

Lac Gary via le Vet

Parc national des Ecrins - Entraigues



Le lac Gary (Bernard Nicollet - PNE)



This signposted itinerary is the only one that enables you to reach the magnificent Gary Lake in the Arcanier massif that resembles a citadel.

The path starts from the lowest point of the heart of the National Park at an altitude of 800 m. This long, demanding hike will take you across all alpine vegetation stages. The ascension along the Tête de Vêt and via the Gary Gap offer panoramic views of a good part of the Ecrins, Devoluy, Vercors et Grand Armet.

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 9 h 30

Length : 16.4 km

Trek ascent : 1941 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Return trip

Themes : Lake and glacier,
Panorama, Pastoralism

Trek

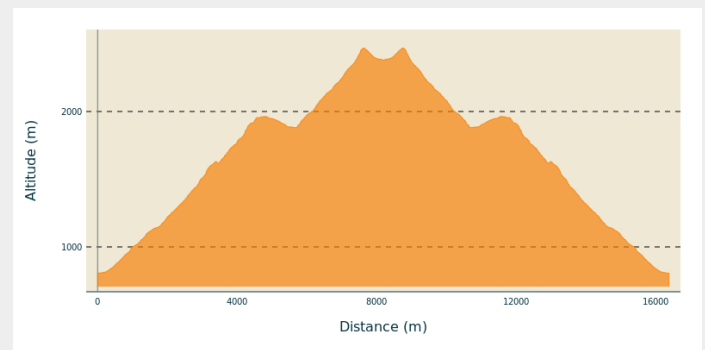
Departure : Entraigues

Cities : 1. Entraigues

2. Le Périer

3. Valjouffrey

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 807 m Max elevation 2469 m

From the Entraigues church car park, follow the road to Valjouffrey up to the last garden and turn left onto the footpath that is signposted Vet-lac- Gary. It continues along a stream that starts at the Combe de la Draye, then climbs up across a rock fall and meanders along rocky ledges. The footpath goes through a beech forest and continues swiftly upwards as it gets closer to the Combe des Roberts, which it crosses as it continues to gain in altitude on the right bank. At the fork in the road Jas des Agneaux/Vet-Lac Gary hut, the slope is not so steep. Follow the route on the right hand side and, by the ledge footpath, enter the Vêt valley in order to get to the pastoral hut. The route follows the left bank of the stream. Link up to the small path coming from Drayes on the Blanc pass. It meanders on a slope of scree below the gap in the Arcanier. From the Gary gap, go down as far as the lake that is set on a terrace facing the summit of the Valjouffrey valley. Return by the same route.

On your path...



-  Flora on the scree slopes (A)
-  Beech forest and mushrooms (C)
-  Spilites (E)
-  Swiss pine (G)
-  Vultures (I)
-  Bearded vulture (K)
-  Green Lizard and Wall Lizard (B)
-  Bearberries and Heather (D)
-  Red-billed chough (F)
-  Citril finch (H)
-  Arctic alpine forget me not (J)

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.



Advices

There is no water supply!

How to come ?

Transports

Bus stop: Entraigues

Access

On the N85, take the D526 towards Entraigues

Advised parking

Behind the church, Entraigues

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...



✿ Flora on the scree slopes (A)

The flora on the crystalline scree slopes at low altitude is adapted to very high temperatures which are due not only to the sun but also to the structure of the soil. Here, dark coloured stones have accumulated on the slopes, oriented like solar panels forming a group, favourable to stockage and radiation. Wild roses of all kinds, spiky shrubs thistles have hardened to this atmosphere but so have the Sweet William and the Sheep's Bit Scabious.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



🦎 Green Lizard and Wall Lizard (B)

Two species with legs stay close to the track. Quick as a flash, these little saurians escape from your presence while signaling their own... One, around thirty centimeters is impressive because of its size and is green blue colour; it is the green lizard... The other, russet coloured, much smaller is very common, it has not been named by accident; it is the wall lizard. Both feed on insects and hibernate in the cold season...

