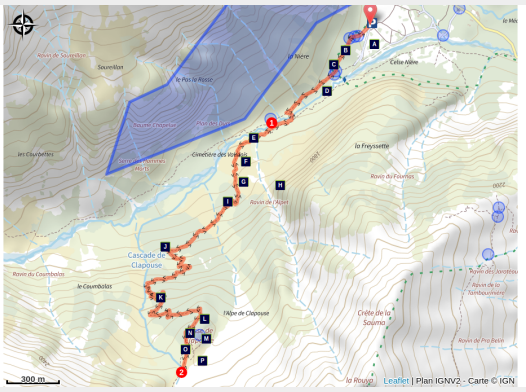
La Bosse de Clapouse

Vallouise

Randonnée à la bosse de Clapouse (Thierry Maillet - Parc national des Écrins)



This walk to La Bosse de Clapouse, manages to unite the mildness of the larch forest, the coolness of the ravines, and the dimension of the high mountain all in an environment of emblematic plant life.

"*In the enchanting light of the larch undergrowth, mesmerised by the playful tree keepers that searched the tree trunks at breath taking speed looking for the odd insect that might be hidden in a crack of the bark, I had not even noticed the female grouse that was resting on a low branch. We spotted each other with mutual surprise. The magic led to the noisy departure of the bird. I was the trespasser*"

