

Nkhoma Mountain

A Guide to Hiking and Camping



Ed Nhlane

NKHOMA MOUNTAIN



A Guide to Hiking and Camping

Ed Nhlane

FOREWORD

In all my experience of hiking and camping in Malawi, I wished I had not struggled to find material about the routes on mountains to which I was going. Except for Mulanje and Zomba, hiking many mountains in Malawi is reliant on word of mouth, with no print source to show such relevant info. The problem with this arrangement is that information varies greatly depending on who is providing it; it is difficult to know precisely where it is safe to park your vehicle, how to find trail bases, what level of exposure and other dangers to be cautious of, or what to expect from the communities surrounding the mountains. In the Central Region, Nkhoma Mountain is perhaps the most prominent destination for mountain adventure. This guide is a compilation of material I have gathered in my years guiding at Nkhoma, from several meetings conducted with local Chiefs and people from villages surrounding the mountain, and from consultations with service providers, including the Nkhoma Synod and others operating at Nkhoma. Therefore, this handbook seeks to provide the reader with information about the Mountain and its surrounding areas, the activities found there, the routes used and useful contact details to help you plan your trip. It is also my way of sharing my passion for hiking, camping, mountain biking and rock climbing—more on the first two than the last two—with people who are thinking about making wilderness travel in the mountains a big segment of their lives. To my knowledge, this is the first publication on Nkhoma, and I trust that others and I will continue to build on this foundation over the years. The guide who operates at Nkhoma may also use this book freely as a reference material without seeking my permission first. I hope you will find this expedient.

Ed Nhlane
Author

©2021

Cover: Petter Sundqvist, Madalitso Mwaungulu, Ed Nhlane and Kristina Sonnenschein at the Horn of Death on Nkhoma Summit; photo by Rachel Douglas

Photo Credits: Jaime Johnson, Olya Skarin, Helle Biseth, Petter Sundqvist, Tyler Algeo, Vania Wang, Rose Sulentic, Angela Allmendinger, Idunn Prestegard, Aleksandar Grahovac, Matthew Hau Hau, Innocent Gondwe, Fiona Wallace, Hayaan Nur, Emily Nip, Linda Chinangwa, Ephrate Kamchocho, Benjamin Snow, Lonia Mwiyeriwa, Love Mwiyeriwa, Caroline Hambloch, Amanda Helle, Dylan Tromp, Jan Dannheisig and Priscilla Chiphango.

Maps: Google Earth, Map Box, ArcMap, Thunderforest and Backcountry Navigator

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| FOREWORD | 2 |
| INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| Getting There | 7 |
| Nkhoma Mountain | 8 |
| History | 12 |
| HIKING | 15 |
| SOUTH..... | 15 |
| Chiyambi Route, 6.1 km (GPS:-14.040782, 34.103914) | 15 |
| WEST..... | 21 |
| Njuchi Route, 7 km (GPS: -14.024364, 34.076716)..... | 21 |
| Khokha Route, 6.2 km (GPS: -14.023362, 34.077815)..... | 24 |
| NORTH | 25 |
| Chigaga Route, 5.3 km (GPS: -14.015207, 34.083479)..... | 27 |
| EAST..... | 30 |
| Nkuyu Route, 5.2 km (GPS: -14.022555, 34.101056)..... | 30 |
| THE GUEST HOUSES | 34 |
| THE MOUNTAIN HUT | 38 |
| THE MUSEUM..... | 42 |
| CAMPING | 45 |
| Where to Camp: Choosing an Ideal Campsite | 45 |
| Campsite 1: On Hut Premises | 46 |
| Campsite 2: On Top of the World | 47 |
| Campsite 3 and 4: Stone-throw Away from Hut | 49 |
| Campsite 5: Kamazi | 49 |
| ROCK CLIMBING | 51 |
| PARAGLIDING | 52 |
| MTB..... | 53 |
| Zungulira Trail | 53 |
| THE SUMMIT..... | 55 |
| Horn of Death..... | 55 |
| Kaphiri Point..... | 59 |
| Nkhoma Peak..... | 61 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Mpeya Point | 61 |
| Mbalambala and Kamazi Peaks | 64 |
| CONSERVATION AND SAFETY | 69 |
| LIFE FORMS..... | 69 |
| CONSERVING MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS, INCLUDING THEIR BIODIVERSITY | 72 |
| SAFETY PRECAUTIONS..... | 72 |
| HIKING | 72 |
| CAMPING..... | 73 |
| CLIMBING..... | 73 |
| MTB..... | 74 |
| PARAGLIDING..... | 74 |
| WASH IN CAMPING SETTINGS | 76 |
| Water..... | 76 |
| Sanitation | 77 |
| Hygiene | 78 |
| Environmental Cleaning | 78 |
| MEDICAL EMERGENCIES..... | 81 |
| USEFUL CONTACTS | 82 |
| Hiking and Camping | 82 |
| Rock Climbing | 82 |
| Nkhoma Guest Houses, Chalets and Mountain Hut..... | 82 |
| Hope's Inn..... | 83 |
| Porters..... | 83 |
| The Museum | 83 |
| The Hospital | 83 |
| MTB | 84 |
| Paragliding | 84 |
| Updates and Feedback | 84 |
| GLOSSARY | 85 |
| EXPLORER'S CHECKLIST | 86 |

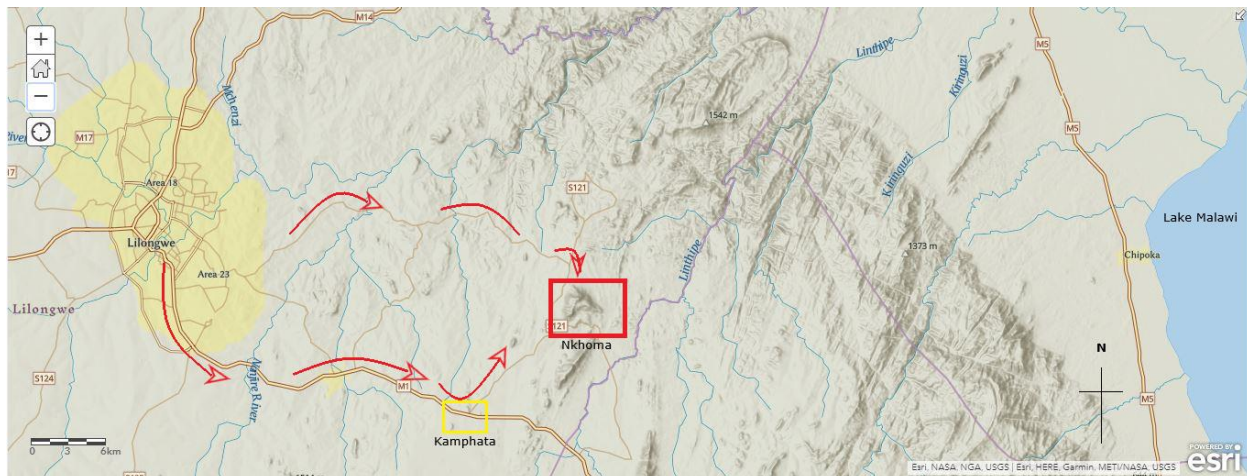


INTRODUCTION

Getting There

Nkhoma Mountain is **fifty kilometres** (50 km) southeast of Lilongwe City. It takes **50-60 minutes** to drive forty kilometres (35 km) south along the M1 road, then turn east (left) at **Kamphata Trading Centre** for another fifteen kilometres (15 km) to the Nkhoma Synod Guest House, CCAP Church or Mission Hospital. The mountain area is in Traditional Authorities (TAs) Mazengera on the south and west, and Chitekwere on the north. There are so many villages at its foot, more notable are Group Village Heads (GVHs) Nsumati and Khokha, where the trails described here begin. There are eight villages under GVH Nsumati namely Ngwanda, Kamtepa, Bezayi, Kumpita, Masoabwenzi, Kunsanja, Kayinja and Kanthungo. From a meeting with the local chiefs in September 2019, the eight villages agreed that tourists, of both Malawian and foreign origin, could park in their villages for a small fee. There are over eleven (11) villages in GVH Khokha, *inter alia*, Mponde, Njuchi, Makombodza, Chagala, Chilunga, Chidzokombo, Chimbalinga and Chinkhokwe.

If you do not own a vehicle, however, it is also possible to get there by public transport. Minibuses leave Lilongwe City terminus (outside the bus/coach depot, **GPS: 13°59'41.2"S 33°46'36.4"** for Nkhoma at **MWK2000** as of January 2021, and takes about 90 minutes. The minibuses will have a big **"NKHOMA-KAMPHATA"** sign in front on the windscreen or on the side above the passenger door. In which case, when you travel in a minibus, you get off at the Nkhoma Mission Hospital gate. The advantage of travelling by bus is that you get to experience to the fullest being in Malawi and making the trip using local means. Besides, if you are into photography, it is the best chance to snap beautiful moments. For bikepackers, the scenic road gives a spectacular view as you cycle there, and as most of the trail is rough and steep at Nkhoma, it is best to park at the Synod Guest House and proceed on foot. You may also approach from the North by cycling from area 23.

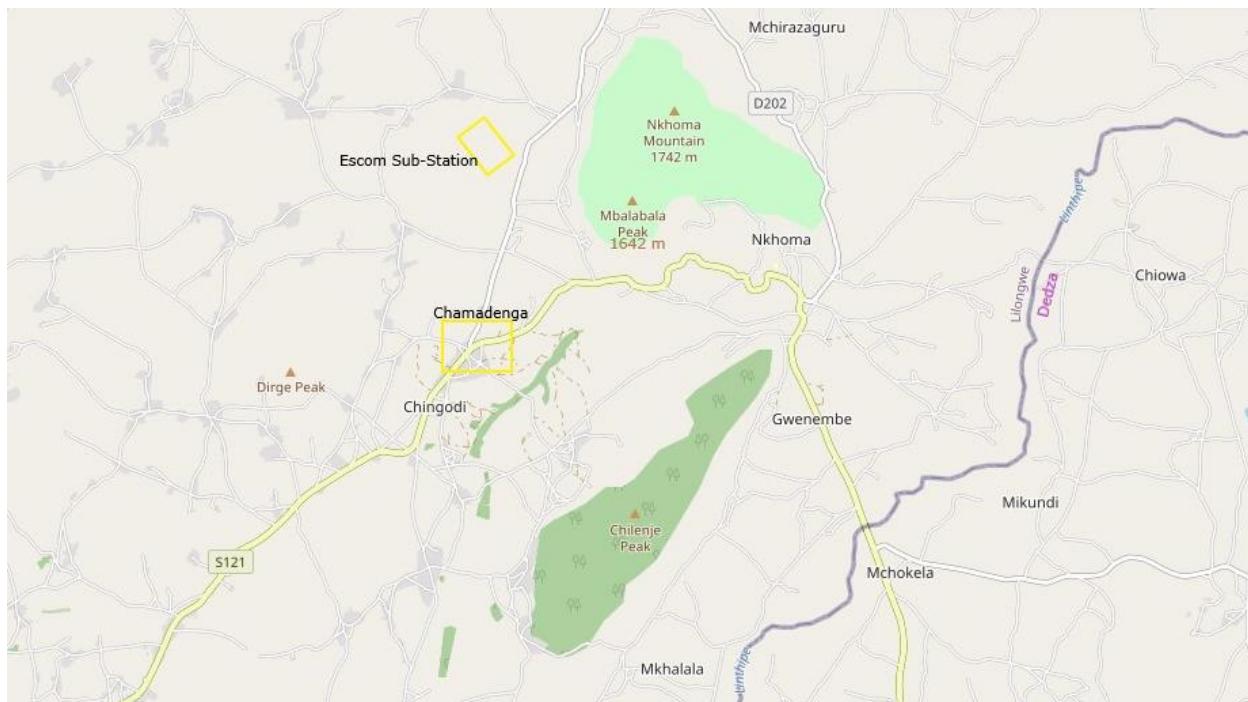


Getting to Nkhoma

If going hiking on the Northern and Western trails, then you go left at **Chamadenga (14°03'14.3"S 34°03'50.6"E)** and go past the ESCOM power sub-station and park vehicle at any of the villages. It is hard to find the trail bases—often starting behind the villages and away from the road—without asking the locals or a guide familiar with the location. GPS coordinates have also been provided for this purpose.

Nkhoma Mountain

Nkhoma Mountain has two visible peaks: Nkhoma and Mbalambala. This formation earned it the local name *Phiri La Mitu Iwiri* meaning “the two-headed mountain”. Nkhoma Peak, considered the true summit, rises to **1743 m** (5718 ft) above sea level, and this is the side where hiking and camping usually happens, when approaching the mountain from the south. If you are going hiking for the day, then best place to park is the Mission Hospital or the CCAP Church, and remember to tell guards to watch over your vehicle. Guards may or may not expect a tip (**MWK1000** is adequate). If going camping for one or more nights, then park vehicle at the Synod Guest House, where you also have to check in with Mountain Hut Manager¹ and get a pass to show guards at the Hut. The hiking trail is six kilometres (6 km) to the top (a total of 12 km roundtrip), with over 600 m elevation gain, and can start from the Mission Hospital, Church or Guest House. It starts with dirt road for about 20 minutes and then a trailhead goes up on the right (landmarks: a tree and cement pillar with some paint on it). The mountain Hut is 4 km up.



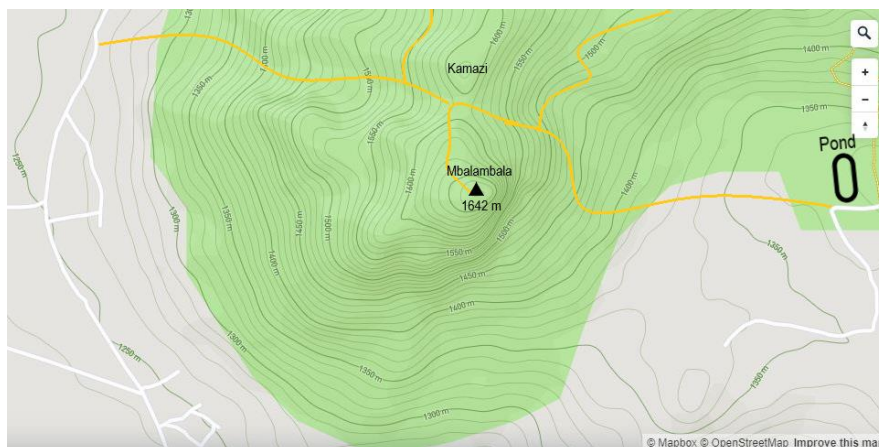
Nkhoma and other peaks

The time it takes to reach the summit depends on several factors: size of company; speed and fitness of hikers; amount or weight of packs; and whether or not there are children in the party. However, on average, hiking to reach Nkhoma Peak, takes **two-and-half hours** on Chiyambi. Mbalambala Peak is slightly lower, rising to **1642 m** (5387 ft) and getting there may take **three to four hours** (3-4 hours). The name *Mbalambala* refers to a kind of rock deer called **Mbalale** that swelled on the mountain many years ago. Just a few *Mbalale* deer dwell on the mountain now and, according to locals at Chigaga Village, can be found on the Northern side below the Nkhoma Peak.

¹ The Nkhoma Synod CCAP run the Guest House and the Mountain Hut. Always book in advance. See details at the end of the Guidebook.



Main backpacking trail shown (Red Trail) and campsites on the mountain (White Rings), drive-in (Orange) and approach (Green Trail) to rock climbing area



You can also hike to Mbalambala Peak, either by going straight past the Pond or by approaching from the Mountain Hut and hiking through the path to the well and through the pass (hyena territory), then along the escarpment. However, rock climbing² is the main activity that occurs down there. Driving to the boulders is also

possible, provided the vehicle is 4x4 because the terrain is very rough. Another provision is that you do not park or camp down there for the night or you may do so knowing fully well that it is hyena territory. For more information on rock climbing at Mbalambala refer to the rock climbing guidebook: **Nkhoma Climbing by Tyler Algeo**³ or contact **Climb Malawi**⁴. Adjacent to Nkhoma in the south is **Chilenje Mountain**. You see the mountain to your right as you drive near the Mission. As you get closer to Nkhoma, the road cuts at the foot of Nkhoma Mountain on the left and you clearly see Chilenje on the near right.

² Climb Malawi's initiative at Mbalambala.

³ Founder of Climb Centre and the climbing community in Lilongwe and pioneer of modern climbing at Nkhoma and Nathenje.

⁴ Bouldering Gym and Offices in Area 18A, Lilongwe.





Rock climbing at Nkhoma

History

Local history⁵

According to the locals in **GVH Nsumati**, Nkhoma Mountain has a long, rich and significant history to the Chewa people living around the mountain: from slave trade in the 1800s, wars with other tribes, to the coming of the Dutch Missionaries in 1896. Mbalambala Peak, because of its strategic position, offered a natural fortress to fight off Arabs and Yaos looking to capture slaves. Villagers would flee to the mountain there when war loomed (the Yao and Ngoni raids) or rumours of slavers broke, and they hid in caves. From the top of Mbalambala they could see everything approaching from all directions and would properly hold their defense by rolling down boulders and shooting down arrows. There was a pool of water at the ridge near the top, which provided drinking water and, therefore, allowed them to stay longer up there in the caves than their enemies could wait for them down at the villages. Furthermore, Mbalambala was swelling with game then, which the people hunted for food. Some sites there also held a spiritual significance to the people; the Chewa Chiefs had them consecrated for ceremonial and religious rites, which were led by Chewa priests. Besides Nkhoma, other places of historical significance within Lilongwe are Bunda and Dzalanyama, which also happen to be popular hiking destinations. **Bunda Hill** was a rain shrine and centre for ritualistic ceremonies (led by a High Priestess or Prophetess called *Makewana*⁶) and *Nyau*, and it played an important role in the social, cultural and economic activities of the Chewa people since the 15th Century. In Chichewa, *Bunda* is short for “Chibunda or Chiwunda”, meaning “young dove or pigeon”.⁷ More important was **Dzalanyama**. The Chewa passed Dzalanyama range of mountains when migrating from Zaire through Zambia into Malawi⁸. According to Chewa mythology, all things were created by *Chiuta or Chauta* (God) at **Kapirintiwa**, a mountain on the western boundary of Central Malawi (with Mozambique), during a thunderstorm⁹. Therefore, it continued to have greater religious and cultural significance in the **Maravi empire**. In fact, the High Priestess, *Makewana*, to whom all the priests were subservient, was stationed at **Msinja** at the foot of Dzalanyama¹⁰. This area, Kapirintiwa, is Dzalanyama mountain or what is now called Dzalanyama Forest Reserve. In Chichewa, *Dzalanyama*¹¹ means “full of game (animals)”. I cannot help but wonder if hiking and camping was popular in those years, but only in form of pilgrimages.

The Coming of the Missionaries^{12,13}

After Dr. David Livingstone had explored Nyasaland in 1858¹⁴ and helped to establish the Livingstonia Synod in the North and Blantyre Synod in the South, supported by the Free Church of Scotland, the Missionaries invited the Dutch Reformed Church from South Africa to work in the Central Region, led by Revs. Murray and Vlok. The Dutch Missionaries first arrived in **Mvera**,

⁵ Source: Oral history narrated by the council of chiefs at GVH Msumati, September 2019

⁶ Meaning “Mother (of Children)”

⁷ Boeder, R.B. (1982). Malawi: Land and legend. *The Society of Malawi Journal*

⁸ De Aguilar, L.B. ((1994). Nyau masks of the Chewa: An oral history introduction. *The Society of Malawi Journal*

⁹ <http://www.philtar.ac.uk/encyclopedia/sub/chewa.html>

¹⁰ Katani, A.M. (2008). *Traditional Malawian choral music: A liturgical-critical study of within the Church of Central African Presbyterian (CCAP) – Nkhoma Synod (PhD dissertation)*. University of Stellenbosch.

¹¹ Portmanteau of *dzala* meaning “(to be) full” or “to plant” and *nyama* meaning “animal”

¹² Source: The Museum, 2019; Nkhoma Synod – History, 2010. <https://nkhomasynod.blogspot.com/2010/09/history.html>

¹³ Source: Maralise Potgieter, former Manager of Nkhoma Synod’s Guest Houses and the Mountain Hut, 2018

¹⁴ Former country name of Malawi, changed at independence in 1964.

Dowa in 1888 (Murray, and joined by Vlok in 1889) in the highlands of Central Angoniland¹⁵.



In 1896, they gave up **Livlezi** at Mvera as a Mission centre because it was unhealthy and Vlok was instructed to seek another site near **Nkhoma or Chilenje mountains**, 28 miles south of Mvera¹⁶. He met Chewa chief Mazengera with his people who were living at Nkhoma mountain (in May 1896), driven there by the continuous raids of the Yao and the Ngoni invasion (Pauw, 1980). They made camp on the northern slopes of the mountain and spent days trekking around the mountain and reached the top (in the company of Murray who had joined in from Mvera), selecting a site for the new Mission. On Sunday, 31 May 1896, the first congregation of 600-800 people gathered at the tents. Construction work began and the first church was inaugurated on 13 May 1905. In 1912, Nkhoma became the head station of the Mission. The old church would later be pulled down to construct a new one in 1939¹⁷. Full history account on the Mission, available at the Museum of the Nkhoma CCAP Synod, established in 1989 during centenary celebration of the Mission at Nkhoma. Since 2015, the Museum is now under Nkhoma University.

Nkhoma Museum (top)

¹⁵The **Chiwere Ndhlovu** Ngonis who had migrated and settled at Kaso Hill in Mvera after the death of Zwangendaba in 1848 at Fipa near Lake Tanganyika

¹⁶ Pauw, C.M. (1980). *Mission and church in Malawi: The history of Nkhoma Synod of the Church of Central Africa, Presbeterian 1889-1962 (ThD thesis)*. University of Stellenbosch

¹⁷*Ibid.*




HIKING

SOUTH



Chiyambi¹⁸ Route, 6.1 km (GPS:-14.040782, 34103914)

 Chiyambi is the main backpacking route and probably the oldest, hence its name. It is about **six kilometres** (6 km) and starts on the South of the mountain, from the Mission Hospital, Guest House or the Church, depending on where you get off. On average, it takes **2 hours 30 minutes** to reach Nkhoma Peak via Chiyambi. Hiking on this route hardly ever attracts undesired attention or following of the locals because communities around are accustomed to tourists and/or foreigners.



Chiyambi Route tributaries

- a. **C1 & C3:** If parked at the **Church** (**14°02'26.8\"S 34°06'14.2\"E**) or the **Guest House** (**14°02'35.9\"S 34°06'05.4\"E**), then you already had to drive through the **residential tarmac road** to get there. Simply start walking back to the road, go up, and at the curve of the road, go right to the dirt road.
- b. **C2:** If starting from the **Hospital** (car park), **go up the corridor** and past the ODP¹⁹ then turn **right** at the **toilet blocks**. Walk straight across the **Maternity Wing corridor** and take the **right exit** out to the open at the back. Continue walking until you pass **PB+J**²⁰ on your right and exit at the Hospital wire gate. Turn left at the fork-road then right to join the **residential tarmac road** and walk up for a minute to the curve. At the curve (corner) of

¹⁸ Lit. "The Beginning"

¹⁹ Out Patient Department

²⁰ Peanut Butter and Jesus

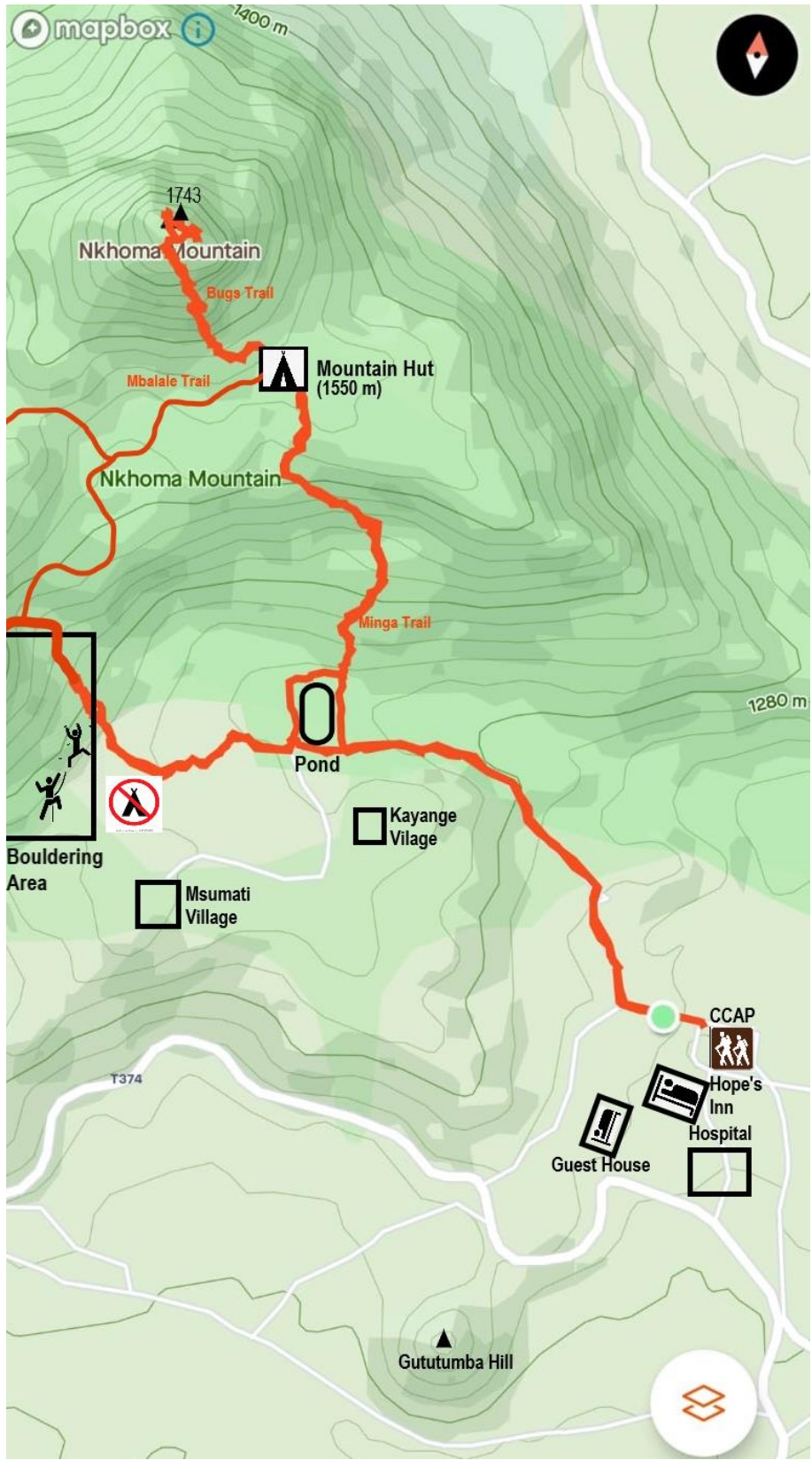
the road (past the giant trees to the right) turn right to the dirt road. This start works very well if you travelled there by minibus (and you get off at the Hospital Gate)

All 3 tributaries of *Chiyambi* Route join here at the curve of the road. Keep walking straight along the road, past the School, until you find the **waterworks treatment plant**. Here another road goes up to the **left**. Ahead lies another landmark: a **circular concrete settling tank**, for the water treatment facility, on the right. And also a big *Chisekese* tree on the left, adjacent to the tank.

20-30 minutes into the hike you reach the base of **The Minga Trail** (The Thorns Trail) and you start to ascend until you reach the Hut. Watch out for the hundreds of thorny bushes lining this path; bristles may scratch legs, spike arms or prick face. The Minga Trail's level of difficulty is medium. Use of hands is not required to aid the hike.

During the rainy season, December-March, many springs pop up on the mountain and sometimes the trails on Chiyambi route become gullies for streams. All the springs on this route empty into the earthen dam shown in, which in turn flows into another dam (which usually dries up in hot, dry season, August-October). This water goes to settling tanks, then to the treatment facility where it is distributed to the residents at Nkhoma Mission.





It is **four kilometres (4 km)** to get to the Mountain Hut. At the Hut, it is fairly flat—a 1550 m above seas level plateau. There is a path at the back left of the Hut (and left of the Guards' House) which starts to rise again at base of **The Bugs Trail**, which is **two kilometres (2 km)** long to the summit.

There are also trails scattering to the left leading to the western ridges, all the way through Mbalambala and Kamazi peaks, and to the right crossing the plateau and descending to the eastern villages. Hikers making a day's trip may take a good rest and recover here at the Hut before advancing to the top.

Chiyambi Route with starting points from the Guest House, the Mission Hospital and the Mission Church



Bottom and top views from the Bugs Trail



The level of difficulty on this trail is hard and scrambling—use of hands to assist in walking uphill—may be required. The slope in this gully is spread out with scree and talus. **Talus** consists of larger rock fragments (dropped below from constantly crumbling peaks), usually big enough to step on individually. **Scree** is smaller—from the size of coarse sand up to a few centimetres across—and may flow a bit around your feet when you step on it. However, gaiters are not necessary here to prevent scree from getting in your hiking shoe. There are many loose talus on the Bugs Trail because most the rocks are young so that soil and vegetation have not filled up the spaces. On the contrary, on the oldest slopes, soil fills the spaces between the rocks, cementing them together to create smooth pathways and the talus will also be covered in **lichen**. As a general rule of thumb in wilderness travel, always try the

route where the rock is lichen-covered and spaces are filled, which indicates that the rock has remained in place for a long time and is, therefore, more stable. Move deftly on talus, ready to leap away if a rock shifts underfoot, as the shifting may cause a sprain or a fall. Always be cautious when hiking, especially when walking downhill. Although the slope is steep, no technical

equipment is needed for the climb. When walking up with children, especially on this path, keep them in sight at all times. If backpacking all the way to the summit, then this is perhaps the most challenging stage of the Chiyambi Route to hike while strapped with a pack full of supplies.

There are millions of bugs (of different species) on this trail all the way to the Summit, flying about and resting on the trees, hence its name. Birds and butterflies can also be sighted along this trail. The Bugs Trail has medium exposure²¹ and is the most difficult part of the hike. (Again) It is characterized by steep slope and loose rocks; involves scrambling and slow speed.



The Bugs Trail in the gully

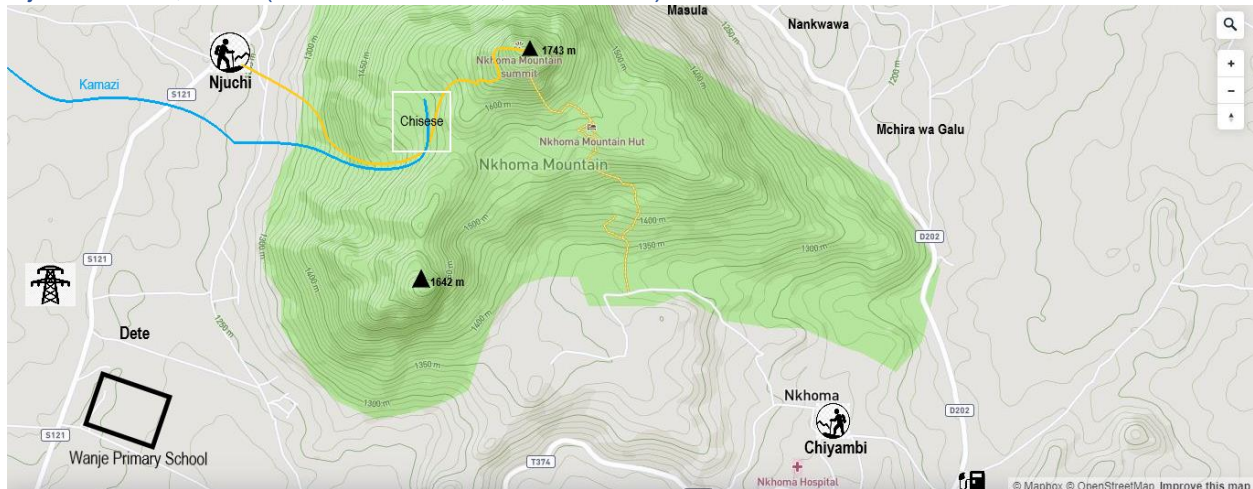
²¹ Mountain exposure is how susceptible you are to a fall or injury because of the steepness of the slope of the route. Medium exposure involves use of hands to aid the hike on steep slopes.




Occupants of the Bugs Trail

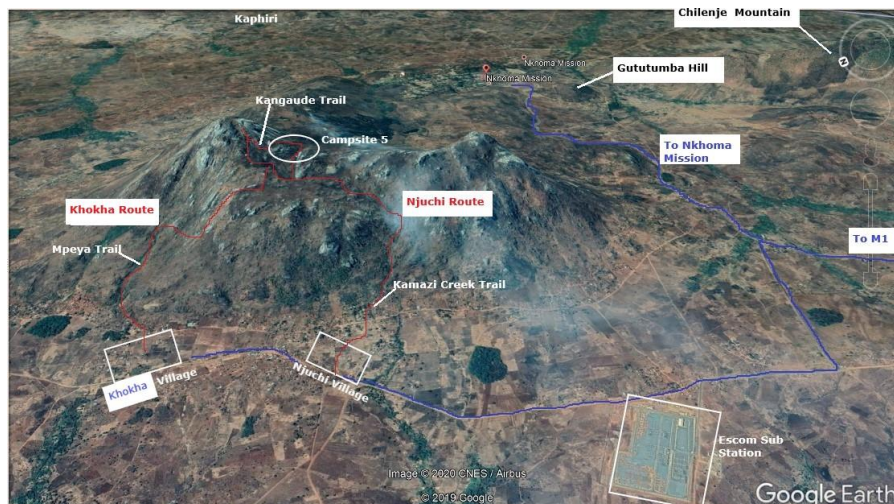
WEST

Njuchi Route, 7 km (GPS: -14.024364, 34.076716)



The trailhead, Njuchi Village

 **Njuchi** is one of the two main routes on the Western face of the mountain. The name “Njuchi” means “Bee”. It is about **seven kilometres (7 km)** and is the most scenic of the all the routes leading to the summit. The route gets its name from the village where the trailhead is. Villages on the western face of the mountain are unaccustomed to receiving outsiders and, therefore, hiking from this side may attract undesired attention, particularly if hikers are not of Malawian or African descent. Unlike Chiyambi on the South or Nkuyu on the East, children from the villages on the West and North tend to swarm around foreigners, especially Whites and Asians, which can be annoying. The best thing to do is to disregard their curiosity and go on about your business.



To get to the Western face, you make a turn left at the curve to the ESCOM²² electricity sub-station. About 900 m after the sub-station **Njuchi Village (14°01'27.7”S 34°04'36.2”E)**. There are no properly designated lots for parking, so when you get to the village you may park your vehicle at someone’s compound, provided you give a

parking fee (**MWK1,000**) on your retain.

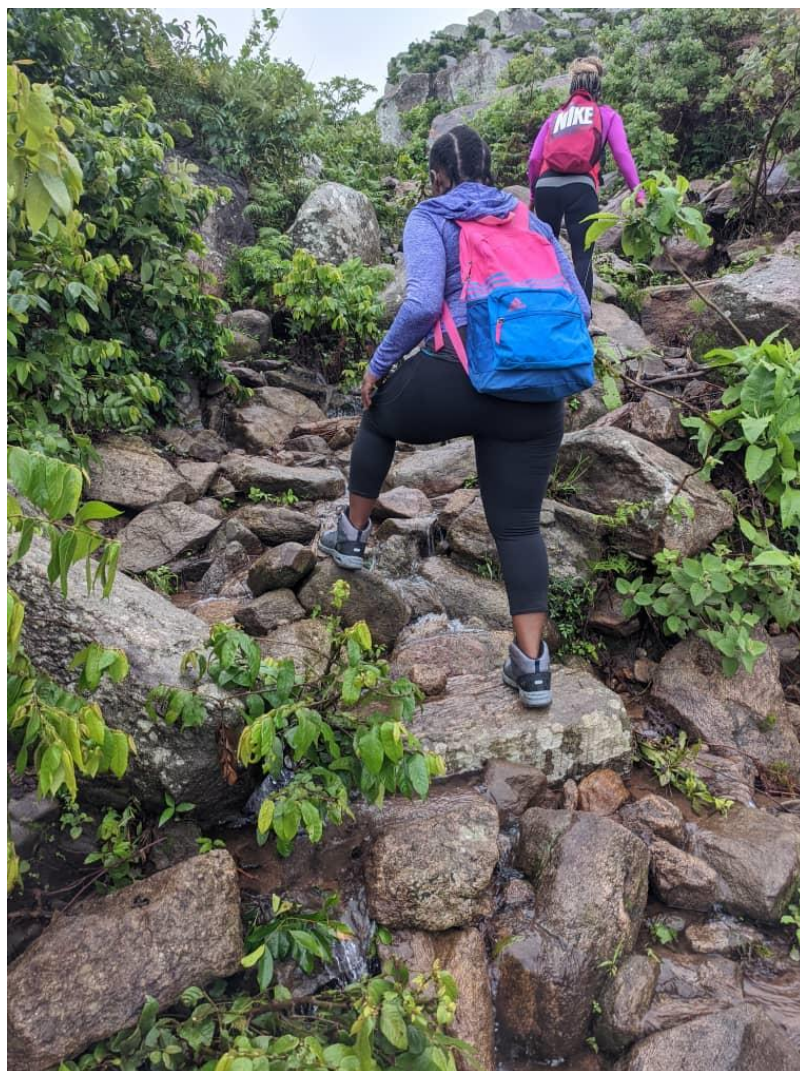
²² Electricity Supply Corporation of Malawi

It is not easy to find the trailhead for **Njuchi Route** without asking the locals for direction. However, one of the landmarks is a **borehole in an enclosure**, which supplies to 11 of the surrounding villages. And the GPS coordinated provided should help too.

Kamazi Trail

The difficulty on this route is mostly medium. Njuchi route starts with the **Kamazi Creek Trail**. All you have to do is follow the creek up from the village. Sometimes the path crosses the creek and sometimes the creek is the path. The stream is perennial and the biggest of the three creeks, including Mkanga and Kumpita, on the northern and western side of Nkhoma.

Since the trail base lies in the villages, who keep livestock, the path is wide and hoof-trodden.



Kamazi is characterized by goat, cow and donkey dung. There are also a lot of rocks and shrubs. Views from Kamazi are amazing and they get more scenic hiking further up, especially in rainy season. There are many impressive rock formations, giant boulders and caves that cannot be imagined when approaching the summit along the Chiyambi route. It takes about 3 hours to reach the Nkhoma Peak at the summit. About an hour up, near caves is a site suitable to set up camp. It is convenient because of the recurrent water source, the Kamazi stream.

Kangaude Trail

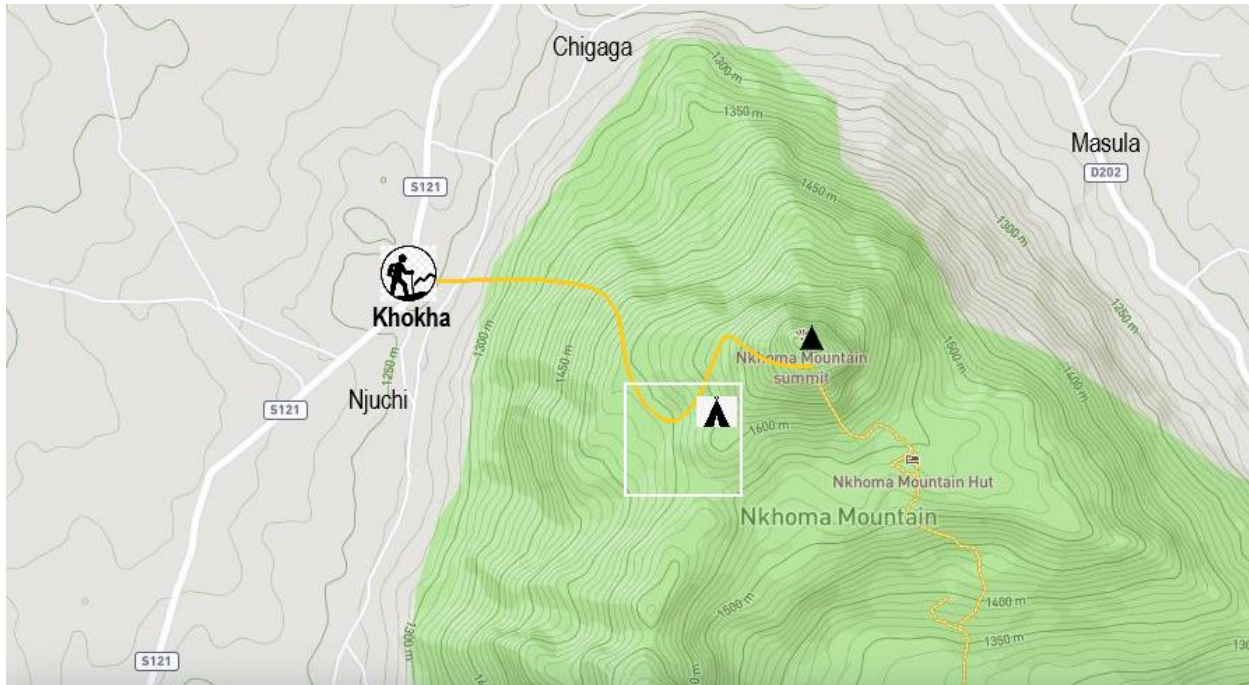
Kangaude Trail is to the right of the Kamazi Campsite 5. "**Kangaude**" is Chichewa for "Spider". As the name suggests, there are many noticeable spider webs along the trail. Goats, cattle and donkeys can still reach far up here. It then turns left and goes down to a pass, then ascends

again to the last part of the trail, which leads to Nkhoma Peak.

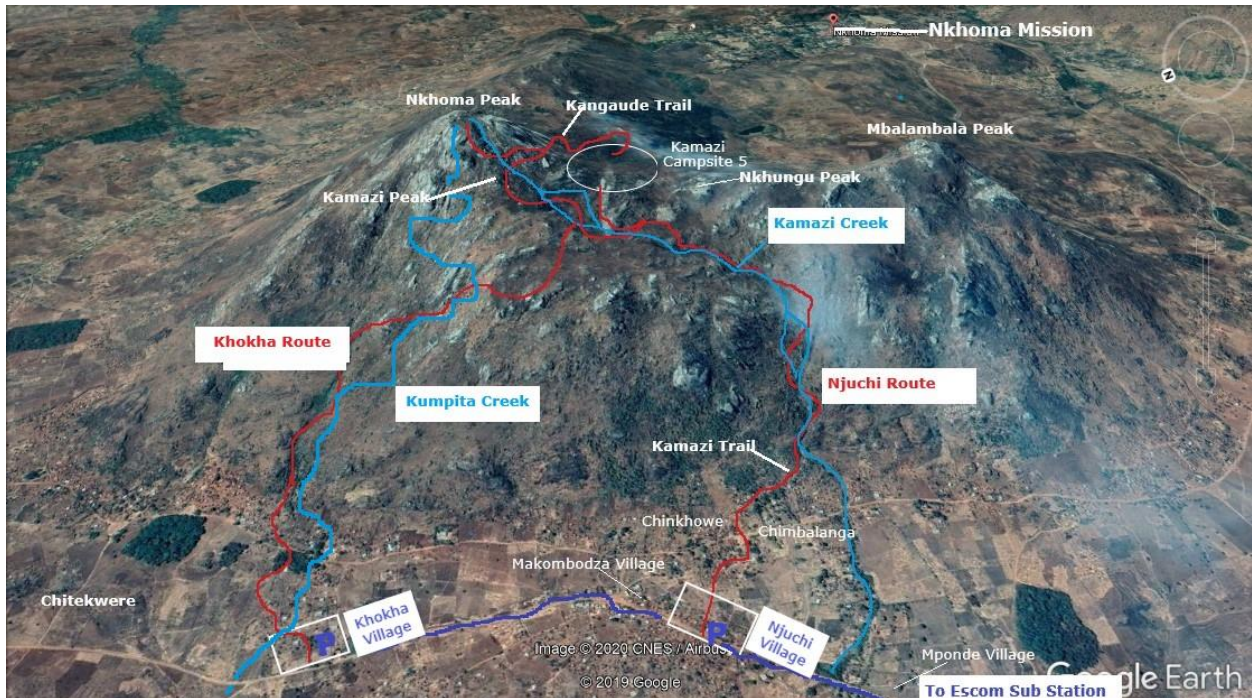


Trail over Kamazi Creek

Khokha Route, 6.2 km (GPS: -14.023362, 34.077815)



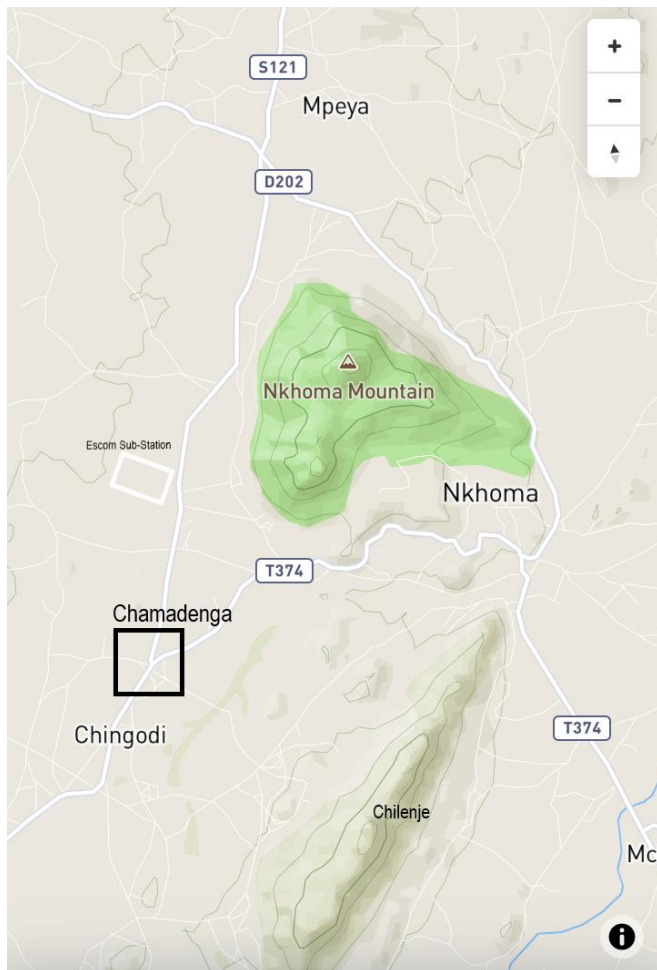
Western routes: Njuchi and Khokha



Khokha Route starts from the village at Khokha ($14^{\circ}01'24.1''S$ $34^{\circ}04'40.1''$), not far from Njuchi, on the northwestern face. It is about **six kilometres (6 km)**. You may seek permission from any household in the village to park your vehicle. The people are generally kind. The paths are similar and they join near the Kamazi campsite. Unlike Njuchi, Khokha is steeper at the beginning of the trail. Slope gently drops into a saddle at **Chisese**. There are **hyenas** inhabiting the **Namachizi caves** around Chisese and it is best not to hike there at night.

NORTH

Thick shrubs characterize many trails rising from the north to the summit and tall grass, which sometimes or in some places grows up to your knees, is common. Therefore, it would be better to wear trousers and/or a hiking boot to cover the legs and protect the feet. In the rainy season, the trails are so dense that in some places you can hardly see where you are stepping your feet. Therefore, be cautious of snakes. However, because of this wilderness, you are likely to encounter the following: **mkhwere** (baboon), **mbalale/insa** (rock deer), **kalulu** (hare), **nungu** (porcupine), **mbira** (mountain guinea pig), and **njoka** (snake). According to the locals at Chigaga village, venomous snakes common in this area are **mphiri** (puff adder) and the **mambas**. Furthermore, the bushes teem with wild fruits such as **mgalakasha**²³ and other edible plants like **tsutsumudwa**²⁴

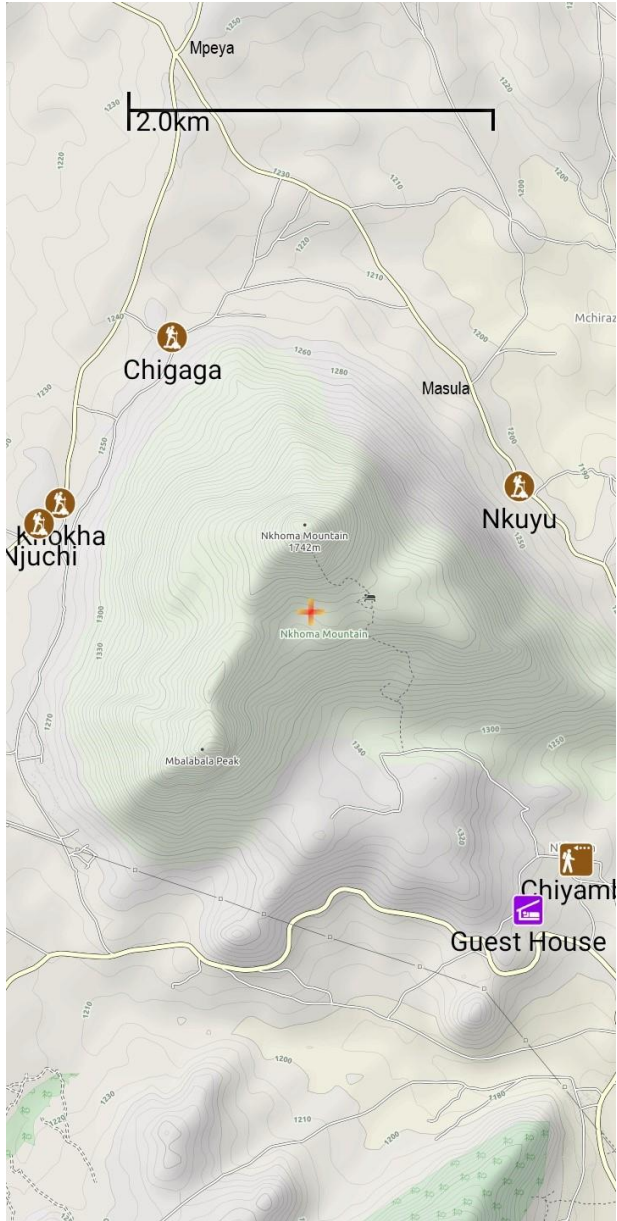
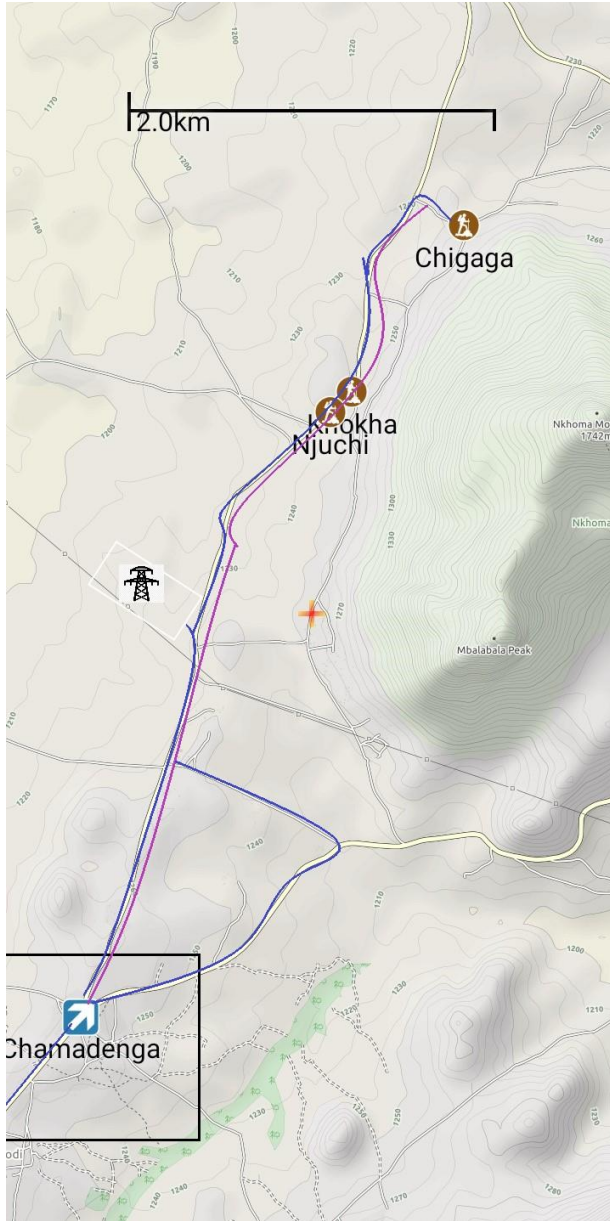


There are two main streams flowing down from the mountaintop and the trails will go along, cut across or run parallel to these streams along the hike. These are **Mkanga and Kumpita**, both of which are smaller than **Kamazi** on the West.

When driving to the Northern side of the mountain (in blue), you take a **left turn** at the corner, and drive west in the direction of the Electricity Sub-Station. At the turn there is this big sign “**From the American People**” for the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). If going to Nkhoma on a minibus and you plan to approach the summit from the northern face, instruct the conductor that you are getting off at **Chamadenga (14°03'14.3”S 34°03'50.6”E)**. At Chamadenga, there are motorcycle taxis parked on the left. One motorcycle can take up to two people (which is a nice way to save costs!). Depending on where you want to be taken, a ride on a motorcycle (in purple) will cost from **MWK500 when going to Njuchi Village to MWK1,000 when hiking from Chigaga Village**. For climbers, there is crack climbing at the boulders at Chigaga.

²³ **Mgalakasha** is a kind of a cherry that is red, maroon or deep purple when ripe (necessarily in that order of ripening) and has a tart taste. The skin leaves a bitter aftertaste and therefore, it is seldom eaten. The flesh, however, is succulent and tastes fine.

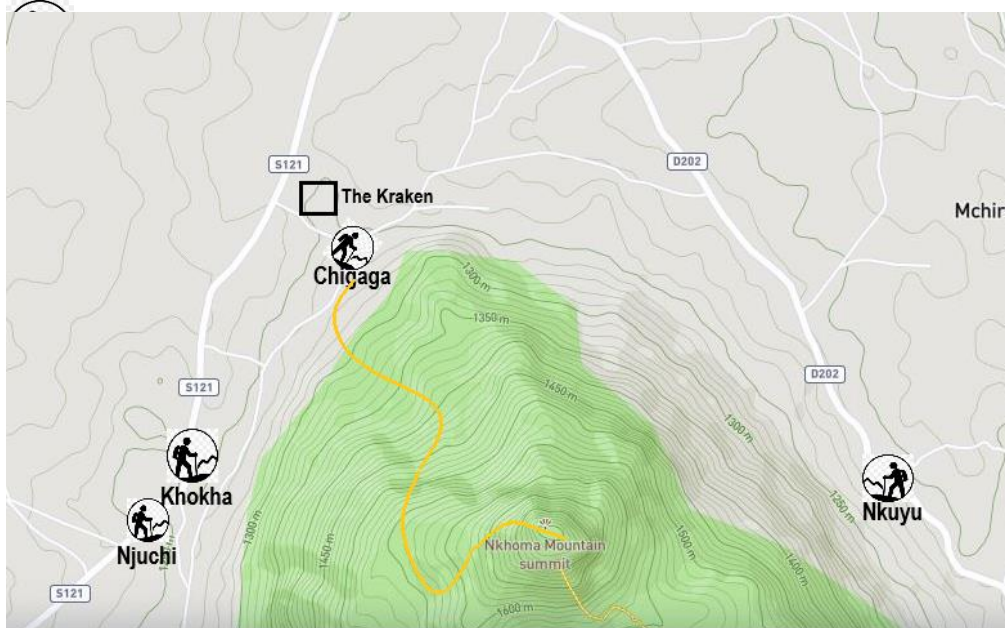
²⁴ **Tsutsu** is a kind of creeping plant often growing in the shadow of other shrubs. When dug from the ground, you peel the bark of the root and chew, throwing away the rest of the taproot. First saliva that forms is spat out. It takes a short while to taste the sugar when chewing. It is so sweet and its sweetness can last for an hour or two. It is like a natural chewing gum.



Getting to the North of Nkhoma, Chamadenga by car (blue) and by motorcycle taxi (purple)

The dirt road that goes through this area is rough and it may be nearly impassable at the peak of rainy season (Dec-Jan) for small cars, especially around Njuchi. However, when it is dry season, it is quite good.

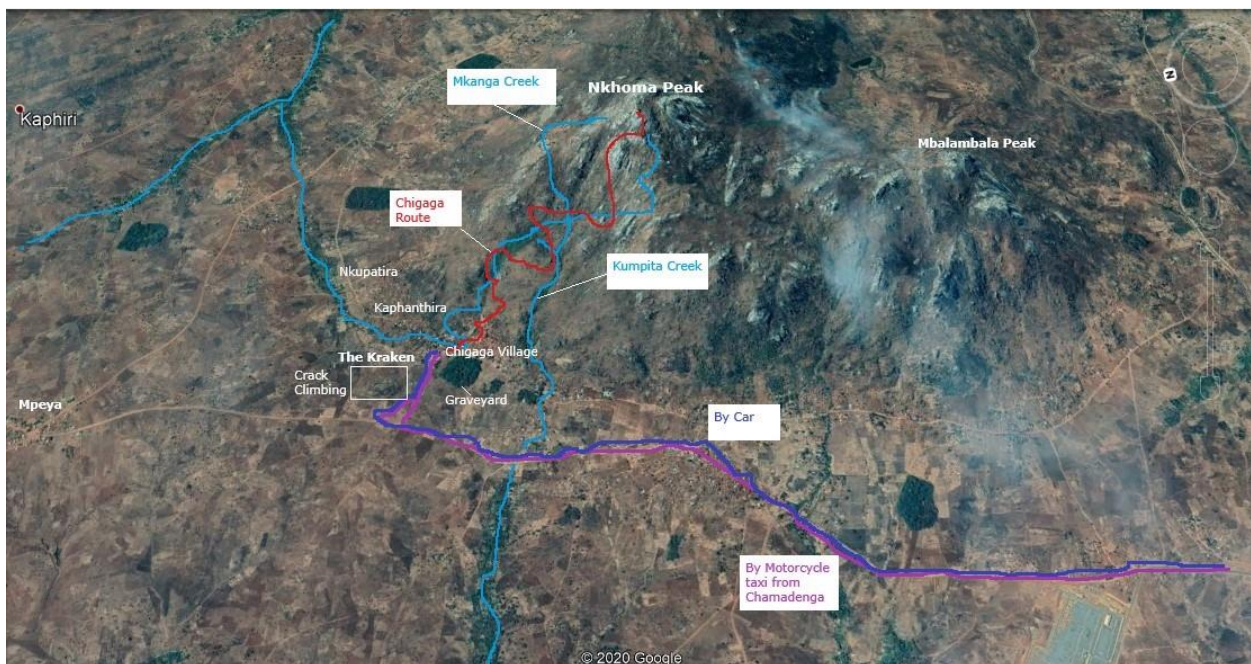
Chigaga Route, 5.3 km (GPS: -14.015207, 34.083479)



Chigaga Route is the best approach to Nkhoma Peak from the northern side. The trail is about **five kilometres (5 km)** making it the second shortest route, after Nkuyu on the East. The trails on this route are mostly wild and overgrown with shrubs. On

average, it takes **100 minutes** to reach the summit, which is an hour less than it takes on Chiyambi. Whether travelling by car (in blue) or by motorcycle (in purple) from Chamadenga, you need to get to Chigaga village first to start the ascent

You may ask about directions to the mountaintop when you get to the village or even request a local guide, who are almost always boys aged between 12 and 15 years. However, language may be a barrier for non-Malawian hikers. The boys will immediately approach you or your vehicle under the assumption you need a guide. In this case, **you definitely ought to tip the guides during or after the hike, just so locals may also benefit from this sort of tourism.**



Chigaga Route (red)

The Chigaga Route trailhead is in Chigaga village (**14°00'54.8"S 34°05'00.5"E**) and you can park your vehicle or get off the motorcycle at the **Maize Mill** running on diesel fuel (made of and thatched by tall savanna grass) just after the graveyard. For the most part you follow **Mkanga Creek** going up.



Chigaga trailhead (left)

Just before you reach the village, there is a crack climbing area on the left: The Kraken. **“The Kraken”** is a boulder at Chigaga with a monstrosity of a crack. So far, it is one of the three discovered boulders at Nkhoma where **crack climbing** can be done. The other two places are on the Eastern face and on the West of Mbalambala Peak.

The name Kraken is from the Greek Mythological titan: large and fierce. For the purpose of this book, specific details about rock climbing here and other parts at Nkhoma have been deliberately omitted. If you are a climber and, you may refer to the **Nkhoma Climbing Guidebook** or contact **Climb Malawi** for a guided visit to this

place. It is quite accessible by car although in the growing season you may have to cross some cultivated field on foot.

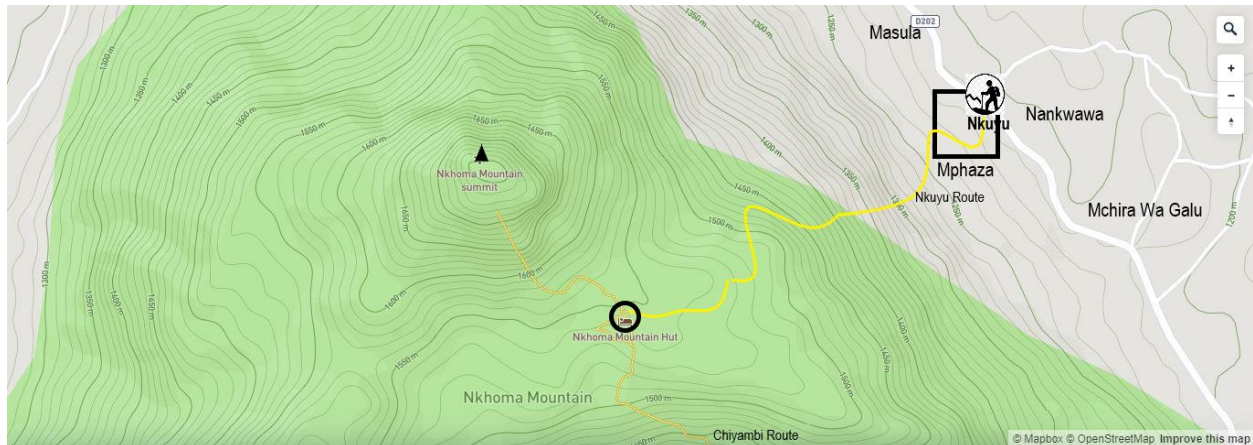


EAST

Nkuyu Route, 5.2 km (GPS: -14.022555, 34.101056)



The word *Nkuyu* is Chichewa for Fig Tree²⁵. This route is so-named because at the trailhead in **Nankwawa Village** there is a giant Nkuyu tree by the side of the road, opposite a grocery store. This serves as a landmark for the trail, **on the left**. When approaching from the south (the Mission), Nankwawa village is between **Mchira Wagalu village** and **Masula village graveyard**. The locals refer to this footpath as the **Nkuyu Trail**



Nkuyu route

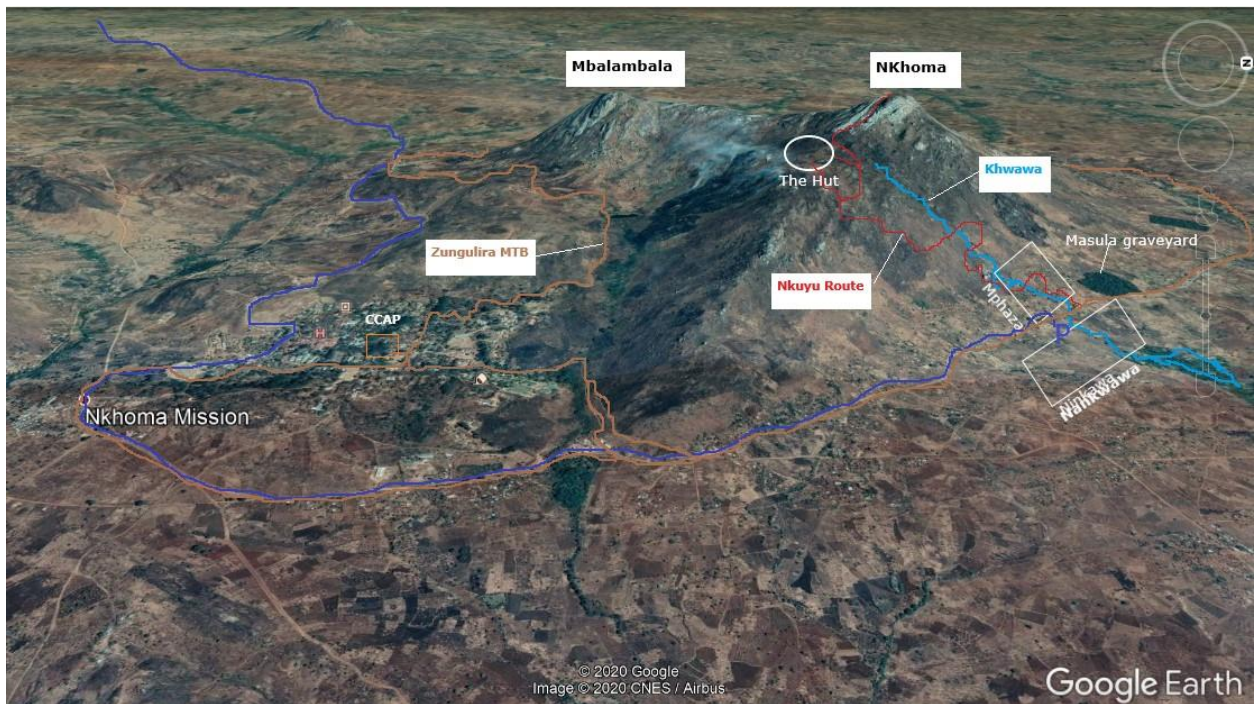


To get there by car (blue line), drive past the Mission Hospital and turn left at the **Filling Station** and keep left, driving on the east until you reach Nankwawa. You can park vehicle by the grocery store and it will be safe there. If travelled by public transport, **get off the minibus at the filling station** and get a motorcycle taxi there or

further down the road (purple line), which costs **K800**, say you need to be dropped off at the Nkuyu tree in Nankwawa village.

Nkuyu Route starts on the Nkuyu Trail, goes up from Nankwawa to **Mphaza Village**, which leads up to the Mountain Hut and proceeds to the top via The Bugs Trail. It is **three point two kilometres (3.2 km)** from the Nkuyu to the Mountain Hut and another **two kilometres (2 km)** from the Hut to the top. The level of difficulty ranges from easy to medium (mostly easy) up to the Hut, and take **1 hour 10 minutes** on average, for the seasoned hiker.

²⁵ "Nkuyu" is the fig tree, "Nkhuyu" is the fig fruit.



People from villages on the Eastern Face are generally warm towards strangers, including hikers of foreign origin. Women and girls who pick firewood from the mountain travel the trails frequently. Although the trails are less trekked by outsiders, hiking Nkuyu Route does not attract unwanted attention, as is the case on the Western Face.

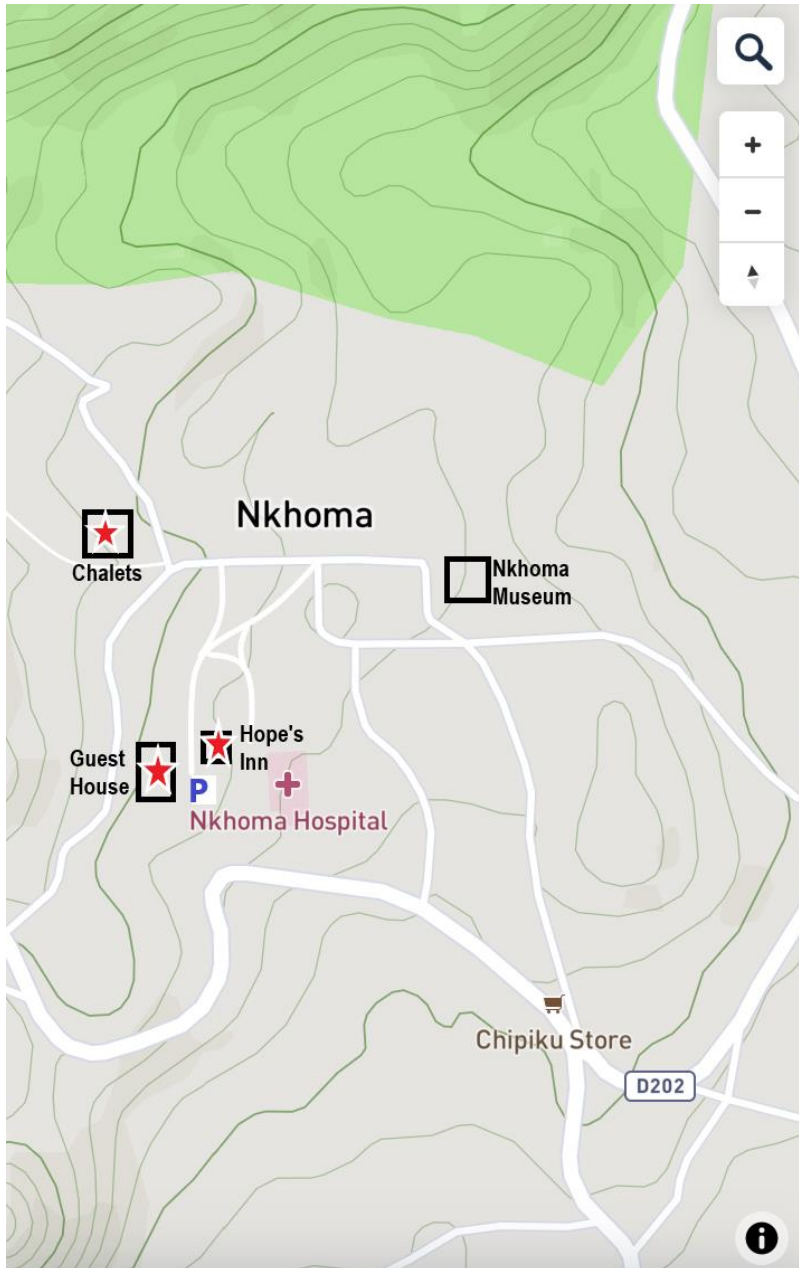
A very interesting activity happens every year: a **maize party**. In March when the rains have lessened, young boys and girls from different villages (Mchira Wa Galu, Zeze, Masula, Nyangu, Tsinthu, Kutsononkho) from the East, hike up Nkuyu Trail and gather at the mountaintop for leisure. They make fires, sit in large groups and roast fresh cobs of maize. They continue to do this on Saturday mornings until all the maize dries in the fields and it is harvesting time. This pastime normally attracts over 50 young, local participants at one time. They also welcome the participation of outsiders.



THE GUEST HOUSES

Nkhoma Guest House

The Guest House of the Nkhoma Synod CCAP is the oldest. Built in 1919 originally as a school for the children of local missionaries, it was used for this purpose until 2000. It has eight (8) rooms available: 3 singles occupancy with double beds and 5 shared, and can accommodate up to 21 people when fully booked. They do not provide meals except for supper, upon request.



Aside from the Guest House, there are **two other inns** operating around the area, including splendid **chalets**.

Hope's Inn²⁶

Sitting a few steps from Nkhoma Hospital and opposite the Guest House is Hope's Inn of PB+J²⁷. Opened in 2017, it has 10 private rooms, some small with twin bunk beds and others large, but each room ensuite with single and double occupancy. A shared lounge and kitchen are available and sitting on the veranda you can enjoy the view of the mountain. Prices range from 15-35 USD per night.

These accommodations provide an option for people who would like to experience all the mountain adventures at Nkhoma but are uncomfortable with anything short of luxury. It is like non-swimmers dipping their toes in the water: going outdoors without really sleeping there.

All the lodgings at the Mission provide adequate security on premises for both residents and property such as vehicles,

motorcycles or bicycles. They all offer the benefit of proximity to the mountain such that a morning or afternoon hike from the site is plausible.

²⁶ See in useful contacts section for booking accommodation

²⁷ All provides derived the Inn are allocated to Peanut Butter and Jesus (PB+J) and assist in the provision of RUFT to Nkhoma Hospital



The Guest House



Hope's Inn



The Chalets



provides, upon request, firewood and extra supplies such as toilet paper, candles, soap, etc., for an extra fee. Hot water for baths (not for drinking) is always available for those who may need to freshen up in the evening and/or require washing up in the morning. Guards collect it from a well that is a few metres away in the woods, left of the Hut. Do not drink water from the well unless it is purified first.



There are three (3) campsites around this area: one on the premises and two about 100 m away. If camping at the Hut and your company has more than four (4) backpackers, then I suggest you bring extra chairs.

When approaching the Mountain Hut from the Northwestern side, the hut is called “Nyumba Ya Mzungu” meaning “White Man’s House”. Remembering this

may come in handy when you want to ask for the appropriate trail to take to reach the Hut.



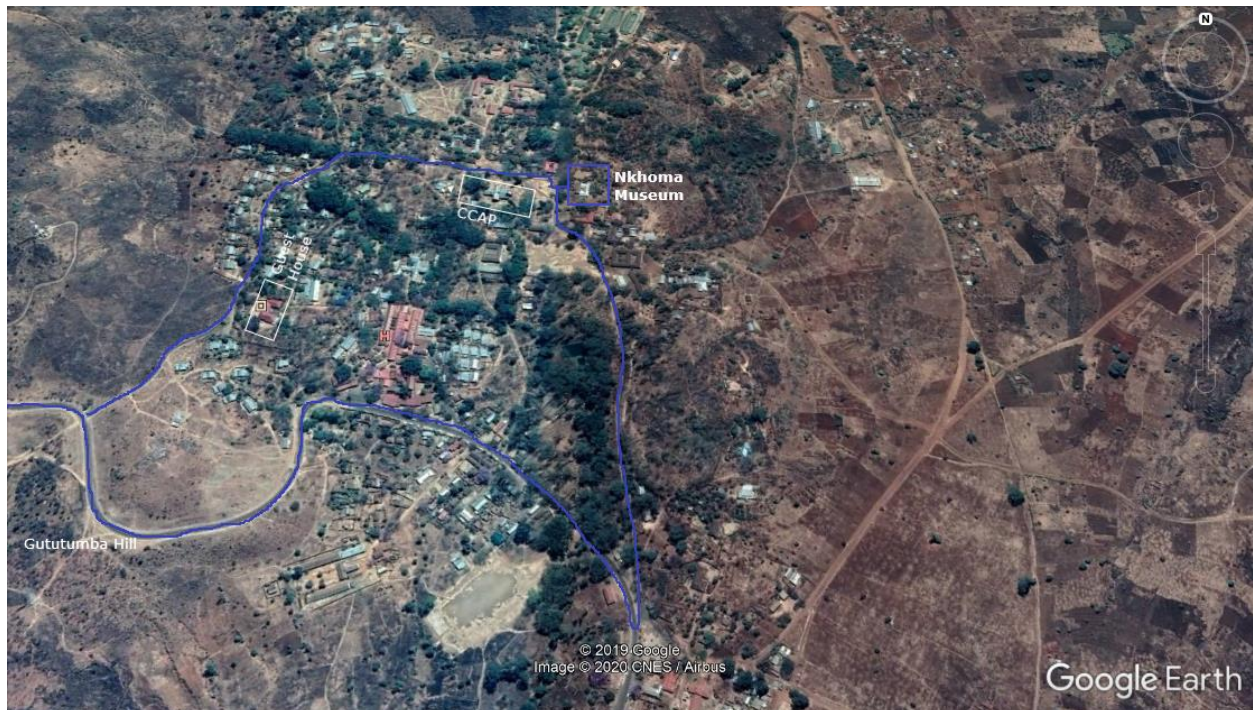


The Mountain Hut



THE MUSEUM

After it was built in 1922, the building would be used as a meeting place for church ministers until 1989 when the Museum was established, during the 100 Years Celebration. In 2015, management of Nkhoma Museum was transferred from General Office of the Nkhoma CCAP Synod to Nkhoma University. In 2017, it was refurbished and reopened to the public; many guests were present including Ministry of Tourism and Culture officials. The Museum narrates the history of the Church and Missionaries at Nkhoma and comprises three centres: Centre for Oral History and Memory, Centre for Environment and Climate Change, and Centre for Information Ethics.



Nkhoma Museum





CAMPING



Where to Camp: Choosing an Ideal Campsite

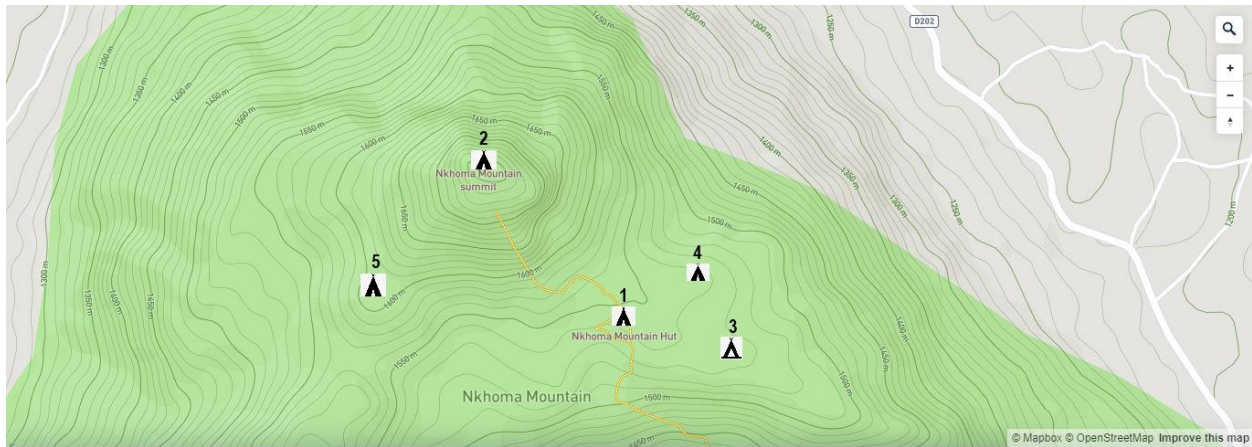
The ultimate guide to camping, and inherently one of the fundamentals of survival, dictates that if you are on high exposed ground, go lower down to find a sheltered spot. Use natural rock formation of the area to secure a good spot for the night. When on low, wet ground you will need to climb higher in order to find somewhere securely dry. Always look for somewhere sheltered from the wind, on rising ground that has no risk of flooding and is safe from rock falls²⁹. According to survival specialist John “Lofty” Wiseman, the following are **bad places to camp**:

1. Hilltops exposed to wind. Instead, move down and look for shelter on the lee side.
2. Valley bottoms and deep hollows. These places could be damp, and, especially, when the sky is clear, more liable to freeze at night.
3. Hillside terraces where ground holds moisture.
4. Spurs which are on game trails.

Strive to apply **Leave No Trace** principles when hiking to and when choosing a campsite. So far, there are five sites suitable for camping: four on Chiyambi and one on Njuchi. The choice of site is just a matter of preference of the backpacking company. If luxury is a determining factor, then Campsite 1 at the Hut is most suitable, with access to mattresses, pillows, bathroom and a latrine. If you are all about sunrise and pulling away from civilization while not being too exposed to the elements, then Campsite 3 and 4 are perfect. Campsite 2 at the top of Nkhoma is for wild campers who get exhilarated when exposed to strong wind and night freeze!



²⁹ Wiseman, J. (2014). *SAS survival handbook, 3rd Ed: The ultimate guide to surviving anywhere*. William Morrow: New York, NY, USA.



Camping sites at Nkhoma

Campsite 1: On Hut Premises



This site is located around the premises of the Mountain Hut. This site is ideal when camping with children or campers who do not want to go wild all the way, but instead wish to experience some luxury during camping. The Hut can also provide an alternative to people who desire to experience life outdoors without necessarily sleeping outside in a tent: comfortable mattresses and pillows available for laying on the floor. Here you will have access to the Hut's facilities including kitchen, toilets and bathrooms. In the event that you have a lot of food and supplies, you may cache these in the hut. Then you can explore the mountain knowing your things are safe. Guards provide security 200 m around. The ground is good and the soils deep enough for staking tents. Therefore, all tent types (domes, wedges and hoops) are suitable here; a standard or regular tents maybe used without worry of damage.



Advantages

- Perfect for camping with children; a lot of playing grounds.
- Two pit latrines, no need for cat holes.
- Access to kitchen, chairs, tables and bathroom
- Fireplace, charcoal and mbaula
- Access to water from an unprotected well
- Guards
- Can store supplies in the hut
- Trees available to set up hammock
- No extreme weather conditions by day or night

-Although not along game trail, animals may reach campsite

Disadvantages

- No view of sunrise or sunset. To catch sunrise, you must either move to campsite 3 or 4.
- It does not give full wilderness experience and may deny children a chance to learn some outdoor skills e.g. fire making.
- Nearby thicket harbours snakes, ants, centipedes, bees and wasps, which maybe present a danger, especially to children.



Campsite 2: On Top of the World



This is a perfect place to watch sunrise, sunset or the stars on a clear night. The top is extensive and, therefore, a particular site should be chosen depending on preference of the party and camping gear brought. A specialized tent designed to withstand extreme condition is necessary here because of the winds, which get stronger at night on the mountaintop. Although hoops would be the go-to choice because of their ability to shed wind, domes and wedges are the better option because of their freestanding properties in a rocky place, where stakes and guys cannot be effectively used to reinforce structure. If possible, then use tents with pole of Fibreglass, rather than Carbon Fibre, which can break easily—however, standard tents should hold just fine.



There is little earth at the top, mostly rock, which makes pegs rather useless for anchorage. Guy ropes must be used to provide support to pitched tents, stones may be used instead of stakes to reaffirm the structure of the tent. Sharing a tent with someone may also reduce

significantly the chance of one getting blown off the top. Still, it is better to make camp at an unexposed area, where natural rock formation will provide a shield against strong mountain winds.



Advantages

- Sublime mountain experience
- Spectacular sunrise and sunset, and mountain top views
- Improbable to be reached by hyenas or other animals
- Quiet and secluded. Not likely to be congested
- Allows a chance to use outdoor skills
- If you know where to look, there are colonies of different kinds of bugs

Disadvantages

- Difficult to reach when

strapped with a heavy rucksack. This makes bringing supplies up there burdensome

- Not safe for children

- No access to toilet or bathroom. Cat holes are not ideal either because the soil is thin, may require walking far away from camp to find a good place do your business. Otherwise “pack it out’ is the more acceptance practice of disposing off human waste.
- May require accurate knowledge of windward and leeward side
- Cannot use hammock

Campsite 3 and 4: Stone-throw Away from Hut



Sites 3 and 4 are situated about 100 metres away from the Hut, just past the thicket. From the Hut premises, there is a trail to campsite 3 going back a few yards (south of the Hut) on the Minga Trail and turning left. The site is just beyond the rock where people usually pray during the day. It faces east. On the north eastern part of the compound (to the right of the Guard’s hut) and the edge of the thicket, lies a path leading to campsite 4. Like site 3, the trail goes a little further beyond the rock where people also make prayers.

Advantages

- Perfect sites to see sunrise
- Site is away from trails. May allow for some privacy with limited encroachment.
- Full wild experience
- Few trees for hammocks
- A lot of space, good for other activities e.g. catch, paintball
- Possible to have access to hut facilities if paid for

Disadvantages

- Site is exposed and unsafe. Animals e.g. snakes and hyenas, may intrude into camp at night. The further away from the camp, the less guaranteed the safety provided by the guards.
- Although not very far from the Hut, access to its amenities is limited to daytime
- Inconvenient when prayer groups come, especially during the day. The singing is loud and maybe undesirable if the intention had been to have some quiet time.
- Little to no trees to set up hammock

Campsite 5: Kamazi



Kamazi Campsite 5 is along the Njuchi Route near caves on a relatively flat are. Two peaks flank it and trails go out radially from here. It is an excellent site for wild camping. It is well hidden so that all around is the mountain.

Advantages

- Access to water supply, which may purification can render safe to drink
- Scenic
- May enlist help of (unofficial) local porters to carry supplies
- Caves and other rock formations may provide extra shielding or protection
- Plenty of firewood for starting a fire

Disadvantages

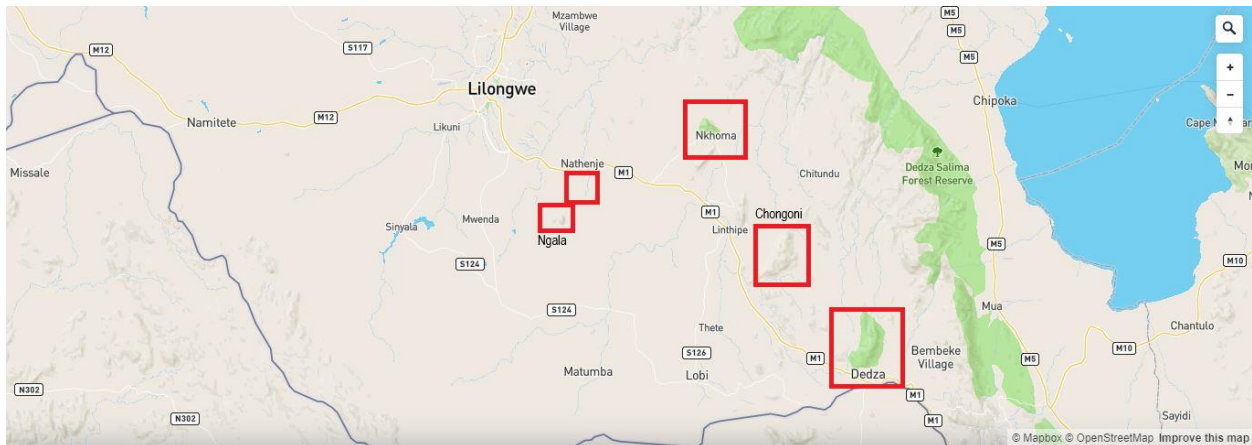
- No direct views of sunrise or sunset. To watch the sun, one would have to move to another site.
- May be encroached by snakes
- Some places may require a little clearing



ROCK CLIMBING



Rock climbing activities at the crags at Nkhoma Mountain are coordinated by **Climb Malawi**. There is a robust and all-inclusive climbing community in Lilongwe, including a bouldering gym at the Climb Centre in Area 18A. Although exploration is still happening for more potential sites at Nkhoma, there are already bolted routes for free climbing and beta are available for routes on developed boulders (including a guidebook with ratings). An older guide exists that talks about some multi-pitch trad climbing and routes that were bolted in the '80s at Nkhoma by **H Allen**³⁰; the newer 2020 version **Rock Climbing in Malawi** also gives information about climbing at Nkhoma. Other rock climbing sites include **Nathenje** (sport climbing) and **Chongoni and Dedza** (bouldering). You can find Climb Malawi on Facebook and Instagram. Furthermore, direct contact information about climbing has been included in the contacts section in this guidebook.



Climbing areas near Lilongwe



³⁰ Author and first leader of the most of the routes he described in the guidebook "Malawi Climbs in the Central Region (1988)" and later edited by George Margesson and Drew Corbyn in 2015 and 2020. Available at Mountain Club of Malawi website www.mcm.org.mw/climbing



PARAGLIDING



Paragliding activities in Malawi are coordinated by the **School of Dreams** who are based in the hills of Eastern Dedza off Golomoti Road (also called Khwekhwere Road) at **Mganja**. Flying at Nkhoma is still under exploration in order to find best launching sites. No one has flown there (recently) just yet, although there is a rumour that someone might have in past. From the virgin exploratory trip we made with the Manager of School of Dreams and Paraglider Pilot, **Mathew Hau Hau**, there is some evidence indicating that



the southern slope on Chiyambi Route has potential for takeoff. Further, at the top looks like potential site but the problem is that most of the top area is mostly cliffs. More trips to Nkhoma have been planned to discover more. Paragliding is actively done in Dedza and according to the School of Dreams, the best season for paragliding is when winds are

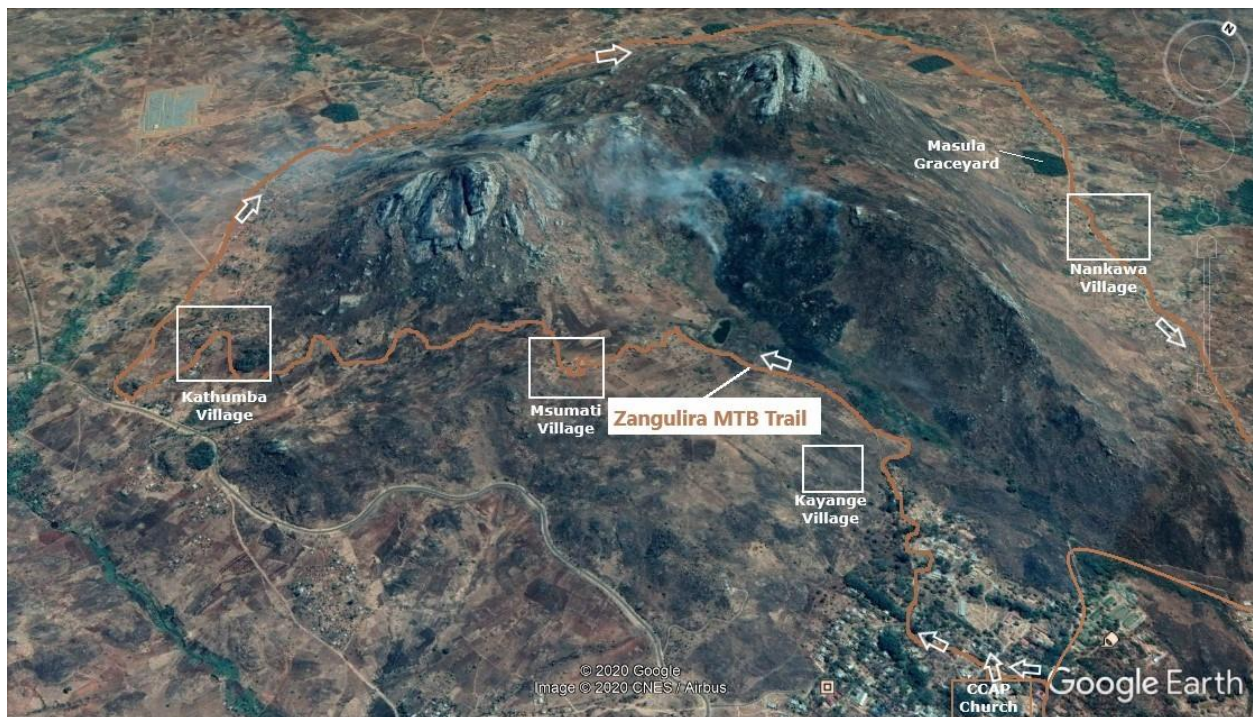
favourable in April—June.

MTB

Zungulira Trail

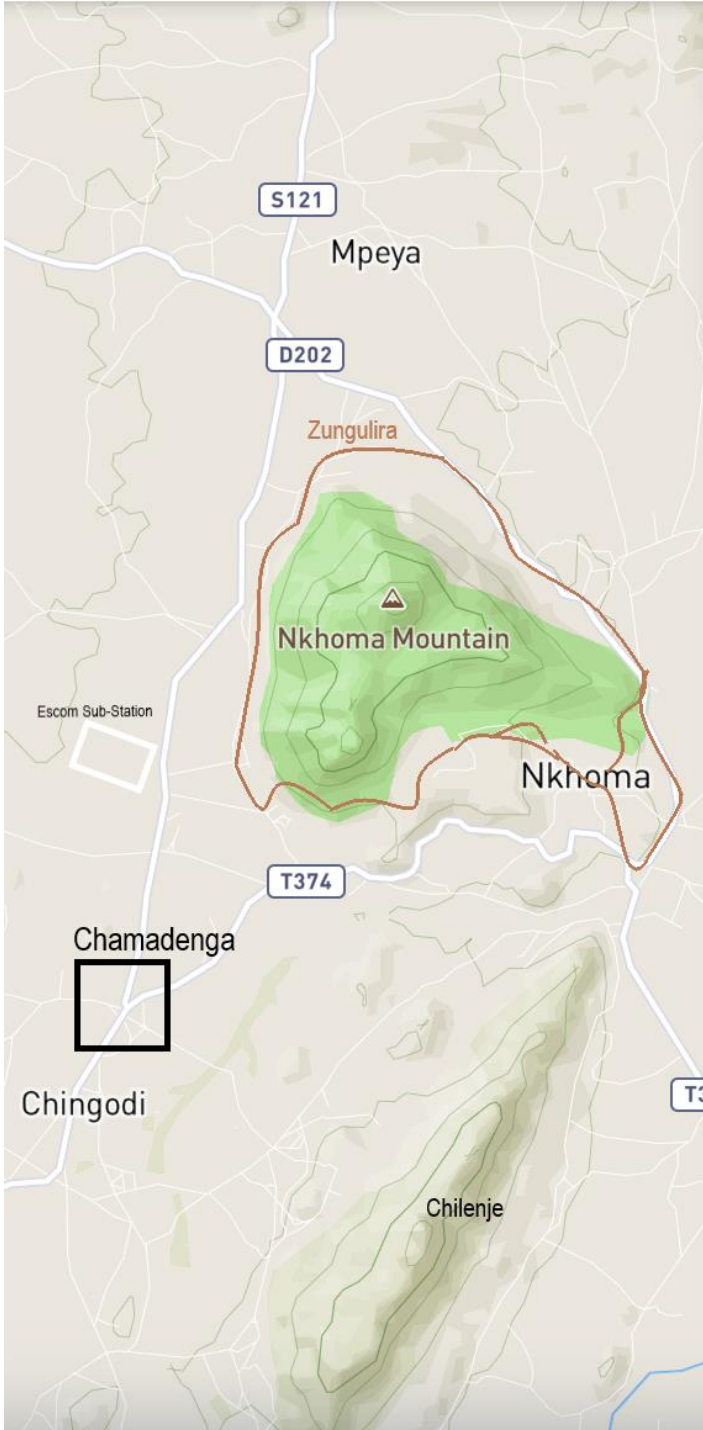


You should park your car at the Church and get your off-road bike out! **Zungulira MTB Trail** is generally a cross-country (XC) type of route which starts at the Church and goes up the road through the normal hiking route. The first part of the trail is a rocky fireroad with steep slopes. It goes past the two ponds, passes through Msumati village and on to Mbalambala and down to Kathumba village. From here, the route is flat. **Hayaan Nur** and I identified this first mountain biking trail at Nkhoma and named it *Zungulira* because it perfectly goes around the mountain. The terrain of this trail is excellent for MTB, with a combination of broad, flat and smooth fireroad; gentle, bushy and rocky doubletracks; and narrow, rugged and sloping trails singletracks. There are no TTFs³¹ on this route. Further exploration is underway.



Zungulira Trail

³¹ **Technical Trail Features (TTFs)** include log piles, log rides, rock gardens, gap jumps and wall rides.



Off-road biking route at Nkhoma

THE SUMMIT

Horn of Death

The **“Horn of Death”** is a pinnacle found at the summit of the mountain. It is highly exposed and it elevates 3 m above its base. Honnolding³² the Horn of Death is petrifying, especially because one mistake can lead to fall over the cliff to a depth of about 40 m (120 ft) or more. Its top is thin and scrambling from the south can get you there, then you scoot to the middle. However, no technical equipment is required for the climb. It is extremely dangerous to get up there and people who have fear of height should never attempt this feat. A fall may lead to serious injury or death. The thrill of climbing up there is immense, a perfect feat for people with RTPS³³. Warning: it is ill-advised to climb up there when there are strong winds or during rainy season.



Petter Sundqvist, Mada Mwaungulu, Ed Nhlane and Kristina Sonnenschein in May 2020

³² Refer to Alex Honnold, the Free Soloist

³³ Risk Taking Propensity Syndrome – the tendency to dash towards danger, exhibited by particular individuals who enjoy activities with a rush of adrenaline (flight or fight) such as large-wave surfing, free-soloing, downhill sports, etc..



Aleksandar Grahovac in September 2019



Olya Skarin and Aleksandar Grahovac in September 2019



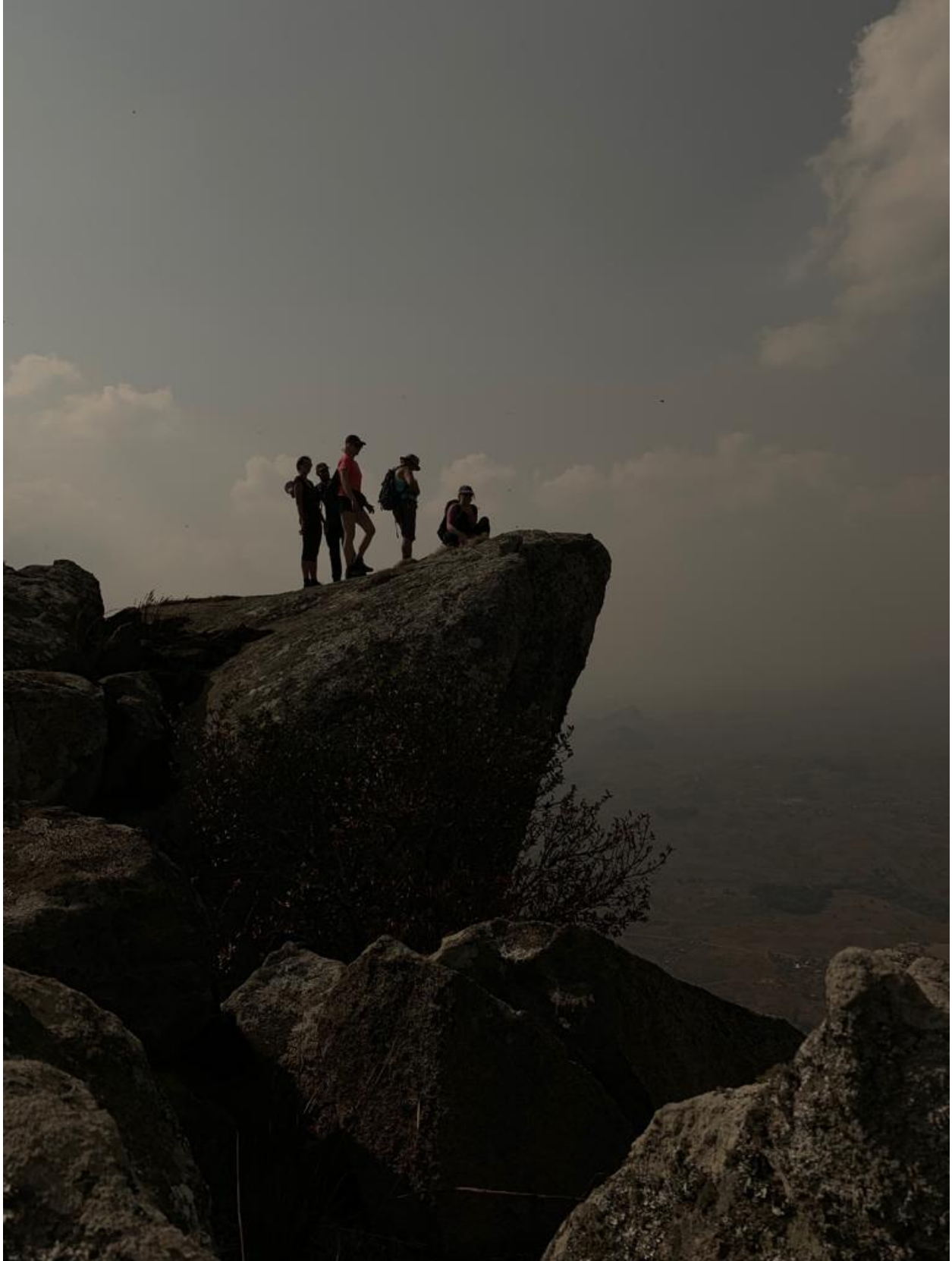
Kaphiri Point

“**Kaphiri³⁴ Point**” is a vantage point at the summit just below the Nkhoma Peak. It is so named because when you stand at this point and look out you can see, across the plain, Kaphiri area. It is one of the three perfect spots for a **peaknic**, the other two are at the peak to the north and west.



Kaphiri Point

³⁴ Kaphiri is Chichewa for “Little Mountain”



Kaphiri Point, side view

Nkhoma Peak

Nkhoma Peak is at an altitude of 1743 m. The rock. There are two sites for peaknic, one near the edge on the north, where you have a 270° clear of Lilongwe City, more visibly the State House and Bingu National Stadium. Another spot lies a few metres west and is also a good site for spending the night in a sleeping bag. There is also a view of other mountains from the peak: Chilenje to the south (and adjacent to Nkhoma) and Chongoni to the south east in Dedza.



The peak and peaknic sites



Mpeya Point

To the North of the is **Mpeya Point** which can be accessed by descending from the peak and going to the right below it, or straight from Kaphiri Point and to the right at the base of Nkhoma Peak. Mpeya Point lies in the shadow of Nkhoma Peak. In fact, two people standing on either points can see and hear each other. Looking out to the North, you can see **Mpeya** at the four-ways/crossroads, where roads coming from the West, East, Area 23 and Chitekwere converge.

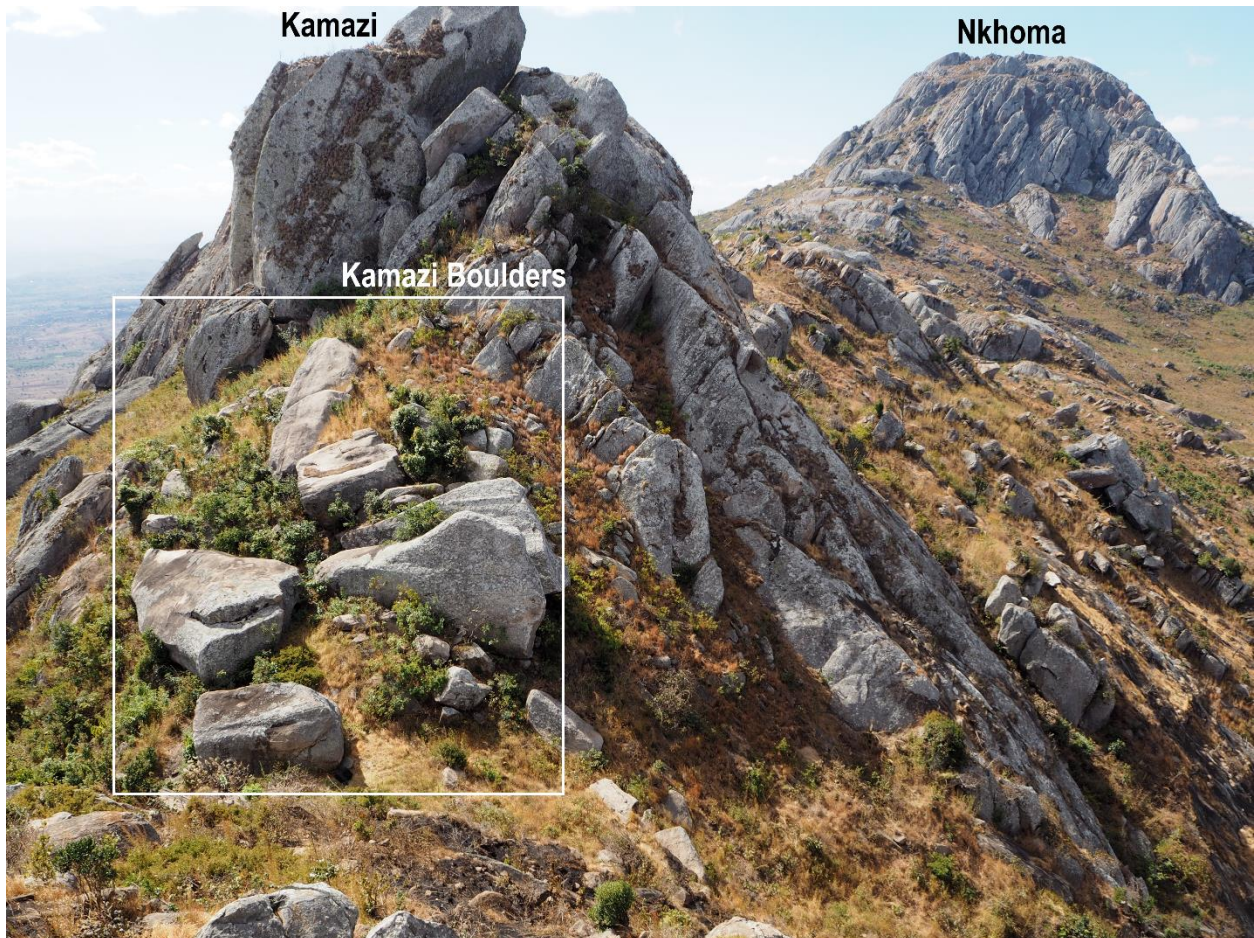
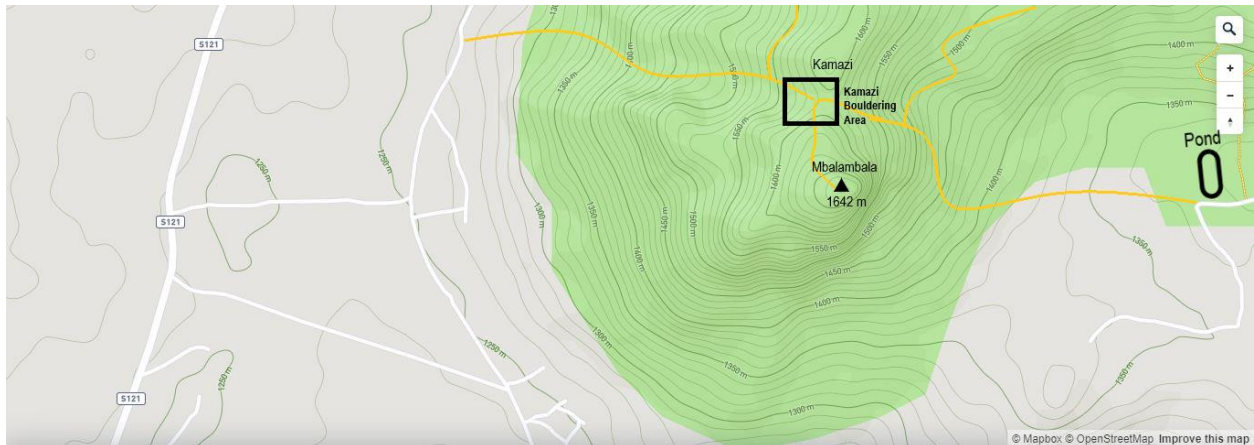


Mpeya point



Mbalambala and Kamazi Peaks

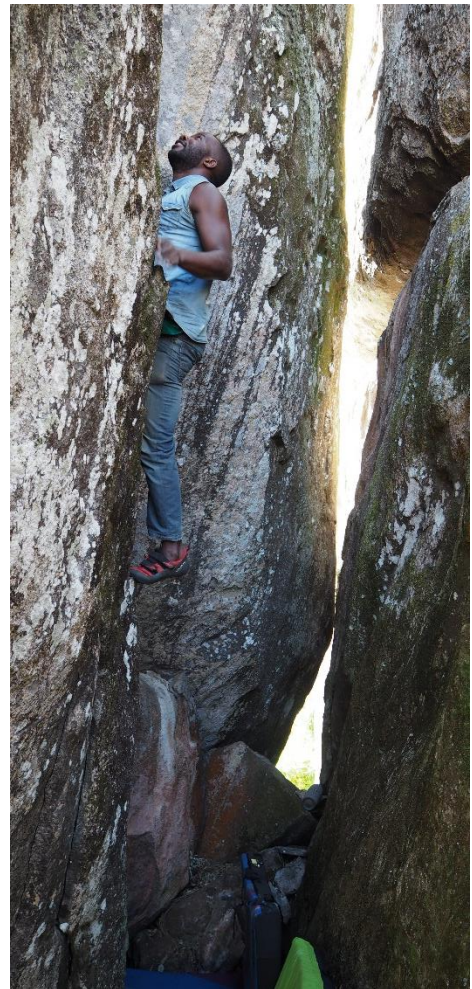
Apart Nkhoma peak, Mbalambala and Kamazi peaks rise on the left of the mountain and are rarely visited by hikers or climbers. These peaks are more easily accessible from the west, but are much more fun when hiked from the south. On the ridge between the two peaks is a boulder field, **Kamazi Bouldering Area**, that offers a variety of climbing styles on rock. The character of the venue can be typified as adventurous. Some of the rocks, especially those beneath Mbalambala on the west are fractured, with cracks large enough to accommodate protection and long enough to give a short but enjoyable **traditional climb**.

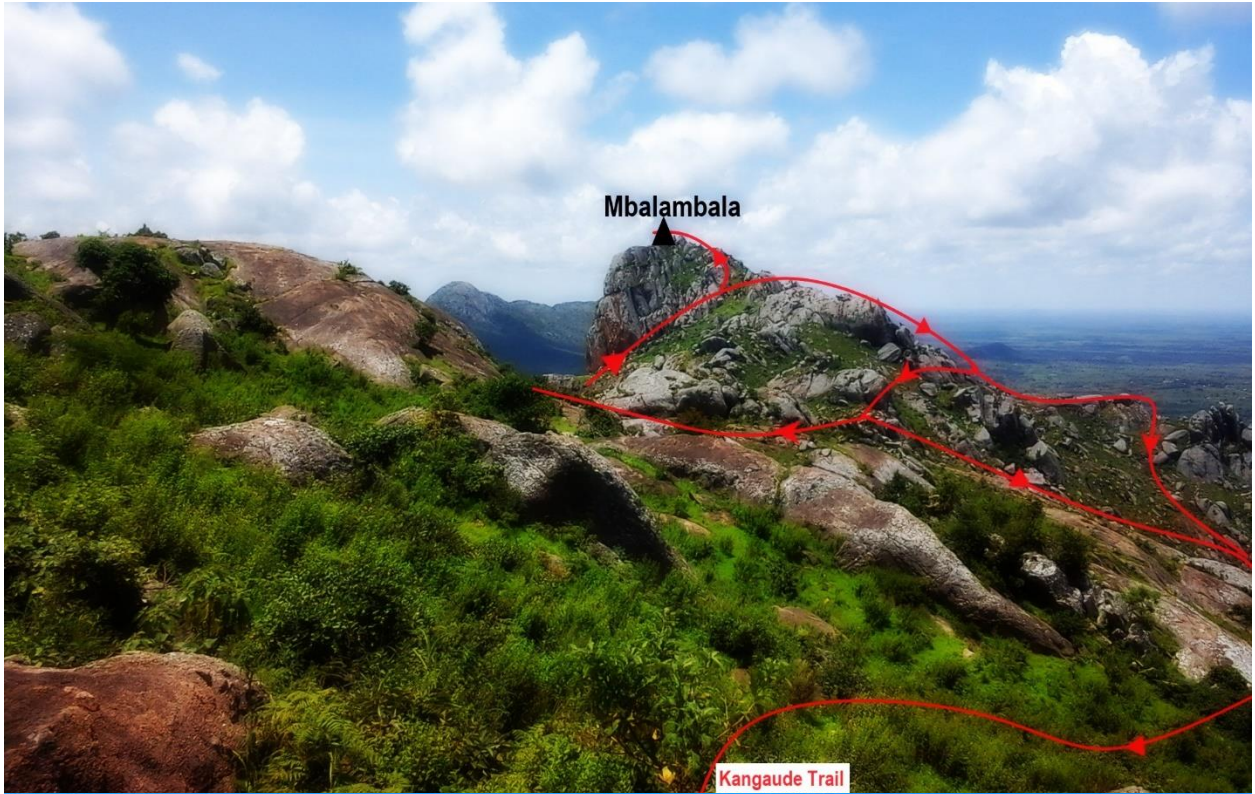


The easy boulders sparsely scatter across the ridge and offer a relaxed activity if camped at the Hut. Most are easily accessible, only a few only would require whacking through some bush to get to. It is equally satisfying to hike to these peaks (Mbalambala and Kamazi) and descend, without having to reach Nkhoma Peak. However, what is more is a five-hour tour of all three peaks. To do this, you will need the entire day to hike, starting on Chiyambi up to the hut. The views from these high points are breathtaking.



Mbalambala (left) and bouldering on the ridge at Kamazi Boulders (bottom left and bottom)







If you are camping at the hut for the night, then you can get up early in the morning for a tour of these three greater peaks. There is **Mbalale Trail** at the back of the hut, on the left, that goes past the **well/spring under the tree** and proceeds all the way to Mbalalamba and Kamazi peaks through hyena territory (quite safe during the day). From there, you can follow one of the minor trails going round Kamazi (on the windward side, the West) through the baboon territory. The best time of the year to hike to Mbalambala is June-December before the paths are overgrown with vegetation and trails are rendered ideally impassable. Depending on your intentions for the day, you may branch off to the right, up around Kamazi and down again to the hut through the pass, or you may continue to venture straight ahead and connect with one of the trails on the western side of Nkhoma mountain that have already been discussed above. If uncertain, ask a guide to take you. **Birding** can also be an enjoyable activity for this area as there are so many various kinds flying about everywhere, flying high and flying low.



CONSERVATION AND SAFETY

LIFE FORMS

When it comes to caring for the wilderness, strictly follow principles of **Leave No Trace**. I am reminded of the caution I found in the book *Mountaineering : The Freedom of the Hills* (8th Ed) and is worth echoing here: “Remember that the beauty of the wilderness frequently becomes its undoing by attracting visitors—leaving the landscape touched by human hands and eventually less than wild. The privileges we enjoy in the mountains bring the responsibility not only to leave no trace but also to help preserve these environments we love.” Mountains are not amusement parks, they owe us nothing and we will do better to remember that we are only visitors there—we are the intruders! We need to be respectful and caring.

There are many life forms on this mountain: from tiny but harmful, unusual and graceful, to large and predatory. The ecosystem and its biodiversity consists of many species of indigenous trees, birds, butterflies, insects, reptiles and amphibians. Yellow baboons live and falcons glide at Mbalambala and hyenas howl at night.



Anyani (Baboons) on rocks shelling maize

The hyenas in this area, based on previous sightings, are massive and dangerous; best not to walk around the mountain at night. I can attest to this from my personal experience. One time, our party parked our vehicles for a night near the village near the boulder field and hiked up to camp at the hut. We thought it would be expedient to leave some of our luggage, including crash pads, in the cars just a few metres away from where we would be climbing the following morning. When we descended, we found that there were prints of at least eight hyenas and that our four cars vandalized that night. Tyres of two cars had been bitten and punctured, mirrors of three cars

damaged, teeth sunk into the front bumper of one and there were scratches and dirty paw prints on all four. Then we also learned that they had gone into the village from there and killed two



My guess is that since there is not much to hunt on the mountain anymore, these beasts go hungry for many days and that is why they go downhill to hunt, and because they are starving they are most likely to kill anything alive they come across. If they can wreak havoc like this to vehicles, what more can they do to tent fabric in order to get to the people inside? Hyenas live in the caves above the pond on the southern side and on **Chisese Pass** on the northwestern area. Porcupines, hares and Mbalale (rock deer) also found in the north.

Chule (Rock Frog) nighed in a rock at the mountain



A beetle



Gulosho (Lizard)

CONSERVING MOUNTAIN ECOSYSTEMS, INCLUDING THEIR BIODIVERSITY

- a. To ensure environmental protection in the mountain, **disposal of non-biodegradables/inorganics** (especially oils, plastics and metals) is **PROHIBITED**. Collect everything (trash) in refuse bags and bring back home with you: **DO NOT THROW THEM IN THE BIN**. Remnants of (organic) foodstuffs may be thrown out in the bush, as these will make humus, which enriches the mountain soils. All outdoor enthusiasts must adopt a set of principles and ethics referred to as Leave No Trace. **TAKE ONLY PICTURES, LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS!**
- b. Birding is okay, but hunting birds is not. Similarly, to preserve the biodiversity of Nkhoma Mountain, watch out for the baboons, bugs, ants, birds and other forms of life. **DO NOT BE THE EVIL STOMPER!** In case of snake sightings, **DO NOT KILL** unless there is an imminent danger to life. First response should be to let the snake be and go its way or to remove it (with a long stick) away from site. If not sure what kind of snake it is, **DO NOT** approach, unless the snake is not going away.
- c. If you can, please register for “**Adopt a Tree**” program with **Ed Camping**³⁵. In this program, you plant a tree and commit to looking after it until it is fully established. Adopt a Tree is a segment of Ed Camping’s “**Adventures 4 Impact (a4i)**” initiative whose objective is to restore green cover and enhance ecotourism at the Mountain.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS


HIKING

- a. *Precaution must be taken at all times when hiking Nkhoma especially along “**The Minga Trail**” i.e. The Thorns Trail (the start of the ascent) and “**The Bugs Trail**” (the last and steepest part to the peak). As the name *Minga* or Thorns suggests, the path is lined with fierce thorny bushes, some of which rise to eye-level. Watch out! On the Bugs Trail, scrambling on loose rocks may lead to a fall or serious injury. Extra precaution must be taken during the descent. Follow **Guide’s Instructions** if you are unfamiliar with terrain.
- b. *Hiking shoes must have a “grip of death” with rock so that no one loses footing due to inadequate friction between sole and rock.
- c. ***Dangerous stunts** or **risky poses for camera shots** should be done at owner’s risk. Instructions provided in this guidebook must be coupled with safety always. The author or tour operator shall not be held accountable for falls or injuries due deliberate careless maneuvers, especially at the Horn of Death.
- d. Beware of *linthumbwi* (red ants) along the “The Bugs Trail” all the way to the peak. Linthumbwi have a dramatic, nasty habit of biting in the inner thighs and underneath the armpits. And they bite hard!
- e. The trails at Nkhoma can be classified as Levels 1 and 2 according to the YDS free climbing classification system. **BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL** when approaching precipices (edges), especially at the summit. Although some of the best peaknic views happen to be on the edges, it is best to sit at a safe distance away from cliffs. **DO NOT LET CHILDREN WONDER WITHOUT ADULT SUPERVISION OR RUN AROUND THE SUMMIT.**

³⁵ Hiking and camping services provider and promoter of (SDG target 15.4) conservation of mountain ecosystems including their biodiversity, operating from Lilongwe. Contact details included at the end of this Guidebook.

CAMPING

The type of camping referred to here is tenting. Here are some things to consider when camping at Nkhoma:

- a.  ***Beware of hyenas!** You may camp anywhere from the hut up. Sites below this the hut are prone areas to hyena attacks. Whatever the case, **DO NOT SET CAMP AT THE BOULDER FIELD** as this area is right in the way of packs of aggressive hyenas.
- b. *Do not leave food leftovers near campsite as this may attract wild animals scavenging at night. **THROW ALL LEFTOVER ITEMS IN COVERED BIN AWAY FROM TENTS! DO NOT BRING COOKED FOOD TO THE TENTS.**
- c. *Always, check the tent floor for ants and other creepy crawlies before sleeping. Beware of *Linthumbwi* (Red Ants) and *Midzodzo* (Army Ants). The former can cause serious damage even fatality, especially when they enter the ears while you sleep and the latter will cause great discomfort at night.
- d. Tents or any other form of shelter must be anchored down when bivouacking at the summit. Alternatively, set camp where the natural rock formation can provide a break for the strong winds. **DO NOT SET TENT OR SLEEP NEAR EDGES!**

CLIMBING

Climbing is an activity that involves danger of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks. Here is some safety advice for climbers, especially novices:

- a. CRASH PAD AND SPOTTER MUST ALWAYS BE PRESENT WHEN BOULDERING
- b. *HELMETS MUST BE WORN BY THE **BELAYER** AT ALL TIMES.
- c. ***ONLY CERTIFIED BELAYERS** OR INDIVIDUALS AUTHENTICATED BY CLIMB MALAWI MAY ASSIST IN CONTROLLING ASCENT AND DESCENT OF CLIMBERS.
- d. TOP ROPING MUST BE DONE WITH AN EXPERIENCED CLIMBER ACTING AS A BELAYER.
- e. *BECAUSE OF THE LEVEL OF RISK INVOLVED, ALL PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN **LEAD, ABSEILING OR RAPPELING MUST SIGN A CLIMB MALAWI WAIVER** FIRST CONFIRMING THAT THE PARTICIPANT ASSUMES ALL RISKS, WAIVES AND RELEASES ALL CLAIMS, INDEMNIFIES CLIMB CENTRE, AGREES TO ABIDE BY ALL RULES AND IS PHYSICALLY QUALIFIED TO PARTICIPATE.
- f. ALL CLIMBING ACTIVITIES AT NKHOMA ARE COORDINATED BY CLIMB MALAWI.
- g. RULES ABOVE MAY NOT APPLY IF CLIMBING IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH CLIMB MALAWI.
- h. Strictly adhere to the CLIMBING CODE³⁶:
 - Leave the trip itinerary with a responsible person.
 - Carry the necessary clothing, food and equipment.
 - A climbing party of three is the minimum, unless prearranged support is available.
 - Rope up on all exposed places. Anchor all belays
 - Keep the party together, and obey the leader or majority rule.
 - Never climb beyond your ability and knowledge.
 - Never let judgement be overruled by desire when choosing the route or deciding whether to turn back.

³⁶ Eng, R.C. & Van Pelt, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Mountaineering: The freedom of the hills, 8th Ed.* The Mountaineers Books: Seattle, WA, USA.

- Follow the precepts of sound mountaineering as set forth in books of recognized merit.
- Behave at all times in a manner that reflects favourably upon mountaineering, including adherence to **Leave No Trace Principles**.

Adhering to the Climbing Code will significantly increase the probability for safety and success, even in risk-filled or doubtful situations, and will provide adequate margin of safety in case you misjudge your circumstance out there.

MTB

Mountain biking is not only a strenuous activity but it also presents great risks if riders are ill-prepared for the trip. There are many safety guidelines to follow but here are the suggested few:

- a. CHECK THAT YOUR MTB is fit for the trails a day before you take it out to the mountain. Check for air in and suspension of the tyres, level and stability of saddle, for the workings of the chain and for the gears that they are working properly. DO NOT FORGET TO PACK YOUR MTB TOOLKIT when you leave.
- b. Never go out if you are too unwell to cycle. Physical fitness of individuals in a cycling company is a crucial component to check on the list before you depart.
- c. Wear protective gear. Bicycle HELMETS MUST BE WORN AT ALL TIMES! Although not absolutely necessary, gloves and pads to cover the shin, elbow and knees may be worn, if available, to safeguard the rider from injuries resulting from a fall.
- d. Wear appropriate clothing that prevent discomfort when cycling, especially cycling shorts.
- e. Pack basic First Aid.
- f. Bring sufficient water in bottles that can be fitted onto the bike and an extra one to throw in the backpack.
- g. ENSURE THAT YOU BRING THE RIGHT MTB to the mountain. Your mountain bike must have at least front suspension.
- h. When cycling, NEVER GO TOO FAST ON UNFAMILIAR TERRAIN!

