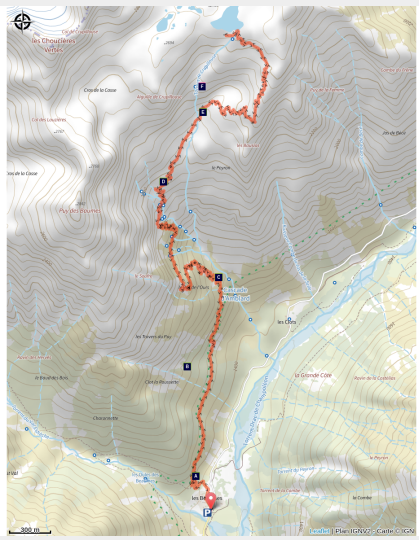
Crupillouse Lakes

Champsaur - Champoléon

Lac de Crupillouse enneigé (Jean Pierre Nicollet - PNE)



A long hike, with bends and crossings, which goes up following the waterfalls to the string of lakes in their mineral setting.

"Happy is the hiker at the beginning of the season who will have the privilege of discovering the lakes still covered in snow with just a turquoise ring of thawing ice.. All that there is left to do is find a slab of well-polished and well exposed gneiss to sit on in order to search the landscape for Ibex."

Marc Corail, Mountain ranger in Champsaur

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 6 h

Length : 15.7 km

Trek ascent : 1380 m

Difficulty : Hard

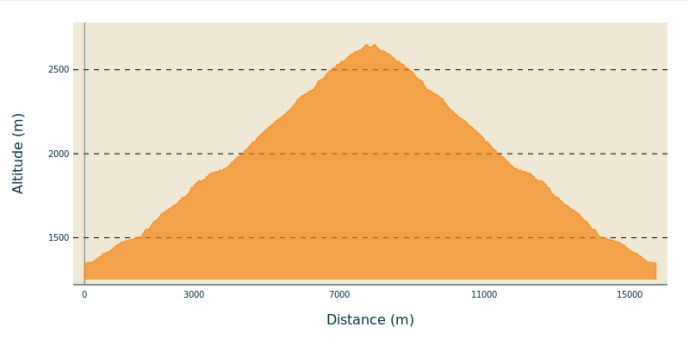
Type : Return trip

Themes : Fauna, Geology, Lake and glacier

Trek

Departure : Les Baumes
Arrival : Les Baumes
Cities : 1. Champoléon

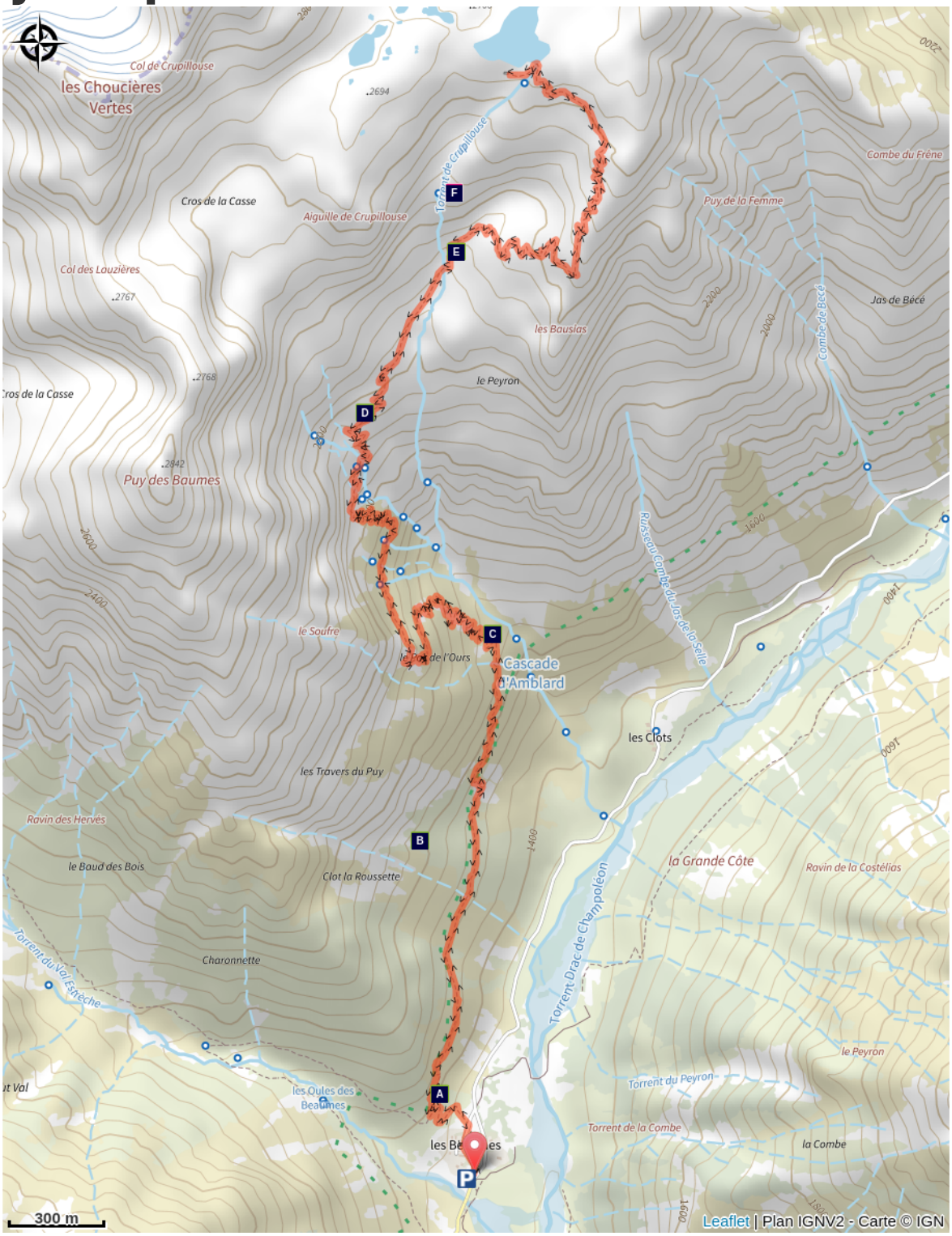
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1351 m Max elevation 2652 m

