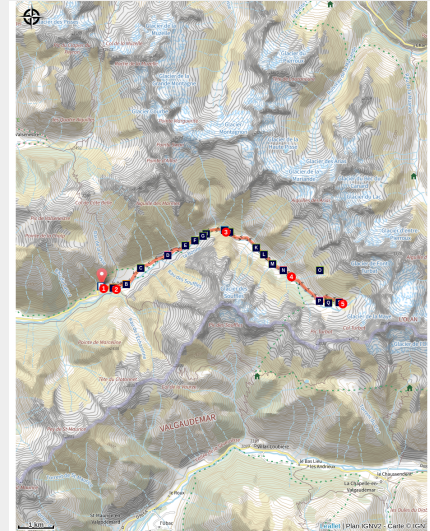


# The Font Turbat refuge

Parc national des Ecrins - Valjouffrey



Le refuge de Font Turbat (Xavier\_and\_Caroline - Parc national des Ecrins)



*This hike ascends a magnificent valley shaped by the glaciers and ends at the refuge at the North-West face of the Olan...*

There are many waterfalls amongst them the Ferrière cascade also called the cascade de la Pisse. Between scree and short vegetation composed of junipers, heathers, the magnificent view of the highest point of the Valbonnais territory, The Olan at an altitude of 3563 m, as well as the welcome at the refuge are the rewards for doing this hike...

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 5 h 30

Length : 18.7 km

Trek ascent : 924 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Return trip

