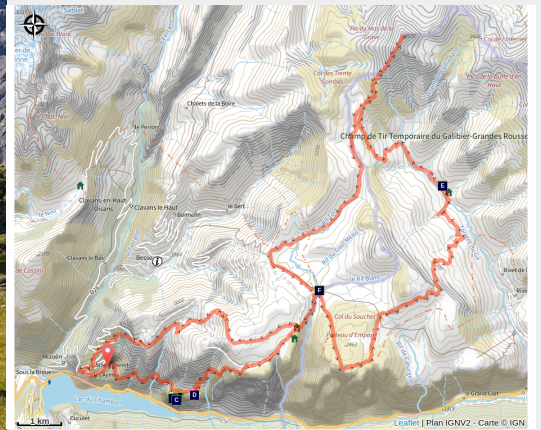


## 4-day tour of the Plateau d'Emparis from Mizoën

Oisans - Mizoën



Lac Lérié (© Parc national des Ecrins - Bertrand Bodin)



*This 4-day trek takes you along the edge of the Plateau d'Emparis, a unique feature in the massif of Les Écrins, and up to the Pic du Mas de La Grave (3,020m).*

From Emparis, every view is one of breathtaking beauty. Down below is the Lac du Chambon, with the majestic peaks of Les Écrins up high. The plateau offers one of the finest possible views of La Meije, Le Rateau and the glacier of La Girose. The Pic du Mas de la Grave is majestic; it is an essential destination for the experienced hikers who come to the valley.

### Useful information

Practice : By walk

Duration : 4 days

Length : 43.7 km

Trek ascent : 2642 m

Difficulty : Hard



Type : Multi-day trekking

Themes : Lake and glacier,  
Panorama, Pastoralism

# Trek

**Departure :** Mizoën

**Arrival :** Mizoën

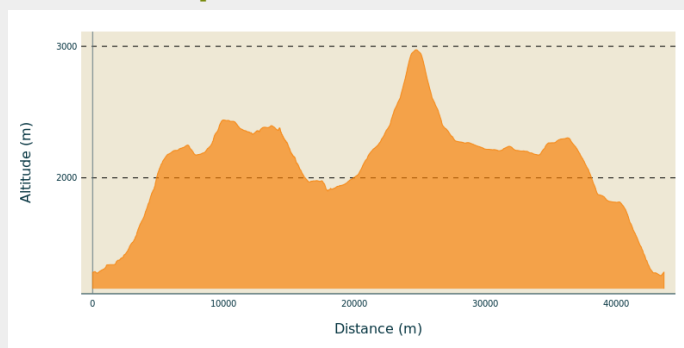
**Markings :**  PR  GR

**Cities :** 1. Mizoën

2. La Grave

3. Besse

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1258 m Max elevation 2975 m

The tour starts with a short stage inviting you to explore the villages and hamlets along the way. The route rises uphill following shaley, overhanging paths, leading to the Lac du Lauvital and its discovery trail, then on to the hamlet of Les Clots, dominated by one of the most beautiful petrifying waterfalls in Isère.

The second stage first follows the banks of the mountain stream La Pisse, taking you above the famous petrifying waterfall. From here, it is a short walk to the refuges of Le Fay and Les Mouterres along a country track. The path then leads to the Plateau d'Emparis and its two iconic lakes, Lac Lerié and Lac Noir, offering a view of the glaciers of Les Écrins and La Mije.

The third day is dominated by the imposing presence of the Pic du Mas de La Grave (3,020m). From the Buffe valley, the climb up to the Pic is a must for experienced hikers, and offers a 360° view. Then back to overnight in the refuges of Le Fay and Les Mouterres.

