost at right angles to their legs. In this posture, they support the weight of their torsos on one or two dancing sticks. The San explain that, as the dance increases in intensity, the n/om in the shamans' stomachs starts to 'boil', their muscles contract painfully, and they bend forward in the way depicted above.

The dancers wear rattles on their legs. **Scattered amongst them are a number of white flecks. Like arrows-of-sickness, these flecks probably depict something that is not seen by ordinary people.** Perhaps they depict the n/om that infuses the place of the dance and that shamans can see.