Themes : Hut, Panorama

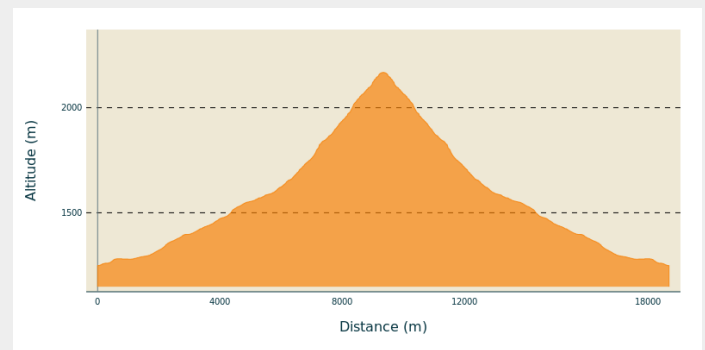
# Trek

**Departure** : Le-Désert-en-Valjouffrey,  
Valjouffrey

**Arrival** : Le-Désert-en-Valjouffrey,  
Valjouffrey

**Cities** : 1. Valjouffrey

## Altimetric profile

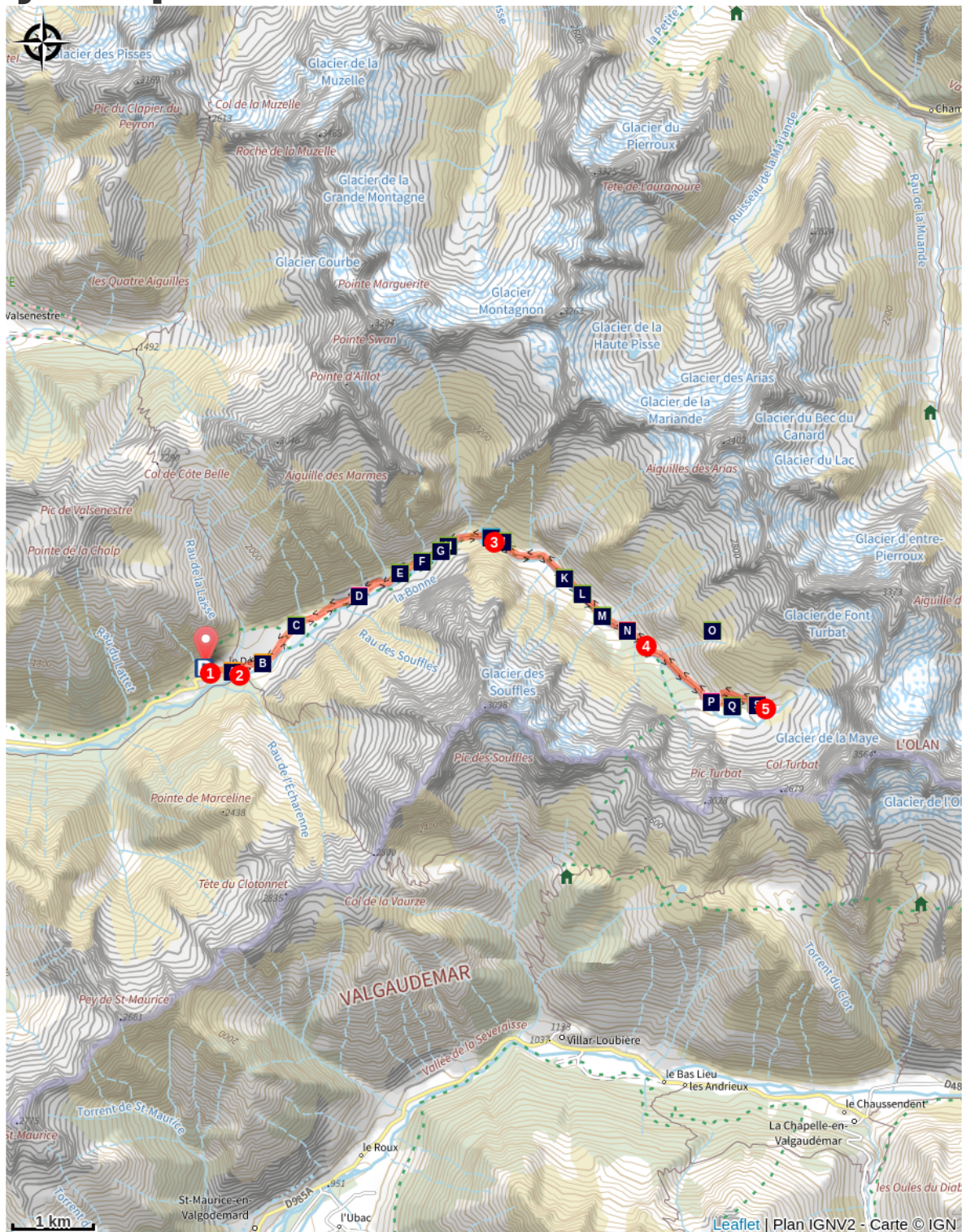







Min elevation 1249 m Max elevation 2169 m

From the car park situated at the entrance of Désert-en-Valjouffrey, cross the village taking the direction to the East. Intersect the GR 54, by crossing the stream at Laisse: on the left it gives access to the Côte Belle mountain pass and on the right to the Vaurze mountain pass. Take the wide path along the prairie and on the right bank of the Bonne which gives access to the gates of the Ecrins National Park (information signposts). Above the Cascade de la Pisse, continue on the track, which goes up always following the bottom of the valley amongst quite short vegetation which is typical in the rocks... Around the bend in the track, the summit of the Olan appears. Pass close to the Châtellerat cabin. Continue towards the Font Turbat refuge. Return using the same itinerary.








# On your path...



-  The Désert-en-Valjouffrey (A)
-  Common Chiffchaff (C)
-  Cob web House Leek (E)
-  Apollo (G)
-  Cascade de la Pisse (I)
-  Eurasian Siskin (K)
-  Red Fox (M)

-  Hay Fields (B)
-  Glacial valley (D)
-  Rhododendron (F)
-  White-throated Dipper (H)
-  Mountain Hare (J)
-  Ring Ouzel (L)
-  Châtellerat Cabin (N)

 Dark green fritillary (O)  
 Savi Pipistrelle Bat (Q)  
 Font Turbat Refuge (S)

 Pic de l'Olan (P)  
 Common Pipistrelle (R)



# All useful information

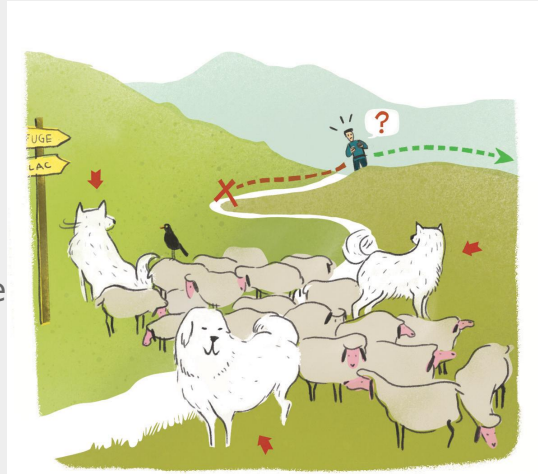
## **Herd protection dogs**

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**

No transport service at the beginning of this hike.

## Access

From the commune of Entraigues, take the D117 until the Désert-en-Valjouffrey hamlet.

## Advised parking

At the entrance of Désert-en-Valjouffrey hamlet

# 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.

## Alpine ibex

Sensitivity period: June, July, August, September

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

Zone de présence du Bouquetin des Alpes

En période de mise bas et d'élevage des jeunes (juin à septembre) les bouquetins peuvent être très sensibles au dérangement notamment en cas de survol à basse altitude. Dans leur fuite les risques d'accidents sont multipliés. Merci de rester à bonne distance et d'éviter le survol de la 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

**Maison du Parc du Valbonnais**  
Place du Docteur Eyraud, 38740  
Entraigues  
valbonnais@ecrins-parcnational.fr  
Tel : 04 76 30 20 61  
<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



## Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## The Désert-en-Valjouffrey (A)

No sand or barren lands, the name of Desert comes from the word "essarter" which means to clear the land of forest in order to produce a clearing. Forest clearing was necessary for the implementation and the development of agriculture in the mountains... Nowadays, the Desert is one of the only hamlets at altitude which is inhabited all year round in spite of the harsh mountain climate.

Attribution : PNE - Collection Tron Lucien

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## Hay Fields (B)

The hayfields where the grass is mown have been improved over the generations by the extraction of stones which have then been stacked in piles which are known locally as "clapiers". These piles of stones mark the boundaries between the crops and the flocks.

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## Common Chiffchaff (C)

A bird that you hear but do not see, the Common Chiffchaff nicknamed the "écu counter". Its song, which is very easy to identify, evokes the sound of gold coins falling one by one in to the cash register as they are counted. Green-brown and greyish on top, its feathers are off white underneath, beige on the chest with a barely visible pale brow.

Attribution : PNE - Saulay Pascal





## Glacial valley (D)

The high valley of Bonne, or Font Turbat, is a typical glacial valley in the form of a trough with morainic bars marking the stages of the retreat of the glacier. The lower shelves or glacial shoulders are suspended above the trough 500 to 600 m in size of which the steep sides dominate the layers of scree and the alluvial fans (mass of debris transported by the water). It finishes upstream by a vast cirque at the imposing foot of the rocky wall of the Olan (3 564 m), hemmed in at its foot by the Maye black glacier. At the time of the last glaciation of Würm, 10 000 years ago, the two glaciers of Font Turbat and Maye joined together and fed into a powerful glacial tongue in the Bonne valley. It formed the valley in the shape of a basin by scraping and polishing rocky walls in the granite. The lowest moraines, masses of rocky debris transported by the glaciers are situated around Châtellerat cabin.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Bernard



## Cob web House Leek (E)

Thick leaves organized in tight rosettes shoot up towards the sky, twisted with white hairs which are quite similar to the traps woven by certain spiders. Not less competitive than the rhododendrons, the Cobweb House Leek is adapted to resist drought. The main rosette and the smaller shoots well grouped together; make a real water reserve which is then marvelously stocked by the fleshy leaves... It also develops many kinds of hairs that collect the dew.

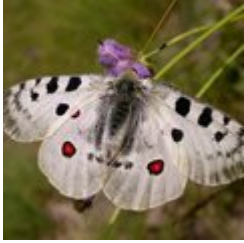
Attribution : PNE - Warluzelle Olivier



## Rhododendron (F)

Nicknamed the rose of the devil, the rhododendron ferrugineum has the capacity of placing itself between the rocks and boulders where the soil is rare. It keeps its stiff leaves which are dark green and shiny and rust coloured underneath right through the winter. It gets its name from this rust colour. Every year, between the end of July and the beginning of August its branches are crowned with bouquets of flowers coloured rose and purple.

Attribution : PNE - Vincent Dominique



## Apollo (G)

A big white butterfly with black and red markings is not shy; the Apollo is easy to see between the middle of June until the end of July... It lays its eggs on the White Stonecrop, a perennial plant with white flowers living on scree and gravel... The male Apollo is born before the female and waits patiently to procreate. It is to be noted that it benefits from national protection; its transport and destruction are forbidden.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



## White-throated Dipper (H)

Easier to observe than the Common Chiffchaff, the White-throated Dipper lives beside rivers and mountain torrents... A little red and grey bird, with a short tail, it has a fine beak, a white mark on the chin and on the chest. This astonishing sparrow has the particularity of being able to walk under the water against the current in search of food. It flattens itself down and grips on to the bottom with its claws, opens its eyes, which are protected from the flow by a fine membrane and spots worms, larvae, little crustaceans and fish.

Attribution : PNE - Chevalier Robert



## Cascade de la Pisse (I)

With its origin in the high crystalline ground, the torrent bounces down waterfalls and cascades until it meets the Pisse at a height of 40 m.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre



## Mountain Hare (J)

There are many Mountain Hares or Blue Hares that observe you; the opposite is rarely true... Brown in summer, white in winter, the Mountain Hare is present across the Alps. Like the European Hare from which it differs being smaller, with a white tail and shorter ears, It leaves Y shaped tracks in the snow due to the way it moves in little jumps (it brings its back legs in front of the front legs.). However, it is often its tracks and its little dry, round droppings that indicate its passage. Its large fluffy feet are like snowshoes enabling it to stay on the surface of the snow even when it is powdery.

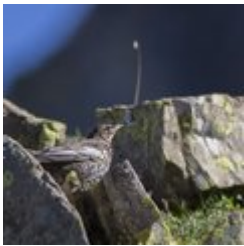
Attribution : PNE - Couloumy Christian



## Eurasian Siskin (K)

Feeding principally on the seeds of the Alder, the Birch and conifers, the Eurasian Siskin only nests in conifer forests in the mountains of the Northern Alps during the reproduction period... The male, more colourful than the female, can be recognized from its bright green-yellow feathers its black forehead and its little white bib under the beak. It is in winter, that you can observe them, sometimes in big groups, descended from the mountains in search of food...

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



## Ring Ouzel (L)

The Ring Ouzel is easy to identify: it endorses the black feathering of the blackbird, but is distinguished from it by the big white bib on the chest, the light borders of its wings and abdomen. Insects, grasshoppers, worms and berries make up its menu. This shy mountain blackbird, that flies fast, lives at the edge of forests of larch, Scots pines, Spruce and Swiss Pines pins at an altitude of between 1 000 to 2 500 m. Present in the mountainous massifs it nests in the lower branches or in the hollow trunk of a tree, a crack in the rock or building. Essentially a migrator, the Ring Ouzel hibernates in Spain or in Northern Africa. It comes back to the Alps from the month of March.

Attribution : PNE - Saulay Pascal



## Red Fox (M)

The Fox was originally called the goupil in French and this animal was the central character of the hugely famous "novel" written in the 12th century about a goupil called "Renart" (later "Renard"), who was, a clever knight tricking and making fun of the clergy and the powerful who were unable to deal with the people. Renart made fun of them and was sometimes cruel. He was so popular that his name became that of the animal species he portrayed. Another literary reference to this animal is by Jean de la Fontaine whose character « Maître Renard » features in twenty of his fables...

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



### Châtellerat Cabin (N)

In 1908, Châtellerat pastoral cabin was hastily built by the community of Valjouffrey. Destroyed several times in avalanches, is still sheltered numerous mountaineers. It was rebuilt in 1921 in a less exposed place and already ideas about a « real » refuge were growing.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre



### Dark green fritillary (O)

Thanks to its impressive wingspan, the dark green fritillary makes its presence noticed! The top side of its wings is a beautiful orangey colour embellished with black spots. Underneath, they are marked with bands of mother-of-pearl against a background of greenish scales. This is a large butterfly with a wingspan of 50 to 60 cm. It is relatively common but is becoming less so due to loss of habitat, caused by changes in farming practices. In fact, its caterpillar which is black dotted with orange spots along its sides, essentially feeds on violet leaves which are only found in extensively grazed meadows.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



### Pic de l'Olan (P)

It was on the 29th June 1877 that Coolidge, with Christian Almer father and son, carried out the first ascent of the pic de l'Olan. On the 5th August 1980, Arthur Cust with Pierre Gaspard and Roderon opened the Northern ridge. At that time the bivouac was still obligatory at the bottom of the Bonne valley.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre



### Savi Pipistrelle Bat (Q)

With a small size, and a contrasted coat, an off white abdomen and a golden brown back, Savi's Pipistrelle can be recognized by the black membranes, it's rather pointed muzzle and at the end of its tail from which several vertebrae are visible by the uropatagium, a skin membrane situated between the two hind legs... With a calm nature, this bat is a rock species mainly from the South, but it can also reach the high mountains at an altitude of more than 3 000 m.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien





## Common Pipistrelle (R)

Brown with relatively short ears, the Common Pipistrelle and the Soprano Pipistrelle fight over the title of the smallest bat in Europe... The Common Pipistrelle can be seen in very diverse environments even above an altitude of 2 000 m. At the time of Jules Ferry, school books boasted about the merits of bats. In fact, insectivores, they consume every day a quarter to a third of their own body weight in mosquitoes and other insects.. They emit ultra-sounds which are inaudible to the human ear but detectable thanks to a captor. This technique enables them to orient themselves when moving about at night to capture their prey. They can often be seen around street lighting hunting the insects that have been attracted by the light.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre



## Font Turbat Refuge (S)

During the summer of 1923, the guide Célestin Bernard took charge of the construction of the refuge at Font Turbat. Several great mountaineering names are associated with it like Guery, Ripert, Frendo, Fourastier, Boell, who came to explore the mountains at Valjouffrey. In 1934, Devies and Gervasutti traced a historic itinerary in the North-West face of the Pic de l'Olan. 22 years later, the direct Couzy-Desmaison (ED) was opened to the left of the previous one, surmounting the steepest part of the face. The construction of the refuge As it stands now dates from 1962. It was extended and renovated in 1996-1997.

Attribution : PNE - Albert Christophe