Lake della Vacca the Speranza bivouac and Colle del Sabbione

Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime

Il Vallone del Sabbione a monte di Gias Valera (Roberto Pockaj)

The route requires a very long "preamble", on a dirt road up to the Gias Valera. The route then proceeds on an excellent mule track, which turns into a footpath only as it reaches the Colle (pass).

The most interesting part of the excursion is the portion above the Gias Valera. Lake della Vacca is quite lovely, nestled in a grassy bowl, as is the Colle del Sabbione pass, where the difference between the steep rocky crags of the Italian side and the softly rounded grassy slopes of the French one can be clearly appreciated. Between the lake and the mountain pass stands the small building known as the Speranza Bivouac.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 4 h 34

Length : 12.0 km

Trek ascent : 1337 m

Difficulty : Medium

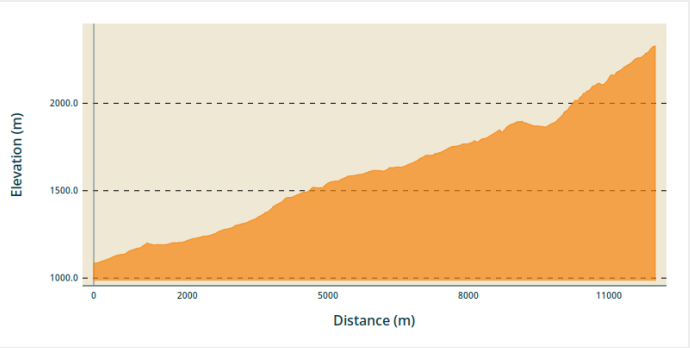
Type : Round trip

Themes : Geology, Lake, Pastoralism

Trek

Departure : Ponte di Porcera (1078 m)
Arrival : western Colle del Sabbione (2328 m)
Cities : 1. Entracque
2. Tende

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1085 m Max elevation 2327 m

From the car park at Ponte di Porcera (1078 m), follow the dirt road that climbs southwards through the woods, on the hydrographic left of the Bousset torrent. Keep to the road, ignoring various branches on both sides, up to the Ponte del Suffiet.
Beyond the bridge, the road continues slightly uphill in the beech forest. You overlook two crossroads on the right: the first for Gias Blin and, a little further on, the second for Gias d'Ischietto (1357 m, 1:05 hours from Ponte di Porcera).
The cart track now climbs more decisively, enters the Vallone del Sabbione, reaches the banks of the stream and ends at Gias Valera.
At a crossroads just past the gias, ignore the path that continues straight for Passo della Mena and go down to the right to cross the stream on a wooden bridge.
Continue along the nice muletrack to Gias dell'Adreit (1643 m, 1 hour and 10 minutes from Gias Valera).
Now on the path, you cross pastured slopes for a long time, then you go up a ridge with a few bends, and you arrive at the basin where the ruined Gias della Culatta is located.
Descend towards the center of the basin, ford the stream and climb steeply in hairpin bends on the orographic right side of the valley; it then turns south-west, traversing with minor slopes among shrubby vegetation up to the grassy hollow of Lago della Vacca (2260 m, 2:10 hours from Gias dell'Adreit).
At the lake, ignore the trail to the right leading to Colle del Vei del Bouc, pass behind the small Speranza Bivouac and climb the few easy bends that lead to Colle Ovest del Sabbione (2328 m, 0:10 hours from Lago della Vacca).

On your path...

Brown trout (A)

The black woodpecker (B)

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.

How to come ?

Transports

Ligne SNCF TER Provence Alpes-Côte d'Azur Pour vos déplacements en région PACA et vers Cuneo Ter.sncf.com

Pour voyager dans la région du Piémont depuis l'Italie Trenitalia.com

Access

Drive from Borgo San Dalmazzo up the Valle Gesso. After passing Valdieri, turn left for Entracque. At the ruondabout, turn left for Trinità, and from there continue on to the Porcera bridge. There is a gravel parking area available for several cars.

Advised parking

Pont di Porcera (1078 m)

On your path...

Brown trout (A)

Culturally we have always considered fish to be animals very different from us, so much so that even today they are the only animals that can be hunted in a protected area. Something is changing and in recent years there has also been an interest in local forms, genetically distinct from populations of other valleys if sufficiently isolated over time. This aspect also contributes to increasing the biodiversity of a natural environment and slowly local strains are being selected which, at least in their livery, are distinguished from the typical shape of the brown trout.

Attribution : Augusto Rivelli

The black woodpecker (B)

The return of the forest and above all the aging of forest environments, possible only following the massive abandonment of the mountain by past generations, has also had the beneficial effect of the expansion of species that were reduced to a flicker, at least here in the Western Alps Italian. The black woodpecker is perhaps the emblem of this comeback. Adaptable species from the food point of view but at the same time demanding as regards nesting, it is now possible to observe it almost everywhere in the woods of the park.

Attribution : Augusto Rivelli