

# Refuge at Chaumette meadow

Parc national des Ecrins - Champoléon



Refuge du Pré de la Chaumette (Thibaut Blais - Parc national des Ecrins)



*At the foot of Sirac, this hike enables you to grasp the difference between the sunny and the shaded slopes of the mountain.*

After having walked from the foot of the Northern slope, the shadier slope, the refuge appears as a welcome resting place in the middle of a pretty meadow. The descent on the sunnier slope, which is oriented South, enables you to make the most of seeing the panorama of Drac Blanc valley and the surrounding mountains.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 3 h 30

Length : 9.3 km

Trek ascent : 342 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna, Hut

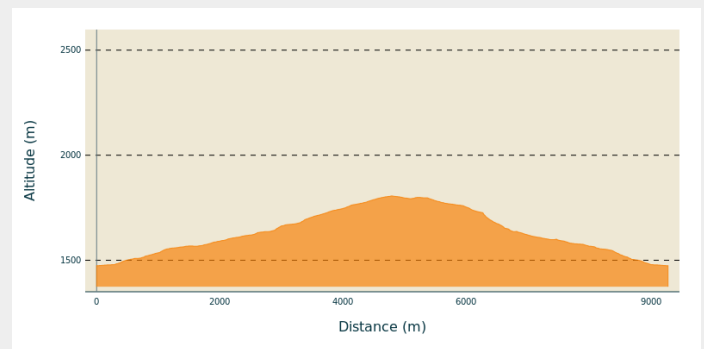
# Trek

**Departure** : Les Auberts, Champoléon

**Arrival** : Les Auberts, Champoléon

**Cities** : 1. Champoléon

## Altimetric profile














Min elevation 1475 m Max elevation 1807 m

From the car park at Auberts, before the bridge that crosses the torrent, go up 200m to the crossroads, stay on this track. Turn right to cross the torrent to the left bank... The itinerary Pré de la Chaumette is indicated. On the track above the Prelles waterfall, three signposts signal the entrance in to the protected heart of the Ecrins National Park. Cross the torrent using the walkway and continue on to the Chaumette meadow refuge. To get back to the starting point, take the track on the right bank of the go along the sunny slope of the valley et cross the outward itinerary. Continue on for about 200 m and the hike is finished.

## On your path...



-  Royal Eagle (A)
-  Short-toed Snake Eagle (C)
-  Prelles Waterfall (E)
-  Chaumette Meadow (G)
-  White Throated Dipper (I)
-  Eurasian Crag Martin (K)
-  Black Grouse (B)
-  Alpine Ibex (D)
-  Red Billed Chough (F)
-  Refuge at Chaumette Meadow (H)
-  Chamois (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

In bad weather, return using the same itinerary on the left bank.

## How to come ?

## Transports

Coach stop : Les Auberts

## Access

On the N85, take the direction to Pont de Fossé. After the village, continue on the D944, turn left on to the D944A, cross Borels/D472, les Baumes and les Clots. To finish turn slightly to the right to get to the car park at Auberts.

## Advised parking

Les Auberts, before the bridge that crosses the torrent.

# 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>

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## Information desks

### House of Champsaur

champsaur@ecrins-parcnational.fr  
Tel : 04 92 55 95 44  
<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



## Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

## On your path...

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### Royal Eagle (A)

The Royal Eagle is one of the most rare and protected species in Europe. Its large size, its dark colouring, its rectangular wings and its frequent movements in the open air enable it to be easily recognized. In the hottest hours of the day, it turns about regularly benefiting from the rising wind in order to gain altitude. Thanks to its excellent sight the Royal Eagle scans its surroundings in search of an imprudent marmot or a young chamois. In winter it regularly feeds off the cadavers of animals...

Attribution : PNE - Couloumy Christian

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### Black Grouse (B)

To observe Black Grouse in summer, you must get up early. In France, Black Grouse or the 'Heather Cock' is only found in the Alps. In Spring, the male with black feathers, a lyre shaped tail and white feathers under its tail puts on a display to impress the hens. In winter, it spends most of its time taking refuge in igloos dug in to the snow to protect itself from the cold. This is a time when it is particularly sensitive because it cannot compensate for the energy that it uses when it leaves its igloo too hastily disturbed by off-piste skier or a hiker with snowshoes.

Attribution : PNE - Papet Rodolphe



## Short-toed Snake Eagle (C)

Spring has only just returned when you can hear cries as loud as the church bells. You have to lift your head up to admire two large birds flying together, alternating aerobatics and hovering in the sky like two silver coloured kites playing with the wind.. Their light stocky silhouette and their darker head enable you to identify the Short-toed Snake Eagle. It mainly feeds on reptiles (lizards and snakes) which it captures by the head, which it can then regurgitate in order to feed its young.

Attribution : PNE - Corail Marc



## Alpine Ibex (D)

The Alpine Ibex, also known as the « rock goat », is solid and covered with a coat that is chocolate coloured or beige depending on the season and its sex... Males and females both have ringed horns which grow throughout their life. The Alpine Ibex lives in groups, males on one side, etagnes (females) and the young on the other. In the winter, the females mix with the males during the mating period and give birth at the beginning of Summer. In order to observe it, look over on to the facing slope, the Alpine Ibex is sometimes visible in Spring.

Attribution : PNE - Chevalier Robert



## Prelles Waterfall (E)

The waterfall feeds in to the Drac blanc. The minor bed of the torrent is very large giving an idea of its violence and its capacity to wash away stone boulders.

Attribution : PNE



## Red Billed Chough (F)

The Red Billed Chough is a surprising bird in many ways. It lives near to the cliffs and plays in the clouds, breaking the silence with its brief, strident and almost metallic cry. Alerted by the echo coming from the mountain wall, its companions reply to it. Its confident gait with a rhythmic step, the Red Billed Chough strides meticulously across the prairie in little groups to find small worm and crickets in the pasture... Except for occasional seasonal escapes linked to the availability of food, the Chough is sedentary.

Attribution : PNE - Combrisson Damien





## Chaumette Meadow (G)

The refuge is situated in a vast meadow formed by alpine grasslands that benefit from deep soil, on gentle slopes that are covered with snow on an average of eight months a year.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

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## Refuge at Chaumette Meadow (H)

The pastoral cabin at Champoléon was built by stockbreeders in 1921. It was in 1972 that the cabin was restored for the first time... Two years later, the French Alpine Club (CAF) took over its management in order to insure shelter for the increasing number of hikers of the GR54. Having become too cramped, the refuge was rebuilt in 1979 on the ruins of the hamlet and became the Chaumette Meadow. The decorative stones were cut on site at Champoléon. The imposing Lauzes stones used to cover the roof underline the effort made to integrate with the landscape. Today flocks of sheep are brought up to the mountains at the end of June and are visited once a week.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

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## White Throated Dipper (I)

The White Throated Dipper is easy to observe as long as you are discreet. It lives beside mountain rivers and torrents. A little red and white bird with a short tail, it has a fine beak, and a white mark on the chin and the chest. . This astonishing sparrow has the particular skill of being able to walk on the bottom of the water against the current in search of food. It flattens itself down and clings 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 : Robert Chevalier - PNE

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## Chamois (J)

An emblematic animal in the Alps, the chamois or « rock goat » has short curled horns. Like the Ibex, it is easy to observe through binoculars. The goats and esterlons (young males aged one year) like to live in big herds ; in contrast, the billy goats stay quite isolated only rejoining the females during the mating season.. In the winter, the chamois need a lot of tranquility in order to conserve their reserve of fat which they need in order to survive...

Attribution : Albert Christophe - PNE

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## Eurasian Crag Martin (K)

The Eurasian Crag Martin is dressed in beige tones. It is capable of real flying prowess, an indispensable quality for capturing the multitude of insects that it feeds on. In Spring, as soon as it has found a safe rocky ridge, the Eurasian Crag Martin tirelessly transports, mud and pieces of plants with its beak. With the help of this unique tool, it solidly fixes each element on to the rock thanks to a clever mixture of saliva and water.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE