

# La Plaine circuit (no. 8)

Parc national des Ecrins - Freissinières



Plaine 2 (victor.andrade)



*Easy circuit along the Biaysse which takes you into a pleasant and peaceful environment surrounded by nature.*

This relatively level loop is suitable for families and leads along both banks of the Biaysse, alternating between forest and meadow. It takes you to the municipality of Freissinières and its hamlets: a valley haven in a completely natural setting and gateway to the Parc National des Écrins.

## Useful information

Practice : Mountain bike

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 7.4 km

Trek ascent : 84 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna, Flora, History and architecture

# Trek

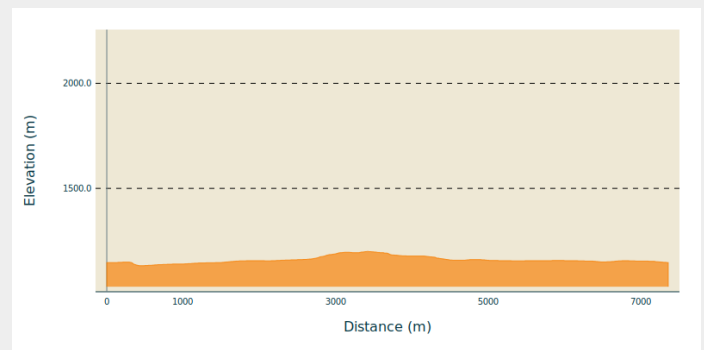
**Departure** : Parking near the Les Allouvières bus stop (left-hand bank of the Biaysse and the opposite side from the campsite), Freissinières

**Arrival** : Parking near the Les Allouvières bus stop (left-hand bank of the Biaysse and the opposite side from the campsite), Freissinières

