CHITAKE SPRING
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS

Dear Visitor,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a wild and fragile part of Mana Pools, a World Heritage site. We expect that all visitors respect the honoured status of the Park and uphold the highest ethics with respect to this wilderness area and its inhabitants.

Please place a high value on this unique Spring and what it has to offer. Treat the animals and the secluded and tranquil environment with the utmost respect. Rather forgo a sought-after photograph than disrupt the natural behaviour of the targeted animal(s).

The registered tour operators have agreed to adhere to a high stand of ethical guiding. Please do not pressure them to breach agreed protocols.

Please note that in order to protect and preserve this pristine wilderness a number of rules and regulations have been in force for many years as per the Parks and Wildlife Act (General Regulations).

Please ensure that you and ALL the members in your party are aware of these regulations which are designed to enhance and maximise every visitor’s experience.

We wish you a relaxing and enjoyable stay.

GENERAL

1) Chitake Spring is “designed” as a walking, sitting and viewing tourist experience. In the dry season this is the only water for many kilometres and animals come to the Spring stressed and thirsty. Be patient, give them right of way, allow them to approach, drink and retire undisturbed. This will often require a selfless attitude. Game viewing is not meant to take place by driving around, and off-road driving will be penalised. Note that members of the public are by law entitled to report those who breach the rules to the authorities.

2) Note that all plants, animals and soils are protected and cannot be removed from the park. This includes firewood, feathers, seeds & seed pods, fruits, bones, teeth, horns, skins, flowers, insects, cultural artefacts etc.

3) You are only permitted to be at Chitake if you hold a valid booking for one of the camp sites. Day visitors are not permitted.

4) Do not enter campsites for which you do not have a booking.

5) Refrain from any behaviour likely to disturb wildlife or other park users. Do not encroach on other visitor groups. Allow animals’ right of way across your path if walking. Do not disrupt animals that are drinking or moving towards water. Avoid crowding or surrounding animals. All observers should watch from the same viewing quadrant (preferably downwind) - see diagram.

6) Photographic parties are required to adhere to all the above demands to respect animals’ space. Note that Commercial Photography is ONLY allowed with a valid Permit from ZimParks.

7) Walking entirely at your own risk is allowed, but only with a permit purchased at the entry gate. It is strongly recommended that those without considerable experience with wildlife do not walk. Rather hire a guide.

8) Feeding of animals or birds is strictly prohibited. This includes the enticing of animals using natural, locally available foods.

9) Night driving or using a spotlight to view wildlife is prohibited.

10) No generators are allowed.

11) Any commercial safari activities within the Park must be conducted by a registered Mana Pools Tour Operator.

12) All firearms must be declared on entry to the Park and (unless carried by tour operators licensed for this Park, or their guides) must be handed in or sealed at the Park office at Marongora.

FIRES & FIREWOOD

13) We encourage the use of gas to preserve firewood. Dead trees form a haven or food source for many species in the wild. If you must use wood, please keep your fire size to minimum.
14) It is prohibited to collect your own firewood from the surrounding area. All firewood must be purchased at the Nyakasakana Gate.

15) For the benefit of those who come after you, please dispose of the ash from your fire by burying it.

16) Move a respectful distance from your campsite and dig an appropriate sized hole for your toiletry purposes. Used toilet paper must be buried, burned or taken out of the park. Please report any untidy camp sites at Nyakasakana Gate. Take a date/time picture to as proof to show Parks staff.

CODE OF CONDUCT AT CAMP SITES

17) Be considerate to other visitors by leaving your camp site in the condition in which you would like to find it i.e. litter, ash and toilet paper free. Dispose of ash from your fire by removing it from the Park.

18) Drinking water should have been brought in with you.

19) If you need to collect water from the Spring do so only if there are no animals in the area, do not dig large holes in the river bed, cover any depression you create to scoop water.

20) Music or radios can only be played through earphones/headphones (so as not to create disturbance). No speakers.

LITTER

21) A CARRY IN CARRY OUT policy applies. ALL non-biodegradable waste must be removed from the park. It is not unreasonable to request that “what you brought in you must take out”.

22) You will be required to show your CARRY OUT litter at the exit gate. Failure to do so will result in a fine.

23) Dispose of your litter outside the Park ONLY at a designated bin in one of the TOWNS that you pass through. DO NOT use roadside or lay-by bins as these are seldom emptied.

24) If you see any litter in the park, please assist by picking it up.

OFF-ROAD DRIVING

25) No driving off road under any circumstances.

26) Only drive on designated/graded roads and DO NOT FOLLOW other people’s off-road tracks – you are not entitled to break the law as they have.

27) The road along the East of the Spring is strictly for Parks staff use only. Using the road for game viewing is extremely disruptive to game needing to access the Spring.

28) Absolutely NO driving in riverbeds except at designated crossing points.

29) Should you become stuck in the sand at any of the river crossing points and are recovered, take care to fill in any holes you may have made.

OFFROAD DRIVING IS TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY AND PERSONS FOUND DRIVING OFF ROAD OR IN RIVERBEDS WILL BE LIABLE TO HAVE THEIR VEHICLE IMPounded UNTIL SETTLEMENT OF A FINE AND THEY MAY BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE PARK.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

30) You can be of great assistance to park management if you report any illegal activities. In the event of off-road driving, note vehicle details i.e. colour, make, registration number and the location where this occurred. Where possible take a time/dated photograph for proof.

31) All registered tour operators’ act as an intermediary for Parks so feel free to report any suspicious activities or incidents to them and they will guide you according or take appropriate action.

32) If you hear any shots report to Parks giving the time and an estimated location.

33) Report the location of any dead animals to Parks

34) The use of drones is prohibited.

35) No unregistered communication radios are to be used in the Park except in an emergency.

36) No recorded sounds are to be used to attract predators.

37) Foreign tour operators/guides can only operate under the permit of a local Mana Pools tour operator.

NOTE that persons found to be contravening any of the above regulations will be liable to a fine, prosecution and may be banned from entering the park.