From the car park cross. Baumes hamlet to the start of the track (information board). After 5 minutes, turn left off the track and go towards Valestrèche valley. After a few bends, reach the big crossing the scree slope. Then, rocky inclines lead to the Pas de l'Ours. A succession of bends across the scree slope then large crossings take you to the old jas de Crupillouse (shelter under the rocks) then the Crupillouse lower cirque. After the last grasslands, a series of bends and a large diagonal enabling you to reach the threshold of the lower lake that you will only discover at the last minute. There, motivated by tiredness, it would be tempting to abandon the ascent. Continue for 10 more minutes to reach the base of the second lake (or the shoulder that separates them) to fully benefit from the whole view of the cirque and the panorama across Champoléon.

On your path...



- Orange Lily (A)
- Ibex (C)
- « Popeye » Locust (E)
- Chamois (B)
- Rock Ptarmigan (D)
- Polished glaciers (F)

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

It is recommended to leave at the break of day. The Southern slope becomes sunny very quickly; you soon miss the freshness of the early morning. On the other hand, in summer the lakes are often covered with clouds from the beginning of the afternoon. On the way back, in the case of big storm it is sometimes difficult to cross the torrents.

How to come ?

Transports

A summer shuttle service from Gap to Aubert passing through Champoléon valley.

Access

From the Maison de la Vallée at Pont du Fossé, go up the road to Orcières until Pont de Corbières. Go up the Champoléon valley until Baumes hamlet.

Advised parking

Car park at the entrance to Baumes hamlet

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...

Orange Lily (A)

In July, it is there faithfully, just on the edge of the track 5 minutes after the start. A bit of plant life before emerging in to the mineral world that awaits us on top.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

Chamois (B)

About sixty chamois regularly occupy the Crupillouse valley. More or less high depending on the season. In Spring and Autumn the crossing up to the Pas de l'ours is the moment to make great observations. In summer, the goats go up higher and the kids like to play on the last big pockets of snow. Once again, luck will smile on you the earlier you manage to get up.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

Ibex (C)

The site of Amblard, at the foot of the Crupillouse valley, is the historical reintroduction site of Ibex in the Champsaur in 1995. At the beginning of winter, it is a meeting place during the mating season. In summer, the Ibex go up higher to Aiguilles de Crupillouse, unless they have gone through the Parière mountain pass to reach the Valgaudemar.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

Rock Ptarmigan (D)

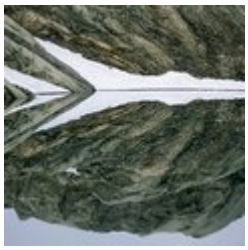
The sector of the lakes is a breeding ground for the Rock Ptarmigan. In this mineral world, the mimicry of the birds makes it seem unrealistic to think of finding them here surrounded by stones. However sometimes luck can suprize hikers early in the day or campers who have set up their bivouac in one of the rare flat places that dominate the lakes.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

« Popeye » Locust (E)

Descending to the lakes, the first short grass land nestling between the polished glaciers and gneiss provides the opportunity for an entertaining pause. It will be the moment to search for the famous « popeye » locust. It is not certain that the muscles in its front arms will be enough to protect it against the Northern Wheatears looking for insects to feed their young, hiding in nests between the rocks.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE



Polished glaciers (F)

Lying in the ancient cirque of glacial abrasions, the lakes are ringed with beautiful white-pink gneiss rocks which have been progressively polished by the erosion of the glaciers. You can find beautiful specimens of “augen” gneiss, big almond shaped patches of Feldspar. Feldspar is a coloured mineral consisting of chemical elements (silicate, potassium, calcium...). In the lower cirque, you can also find beautiful polished rocks between the grassland where the Chamois like to have their siesta.

Attribution : Claude Dautrey - PNE