PARAGLIDING

This sport is extremely dangerous and should not be attempted by untrained, under-qualified or inexperienced persons. The operational assumption here is that participants for paragliding are already experienced individuals who are certified to fly. If this is not the case, then at least they going on as a passenger with a trained paraglider pilot. Seasoned pilots will have the necessary judgement that only comes from years of experience taking off from summits on the mountains, which will help to minimize and control risks. All activities and safety related to paragliding are coordinated by **School of Dreams**. All their safety guidelines apply here. See in contacts section.



WASH IN CAMPING SETTINGS

Safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) is just as critical during camping as it is at home. It is imperative, therefore, to adequately discuss a few things here: safe drinking-water, cooking, number-two-in-the-bush, personal hygiene (hand-washing with soap, menstrual hygiene management (MHM) and brushing teeth) and environmental cleanliness. This applies to all forms of camping, except for the most extreme, namely survival camping (where no conventional rules apply). This section gives general information, not specific to Nkhoma but relevant to the matter of hiking and camping.

Disclaimer: The components of WASH, the definitions of service and service ladders in this document are not the official categories of JMP³⁷, but my personal opinion on what should constitute WASH service when hiking and camping, based on my experience in the wilderness.

Water

| | Service level | Definition |
|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| SDG 3.9 SGD 6.1 | Basic Service | Water is available from an improved source on premises or clean water is carried in a pack to campsite |
| | Limited Service | An improved source is within 1 000 metres of campsite or means exist to purify water from nearby unimproved sources |
| | No Service | Water is taken from unprotected or surface sources with no intention of purifying it or improved source is located more than 1 000 metres away from campsite |

An improved water source is one, which, by nature of its design or construction, has the potential to deliver safe water³⁸. Such sources include, piped water or taps, boreholes, rainwater, and packaged or delivered water.

When planning to stay out in the mountain wilderness for one or more nights, carry sufficient drinking-water (at least 1 L per day per adult). If you plan to cook at the campsite, then you need an extra 500 mL of safe water and another 500 mL for brushing teeth for every day you spend backpacking. Some people think brushing teeth with unclean water is okay because it only goes in and out of the mouth without going down inside the body. This is neither okay nor true. In fact, brushing teeth with unclean water from rivers or streams is just as harmful as ingesting it. You could still catch a waterborne disease. Therefore, whether you choose to pack a hydration bladder (platypus) or hydration bottle, good preparation demands that you have no less than 2 L in your pack for each day. You will need even more if you have toddlers in your company. The only disadvantage of this is that water is very heavy. While packing your own water would be convenient if camping for one or two nights, this quickly becomes a nightmare if you intend to spend a week or more in the wild.

³⁷ WHO and UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP), the official custodian for tracking global progress in drinking water, sanitation and hygiene.

³⁸ JMP, 2019

No worries, a solution exists: water purification! You can apply a combination of inexpensive Household Water Treatment and Safe Storage (HWTS) techniques such as sedimentation (clarification), BOILING and filtering with a clean cloth. Alternatively, chlorine based water purification tablets such as Aquatab and PUR may be used where the water is not turbid. Chlorine products, however, produce an odour, which, ironically, makes the cleaned water unacceptable to other people. The best are water filters such as the MSR Trailshot/Guardian, Platypus Gravity Works and Life Straw, which allow you to turn raw water (from rivers, springs, waterfalls) into clean water safe for drinking (without worrying about the odour). That way you only get to carry little water to be used at the beginning of your journey and Go Ultralight Backpacking! This, however, should only be considered an option if you are guaranteed a water supply will be available where you are going camping.

Advanced service can be achieved by considering the quality and acceptability (colour, taste and odour) of the water available.

Sanitation

| | Service level | Definition |
|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| SDG 3.9 SDG 6.2 | Basic Service | Improved sanitation facility is available on premises and usable |
| | Limited Service | Improved sanitation facility is available on premises but not meeting requirements for basic or faeces are safely disposed of in cat holes away from trails |
| | No Service | Open defecation |

JMP (2019) defines an improved sanitation facility as one, which, by nature of its design or construction, hygienically separates human excreta from contact. Flush or pour flush, VIP, vault, composting toilets and pit latrine with slab are considered improved.

Pee and Poo Management: No matter how tempting it may feel when swimming, NEVER do one or two in water. Urine and faeces deposited in water present a public health hazard. I am not saying that you have it, but pee can introduce bilharzia larvae into water; and poop (open defecation) is definitely a red alert, on both land and water. Urinate on bare ground and rocks always rather than on vegetation. The salts in urine attract animals to nibble on unintended vegetation and the concentration of urea may burn some shoots. When you go to squat in the bush (far away from trails and campsite), make sure it is not near a water body. Dig a cat hole (at least 8 inches deep and 5 inches in diameter), do number two, bury and mix well with soil, cover and leave no trace. I guess now would be a good time to think about adding a "Trowel" to your camping gear. A Trowel or Poop Scoop/Shovel is designed specifically for this purpose: to dig holes in the ground. You may also use an ice axe. When left in the open, faeces may end up in your mouth or the mouth of others (refer to the Feces-to-Faces pathways of the F-Diagram). On top of mountains, the soil is thin and therefore, cat hole are not the safest way to dispose of human waste. Instead, pack it out in a double plastic bag and wait until you get home or some other place where you can safely dispose of it.

Hygiene

| | Service level | Definition |
|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| SDG 3.9 SDG 6.2 | Basic Service | Functional handwashing facility with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs available onsite (provided or brought) for hand hygiene |
| | Limited Service | Handwashing with water, but not soap |
| | No Service | No handwashing facility (provided or brought) |

Hand hygiene is very crucial. Always carry (liquid) soap for rigorous hand-washing using clean water. Alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) or super towel SHOULD NOT BE a replacement for hand-washing with soap in camping context, where hands are visibly dirty. ABHR works best when hands appear "clean" but you wish not to leave anything to chance to eliminate microbes; rub for 20-30 seconds. However, when you have been fixing tyres, when bikepacking or tenting, or you have been touching the ground and rocks while backpacking (scrambling), wash your dirty hands with clean water and soap for 40-60 seconds! According to **WHO Guidelines for Hand Hygiene** ABHR is the preferred choice for hand hygiene if hands are not visibly soiled, because ABHR is more effective in killing microorganisms than plain or antimicrobial soaps and water, and it has other big advantages. The alcohol in ABHR kills microorganisms by denaturing proteins (i.e., they dissolve some microbe components). It also has persistent activity, meaning that it takes longer for microorganisms to repopulate the hands. It is important to note that the active ingredient—alcohol—is flammable, and that you should be careful and make sure any ABHR is stored away from flames and avoid making campfires after using ABHR. Finally, an advanced service level can be achieved when you remember to stock a Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) pack, especially if there are women and adolescent girls in your party. Other forms of personal hygiene can be considered for advanced services e.g. tissue paper. While the average person may require 2 L of clean water per day, the woman must consider 3 L in order to cover menstrual cleanliness because open water bodies are neither ideal for dignity nor clean for use.

Environmental Cleaning

| | Service level | Definition |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|
| SDG 3.9 SDG 6.6 | Basic Service | Waste is safely segregated, campsite is clean, and all hikers know protocol for a clean camp |
| SDG 12.4 SDG 15.4 | Limited Service | Limited separation of waste and/or clean campsite, but not all requirements for basic services are met |
| | No Service | Waste is not segregated and/or is disposed of haphazardly in the wilderness |

Another aspect of Camping WASH is environmental cleaning, including waste management, without necessarily and significantly disturbing mountain ecosystems and their biodiversity. Make sure your site is clean enough before you make camp there. A clean environment will serve as protection against pathogens and infections. Therefore, site should be clear, well drained and not likely to become a puddle in the case of rain—slight slope. Safely segregate and properly dispose of waste generated at campsite. Solid waste must be segregated into **organics or biodegradables, inorganics or non-biodegradables** (plastics, foils, metals). **INORGANICS SHOULD NEVER BE DISPOSED OF IN THE MOUNTAIN**, instead collect all waste and bring it back home with you.



MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Firstly, always inform someone (at home) when going hiking and camping, including how long you will be gone for. During your stay at Nkhoma Mountain, it is good to have one individual in your party with basic First Aid knowledge. If one of you has a medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, allergies, etc. remember to pack your medication or remedies, and most importantly inform your company about your condition and instruct them what they would have to do in case of acute attacks. Another important thing is to have an ICE³⁹ number written or saved somewhere accessible by other people besides yourself. Do not neglect illnesses or injuries from falls. Remember that there is no mountain rescue at Nkhoma; all emergencies must be responded to the party.

Nkhoma Mountain is convenient because the Mission Hospital is near. The Hospital is one of the best medical facilities in Lilongwe. Any serious injuries or sudden illness during your stay at the Mountain may be rushed there in time. However, sometimes it is more dangerous to move a patient or injured person without proper instruction from an individual with clinical background. In that case, and when uncertain about how to administer First Aid or respond to medical emergencies before taking the person to the Hospital, a contact person at the Hospital, **Samuel Kabota**, has been provided at the end, to help advise on such emergencies and (virtually) instruct you about what to do. Samuel is a trained medical practitioner, with background in clinical medicine and surgery, hospice and palliative care medicine, and will assist in such circumstances. You can call and professional help will come to you over the phone.

Please do not misuse this contact. Use for serious medical emergencies only.

³⁹ In Case of Emergency

USEFUL CONTACTS

The following are the contacts to get relevant information about operators and various operations at Nkhoma Mountain.

Hiking and Camping

To hire camping equipment from Lilongwe, request for a mountain guide, know about porters, or just to enquire in general about hiking and camping at Nkhoma, contact:

Ed Camping

Address: 229 Shire Street, Area 47 Sector 2, Lilongwe.
Contact Person: Ed Nhlane, CCO
Email: enhlane@gmail.com
Mobile: +265 991-240-676
Social Media: **Ed Camping** on Facebook, Twitter & Instagram
Services: Hiking and camping services, and camping gear for rent

Rock Climbing

To know about climbing at Nkhoma and other parts of Malawi, hire gear (shoes, helmets, harnesses, ropes, etc.), sign up for climbing classes, just hit the bouldering gym, join the climbing community or enquire about any climbing-related events from Lilongwe, contact:

Climb Malawi

Address: Area 18A
Contact Person: Tyler Algeo, Founder & ED
Email: tyler.algeo@gmail.com
Call: +265 998-132-434
WhatsApp: +1 720-288-9670
Social Media: **Climb Malawi** on Facebook & Instagram
Website: www.climbmalawi.com
Services: Climbing gym, rock climbing classes, outdoor climbing and climbing gear for rent

Nkhoma Guest Houses, Chalets and Mountain Hut

To book the Guest House and Chalets down at the Mission or the Mountain Hut for camping, and to enquire about prices and services for campsite at the Hut, contact:

Nkhoma Synod

Address: Nkhoma Mission, Nkhoma
Contact Person: Bester
Email: nkhomaquesthouse@gmail.com
Call: +265 995-189-914
WhatsApp:
Services: Accommodation

Hope's Inn

To reserve a room at Hope's Inn and enquire about their prices and services, contact

Address: Nkhoma Mission, Nkhoma
Contact Person: Priscilla Chimphango
Email: stay@hopesinn.info
Mobile: +265 991-379-405
Social Media: **Hope's Inn** on Facebook
Services: Accommodation

Porters

The Porters' Association, although affiliated with Ed camping, is autonomous. To prearrange for a porter to assist you to carry luggage up the mountain to the Hut, please contact:

Porters

1. Billy Chisauka Phiri +265 991-440-246/997-147-246
2. Nelson Kaoloka +265 997-318-528
3. Peter Banda +265 991-631-803
4. Luka Shadreck +265 992-810-524

The Museum

Established in 1989 at centenary celebration of the CCAP Synod of Nkhoma. The Museum now operates under Nkhoma University since 2015. It opens from Mon to Fri, 8 am - 4 pm, with lunch break from 12 pm to 2 pm. It contains various artefacts, which tell the history of CCAP Nkhoma Synod, including the first settlers, the first Nyasaland Christians at Nkhoma, the Hospital and the School. To enquire about admission, contact:

The Mission Museum

Address: Nkhoma Mission, Nkhoma, directly opposite CCAP Church
Contact Person: Innocent Gondwe, Director
Email: igondwe@gmail.com
Mobile: +265 992-366-847 | 992-120-899
Social Media: **Nkhoma Museum** on Facebook
Services: History, art, monuments and antiquities.

The Hospital

To seek professional medical help in case of sudden illnesses or injuries (including other medical emergencies) and for instructions on first aid, please contact:

Nkhoma Mission Hospital

Address: Nkhoma Mission
Contact Person: Samuel Kabota, Clinical Superintendent
Email: samkabota1@gmail.com
Mobile: +265 998-951-493
Services: Medical emergencies

MTB

To enquire about mountain biking at Nkhoma, including developed trails, please contact:

Address: Area 47, Lilongwe
Contact Person: Ed Nhlane
Mobile: +265 991-240-676
Social Media: **Ed Nhlane** on Facebook

Local Guide: Humphrey Ulaya, Kathumba Village (MTB Contact)
Mobile: +265 995-133-146

Paragliding

Information on paragliding provided in this book is intended for exploration at Nkhoma. If you are certified paraglider pilot or you would like to learn to fly, please contact:

School of Dreams

Address: Mganja, Dedza
Contact Person: Mathew Hau Hau, Manager and Pilot
Email: mathewshauhau92@gmail.com
WhatsApp: +265 997-063-801
Social Media: **School of Dreams** on Facebook
Services: Paragliding in Malawi

Updates and Feedback

If you are an operator at Nkhoma Mountain and wish to be included in this guide, have made new discoveries on the Mountain (sightings of birds or animals), provide feedback on how to improve content of this book; or have come across new and verifiable information about the Mountain that could be useful for the later versions of this Guide, please contact:

Author

Name: Ed Nhlane
Email: enhlane@gmail.com
WhatsApp: +265 991-240-676
Social Media: **Ed Nhlane** on Facebook

GLOSSARY

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Amenities | Facilities of a building or place |
| Approach | The route or walk to the base of a climb |
| Beta | Tips on how to do a climbing technique |
| Bivouac | Temporary makeshift shelter meant to protect hikers/climbers from weather |
| Bouldering | Climbing relatively closer to the ground without use of ropes or other technical equipment. Typically relying only on shoes, chalk bag, crash pad and a spotter. |
| Cache | To stow away food or supplies intended for future use during camping |
| Cat hole | or “pig hole” is a 6-8 inches deep hole dug away from trails to poop into |
| Crack Climbing | Type of crock climbing in which the climber follows a crack in the rock using specialized climbing techniques |
| Exposure | Steepness of terrain and risk involved when hiking |
| Guy rope | or simply “Guy” is a tensioned rope to add stability to a tent |
| Lead | First to climb, either by clipping the rope into bolts or placing protection as climber goes |
| MTB | Mountain bike |
| Paragliding | Adventure sport of flying motor-free, lightweight, modified parachutes with no rigid framework and launching the glider aircraft called paraglider on foot |
| Pass | Or “saddle” or “gap” or “valley” is a low lying area between two high lands (peaks) |
| Peaknic | A portmanteau of “peak” and “picnic” used to refer to a picnic at the peak of the mountain |
| Rappelling | or “abseiling” (in EU and AU) is to make a controlled descent on a fixed (static) rope |
| Scrambling | Hiking up a steep terrain with the aid of hands; crawling on all fours up a trail |
| Scree | Loose slope of rock fragments smaller than talus |
| Sport Climbing | Technical rock climbing that relies on fixed protection on rock or a top rope and does not require mountaineering skills. |
| Talus | Rock fragments that are individually large enough to step on |
| Trad Climbing | Technical rock climbing that relies on the natural character of rock to provide protection, which climbers place and remove in a crack system. |
| Trailhead | The beginning of a trail, often marked by a sign |
| Trowel | Also known as a “poop shovel” |
| Turbid | Dirty and full of solid (undissolved) particles |
| VIP | Ventilated Improved Pit latrine |

EXPLORER'S CHECKLIST

Use the information provided in this feedback form to assess your own familiarity with Nkhoma Mountain and check all the various activities done there. Where fresh observations have been made in your explorations and new discoveries confirmed, please make notes by writing against each section then give feedback to the Author promptly.

Activities

What mountain activities at Nkhoma have you done? Check all that apply.

- Hiking
- Camping/Backpacking
- Rock Climbing
- MTB
- Paragliding
- Others (Specify with Notes)
.....

Peaks

Which of the following peaks at Nkhoma Mountain have you been to? Check all that apply.

- Nkhoma
- Mbalambala
- Kamazi
- Others (Specify with Notes)
.....

Hiking

Which of the following routes have you hiked? Check all that apply.

- Chiyambi South
- Njuchi West
- Khokha West
- Chigaga North
- Nkuyu East

Camping

Which of the following sites have you camped before? Check all that apply.

- Campsite 1 At the Hut
- Campsite 2 At the Top
- Campsite 3&4 Near the Hut
- Elsewhere (Specify with Notes)
.....

Rock Climbing

Which of the following climbing have you done at Nkhoma? Check all that apply.

- Bouldering
- Sport
- Trad
- Others (Specify with Notes)
.....

MTB

Which mountain biking trails have you cycled?

- Zungulira?
- Others (Specify with Notes)

.....
..

Windows for Explorers

Use the spaces in these windows to write down **NEW** discoveries made in your explorations at Nkhoma, including sightings of birds, snakes and other life forms; new boulders, new trails and potential camping sites; and your experience in general.

Each of the four panes in the window can be filled with concise information about discoveries related to that particular mountain activity at Nkhoma.

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Hiking | Camping |
| Climbing | Biking |

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Hiking | Camping |
| Climbing | Biking |

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Hiking | Camping |
| Climbing | Biking |

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Hiking | Camping |
| Climbing | Biking |