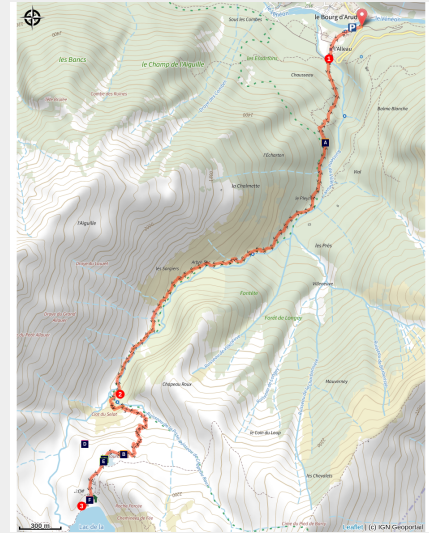


# Muzelle Lake

Parc national des Ecrins - Les Deux Alpes



Lac de la Muzelle (Thibaut Blais - Parc national des Ecrins)



*This hike goes through a forest of resinous trees and Beech trees until the refuge and the lake at Muzelle...*

Going up to Muzelle lake is like touching the past. Go up to the waterfalls following the traces of the shepherds... Discover, the ultimate reward, the lake where the imposing suspended glacier is reflected... The comfort of the refuge, pastoral calm, magical moments...

*André Brun, retired park ranger in the sector of Muzelle.*

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 6 h 30

Length : 11.8 km

Trek ascent : 1261 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Return trip

Themes : Geology, Lake and glacier

# Trek

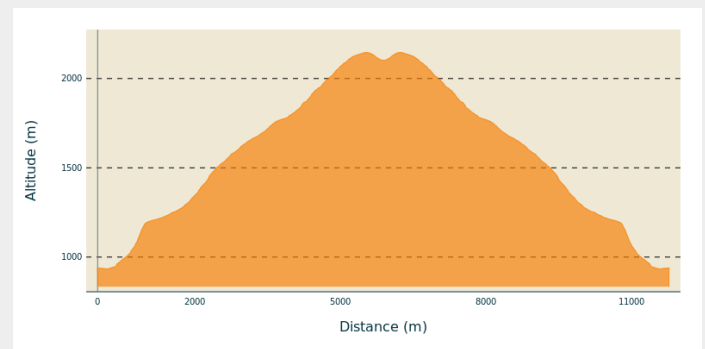
**Departure** : L'Alleau, Vénosc

**Arrival** : L'Alleau, Vénosc

**Markings** :  GR

**Cities** : 1. Les Deux Alpes

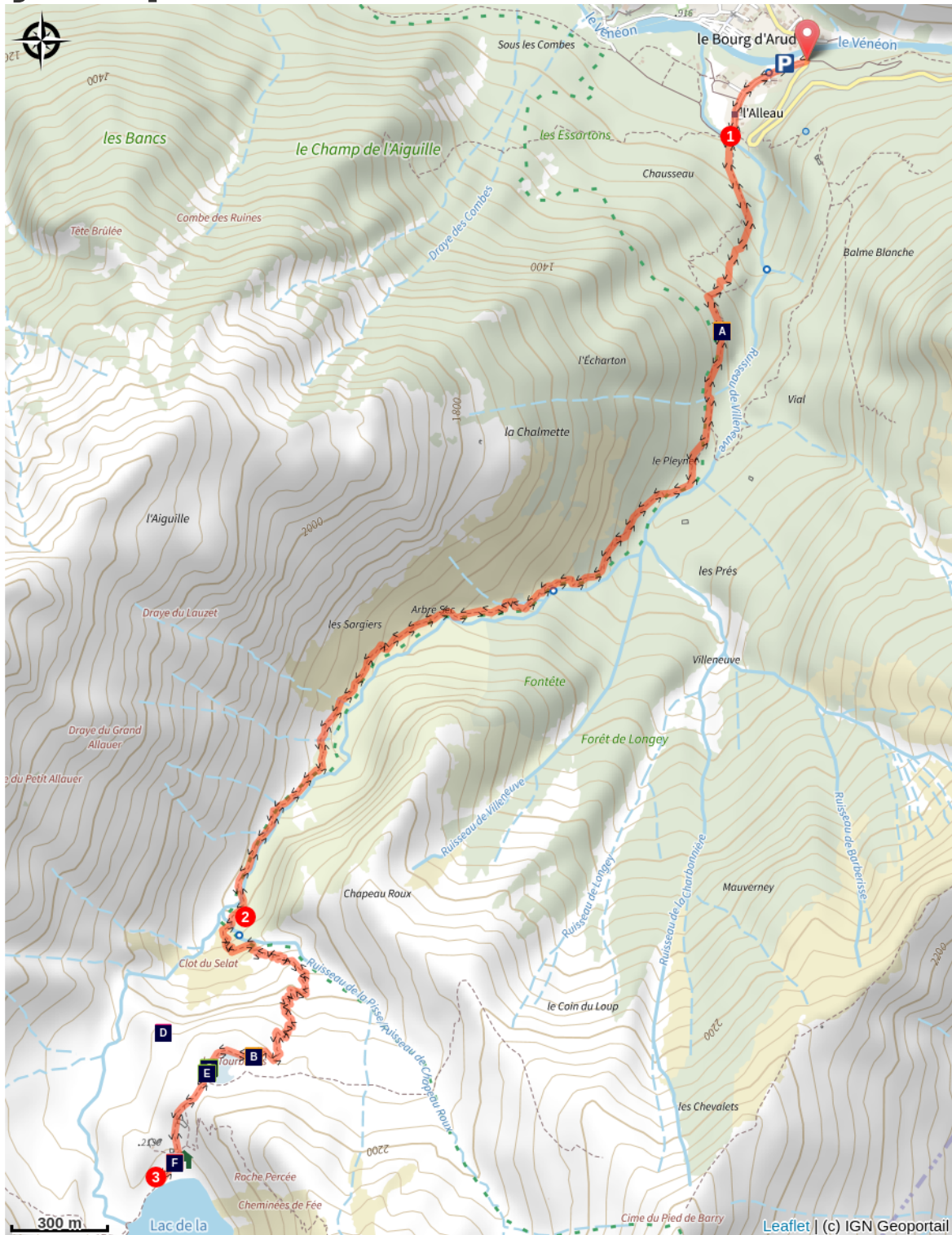
## Altimetric profile









Min elevation 935 m Max elevation 2147 m

From the car park which is next to the left bank of the Vénéon just after the bridge, take the narrow road that leads to the end of Alleau hamlet. Go over the little bridge and take the paved path that goes up steeply into the forest. . After a few bends, a long restful crossing enables you to reach "le Cerisier", a group of houses in ruin. Continue on the path which follows the left bank of the Muzelle torrent, these bends lead to waterfalls which are very welcome in times of great heat. When you arrive at the foot of a big shale slope, the track zig-zags across the torrent and there are many bends to reach a beautiful lawn, then a basin full of bog. Arrive finally at a little hill to see the Muzelle lake and its refuge. Go down on the same path.

## On your path...



-  A bit of history concerning the valley of Muzelle (A)
-  Muzelle bog (C)
-  Fauna and Flora in the Bog (E)
-  The pastoral valley (B)
-  Ser Barbier Fault (D)
-  Muzelle refuge (F)

# All useful information

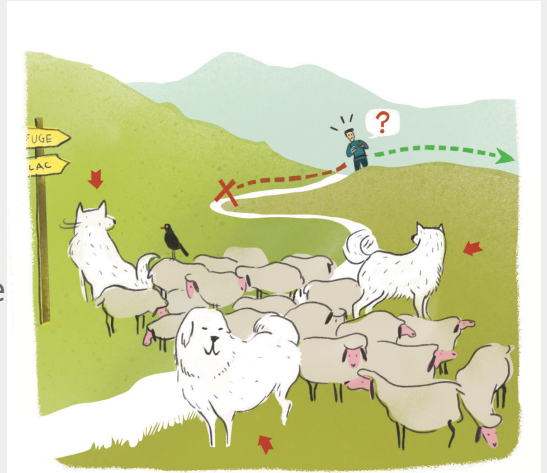
## Herd protection dogs

In mountain pastures, protection dogs are there to protect the herds from predators (wolves, etc.).

When I hike I adapt my behavior by going around the herd and pausing for the dog to identify me.

Find out more about the actions to adopt with the article ["Protection dogs: a context and actions to adopt"](#).

Tell us about your meeting by answering this [survey](#).



## 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.



## How to come ?

Transports

Coach stop : l'Alleau

## Access

From Bourg-d'Oisans follow the D1091, and then take the direction La Bérarde on the D530. At Bourg d'Arud turn right after the bridge over the Vénéon and reach l'Alleau.

## Advised parking

After the bridge at l'Alleau, along the Vénéon river



# 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.

## Peregrine falcon

Sensitivity period: February, March, April, May, June

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

Nidification du Faucon pèlerin.

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Faucon pèlerin 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 !

En cas de survol merci de rester au-dessus de 1910m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

## Short-toed snake eagle

Sensitivity period: March, April, May, June, July, August, September

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

Nidification du Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc en période de nidification sont principalement les pratiques aériennes comme le vol libre ou le vol motorisé.

Attention le survol motorisé dans la zone cœur Parc National des Écrins est interdit en-dessous de 1000m sol et une réglementation spécifique s'applique au survol non-motorisé.

Voir la réglementation pour les survols non-motorisés : <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survol-non-motorises>

Voir la réglementation pour les survol motorisés: <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survol-non-motorises>

## **Information desks**

### **Oisans Park house**

Rue Gambetta, 38520 Le Bourg d'Oisans

[oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr](mailto:oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr)

Tel : 04 76 80 00 51

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



## **Source**



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## A bit of history concerning the valley of Muzelle (A)

At the end of the 19th century the forest was practically nonexistent, it had been reduced in favour of pastoral activity (on the higher planes) and for the culture of cereals, principally barley, above the inhabited areas. Towards 1945, the highest hamlets, like the one at Laffreyte above Bourg-d'Arud, were emptied of their inhabitant. Today the forest has gained ground covering the memory of a few ruins at the bottom of the track... Before the arrival of the motor car and the creation of roads, this itinerary around the lake and the Muzelle mountain pass was often used by the inhabitants of Venosc in order to cross the valley to the neighbouring valley of Valbonnais.

Attribution : Collection PNE

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## The pastoral valley (B)

The configuration of the site made it very favourable to pastoralism for several centuries. This area of pastures was rented during the 19th and 20th centuries to seasonal grazers from the South of France. The local flocks from Venosc and particularly the flock from the hamlet of Laffreyte also went there. At that time, the first animals up in the mountain each year were the cows then the sheep. Since the 1980s, a flock of sheep of round 1200 animals from the Hautes-Alpes summer graze from June onwards and spend the summer in this prairie.

Attribution : PNE - Brun André

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## Muzelle bog (C)

The humid zone, which you cross just before Muzelle lake, is bursting with astonishing biodiversity. The remains of a big lake created during the retreat of the glacier, this marsh has become filled little by little with plants forming the biggest bog in Vénéon valley. For several generations, the shepherds have used the peat as a fuel. Today it is forbidden to extract it. The place is protected by fences as part of agri-environmental measures.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre

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## Ser Barbier Fault (D)

The fault at Ser Barbier brings into contact the crystalline bas (the needle of Venosc) and a marly deposit (Vallon mountain pass). It was formed during the Jurassic period when the Téthys sea opened out, by breaking and crumbling the crystalline massif. The rubbing together of the two parts created a beautiful striated mirror clearly visible due to erosion.

Attribution : PNE - Albert Christophe



## Fauna and Flora in the Bog (E)

The bog is a very special environment which, by definition produces peat. Its appearance is that of a carpet of spongy sphagnum, plants full of water similar to mosses that accumulate over time. Their scientific study has enabled us to trace the evolution of the climate as well as that of the vegetation. The bogs can be seen at a distance when the Cotton Grass is in flower. Etymologically its name in French describes the 'portelaine' (wool carrier): its fluffy tufts and its cottony appearance make it an easily identifiable plant... You can also see around here and animal that is very active in this area: the common frog. Resistant to the cold, it is a batrachian which is very well adapted to the alpine environment. The yellow abdomen and the large dark mark at the back of the eye incorporating the ear drum are two characteristics observable with this species...

Attribution : PNE - Coulon Mireille



## Muzelle refuge (F)

The bottom of the valley comes up to the rock wall at Muzelle, the pic du Clapier du Peyron and the head of the Muraillette. The modern history of this place is marked by mountaineering. It was on the 2nd July 1875 that Coolidge guided by Almer father and son opened the normal way to Roche de la Muzelle by the East North East face and the North-East ridge.. At this time, even if a pastoral cabin was used by the mountaineers the bivouac was still often used in the Muzelle valley. In 1967, it was in the rocky cirque that the community built the refuge on the shore of Muzelle lake.

Attribution : PNE - Albert Christophe