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



✿ Beech forest and mushrooms (C)

From an altitude of 1300m, there is an unexpected forest, containing crooked trees, with many branches and smooth grey bark... Some beech trees are grouped there, projecting their shade onto a less hostile slope... They include a dried beech tree on acidic soil, which characteristically does not welcome many flowering plants... A thick carpet of dead leaves crunches underfoot and is punctuated by rare Snowy Wood Rush in Summer and, luckily, Penny Bun and Black Trumpet mushrooms at the end of Autumn.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



Bearberries and Heather (D)

The highest elevated places, rather bare and well exposed on this hike are covered with flowerbeds with miniature shrubs. They contain Bearberries, or busserole, with round evergreen leaves and little red fruits. At the end of the summer, it is not rare to see the appearance between these bushes of bouquets of pink flowers, they are heather. Also called callune. It is calcifuge.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



Spilites (E)

The elevated crossing to jas des Agneaux has the particularity of being dominated by a quite remarkable geological feature. While you have continued to follow the crystalline base of the massif, you will then see below you the end of this kind of rock marked by a seam of volcanic origin, purplish black and several meters high: these are the spilites. Positioned on these, is an immense limestone cone which constitutes the summit of Vêt. This geological feature is highly visible from the departmental road going down to Entraigues.

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



Red-billed chough (F)

The red-billed chough is a surprising bird in many ways. It lives close to the cliffs, plays with the clouds and breaks the silence with a brief, high-pitched almost metallic cry. Called by the echo from the rock faces, its fellow choughs reply. With a confident, quick step, the red-billed chough, meticulously strides across the pastures in small groups in search of small worms and grasshoppers. Apart from an occasional, seasonal exception, linked to available food, the chough is sedentary.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



❁ Swiss pine (G)

The Swiss pine grows at the upper edge of the various forests that you have walked through. For a softwood, it holds the record for altitude. The Swiss pine is easy to recognise by its needles that grow in fives. The spotted nutcracker feeds on its seeds, hidden at the base of the scales that form a very resistant cone. It thus disseminates them aiding the dispersal of the species. This vital relationship is an example of association for mutual benefit.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Bernard



❁ Citril finch (H)

The citril finch is a small green-yellow-grey bird. It looks like a small greenfinch, but the metallic cry that it gives out during its short flights, leaves no doubt. If you watch it for long enough you will notice a pretty grey-blue colour on the head and the sides of its chest. Over longer distances with its wavy flight, it is similar to a goldfinch. Just like its cousin, it is sociable and wanders in small groups to explore the tufts of nettles or grass.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien



🦅 Vultures (I)

These large birds are on the lookout for animal corpses, dispersed due to the harsh mountain climate at the foot of the rocks or avalanche corridors. They clean up the mountainside thus preventing the spread of infectious agents.

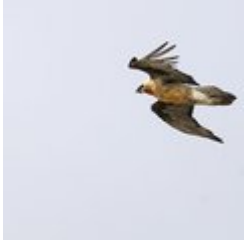
Attribution : PNE - Couloumy Christian



❁ Arctic alpine forget me not (J)

The king of the flowering dwarf plants that cover the windy summits is the predominant Arctic alpine forget me not. It did not take much for this bright blue to become known as 'royal' blue. Its blue flowers are found at very high altitudes as high as 3750 m, always grouped together in cushion shape, snuggled in the rocky gaps of the bare summits, often alongside genepi and androsace. This small forget me not can live for decades. The Arctic forget me not, got its French name "éritriche nain" from the botanist Schrader due to its velvety or silky aspect: in Greek erion means wool and Thrix, hair.

Attribution : PNE - Nicolas Marie-Geneviève



Bearded vulture (K)

Above the pastures, driven by curiosity, a huge slender-looking bird approaches. With its diamond-shaped tail, there is no doubt: it is a bearded vulture. It is one of Europe's largest birds with a wingspan of 2.80 m. The adult is light coloured with narrow wings, whereas the young are darker with wider wings. Their feeding regime is based on bones. In order to ingest them, the bearded vulture flies into the air and drops them above a rock fall in order to break them. Wrongly accused in the past of taking away children and lambs, the bearded vulture was persecuted by man for a long time.

Attribution : PNE - Coulon Mireille