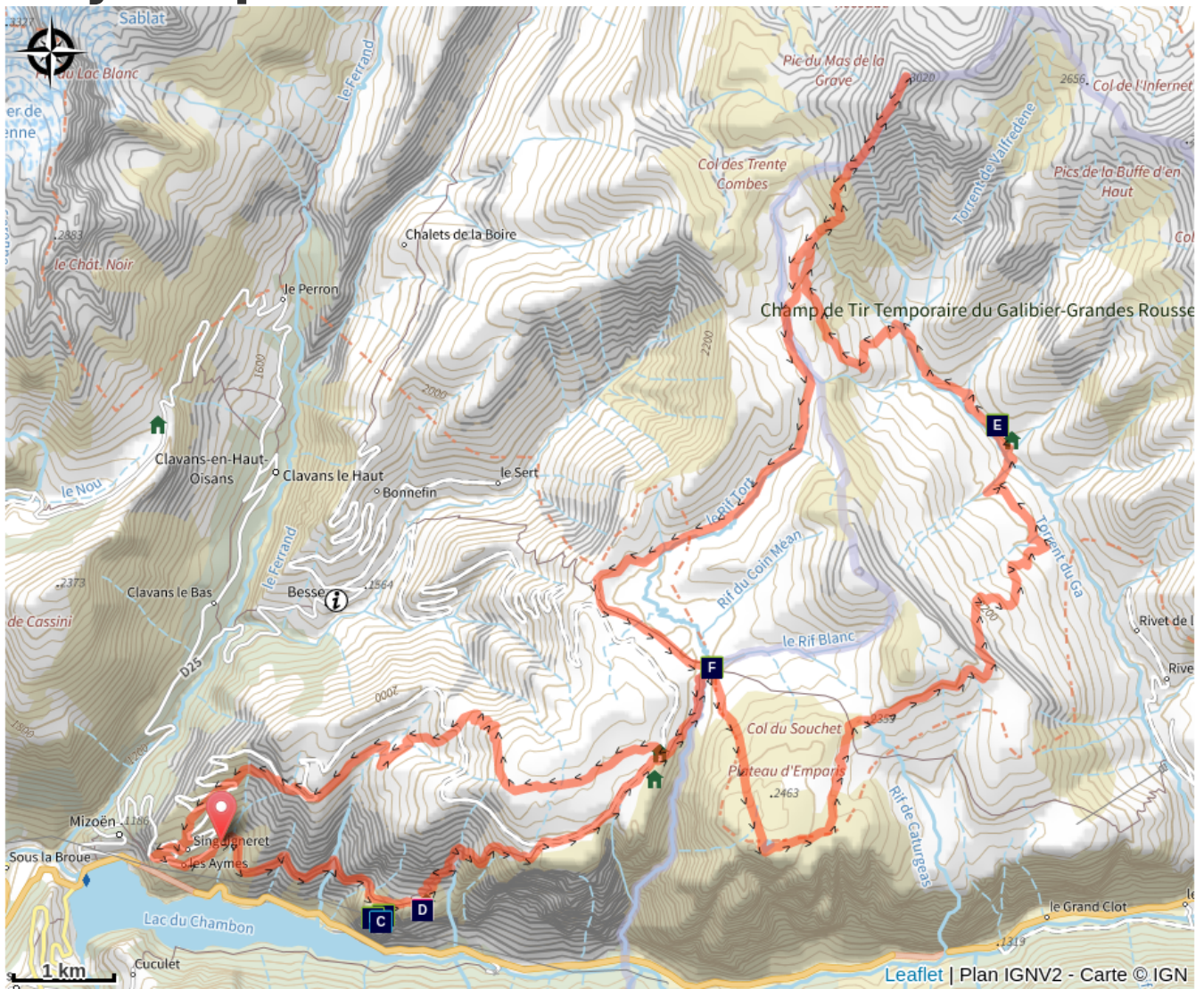
The last stage brings this trek to a gentle close. The descent runs through alpine pastures, leading to Mizoën along shaley footpaths. You return to civilisation as you pass by signs of life as it was once lived, through the ruins of alpine pasture huts and hand-crafted terraces.




## Stages :




1. From Mizoen to the Clots refuge  
4.7 km / 370 m D+ / 1 h 30
2. From Les Clots refuge to the Pic du Mas de la Grave refuge  
15.9 km / 1166 m D+ / 7 h
3. From the Pic du Mas de la Grave refuge to the refuges of Les Mouterres and Le Fay  
16.2 km / 1135 m D+ / 8 h
4. From the Mouterres and Le Fay refuges to Mizoën  
8.7 km / 61 m D+ / 2 h 30



# On your path...



-  Common Midwife Toad (A)
-  Lovitel Lake (C)
-  A "plague" of voles (E)

-  Purple Loosestrife (B)
-  Petrifying Fountain (D)
-  The wetlands of the Rif Tort (F)

# All useful information

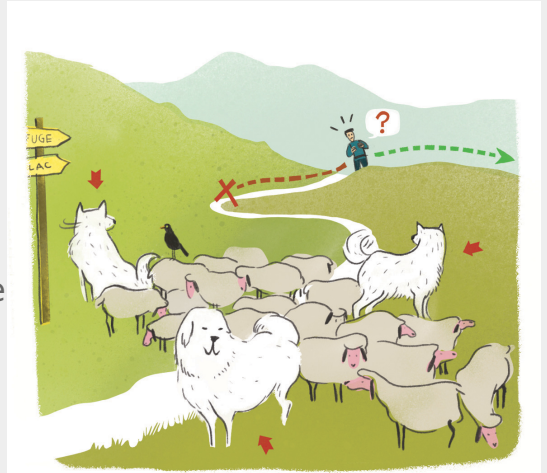
## Herd protection dogs

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

Mountain biking is prohibited on the footpath followed by the GR50 (Order of the Mayor of Mizoën).

**Camping, fires and water sports (including swimming) are prohibited on the Emparis plateau during the summer. Dogs must be kept on a lead. Bivouacs are permitted between 7pm and 9am.**

## How to come ?

### Transports

By train, Grenoble SNCF station : [www.voyages-sncf.com](http://www.voyages-sncf.com)

By bus :

Bus lines in Région Sud : <https://zou.maregionsud.fr/>

Bus lines in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes : <https://carsisere.auvergnerrhonealpes.fr/>

Bus lines in Isère : <https://www.itinisere.fr/>

### Access

Depuis le Bourg d'Oisans, emprunter la D1091 jusqu'au lac du Chambon. Après le pont, quitter la route départementale pour vous diriger à gauche vers la route menant à Mizoën.

