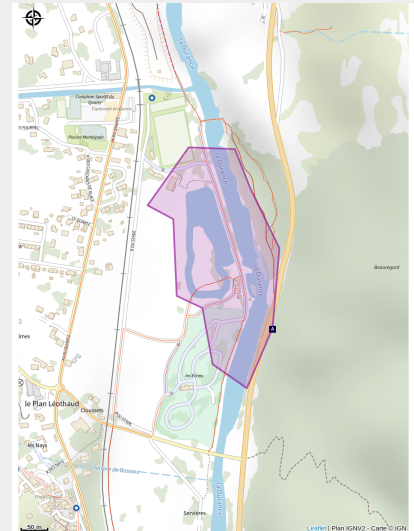


# White water stadium at l'Argentière-La-Bessée (III)

Parc national des Ecrins



Stade d'eau vive (Claude Margaux)



## *White water stadium on a natural river with artificial rockfill*

A white water stadium internationally renowned, and a symbol of Argentière la Bessée town redevelopment. A famous training course holds lots of international and national competitions, the white water stadium of l'Argentière is a staple site serving passionate kayakers.

### Useful information

Practice : Canoe-kayak

Type : Rivière

Period : Spring and Autumn

# Description

Located on the natural river bed of the Durance, at the start of a 35km long and navigatable descent to Embrun, this stadium is equipped with artificial rockfills. It is a physical pool, with a strong water flow due to the presence of numerous counter blocks.

The stadium stays opened until late in the summer due to glacier water inflows from the Ecrins mountain range to the Durance river, particularly from the Gyr in the Vallouise valley.

**Favorable season :** spring to autumn. Large period due to the numerous hydraulic inflows. Opened late in the season due to glacier water inflows.