Christophe Albert, warden in the Vallouise area

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 3 h 15

Length : 8.0 km

Trek ascent : 650 m

Difficulty : Medium

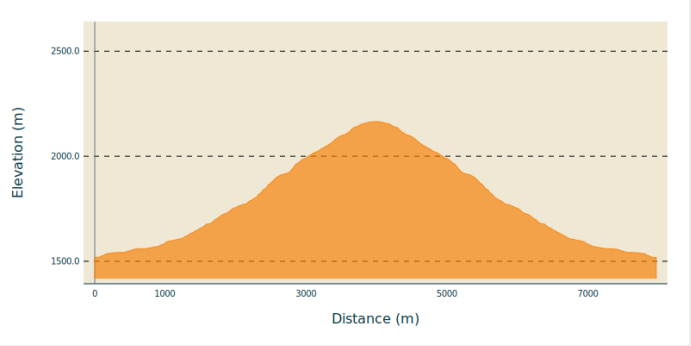
Type : Return trip

Themes : Fauna, Flora

Trek

Departure : Ailefroide
Arrival : Ailefroide
Cities : 1. Vallouise-Pelvoux

Altimetric profile

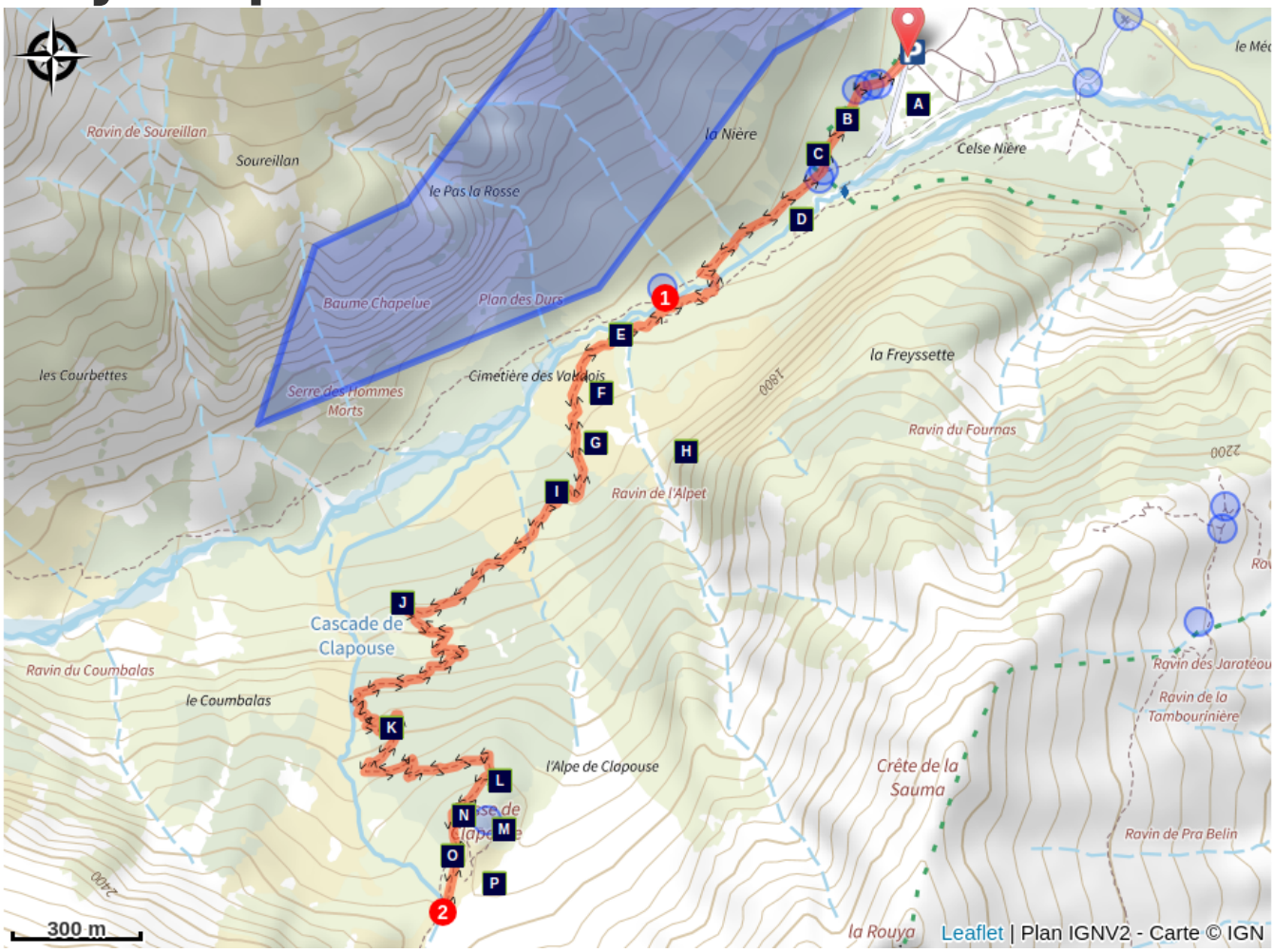


Min elevation 1517 m Max elevation 2165 m

From the car park, walk up the Sélé valley by the footpath that follows the left bank of the Celse Nière stream.

1. At the post, 1572 m, cross the footbridge over the stream to the left. (It is taken down from November to June) Go up the right bank of the stream by the Clapouse footpath, then head diagonally to the left to meander up the slopes alternating through larch and green alder. The route then ingeniously leads to the ledges and crosses ravines before coming to the Clapouse valley. La Bosse (the bump) is the small summit that is reached by following a footpath.
2. The return trip is made by the same itinerary in the opposite direction.

On your path...



- Roe Deer (A)
- Eurasian Tree Creeper (B)
- Western Bonelli’s Warbler (C)
- White Throated Dipper (D)
- Epeorus (E)
- White hellebore (F)
- Small tortoiseshell (G)
- Wallcreeper (H)
- The larch forest (I)
- The ring ouzel (J)
- Black grouse (K)
- Love-restorer (L)
- Screes (M)
- Apollo (N)
- Spotted gentian (O)
- Holly-fern (P)

All useful information

Is in the midst of the park

The national park is an unrestricted natural area but subjected to regulations which must be known by all visitors.

Advices

On this sometimes-steep footpath, the footbridge across the Celse Nière stream is dismantled from November to June. No camping after Ailefroide, bivouac permitted at least an hour's walk away from the park boundaries. No fires.

How to come ?

Transports

SNCF railway station in l'Argentière-la-Bessée then shuttle to Ailefroide during the summer season (reserve 36 hours in advance at 05voyageurs or call 04 92 502 505.

Access

From the N94 in L'Argentière, head towards Vallouise, then Pelvoux. You will then reach the hamlet of Ailefroide by the D994F

Advised parking

Ailefroide car park in the summer.

Environmental sensitive areas

Along your trek, you will go through sensitive areas related to the presence of a specific species or environment. In these areas, an appropriate behaviour allows to contribute to their preservation. For detailed information, specific forms are accessible for each area.

Golden eagle

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August

Contact: Parc National des Écrins
Julien Charron
julien.charron@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Nidification de l'Aigle royal

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec l'Aigle royal en période de nidification sont principalement le vol libre et les pratiques verticales ou en falaise, comme l'escalade ou l'alpinisme. Merci d'éviter cette zone !

Attention en zone cœur du Parc National des Écrins une réglementation spécifique aux sports de nature s'applique : https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/thematique/sports-de-nature

Information desks

Vallouise Park house

vallouise@ecrins-parcnational.fr
Tel : 04 92 23 58 08
http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/

Source

Parc national des Ecrins

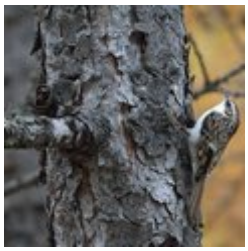
https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr

On your path...

