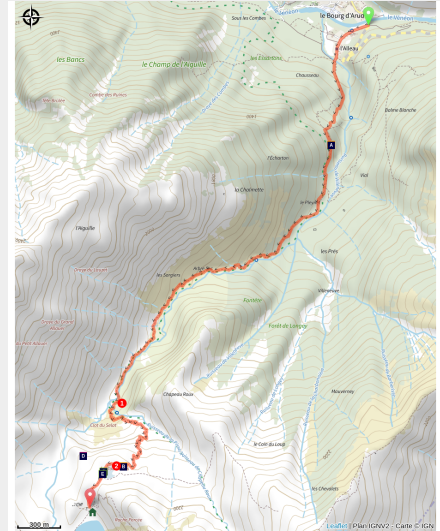


# From Bourg d'Arud to the Muzelle refuge

Oisans



Contemplation de cascade en allant au Lac de la Muzelle (© Parc national des Écrins - Thibaut Blais)



*This first day is short, but keeps all its promises: you soon reach the untamed and peaceful heights, with the lakeside and glacier to admire and enjoy.*

After a shaded and humid start in the forest, you arrive in the Alpine pastures, then glimpse the hollow containing Lake Muzelle, with the glacier of the same name above. You are surrounded by high mountain passes and feel quite small, as if you were in an incredibly beautiful hole.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 3 h 30

Length : 5.8 km

Trek ascent : 1212 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Stage

Themes : Hut, Lake and glacier, Pastoralism

# Trek

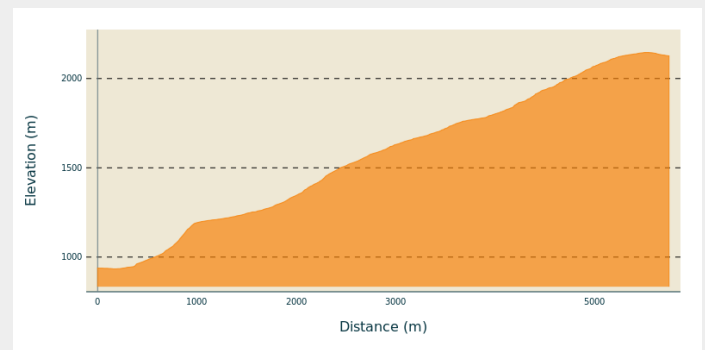
**Departure** : Bourg d'Arud

**Arrival** : Muzelle refuge

**Markings** :  GR

**Cities** : 1. Les Deux Alpes

## Altimetric profile



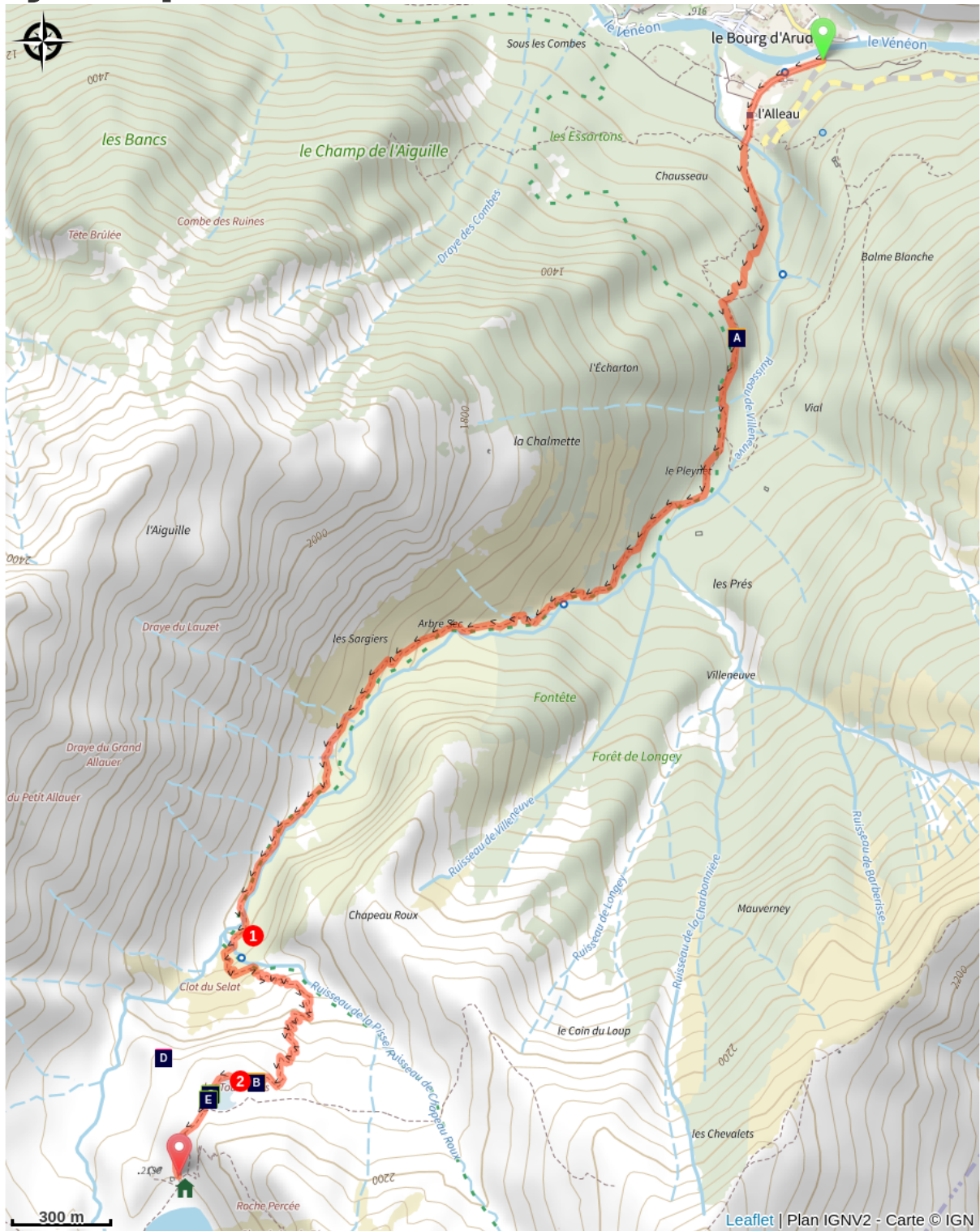
Min elevation 935 m    Max elevation 2147 m






After walking up the little narrow street towards the upper part of the village of Alleau, the climb begins on an old, wide and paved path that continues as a forest path. The forest looks down on the mountain stream, La Pisse, which you gradually draw closer to and then cross, after leaving the forest and arriving in the mountain pastures.

1. Go up along a zigzagging and technical path, beneath the impressive deep black Clot du Selat.
2. You then arrive at the peat bogs (with hollows showing where peat was once extracted), then a section of the path overlooking Lake Muzelle, before going down a few metres towards the refuge of the same name, which stands next to a shepherd's cabin.

If you get there early, you can take a walk above the refuge to get a closer look at the Roche Percée ("pierced rock") and the hoodoos or fairy chimneys, and get closer to the Muzelle glacier.

## On your path...



-  A bit of history concerning the valley of Muzelle (A)
-  Muzelle bog (C)
-  Fauna and Flora in the Bog (E)
-  The pastoral valley (B)
-  Ser Barbier Fault (D)

# 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

L'étape est courte mais il y a possibilité d'aller se balader au-dessus du refuge pour voir de plus près la Roche Percée et les Cheminées de Fées.

Etape courte mais dénivelé conséquent, prenez votre temps pour l'ascension, et ne partez pas trop tard.



# 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.

## Short-toed snake eagle

Sensitivity period: March, April, May, June, July, August, September

Contact: Parc National des Écrins  
Julien Charron  
julien.charron@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Nidification du Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Circaète-Jean-le-Blanc en période de nidification sont principalement les pratiques aériennes comme le vol libre ou le vol motorisé.

Attention le survol motorisé dans la zone cœur Parc National des Écrins est interdit en-dessous de 1000m sol et une réglementation spécifique s'applique au survol non-motorisé.

Voir la réglementation pour les survols non-motorisés : <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survols-non-motorises>

Voir la réglementation pour les survol motorisés: <https://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/les-survols-non-motorises>

## Peregrine falcon

Sensitivity period: February, March, April, May, June

Contact: Parc National des Écrins  
Julien Charron  
julien.charron@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Nidification du Faucon pèlerin.

Les pratiques qui peuvent avoir une interaction avec le Faucon pèlerin 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 !

En cas de survol merci de rester au-dessus de 1910m d'altitude à une distance de 300m sol.

## **Information desks**

### **Oisans Park house**

Rue Gambetta, 38520 Le Bourg d'Oisans

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

Tel : 04 76 80 00 51

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



## **Source**



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

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## A bit of history concerning the valley of Muzelle (A)

At the end of the 19th century the forest was practically nonexistent, it had been reduced in favour of pastoral activity (on the higher planes) and for the culture of cereals, principally barley, above the inhabited areas. Towards 1945, the highest hamlets, like the one at Laffreyte above Bourg-d'Arud, were emptied of their inhabitant. Today the forest has gained ground covering the memory of a few ruins at the bottom of the track... Before the arrival of the motor car and the creation of roads, this itinerary around the lake and the Muzelle mountain pass was often used by the inhabitants of Venosc in order to cross the valley to the neighbouring valley of Valbonnais.

Attribution : Collection PNE

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## The pastoral valley (B)

The configuration of the site made it very favourable to pastoralism for several centuries. This area of pastures was rented during the 19th and 20th centuries to seasonal grazers from the South of France. The local flocks from Venosc and particularly the flock from the hamlet of Laffreyte also went there. At that time, the first animals up in the mountain each year were the cows then the sheep. Since the 1980s, a flock of sheep of round 1200 animals from the Hautes-Alpes summer graze from June onwards and spend the summer in this prairie.

Attribution : PNE - Brun André

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## Muzelle bog (C)

The humid zone, which you cross just before Muzelle lake, is bursting with astonishing biodiversity. The remains of a big lake created during the retreat of the glacier, this marsh has become filled little by little with plants forming the biggest bog in Vénéon valley. For several generations, the shepherds have used the peat as a fuel. Today it is forbidden to extract it. The place is protected by fences as part of agri-environmental measures.

Attribution : PNE - Nicollet Jean-Pierre

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## Ser Barbier Fault (D)

The fault at Ser Barbier brings into contact the crystalline bas (the needle of Venosc) and a marly deposit (Vallon mountain pass). It was formed during the Jurassic period when the Téthys sea opened out, by breaking and crumbling the crystalline massif. The rubbing together of the two parts created a beautiful striated mirror clearly visible due to erosion.

Attribution : PNE - Albert Christophe

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## Fauna and Flora in the Bog (E)

The bog is a very special environment which, by definition produces peat. Its appearance is that of a carpet of spongy sphagnum, plants full of water similar to mosses that accumulate over time. Their scientific study has enabled us to trace the evolution of the climate as well as that of the vegetation. The bogs can be seen at a distance when the Cotton Grass is in flower. Etymologically its name in French describes the 'portelaine' (wool carrier): its fluffy tufts and its cottony appearance make it an easily identifiable plant... You can also see around here and animal that is very active in this area: the common frog. Resistant to the cold, it is a batrachian which is very well adapted to the alpine environment. The yellow abdomen and the large dark mark at the back of the eye incorporating the ear drum are two characteristics observable with this species...

Attribution : PNE - Coulon Mireille