Depuis Briançon, emprunter la D1091 jusqu'au lac du Chambon. Avant le pont,

quitter la route départementale pour vous diriger à droite vers la route menant à Mizoën.

### Advised parking

Car park below the church of Mizoën.

# 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](mailto: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.

Merci d'essayer d'éviter la zone ou de rester à une distance minimale de 300m sol quand vous la survolez soit 1840m d'altitude !

## Information desks

### Oisans Park house

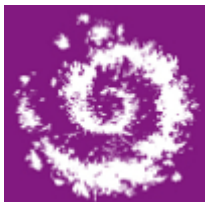
Rue Gambetta, 38520 Le Bourg d'Oisans  
[oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr](mailto:oisans@ecrins-parcnational.fr)  
Tel : 04 76 80 00 51  
<http://www.ecrins-parcnational.fr/>



### Bureau d'information touristique de Besse

Rue Principale, 38142 Besse en Oisans  
[info-ferrand@oisans.com](mailto:info-ferrand@oisans.com)  
Tel : 04 76 80 00 85  
<https://besse-en-oisans.com>

## Source



Parc national des Ecrins

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

# On your path...

---



## Common Midwife Toad (A)

In Spring, a short note emitted at regular intervals resonates around the lake. It is the mating season for this small terrestrial grey toad, mottled with black and brown; it is the male toad's song to attract the females. A peculiarity of this anuran is that the male uses his back legs to surround the string of ova laid by the female to fertilize them with a jet of semen mixed with urine. In this way he watches over the eggs for several weeks. When they are on the point of hatching, he goes to the water and frees the young frogspawn.

Attribution : Marc Corail - PNE

---



## Purple Loosestrife (B)

During the whole summer, the Purple Loosestrife, with its beautiful purple spikes, sprinkles the small Lovitel lake with colour. Considered to be a weed to be destroyed, it does however hold a position among the most useful plants (plants with medicinal properties). Its astringent properties, among others, deem it to be a good remedy against colic in infants when teething. In the kitchen, its young shoots and the flesh of its stalks used to be consumed as a vegetable. The leaves could also be infused like tea.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE

---



## Lovitel Lake (C)

In addition to being one of the rare wetlands at altitude on the highest part of the Romanche, Lovitel Lake unusually partially dries out during the summer and turns in to a marsh. In this way it becomes ideal for the development of amphibians who benefit from the absence of fish, their predators. Furthermore, the ecological quality of the environment is remarkable... Several species of great natural value are present at this site, notably the Adder's Tongue Fern and the Small Meadow Rue, both protected regionally.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE





## Petrifying Fountain (D)

The water that crosses the Emparis plateau which is composed of permeable sedimentary rock, fills up with Calcium bicarbonate. When, lower down, it comes in to contact with the impermeable crystalline rock layer of the Hercynien granitic base, the water follows a fault plane established between two layers and finishes in an aerial waterfall. The dissolved carbonates are transformed into a soft rock called Tuff by their contact with the air which has accumulated there for millennium. This resurgence, or petrifying fountain, is one of the most beautiful in France.

Attribution : Cyril Coursier - PNE

---



## A “plague” of voles (E)

The European water vole, also called the rat taupier (mole-like rat) in French, is one of the biggest species of voles. Its breeding cycle is such that the species can undergo phases of infestation. Although the causes are not fully understood, this cyclic problem started a few years ago in the valley of La Buffe, at an altitude of 2,000 metres. Although the first signs of the presence of voles in a meadow are undoubtedly the "molehills" they create, when they constitute a plague, they can completely overturn the earth, which could be mistaken for ploughed land.

Attribution : Damien Combrisson





## ✿ The wetlands of the Rif Tort (F)

Temperatures on the Emparis plateau are characteristic of a cool steppe climate. It is a very windy plateau with an average annual temperature only just above zero degrees. Winter lasts for eight months, during which it freezes almost every day. The particularly severe temperature constraints in the Rif Tort catchment area have favoured the maintenance of a relic flora adapted to these extreme conditions since the last ice age. «Arctic-Alpine» plant formations are found here. This is a relic flora inherited from advancing glaciers in the Quaternary period, comparable to the flow found on the coasts of the Far North. These formations are particularly rare in Europe and are of very high heritage value. You might see numerous protected species here: bicoloured sedge, sweet grass (a boreal relic species, sole colony in Isère) and the sago pondweed. Livestock grazing in the marsh is necessary because it limits the development of herbaceous plants which could squeeze out the Arctic-Alpine species. A delicate balance needs to be found between the trampling likely to destroy the plant species growing in the low marshes and the passage of the flocks to encourage rejuvenation of the area, and thus maintain this habitat.

Attribution : © Parc national des Écrins - Jean-Pierre Nicollet