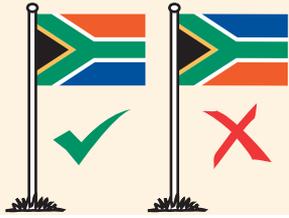


The National Symbols



The National Flag

When the flag is hoisted on a flag pole the red band must be the uppermost and the black triangle to be on the side of the pole or hoist. When it is displayed horizontally against a wall, the hoist should be to the left of the spectator and the red band uppermost.



- ~When the National Flag is displayed vertically against a wall, the red band should be to the left to the spectator with the hoist or the cord seam uppermost.
- ~The Flag must not touch the floor of the ground.
- ~The Flag must be not used as a tablecloth or be draped in front of a platform;
- ~The Flag must not be used to cover a statue, plaque, corner stone etc. at unveiling or similar ceremonies;
- ~The Flag must not be used to start or finish any competition, race or similar event.



The National Flag of the Republic of South Africa was brought into use on Freedom Day 27 April 1994. The unique central design of the flag which begins as a "V" at the flag-post and comes together in the centre of the flag, extending further, as a single horizontal band to the outer edge of the fly, can be seen as representing the convergence of diverse elements in South African society, which then take the road ahead in unison. The National Flag must be treated with dignity and respect.

Citizens responsible for the flag should decide at their own discretion whether the small flag (storm flag) should be used during stormy weather when a larger flag, the halyards of flagstaff are likely to be damaged. The size of the flag to be used during stormy weather is 90cm x 60cm and for ordinary use – 270cm x 180cm or 180cm x 120cm flags can be used according to the size of the building.



The Coat of Arms was launched on Freedom Day, 27 April 2000. A central image of the Coat of Arms is the well known secretary bird with its uplifted wings.



The National Coat of Arms

Above the bird is the rising sun, a force that gives life while representing the flight of darkness and the triumph of discovery, knowledge and understanding of things that have been hidden, and illuminating the new life that is coming into being.

Below the bird is the protea, an indigenous flower of South Africa, which represents beauty, the aesthetic harmony of all its cultures, and South Africa flowering as a nation.

The ears of wheat are emblems of the fertility of the land, while the tusks of the Africa elephant symbolise wisdom, steadfastness and strength.

At the center stands a shield, which signifies the protection of South Africans from one generation to the next. Above it is a spear and a knobkierie. Together, they assert the defence of peace rather than a posture of war. This shield of peace, which also brings to mind an African drum, conveys the message of a people imbued with a love of culture.

Its upper part is a shield being imaginatively represented by the protea. Contained within the shield are some of the earliest representations of humanity in the world. Those depicted were the very first inhabitants of the land, namely the Khoisan people. These figures are derived from images on the Linton Stone, a world famous example of South African rock art.

The motto of the Coat of Arms, Ike e:/xamrra//ke, written in the khoisan language of the /xam people, means 'diverse people unite' or 'people who are different joining together.'



The National Tree is The YELLOWWOOD

The National Tree is the REAL YELLOWWOOD (*Podocarpus latifolius*), found from Table Mountain, along the southern and eastern Cape coast, in the ravines of the Drakensberg up to the Blouberg and the Soutpansberg in Limpopo. The bark of the real yellowwood is khaki-coloured to grey when it is old, deeply split and peels off in strips. The crown is relatively small in relation to its height and is often covered with grey lichen.



The National Flower is The KING PROTEA

The National Flower is the GIANT or KING PROTEA (*Protea cynaroides*), found in the south-western and southern areas of the Western Cape, from the Cedarberg up to just east of Grahamstown. The artichoke-like appearance of the flower heads of the king protea lead to the specific name 'cynaroides', which means 'like cynara' (the artichoke). A number of varieties in colour and leaf shapes are found, but the most beautiful is the pink flower.



The National Animal is The SPRINGBOK

The National Animal is the SPRINGBOK (*Antidorcas marsupialis*). This species has adapted to the dry, barren areas and open grass plains and is thus found especially in the Free State, North West province and in the Karoo up to the west coast. They move in small herds during winter, but often crowd together in bigger herds in summer. They breed throughout the year and lambs are born after a six-month gestation period.



The National Bird is The BLUE CRANE

The National Bird is the BLUE CRANE (*Anthropoides paradisialis*). It is quite common in the Karoo, but is also seen in the grasslands of KwaZulu-Natal and the Highveld, usually in pairs or small family parties. This elegant bird is a light blue-grey, with a long neck supporting a rather bulbous head, long legs and elegant wing plumes which sweep to the ground. It eats seeds, insects and reptiles.



The National Fish is The GALJOEN

The National Fish is the GALJOEN (*Coracinus capensis*) and is found only along the South African coast. It keeps to mostly shallow water, is often found in rough surf and sometimes right next to the shore. The galjoen is a familiar sight to every angler. The diet of the galjoen consists mainly of red bait (ascidians), small mussels and barnacles.