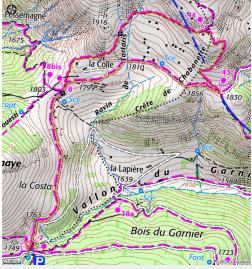


Le hameau de la Colle

Vallées haut-Var&Cians - Péone







Paysage rural de la Colle Saint-Jean en été, éclairage matinal. Hameau en bâti dispersé et prairies en restanques. (Emmanuel ICARDO)

Explore mountain life as it was in the last century thanks to the small hamlet of La Colle. Its inhabitants were arable farmers, sheep and goat farmers and the richer ones were small-scale dairy farmers...

When you reach an altitude of 2000m, the lavender and broom of the Mediterranean will give way to a lunar, desert-like landscape, illuminated by brightly coloured Alpine flowers. Maybe you will be lucky enough to spot the mountain Alcon blue, quite a rare butterfly which owes its French name to the star gentian in which it lays its eggs.

Useful information

Practice: Hiking

Duration: 3 h

Length: 5.3 km

Trek ascent: 252 m

Difficulty: Easy

Type: Loop

Themes: Fauna, Flora

Accessibility: Joelette, Wheelchair

Trek

Departure: Col de l'Espaul at Valberg

(Commune of Péone)

Arrival: Col de l'Espaul at Valberg

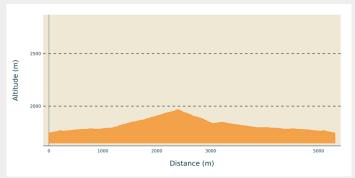
(Commune of Péone)

Markings: — PR

Cities: 1. Péone

2. Beuil

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1746 m Max elevation 1966 m

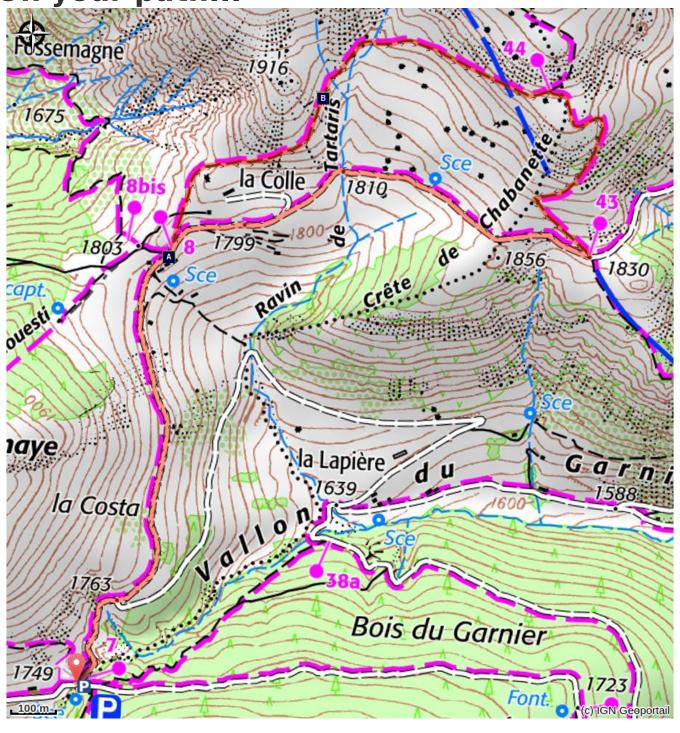
From the Col de l'Espaul, leave the Bois Garnier forest and the Lac de Beuil on your right. At the park signs, follow the dirt track which leads to the hamlet of La Colle. After the first houses, at marker 8 (directional arrow), take the Mont Mounier route which goes around the houses alongside the drinking trough and then the old sheep dips (dipping is a way of removing parasites).

A wide path climbs upwards, touching upon agricultural terraces still covered in pasture. This is a very good area for seeing marmots.

At marker 44, a delightful panorama over Beuil and Valberg opens up to you. At this marker, head down towards Beuil until you reach the sheep pens.

Go pack up the path to get back to the hamlet of La Colle and the Col de d'Espaul, watching the delightful passerines such as shrikes or hoopoes. Migrating from Africa, this bird comes here to nest, setting a record for altitude!

On your path...



Star gentian (Gentiana cruciata) (A) Observing marmots (Marmotta marmotta) (B)

All useful information

How to come?

Transports

No buses to Col de l'Espaul. The nearest public transport service stops at Valberg.

Lignes d'Azur - Alpes-Maritimes network Number 770 Vallée du Haut-Cians (July/August only) reservations possible at http://www.lignesdazur.com/ Randobus section Tel.: 08 1006 1006

Access

Go to Valberg, near to Beuil. In Valberg, opposite the chapel of Notre-Dame des Neiges, turn left onto the Route des Huerris, which rises via Avenue Jean Ray until you reach the Centre de l'Equipement.

Then turn right on the Colle road and you will reach the Col de l'Espaul (1748m) carpark 3km further along.

Advised parking

Col de l'Espaul carpark

Accessibility

Free loan of "la Joëlette" off-road wheelchairs:

Valberg Tourism Office

Tel.: 00 33 (0)4 93 23 24 25

Mercantour National Park House at Valberg

Tel.: 00 33 (0)4 93 02 58 23

Work for adapting access at Col de l'Espaul is programmed for 2015.

Å∳Å Joelette 🔥 Wheelchair



Maison du Parc national du mercantour - La maison Valberganne

Rue Saint Jean, 06470 Valberg

varcians@mercantour-parcnational.fr

Tel: 04 93 02 58 23

http://www.mercantour-parcnational.fr

On your path...



🅯 Star gentian (Gentiana cruciata) (A)

Around the hamlet of La Colle, you may be lucky enough to find some star gentian (Gentiana cruciata). This is an herbaceous plant which grows in clumps; it has erect stalks, large, pointed leaves and blue flowers with 4 petals, which are grouped under the upper leaves. This gentian serves as a "nest" for the mountain Alcon blue butterfly (Maculinea rebeli): in this picture, you can distinctly see the eggs laid by the insect.

Attribution : MARTIN-DHERMONT Laurent



Nobserving marmots (Marmotta marmotta) (B)

If you want to observe marmots, in the valley below the path which runs alongside the agricultural terraces, you will need to be quiet, attentive and position yourself upwind, then look in the meadows for the holes they make, with fresh earth around them and linked by a network of tracks. With the help of a pair of binoculars, you will have no problem spotting same marmots and their young eating, playing or sunning themselves.

A long, repeated call signifies that an unfamiliar presence has been detected (very probably you). A single sharp call means that the golden eagle is around, looking for its favourite prey. In this case, they all dash off to their burrows!

Attribution : BLANC Jacques