

We tend to take the Vaal River for granted, regarding it merely as the source of Gauteng's water supply - and a rather polluted source at that. In fact, the river has a fascinating story to tell. To know is to care, because the Vaal needs serious conservation!

It is one of the world's oldest rivers and it occupies part of what is probably the oldest river basin location on Earth - the Witwatersrand basin.

It is the only major river on Earth that flows across an asteroid impact crater - the biggest and oldest such crater on Earth (2 billion years), with the Vredefort Dome at its centre.

The combination of the Vaal River, the asteroid impact, and the Witwatersrand basin together endowed South Africa with its gold wealth.

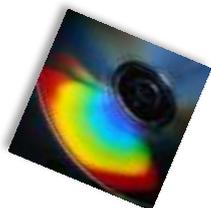
The magnificent islands of the Dome - a product of the underlying crater geology - form a complex ecology with fish eagles, otters, leguans and porcupines, along with fish species.

The Vredefort Dome is one of South Africa's Unesco World Heritage Sites (WHS). It lies at the centre of South Africa and has major scientific, mining, historical, cultural and ecological importance. The Dome is the "central uplift", or core, of a mighty crater caused by the impact of an asteroid about 2 billion years ago. As the subject of WHS forms part of the school curriculum, many educators bring their learners to the Dome.

Our tour options for youngsters include rafting and hiking in the Dome. We run the Vaal river in rafts, professionally guided and with all equipment supplied. No previous experience is necessary and we can take anyone aged 8 and above. The rafts used vary from 2-seater paddle-yourself Crocs to 4-6 seater inflatables suitable for the young, nervous and families.

During the educational tour we explain how the Dome structure and the river interacted to create today's landforms. We show how the gold originally deposited in the Wits strata was buried deep down and later re-exposed by the Vaal.

The day out on the Vaal is an invaluable learning and adventure experience for young people. We encourage educators to use the free booklet afterwards, and obtain a copy of the video explaining the origins of the Vaal and the geomorphology of the region.



SPECIAL! VIDEOS

We provide a **FREE DVD** packed with resources including instructional videos, web links, lesson outlines and much more! **To commission a video of your day ask for a quote.**



It could happen again – anytime! NASA and other space watchers are keeping an eye out for dangerous asteroids which might threaten life on Earth – and there have been several recent near misses. During the talks we explain the dangers of asteroids and what humanity is doing about them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Graeme or Karen Addison Tel/fax 056 8181814
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 Websites: www.vdome.co.za www.riverman.co.za www.otters.co.za

TOUR ITINERARY FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

The day is packed with interest and the sessions are led by trained guides under the supervision of educators Graeme & Karen Addison.

08h30 – Arrival at Otters' Haunt, greetings and settle down. Use your own transport for the day.

MAP: <http://otters.co.za/directions/>

We provide tea/coffee and rusks for educators. There are toilets.

Please provide your own packed meals and refreshments and PLEASE provide for your bus driver/s as well.

08h00-10h30 – About the Vaal.

- Video and Map briefing on the Dome landforms, Vaal River and fluvial processes
- The Vaal as a superimposed river on an older landscape
- River walk and talk.
- Experiments and demonstrations

BREAK FOR TEATIME

11h30-14h00 – Rafting the river

- Allocation of boats, paddles, lifejackets, helmets
- River safety talk
- Downriver trip.
- Bring own lunch snacks. No plastic bags, small Tupperware containers only. See What to Bring list below.
- We stop to examine features of the Dome and river processes.

School vehicle/s will be used for the transport shuttles and the driver/s must not go away!

WHAT TO BRING

- You wear tackies that can get wet and bring a windbreaker.
- Wear a hat and bring sun block-out for sensitive skin.
- 2 litre water bottle for the river trip
- Sweets and chips are good to munch!
- Have a notebook and pen. We have 99% waterproofing for the river.
- We shoot stills and video on all trips and your group can get a copy.

FREE BOOKLET

Each participant is given a free 16-page booklet on the River and the Dome

INDEMNITY TO BE SIGNED

Parents are required to sign an Indemnity Form which will be collected by the school and brought to the venue, for each minor child.

PROF GRAEME ADDISON is former Head of Communication



at the University of North West and a well known author of books on science & technology and writer on the Vredefort Dome, asteroids, rivers and environmental issues.