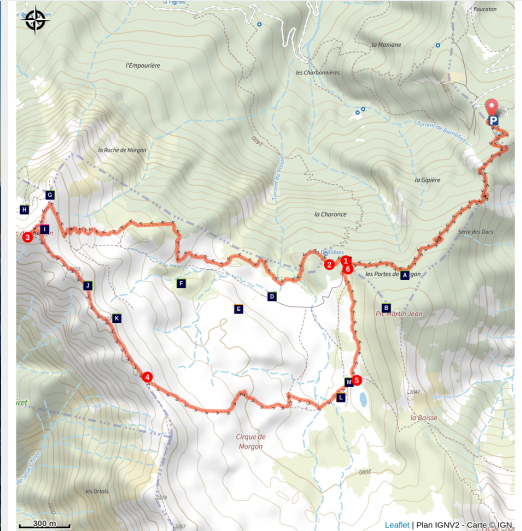


# The Pic de Morgon

Parc national des Ecrins - Crots



Levé de soleil sur la crête du Morgon (Victor Zugmeyer - PNE)



*This hike enables you to discover the enchanting cirque at altitude and the panorama of the valleys of Ubaye and the Durance.*

« It was with the President of the Pastoral Organization Morgon who was replacing the shepherd that day, that we were able to admire the view of 25 male chamois grouped at the Tête de la Vieille without a female on the horizon »

*Michel Bouche, Heritage Technician in the Briançonnais*

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 h

Length : 11.1 km

Trek ascent : 783 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna, Flora, History and architecture

# Trek

**Departure** : Le Grand Clot, Crots

**Arrival** : Le Grand Clot, Crots

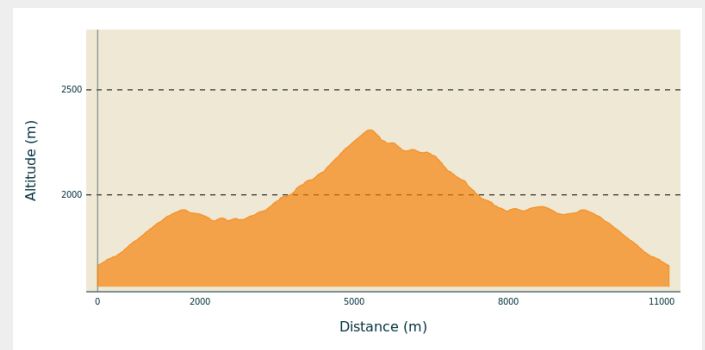
**Markings** : — PR

**Cities** : 1. Crots

2. Savines-le-Lac

3. Pontis

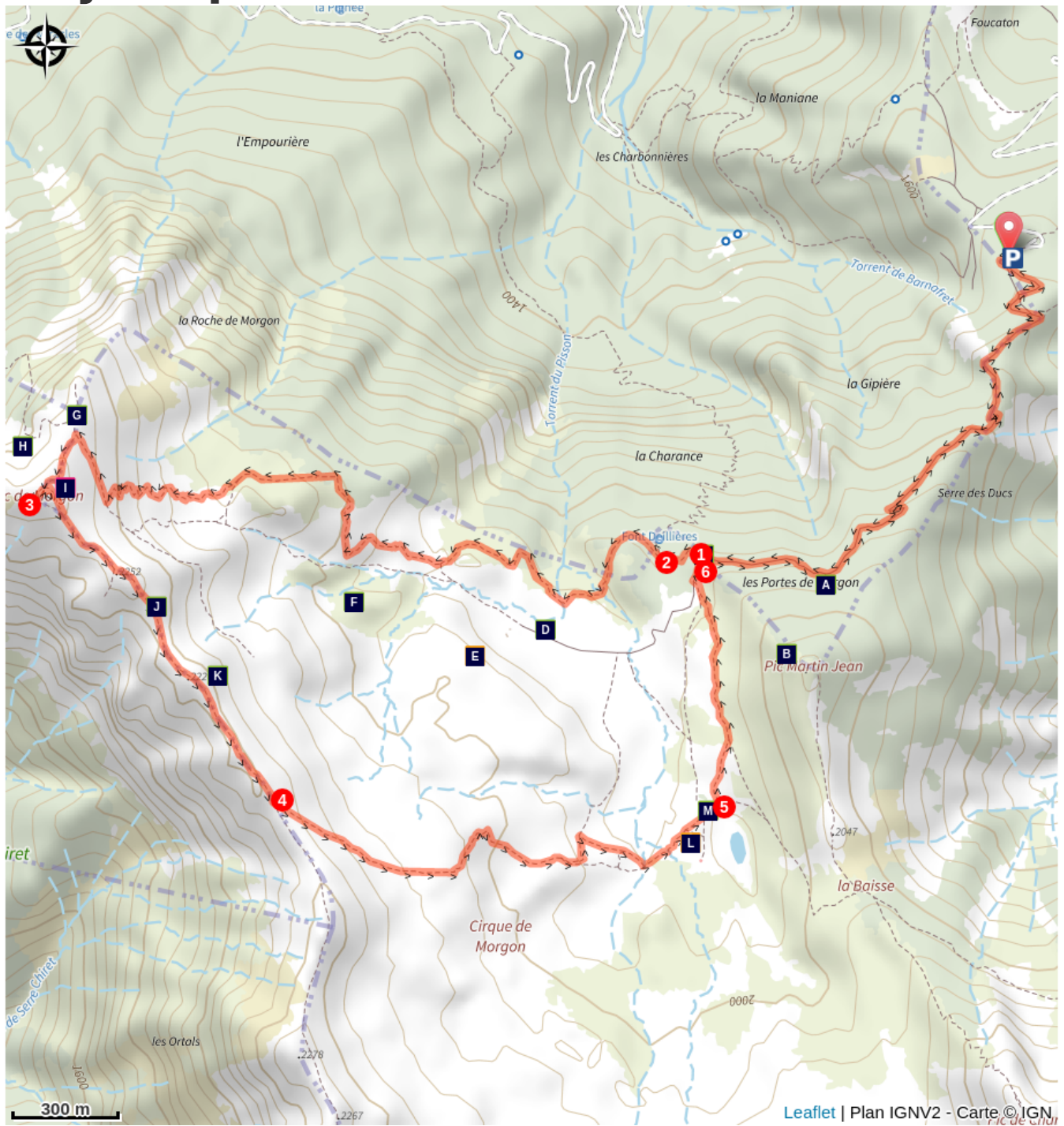
## Altimetric profile













Min elevation 1664 m    Max elevation 2310 m

From the car park at Grand Clot (1660 m) follow the track into the forest until Portes de Morgon where you will discover the cirque of the same name. Once in the cirque, follow the path then the track. Pass near to the shepherd's cabin respecting its tranquility before attacking the ascent which is often eroded in the cargneules. Follow the track in order to avoid making the erosion worse. Ascend to the summit (where there is an old orientation table that has been struck by lightning). It is possible by turning right to pass near to a metal cylinder placed on the ridge in the year 2000 at the same time as the one you can still see at Mont Orel. A third cylinder was put up on Mont Guillaume, but has been dismantled. Next rejoin the summit by following the shoulder of the mountain... From up high, the view of the two branches of Serre-Ponçon lake is stunning. For the return journey follow the ridge to the South in the direction of the Tête de la Vieille (a small passage through the rocks) and get back on to the path that goes down to the cirque. It passes near to Morgon Lake and the Saint Pierre sanctuary before joining the Portes de Morgon itinerary that you followed on the way out...

## On your path...



-  Black Grouse (A)
-  Forest flora (C)
-  Preserved Pasture (E)
-  Rock Ptarmigan (G)
-  Summits and vallies (I)
-  Avifauna on the cliff (K)
-  Common Frog (M)
-  Chamois (B)
-  Marmots (D)
-  Wolf (F)
-  Griffon Vulture (H)
-  Flora at altitude (J)
-  Saint Pierre sanctuary (L)

# All useful information

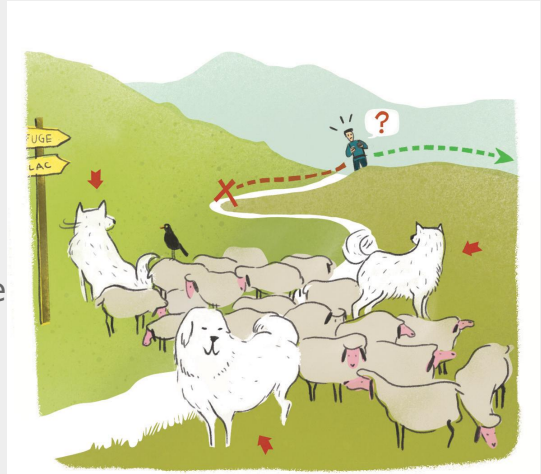
## Herd protection dogs

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](#).



## Advices

Dogs are not allowed in the cirque between the 15th June and the 15th July and from the 15th August and the 15th September.

## How to come ?

### Access

From the N94 between Crots and Savines, go up in the direction of Boscodon Abbey. Continue straight along after the abbey then follow the forest track turning right at the crossroads. Go up for 5 km until you reach the Grand Clot car park.

### Advised parking

Parking de Grand Clot. Payant (5€/véhicule) de 8h à 16h en juillet-août.

## **Information desks**

### **Maison du Parc de l'Embrunais**

Place de l'Église, 05380 Châteauroux-les-Alpes

[embrunais@ecrins-parcnational.fr](mailto:embrunais@ecrins-parcnational.fr)

Tel : 04 92 43 23 31

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



### **Tourist office Savines-le-Lac**

9 Avenue de la Combe d'Or, 05160 Savines-le-Lac

[savineslelac@serreponcon-tourisme.com](mailto:savineslelac@serreponcon-tourisme.com)

Tel : 0492443100

<https://www.serreponcon-tourisme.com/>



## **Source**



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## Black Grouse (A)

In Springtime, the male, whose black feathers and lyre shaped tail contrast with its white rump, make spectacular displays to attract the females. Between the larches and junipers, in the high grass is favourable environment for these birds to reproduce, but we have to take in to account the flocks of sheep and the progressive end of this kind of environment.

Attribution : Robert Chevalier - PNE

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## Chamois (B)

Early in the morning and late in the evening, the chamois come to graze around the Tête de la Vieille, du Pic de Charance or on the other side of the Pic Jean Martin on the edge of the cirque de Bragousse. This emblematic Alpine animal has a particularly well developed sense of smell and hearing which makes it difficult to approach it. So it is easier to observe it through binoculars... which also preserves its tranquility!

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE

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## Forest flora (C)

In the forest, there are a few colonies of Lady's-slipper orchids (also known in French as "sabot de Venus" or Venus' slipper), a species that is as brilliant as it is rare. Please do not pick any of them, so as to protect them and allow others to enjoy them. There is also the very diminutive moss, *Buxbaumia viridis* or green shield-moss, on decomposing stumps.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE



## Marmots (D)

The Alpine marmot is naturally present in the high-mountain grasslands. This large rodent is only active above ground from April to October, and in the cold season it retires to hibernate in its burrow. They live in family groups, respecting a strict hierarchy. Through playing, grooming, fighting and biting one dominant pair maintains its position, ensuring group cohesion. Each individual contributes to marking the boundaries of the group's territory, by rubbing its cheeks on rocks and leaving droppings and urine. When danger threatens, the marmot utters a loud, high-pitched whistle to warn its companions.

Attribution : Rodolphe Papet - PNE

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## Preserved Pasture (E)

The Morgon cirque welcomes a flock of 1300 sheep. At the height of the tourist season, it migrates towards the pastures at Vallon Clapier and Olettes more to the East. This is due to agro-environmental measures, a contract between the Pastoral Organization and the Ecrins National Park which seeks to protect pastoral resources and the environmental assets of the pasture.

Attribution : Agnès Vivat

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## Wolf (F)

Although the species had been eradicated in France at the beginning of the 20th century, about 400 wolves remained in 1980 in Italy. Today thanks to the protection that it benefits from this large carnivore is settling more and more in the North... It regularly comes to the pasture in the summer creating some damage which has been noted by the park rangers in the National Park and compensated for. The presence of the shepherd and his « dogs » is however dissuasive.

Attribution : Robert Chevalier - PNE



## Rock Ptarmigan (G)

It is sometimes possible to see the Rock Ptarmigan on the ridges of the shale slopes which, after having picked their way through the rocks, fly away in a flash of white. It is one of the most threatened species in the Alps... With global warming, evolution in the pastures, winter frequentation ... the future seems uncertain for this inhabitant of the ridges...

Attribution : Jean-Philippe Telmon - PNE



## Griffon Vulture (H)

The Pic de Morgon is used by the vultures coming from the right bank of the Durance, sometimes in large numbers, to get up to altitude after having crossed over Serre-Ponçon Lake. Scavengers exclusively, these gravediggers who have frightened and disgusted mankind for a long time hold a fundamental place in the food cycle by rapidly eliminating cadavers and in this way limiting the dispersal of microbes and illness.

Attribution : Marion Molina



## Summits and vallies (I)

The summit of the Pic de Morgon offers a magnificent view over the Ubaye and the Durance. While on the right bank of the latter, one can see the Aiguilles de Chabrières, the Piolit and the Mont Guillaume, on the left bank of the Ubaye, you can see the Dormillouse. Near to the Pic de Morgon, is the Tête de la Vieille, le Pic de Charance and the Pic Jean Martin. In the distance, you can distinguish the Pic de Bure as well as the snowy summits of the Ecrins and the Vanoise.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE



## Flora at altitude (J)

On the ridges, la Berardia Subacaulis, rare and protected, resembles plants found in the desert. Its grey-green cottony rosette is unusual up here on the slopes where we also find the Rose Daphne with its suprizing fragrance. On the limestone the Silver Edged Primrose grows, a Southern plant which is recognizable by its divided leaves edged in silver.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - PNE



## Avifauna on the cliff (K)

The North face of the Pic de Morgon, with its cliffs, is a perfect place to watch the rock birds... You can see the aerial acrobatics of the Red Billed Cough, which breaks the silence with its strident cry, which is almost metallic. You can also observe the rapid flight of a group of Alpine Swifts and that of those that look like butterflies the Wall Creepers with their legs and curved claws enabling them to cling on to the cliff.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson - PNE



## Saint Pierre sanctuary (L)

From time immemorial, the « chapel » situated near to Morgon Lake is the goal of a pilgrimage which takes place every 29th June, Saint-Peter's day. The practice of this pilgrimage probably goes back to Pagan times; witnessing these impressive stone boulders which may have been used as sacrificial altars... Of this sanctuary, which has been abandoned since the beginning of the 20th century only a few roughly cut rocks remained. However it was identically rebuilt in June 1992 by the students at the Ecrins Technical College. Since then, festivities are held there once more every June.

Attribution : Agnès Vivat



## Common Frog (M)

The only amphibious frog living at altitude, it reproduces in Morgon lake before this dries up. Well versed in inhabiting these glacial waters where it hibernates without too much danger, it has a stocky body about 10 cm long, beige with brown markings and a short face topped with golden coloured, protruding lidded eyes.

Attribution : Thierry Maillet - PNE