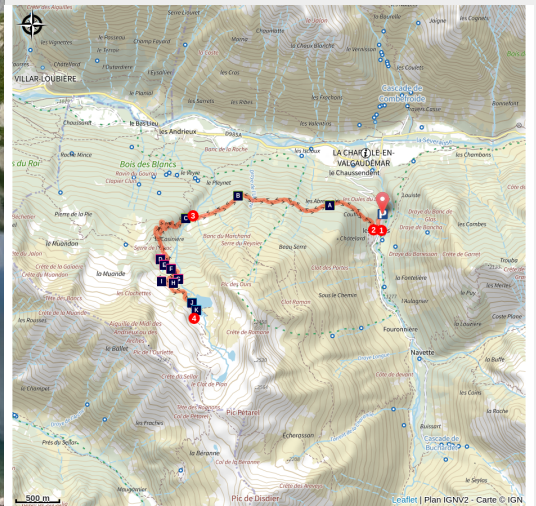


The Pétarel Lakes via Les Portes

Parc national des Ecrins - La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar



Lacs de Pétarel (Dominique Vincent - Parc national des Ecrins)



This ascent leads through a cool, discreet forest atmosphere to an open landscape, exposed to the heat of the sun.

Making your way through the forest, a shadow passes a few yards away. I stand still and watch this unknown figure, which is looking at me with surprise and seems to be saying: "what kind of creature are you? - you're not a chamois."

Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 5 h 30

Length : 12.0 km

Trek ascent : 906 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Return trip

Themes : Fauna, Lake and glacier, Panorama

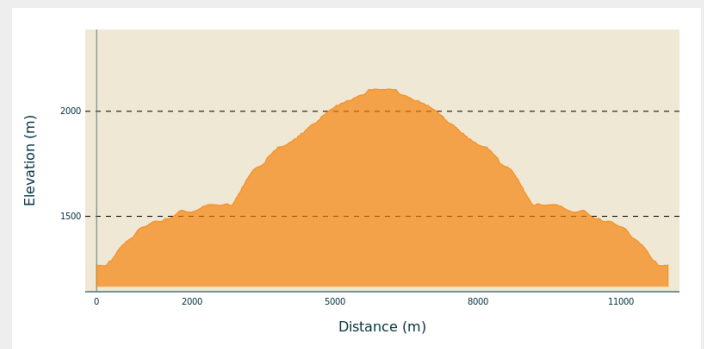
Trek

Departure : Les Portes, La-Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

Arrival : Les Portes, La-Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

Cities : 1. La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

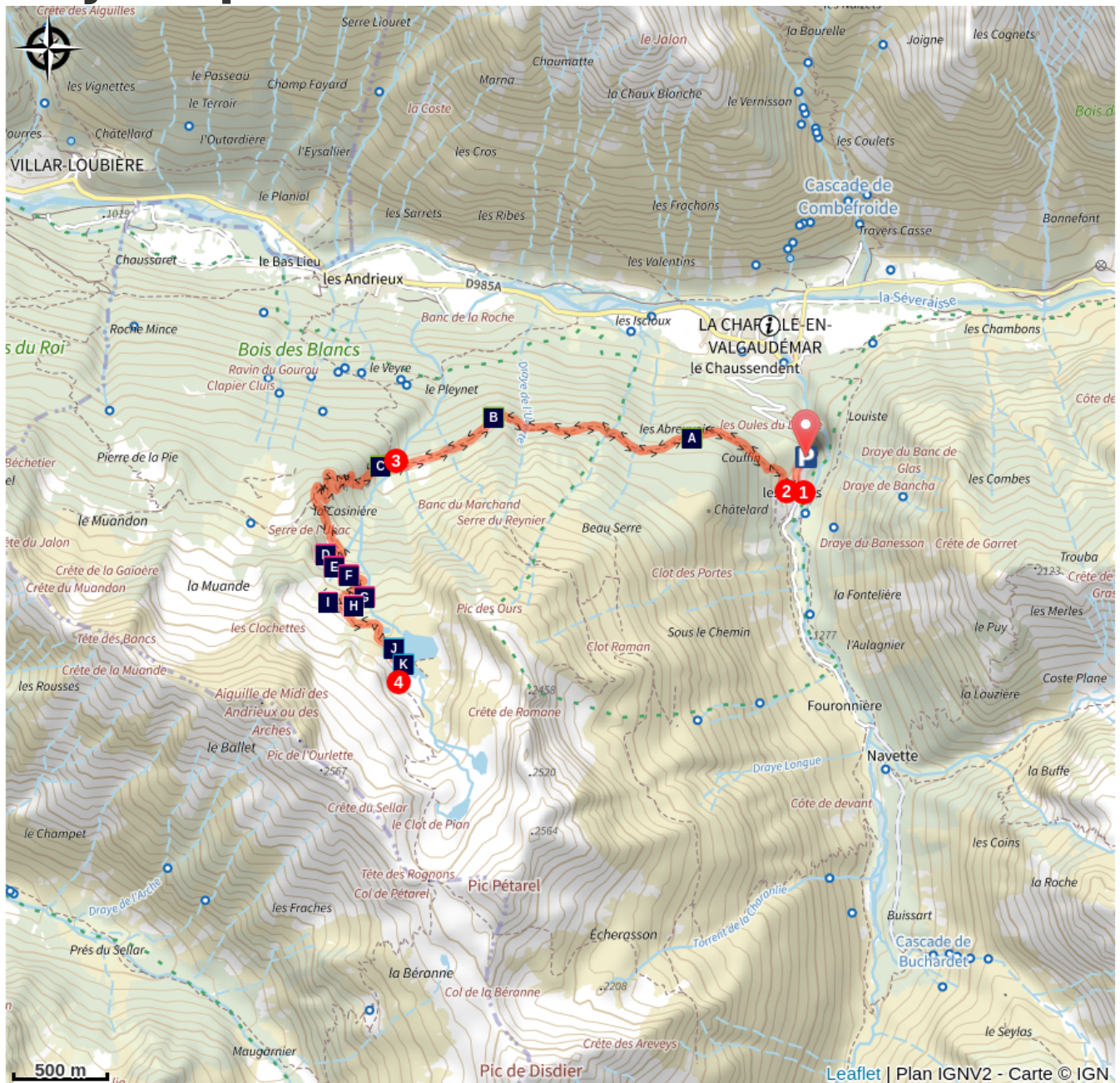
Altimetric profile














Min elevation 1266 m Max elevation 2107 m

In the village of Les Portes, turn right onto the path signposted "Lacs de Pétarel". Follow this rising path, and soon after, at a crossroads, turn left following the arrow shown on the panel. You cross a forest clearing and a scree, then arrive at and cross the Pétarel torrent. Then make your way through the forest, where the path meets another path leading to the village of Les Andrieux. Follow the signpost at this crossroads to "Lacs de Pétarel". Continue through the forest as far as a slope of low-lying vegetation, following it up through the winding turns. The path crosses the torrent. Go carefully in the last rocky sections. A large cairn signals your arrival at the lakes. Come back the same way.

On your path...



-  Blueberries (A)
-  Red Ants (C)
-  Pic des Souffles (E)
-  Pic Turbat (G)
-  Combination of minerals in the Olan and the Turbat (I)
-  Scientific monitoring of the Pétarel Lakes (K)
-  Chamois (B)
-  Cime du Vallon (D)
-  Pic de l'Olan (F)
-  Granite at Pic Turbat (H)
-  Pétarel Lakes (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

Crossing the torrent may prove dangerous when the current is strong (you cross the ford).

Please note that only bivouacking is authorised (from 7 p.m. to 9 a.m.) and waste must be taken away to preserve the site.

How to come ?

Access

21 km from St Firmin along the D58, the D985a to La-Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar and then turn right onto a narrow road as far as the village of Les Portes.

Advised parking

Village of Les Portes

Information desks

Valgaudemar Park house

Ancien Asile Saint-Paul, 05800 La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

valgaudemar@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 55 25 19

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



Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

On your path...



✿ Blueberries (A)

The blueberry shrub is a bushy shrub whose angular twigs have small tender, oval leaves that are finely serrated. It has single wine-coloured, bell-type flowers. As of August, they will give way to edible purple-fleshed berries that are also known as "black mouth". At high altitude, it accompanies bilberries. When autumn sets in, entire mountainsides are covered in bright red that is highly visible in the landscape. Blueberries are an additional food source for fauna that is baccivore (berry eating), frugivore or herbivore, hence its scientific name *vaccinium*, from the Latin *vacca* (cow).

Attribution : Bernard Nicollet - PNE



🐐 Chamois (B)

An iconic animal of the Alps, the chamois or «rock goat» has short, black hooked horns. In the spring, it can easily be observed with binoculars around the Pétarel lakes and sometimes alone in the forest. The females and young males (one-year-old) live in large herds. By contrast, the bucks remain rather solitary, only joining the females during the mating season. In the winter, chamois tend to lead quiet lives as they survive by conserving their reserves of fat.

Attribution : Pierre-Emmanuel Dequest - PNE



🐜 Red Ants (C)

Numerous anthills are present in the forest area. Anthills are composed of accumulated vegetable detritus.. The principal rôle of the dome is the thermoregulation of the anthill, in particular for the brood. In fact, the temperature of the ants' eggs must not go above 25°-30°C. The weight of this habitat can be amazing: up to 20 kilos for a nest of 3 m cubed.. Apparently anthills are a sign of a healthy environment. So please respect these little creatures!

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Bernard

Cime du Vallon (D)

The Cime du Vallon is an easy stretch of snow to hike or ski across in Winter and in Spring. Starting from Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar, it offers a difference in levels of 2 350 m.

Pic des Souffles (E)

The first summit in the valley at an altitude of more than 3 000 m, It is hardly visited by mountaineers. At the beginning of the story of mountaineering, the pic was highly frequented by local guides who opened the first trails. Currently rated AD (quite difficult) it has been equipped. The approach is long but worth it for the suspended atmosphere. The passage to the refuge of the same name will leave nobody unmoved.

Pic de l'Olan (F)

The Pic de l'Olan is a summit like a beacon in the valley. Its North East face is one of highest and wildest in the Alps. like the Walker rocky spur or the Drus (in the Mont-Blanc massif). Its name is a deformation of 'Auran' which signifies « windy mount ». The first ascent of Northern summit was carried out on 29th June 1877. For mountaineers, it represents a good climb accessible to all levels accompanied nevertheless by a high-mountain guide.

Pic Turbat (G)

A pretty 3 000 m achievable as an athletic hike in summer, it can be seen from the Souffles de l' Olan refuge. It is also a lovely belvedere over the first part of the valley and across the large North-West face of the Olan. On the way back, a pause beside the little Lautier lake is not to be missed.

Granite at Pic Turbat (H)

This very compact granite (on the facing slope), consists of fine grains, and the clear colour which is specific to Pic Turbat. It is formed from drops of granite that came back up across le magma, and which were then uncovered due to erosion.

Combination of minerals in the Olan and the Turbat (I)

The mineral combination (situated in the facing slope) consisting of the Olan and the Turbat offers an interesting reading of the diverse geological layers. This site is characteristic of alpine territory. These last high mountains at the heart of the massif exceed the crystalline base by 3 500 m.



Pétarel Lakes (J)

The Pétarel lakes are relics of a long glacial and geological history. They are the result of glacial abrasions in the Hercynien granite, base rock of the Ecrins massif.

Attribution : PNE - Roche Daniel



Scientific monitoring of the Pétarel Lakes (K)

A scientific protocol was put in place on the lake at Pétarel in order to follow the evolution of fish, zooplankton and phytoplankton. This lake constitutes a singularity in the mountain parks, it is a witness to climatic and historical evolution. This protocol is carried out with other services: The Mediterranean Institute for Continental and Marine Biology (IMBE), The National Office for Water and Aquatic Environments (ONEMA) and the Departmental Federation of Fisheries in the Hautes-Alpes.

Attribution : PNE - Warluzelle Olivier