**Markings** : ➡ VTT

**Cities** : 1. Freissinières  
2. Champcella

## Altimetric profile

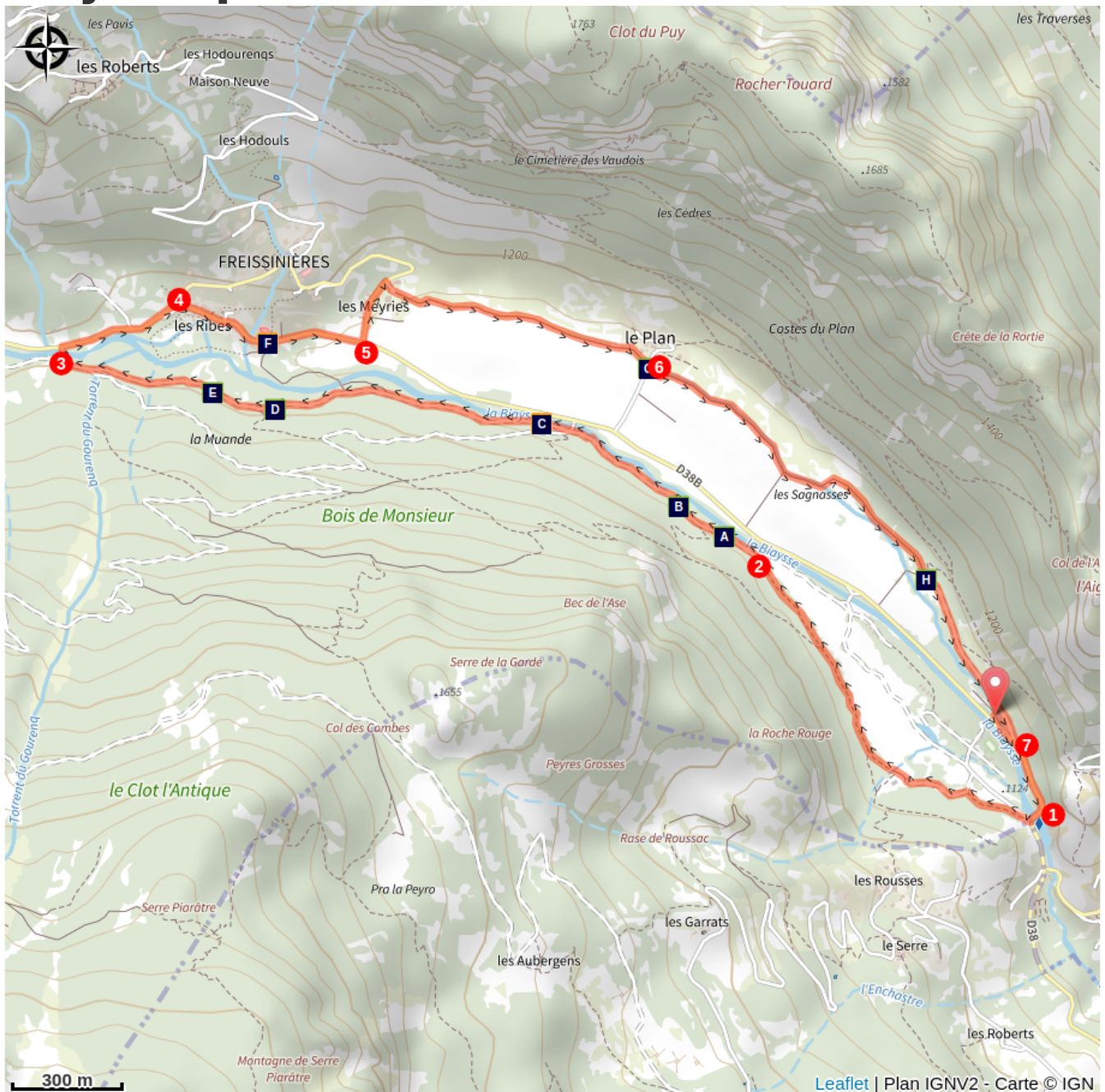


Min elevation 1132 m Max elevation 1200 m

The route starts at the Les Allouvières bus stop, on the left-hand bank of the Biaysse and opposite the campsite

1. Go across the EDF dam and take the narrow path on the right above the road leading to the Les Allouvières campsite
2. At the end of the track, continue straight ahead along a drivable track which follows the right-hand bank of the Biaysse
3. After the descent, cross the church bridge and turn right towards Freissinières along the local road
4. At the hamlet of Les Ribes in the Freissinières valley, turn right onto the D38b heading towards Le Pallon
5. After going through the village of Freissinières, turn left to Les Meyries and 200 metres further on, bear right onto a stony track
6. When you come to Le Plan, continue straight ahead, along a slightly zigzagging route
7. At the end of the track, turn right to return to your starting point

# On your path...



- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  The European silver fir (A)             |  The creeping lady's-tress (B) |
|  The Freissinières valley (C)            |  The red squirrel (D)          |
|  The horsetail (E)                       |  Freissinières (F)             |
|  The petasites hybridus or butterbur (G) |  The southern water vole (H)   |

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Rescue services contact details: Secours Montagne(Mountain Rescue): +33 (0)4 92 22 22 22 or 112

Take your litter home

Do not take shortcuts across pastureland

## **How to come ?**

### Transports

Public transport >> [www.pacamobilite.fr](http://www.pacamobilite.fr)

Consider car-sharing >> [www.blablacar.fr](http://www.blablacar.fr)

For more information, ask at the Tourist Information Office nearest to the trail starting point >> [www.paysdesecrins.com](http://www.paysdesecrins.com)

### Access

9 km from L'Argentière-la-Bessée, take the N94 and the D38.