Roe Deer (A)

Hidden in the larch forest, the Roe Deer sometimes shows its fine head at dawn or at dusk. Not always easy to see this discreet animal but a few tracks or droppings can give its presence away.: the heart shaped print of its delicate hooves, the trunks of shrubs nicked by young fallow deer rubbing new antlers there to remove the last shreds of velvet, Sometimes it is a deep sonorous and guttural bark that resonates in the woods.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE



Eurasian Tree Creeper (B)

The Eurasian Tree Creeper is a small, compact and agile bird. Its beak is long and curved and its tail is composed of stiff feathers. Its long claws have sharp nails. So many adaptations enabling it to explore the bark of the larch trees where it hunts for insects and other spiders which make up its diet all through the year.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

Western Bonelli’s Warbler (C)

This common little sparrow is rarely seen but often heard. It interprets a brief song lasting just a few seconds, with around ten repetitive notes, which quickly become identifiable, rather haunting. The male sings almost throughout the year, from April to July, then only in the morning in July. After the storm when the trees are still dripping with rain, he starts singing immediately. At the end of August males et females leave for the African savannah forest regions, followed by that years young.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

White Throated Dipper (D)

Stocky, short tail, tapered beak, the White Throated Dipper is often perched in the middle of a torrent, on a boulder at water level. Recognizable by the white mark on its chin and chest and the rest of its red and slate grey plumage, this bird dives in the icy water looking for aquatic larvae which are the essential ingredient of its menu.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE

Epeorus (E)

This beautiful insect skims the water surface to lay its eggs, which will develop into aquatic nymphs. These can live for up to two years in the stream before metamophosing into a perfectly formed insect, the imago, which will only live for a few days - it is incapable of feeding itself - but will reproduce in that time.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE

White hellebore (F)

The white hellebore is a plant which seems at first sight to be entirely green, but as you get nearer you can make out its greenish-white flowers. Its large, broad leaves alternate along the stem, which differentiates it from the gentian which has opposing leaves. It is important for home-made aperitif lovers to tell them apart because although gentian roots can be used to make a beverage loved by mountain-dwellers, the roots of the hellebore are poisonous.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE

Small tortoiseshell (G)

Nothing at all like the shelled reptile, this creature has rather flamboyant colouring. It sports bright orange wing uppers, inlaid with ebony and edged with black-bordered blue crescents. Appearing early in the year, the small tortoiseshell is the first butterfly to be seen fluttering around the flowers just as they emerge from the snow on the sunniest mountain slopes.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE

Wallcreeper (H)

The wallcreeper inspects the rock face by latching on to it with long efficient claws. Its long thin beak enables it to capture the best-hidden insects in the tiniest of cracks in the rock. This capacity is only equalled by its deep red feathers that make it seem like a butterfly, as it performs its airborne acrobatics.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

The larch forest (I)

They form a welcoming forest which changes appearance with the seasons: a soft green in spring changing to a golden russet in autumn, it is slender and bare when the valley is blanketed with snow. Always light-filled, the larch forest attracts flocks and walkers, filters the sunlight for them and encourages vegetation and abundant flowers.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE

The ring ouzel (J)

The ring ouzel is easily identifiable: it sports the same plumage as the black ouzel but is distinguished from it by a large white bib on its breast and light edges on the feathers of its wings and underside. This shy, swift-flying mountain-dwelling ouzel lives on the edges of forests of larch, Scots pine, spruce and Swiss pine, at altitudes of between 1,000 and 2,500 metres.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

Black grouse (K)

Present from 1,200 metres above sea level, in France the black grouse is only found in the Alps. The male can be recognised by its distinctive black plumage and lyre-shaped tail, which explains its French name, tétras lyre. While it spends a large part of the winter taking refuge from the cold in igloos dug into the snow, when spring comes the male executes spectacular displays to attract the hens.

Attribution : Rodolphe Papet - PNE

Love-restorer (L)

Some plants trail at your feet while others rise up to the sky. The love-restorer is one of the former. Its thick leaves form small scattered rosettes between the boulders of the big scree across which the path winds. Its numerous little wine red flowers are arranged together at the top of the stem.

Attribution : PNE

Screes (M)

For the botanist, screes are a mosaic of highly contrasting and interconnected environments. Plants from the surrounding habitats share out this territory between them, exploiting the smallest islets of humus. Course screes, defined by their stability, are distinguished from fine screes which are constantly shifting due to the small elements (gravel, sand, silt).

Apollo (N)

The Apollo is a large protected butterfly, its wings translucent white and dotted with black spots and with four bright red eye-spots. It needs the heat of the sun in order to fly. When a cloud passes, it settles on a cardoon or some thistle or other to enjoy its nectar. Loss of habitat and abnormally warm winters have led to its disappearance from some regions of France. By preference, it appears to make its home in the screes devoid of any dense vegetation.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE

Spotted gentian (O)

The spotted gentian, like its big sister the yellow gentian, can be recognised by its upright bearing and its yellow flowers. The flowers differ, however, in that they are speckled with brown and are carried within the leaf axils. Growing in small groups, the gentian extends from the Alps to the Carpathian Mountains and colonises screes in the company of other species that favour stony terrain and wide-open spaces.

Attribution : Christophe Albert - PNE

Holly-fern (P)

This slender, upright and tough fern thrives in rough screes where it finds a foothold in the cool crevices created by the scattered rocks and boulders. It was regarded as a particularly beneficial plant in the Middle Ages. Capable of curing all ills, it was also attributed with divine status: wherever it grew, thunder and lightning could not strike and the Devil himself would be thwarted!

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE