

# From La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar to the Refuge des Souffles (start of the GR footpath)



Valgaudemar - La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar



Itinéraire des Souffles, vue sur les Arraches (Olivier Warluzelle)



*A gentle start from La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar before crossing the numerous mountain passes and roaming the high valleys of Les Ecrins.*

A tranquil walk from La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar, accompanied by the soothing sound of the Séveraïsseriver and past the hamlets along its banks, makes for a relaxing start to the GR54. Then, leave civilisation behind as you climb the slopes of the Pic des Souffles (3,098 m). When you arrive at the refuge 2,000 m above sea level, the view opens up over the wild, steep Valgaudemar valley.

## Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 h 30

Length : 9.8 km

Trek ascent : 967 m

Difficulty : Medium

Type : Stage

Themes : Fauna, Geology, Panorama

# Trek

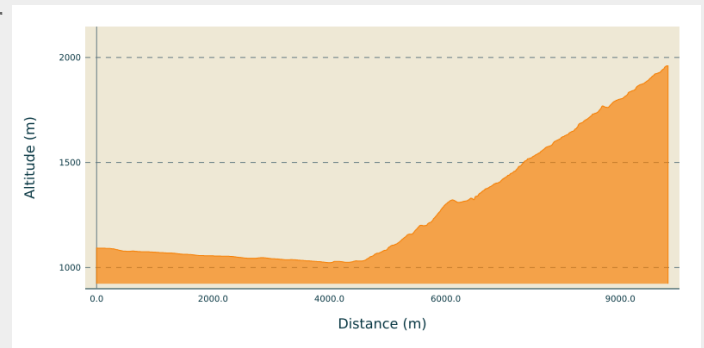
**Departure** : La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar

**Arrival** : Les Souffles, Villard Loubière

**Markings** : 🚲 VTT 🚶 GR

**Cities** : 1. La Chapelle-en-Valgaudemar  
2. Villar-Loubière

## Altimetric profile









Min elevation 1023 m Max elevation 1960 m

From the National Park Centre car park (reserved for staff), cross the little bridge to reach the main road. Turn right, go past the municipal campsite and grocery store and continue along the D985 as far as an oratory. Cross the Séveraisse river and follow its right-hand bank until you reach the Les Andrieux bridge (1,043 m). Take the path on the right to follow the Séveraisse river, now along the left-hand bank. At the Séveraisse bridge (1,025 m), cross the river again heading for the hamlet of Villar Loubière (1,033 m). Leave the hamlet via its north end heading for the Stage gîte d'étape « Le Relais de la Vaurze » and the « La Charrière » gîte further on. At the Parc des Ecrins signs, follow the road suitable for motor vehicles for a short distance before taking the path on the left. Follow the Le Villar mountain stream as it gradually rises upwards. Cross the Le Lautier stream via a wooden walkway (1,220 m). The path winds upwards, mainly through undergrowth. Turn left at the Pas de Galiane and carry on along the twisting path. At the intersection (1,800 m), take the easy path on the right which leads to the Refuge des Souffles (1,975 m).

# On your path...



-  Villar-Loubière windmill (A)
-  Sheep on the mountain pasture (C)
-  Variety of the natural environment (E)
-  Arraches (B)
-  Black Grouse (D)
-  Variety of plant life (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

Parking spaces are available along the departmental road at La Chapelle en Valgaudemar, near the National Park Centre. The Park Centre car park is for staff only!

For the most hardened walkers, it is possible to combine this stage with the next day's stage, and reach Le Désert en Valjouffrey via the Vaurze pass in 9½ hours.

# 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>

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## 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...

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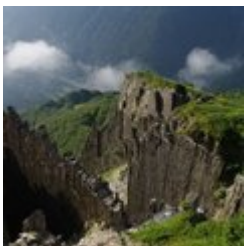


## Villar-Loubière windmill (A)

As you begin the steep climb towards the Col de la Vaurze, don't miss the unusual Villar windmill, covered in vegetation. Built in 1838, this legacy from past times has been perfectly preserved with its curious horizontal wheel. It was still in use 50 years ago, milling wheat, but also nuts and rapeseed. It was restored in 1979 and is the last working windmill in the Valgaudemar valley.

Attribution : Florence Chalandon ©

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## Arraches (B)

From the refuge, or during the climb, a peculiar geological formation may catch your eye on the opposite bank, above the old hamlet of Peines. Sedimentary rocks are trapped in the middle of crystalline formations where erosion has created a specific pattern of erosion that looks like a giant tiger has clawed at the rock. This morphology is what gave it the name Arraches.

Attribution : Olivier Wartuzelle - PNE

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## Sheep on the mountain pasture (C)

During your walk, you might come across sheep on the mountain pastures. This is an old form of pastoralism, as proven by the dry stone enclosures that you will see. These are known as 'jas'. You will also notice a rock shelter near to the Clot. The sheep that are in these pastures belong to breeders from the valley or from the Bas Champsaur area.

Attribution : Jean-Philippe Telmon - PNE

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## Black Grouse (D)

The upper limit of the forest is where you are likely to see the black grouse. The female has faint in her bland-coloured feathering that camouflages her in the vegetation, making her difficult to spot. On the other hand, the male, which is black and white with red "eyebrows", is not so private, particularly during the reproduction season when their cooing and hissing sounds echo in the mountain in the early morning.

Attribution : Robert Chevalier - PNE

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## ✿ Variety of the natural environment (E)

This walk is a summary of south facing slopes in the Valgaudemar area. It starts in the warm scree that is more or less vegetated. It then progresses over lawns and moors of juniper, blueberries or bearberries... They give way to mountain ash, whitebeam and amelanchiers indicating that the forest will soon take over. Higher up, the beech forest casts shade on the walkers, next a beautiful larch forest is a sign that the forest environment will give way to the high altitude moors and lawns. The Lautier lake and the surrounding ponds are a haven for aquatic species. Still higher, is the realm of rocks and chamois.

Attribution : Bernard Guidoni - PNE

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## ✿ Variety of plant life (F)

There is a large variety of plant life along the itinerary, particularly on the slopes above the refuge, due to the exposure, the soil types and the altitude. Marjoram, lis, laserwort, houseleek, stinecrop, gentian, columbine, aconite and many others are present.

Attribution : Olivier Warluzelle - PNE