

Hondo Hondo



udzungwa forest camp

DAY HIKING TRAILS IN THE UZUNGWA NATIONAL PARK

Prince Bernhard Falls

1km, ½h, height gain 30-80m

Named after Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands – president of the World Wildlife Fund at the time the Udzungwa Mountains National Park as gazetted – these small but pretty falls are just a short walk behind the park headquarters. They are named after the Prince, as aged 84, he was unable to climb to the top of Sanje Waterfall. They are a nice quick visit for anyone visiting the park after paying park fees, regardless of which trail you plan to hike, and if you're not planning to hike one of the longer trails, you can extend your walk (by 1.5km) up to campsite 2 to spend a little more time in the forest without a long climb.

Sonje Waterfall Trail

3km, 1-2h, height gain 120m

A short (20min) easy trail to the bottom of the Sonjo waterfall, with the option of continuing up a steeper path for 15 mins to reach the second falls. These falls are very beautiful and a favourite of waterfall lovers. From the second waterfall, you can continue around the circuit to return to the start along a different path.

Sanje Waterfall Trail

6km, 4-5h, height gain 450m

The most popular trail in Udzungwa is Sanje Waterfall. This 180m waterfall is very impressive, surrounded by rainforest with excellent views over the Kilombero floodplain. At the top, you can swim in the refreshing plunge pool of the top waterfall (around 40m high) surrounded by thick rainforest. Optionally, you can take a 20min detour from the path, either on the way up, or on the way down the path from the Old Sanje Hotel, to the bottom of the large waterfall for fantastic views looking up, and more swimming/jumping/diving in the pool (a bit warmer). Sanje can be walked at any time of day, but it is best in the morning with the sun on the waterfalls, and is very hot at midday. At the right time of year, the sides of the gorge are covered in fireball lilies. It is common to see both types of Colobus on this trail. Many people walk up and down on the Old Sanje Hotel trail, but there is an alternative route up or down starting at the ranger post to the south. This route is

slightly longer and is less used, so provides better chances of seeing undisturbed monkeys, and of course a circular walk. If you are using Hondo Hondo transport, you can be dropped off at one place and picked up from the other.

Njokamoni Trail

5km, 4-5h, height gain 400m

Njokamoni trail is very similar to the Sanje trail except a lot less walked. As a result, it is common to see many troupes of monkeys with a better chance of seeing the Sanje Mangebey. You may also see red duiker, elephant shrews, squirrels and other rare forest mammals. This hike will also take you between 4 and 5 hours with a rewarding waterfall at the top which you can splash around in to cool off. The trail passes behind Hondo Hondo Camp and Njokamoni waterfall is the same stream as that which provides water to Hondo Hondo. You start the hike from TANAPA HQ and end the walk 1km down from Hondo Hondo Camp.

Hidden Valleys Trail (Campsite 3 trail)

14km, 6-8h, height gain 1000m

This trail follows a big loop around the large peak rising behind Hondo Hondo Camp. It starts from Campsite 3, just after the turning for the park HQ and arrives back on the decent trail from Njokamoni Waterfall, right back into Hondo Hondo. It is a long and steep walk that climbs to over 1300m above sea level so you should plan to leave early. You discover that what you thought was a ridge looking up from the camp is actually just a step into the hidden valleys, where the streams become meandering and almost level, with open grassy areas favoured by elephants - it is necessary to take a ranger on this hike as there are several large mammals deep in the forest. The trail goes behind the peak above Hondo Hondo and the forest up there is full of large trees. You will hopefully see plenty of wildlife on this trail.

Habituated Sanje Mangabey Trek

Undefined distance, 3-4h, height gain undefined

A great initiative of the park is conditioning a troupe of habituated Mangabeys. You will hike "off-piste" into the forest just above Hondo Hondo starting from the HQ and with the help of the research team you will trek to a troupe of Mangabeys and observe them from very close quarters, undisturbed. It's an excellent way to observe this endemic species close up without disruption to their natural habits. This is pre-arranged with the national park and they will inform the camp on the morning where the troupe has been spotted.

NB: Please note that all TANAPA park/guide fees are not included in the Hondo Hondo rate useless specified. These fees are payable to TANAPA at their HQ, 1km from camp, by credit card only. A guide is compulsory for all hikes and a ranger if doing the Hidden Valley Trail.