### Advised parking

Car park near the Les Allouviers bus stop (left-hand bank of the Biaysse & the opposite side from the campsite), Freissinières



## **Information desks**

### **Vallouise Park house**

vallouise@ecrins-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 92 23 58 08

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



### **Bureau d'Information Touristique de L'Argentière-La Bessée**

23 Avenue de la République, 05120

L'Argentière-La Bessée

contact@paysdesecrins.com

Tel : +33(0)4 92 23 03 11

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com/>



## **Source**



Pays des Ecrins

<https://www.paysdesecrins.com>

# On your path...

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## ✿ The European silver fir (A)

The fir thrives on this north-exposed slope, called the ubac. Its needles have two white stripes on their undersides. They are arranged on either side of the boughs, and not all the way around them, which distinguishes it from the spruce. The elongated cones stand upright, rather than hanging downwards. They grow in large number, often mingling with larch trees under whose shade they can grow. By contrast, the larch - the "tree of light" - cannot grow under the cover of fir trees.

Attribution : Mireille Coulon - Parc national des Écrins

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## ✿ The creeping lady's-tress (B)

This inconspicuous little orchid grows on moss, in the undergrowth of the pine forest. Growing at the base of the stem, its leaves are oval and pointed, with a network of veins. The upright stem only bears a few scales. Covered in a fine down, the white flowers are arranged in the form of a spiral spike, facing the same way. A little gem that is worth keeping an eye out for!

Attribution : Marie-Geneviève Nicolas - Parc national des Écrins

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## 🕒 The Freissinières valley (C)

The valley was created as the result of glacial overdeepening, that is to say, when the glacier came to a halt against the Pallon hard rock bar, it created a depression. When the glaciers retreated, a lake was left behind this rock bar and was gradually filled up by alluvial deposits. From a historical point of view, the Protestant pastor Félix Neff fundamentally altered life in the valley in 1826 by founding a training college for primary school teachers, developing irrigation processes and teaching new crop growing methods, among other things...

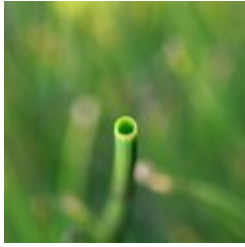
Attribution : Office de tourisme Pays des Écrins



## The red squirrel (D)

Elegant and alert, a squirrel crosses the track, followed by its long feathery tail. Red? This one is dark brown. In the mountains this rodent has adopted a “solar panel” strategy, on the principle that dark colours absorb the heat more efficiently. It is active during the day and does not hibernate, although it does minimise its activity on days when the weather is bad. It is a protected species.

Attribution : Marc Corail - Parc national des Écrins



## The horsetail (E)

On the banks of a stream, on the edge of a ditch a plant grows which resembles a large bottle brush... or a horse's tail, depending on your imagination. It's the field horsetail, a plant related to ferns. It is known for its medicinal properties because it is rich in silica, a powerful remineraliser for the bones, cartilage and skin. There are several species of horsetail.

Attribution : Cédric Dentan - Parc national des Écrins



## Freissinières (F)

The name Freissinières comes from the old word freissinière meaning "black ash". This municipality, which extends as far as the Col des Terres Blanches and the Col de Freissinières, both of which overlook the Champsaur valley, is made up of thirteen hamlets, although none of them are called Freissinières! Archaeological excavations carried out twenty years ago show that sites at high altitude (such as Faravel) were occupied on a seasonal basis from the retreat of the glaciers 12,000 years ago (Upper Palaeolithic period) and that this occupation continued after that.

Attribution : Office de tourisme Pays des Écrins



### The petasites hybridus or butterbur (G)

The ditches on the Freissinières plain are edged by a plant with very broad leaves: the petasites hybridus or butterbur, also called the devil's hat in French. In Ancient Greek, the petasos was a round felt hat. Nobody knows whether the devil wears this hat, but the plant is certainly used as a herbal remedy. Very common in the lowlands, it is quite rare in the Pays des Écrins although other species of petasites do grow at higher altitude.

Attribution : Ludovic Imberdis - Parc national des Écrins

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### The southern water vole (H)

Flattened paths through the reeds, and holes 6 to 7 cm in diameter... the southern water vole has been here! This large rodent with dark brown fur on its back digs its burrow in the banks of the stream. This species, which lives close to water, causes no damage to crops. Not a prolific breeder, its numbers are low and it is threatened with extinction.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson - Parc national des Écrins