## **Technical characteristics :**

*Length :* 400m

*Width :* 18m

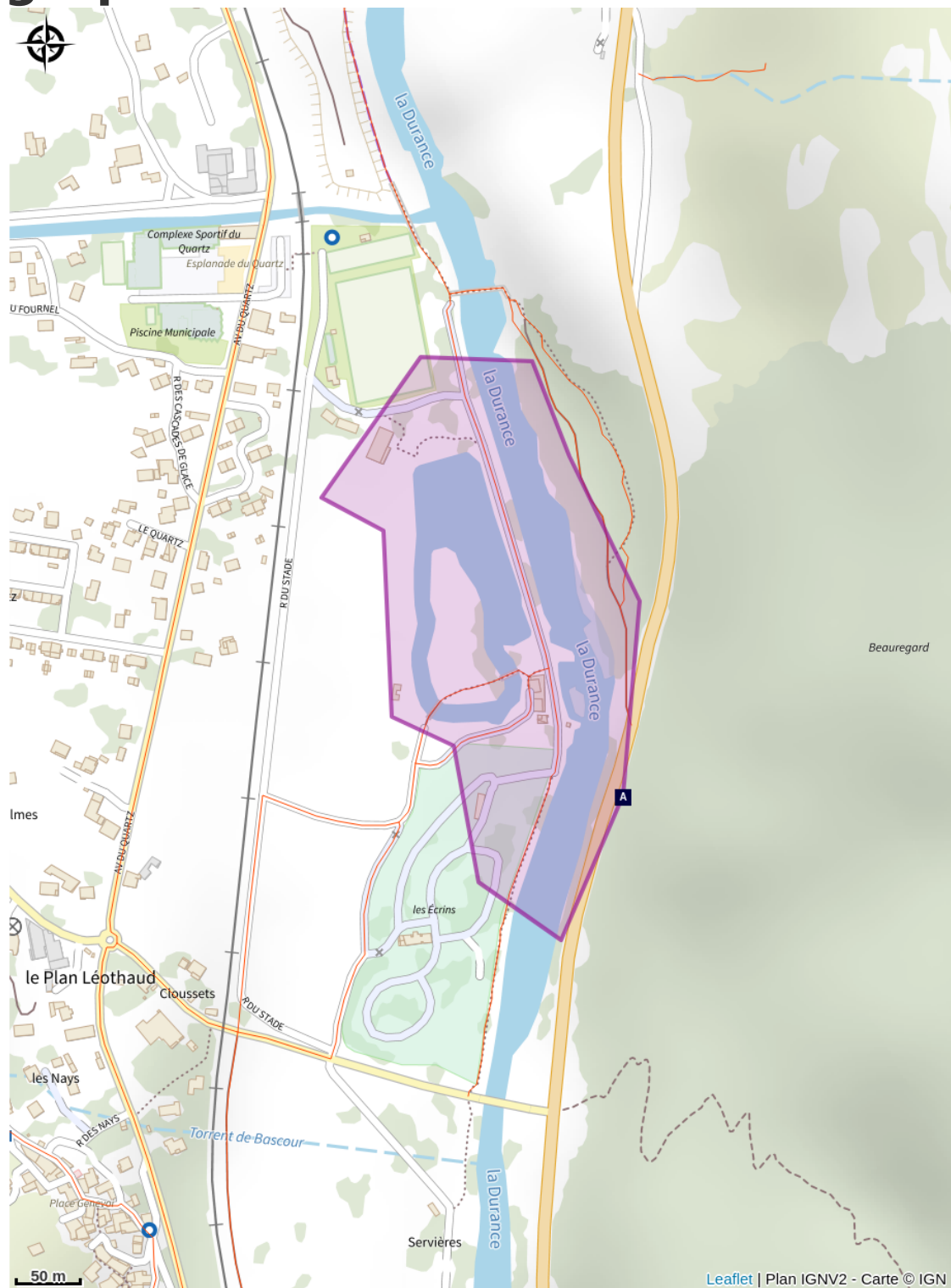
*Depth :* 4m or 1 %

*Flow rate :* from 15 to 80m<sup>3</sup>

*Rating :* III

***Access to the stadium is free of charge outside of competition periods.***

# Geographical location



-  The Durance (A)
-  The white water stadium (C)
-  The Fournel (B)
-  The southern swallowtail (D)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

### **Equipment :**

- Wet suits are strongly recommended (glacier waters can reach under 4°C)
- Helmet and life jacket are mandatory
- Inflatable kayaks are not suitable and strongly advised against

### **Important information :**

- Careful with floods after a storm
- Careful with logjams, especially at the beginning of the season
- Please take your trash with you

**Attention :** Experience is required in order to navigate these rivers without professional supervision. This information is provided for general guidance. Checking weather reports, water levels, flow rates and conditions before embarking is under your responsibility. The tourism office and the national park will not be held responsible in case of an accident.

**If you have doubts, please ask a [professional](#).** Kayak schools, instructors and renting shops of the valley are here to help you.

**Mountain Rescue :** dial 112

### [Weather report](#)

**Water levels at l'Argentière :** <https://www.rdbrmc.com/hydroreel2/station.php?codestation=1125>

## **Accessibility**

The site is along the road N94 Gap-Briançon, south of l'Argentière-La Bessée. Cross the Chancel bridge to reach the stadium.

## **Information desks**

### **Vallouise Park house**

vallouise@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 23 58 08

<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



### **Bureau d'Information Touristique de Puy Saint Vincent 1400**

Les Alberts, 05290 Puy Saint Vincent  
1400 m

contact@paysdesecrins.com

Tel : +33(0)4 92 23 35 80

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com/>



### **Bureau d'Information Touristique de Vallouise**

Place de l'Eglise, 05340 Vallouise

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### **Bureau d'Information Touristique de L'Argentière-La Bessée**

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<https://www.paysdesecrins.com/>



## **Source**



Pays des Ecrins

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com>

# On your path...

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## The Durance (A)

The Durance is the biggest river in Provence. Its source rises in the municipality of Montgenèvre at an altitude of 2,390 metres, and it flows down to meet the Rhône to the south of Avignon. This is a "pluvio-nival" river, that is to say, its flow depends on the natural addition of water due to snowmelt and rainfall. It thus constitutes a real playground for kayakers from across Europe.

Attribution : Office de tourisme du Pays des Écrins

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## The Fournel (B)

The source of the Fournel rises in the Fournel valley, in the heart of the Parc National des Écrins, and flows into the Durance near the white water stadium. It is known as a high alpine canyon offering lots of sport and leisure possibilities, and is the most popular in the Haut Val Durance. It is ideal for an introduction to vertical activities, in particular thanks to the presence of several jumps, toboggan runs and rappel sites. Access is authorised from April to October and is regulated because it is located upstream from an EDF water intake, which presents a real hazard.

Attribution : Office de tourisme du Pays des Écrins

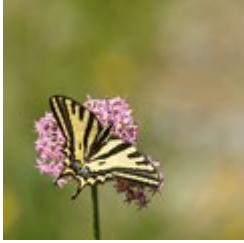
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## The white water stadium (C)

As part of its restructuring after the closure of the industrial site, the town of L'Argentière-la-Bessée opted for sports tourism, exploiting the natural elements present on the site, that is to say, water. Standing at the beginning of the longest navigable section of the Durance river, in 1993 the municipality decided to establish itself as a major white water centre by creating this stadium which covers a 400-metre stretch. So thanks to its reputation and its ideal situation, every year this stadium hosts several elite competitions at national and international level.

Attribution : Office de tourisme du Pays des Écrins



## The southern swallowtail (D)

This very beautiful but rare butterfly is similar to - and can easily be mistaken for - other more common butterflies, the scarce swallowtail (common despite its name) and the common yellow swallowtail. It lives on hot, limestone hillsides. Although protected, it is threatened by the disappearance of its habitat, due in particular to urbanisation and its capture and trade (both illegal) for collectors.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins