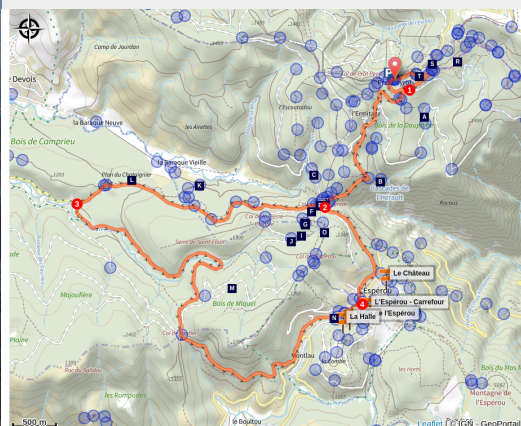


La boucle découverte du col de Faubel

CC Causses Aigoual Cévennes - Terres solidaires



Le belvédère de la Serreyrède (Audrey Bourgade)



Circuit without any particular difficulty exploring a little corner of the Aigoual massif around the Bois de Miquel woods and along the watershed.

Three valleys open up before you: the Hérault valley, the Dourbie valley and the Bonheur valley. The first looks towards the Mediterranean and the Cévennes, the other two towards the Atlantic and the gentle slopes leading to the villages of Camprieux and Dourbies.

Just to whet your appetite for further exploration...

Useful information

Practice : Cycling

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 17.8 km

Trek ascent : 454 m

Difficulty : Very easy

Type : Boucle

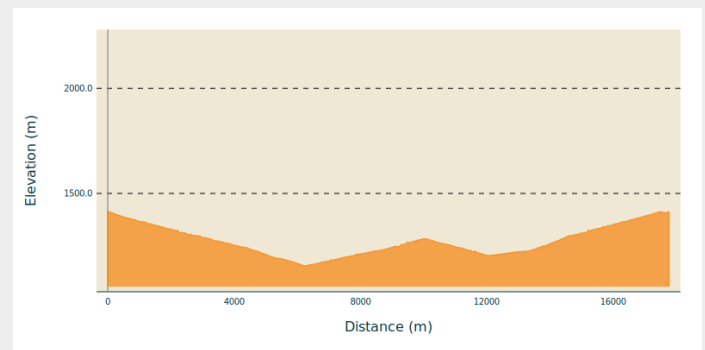
Trek

Departure : Prat-Peyrot

Arrival : Prat-Peyrot

Cities : 1. Val-d'Aigoual
2. Meyrueis
3. Saint-Sauveur-Camprieu
4. Dourbies

Altimetric profile



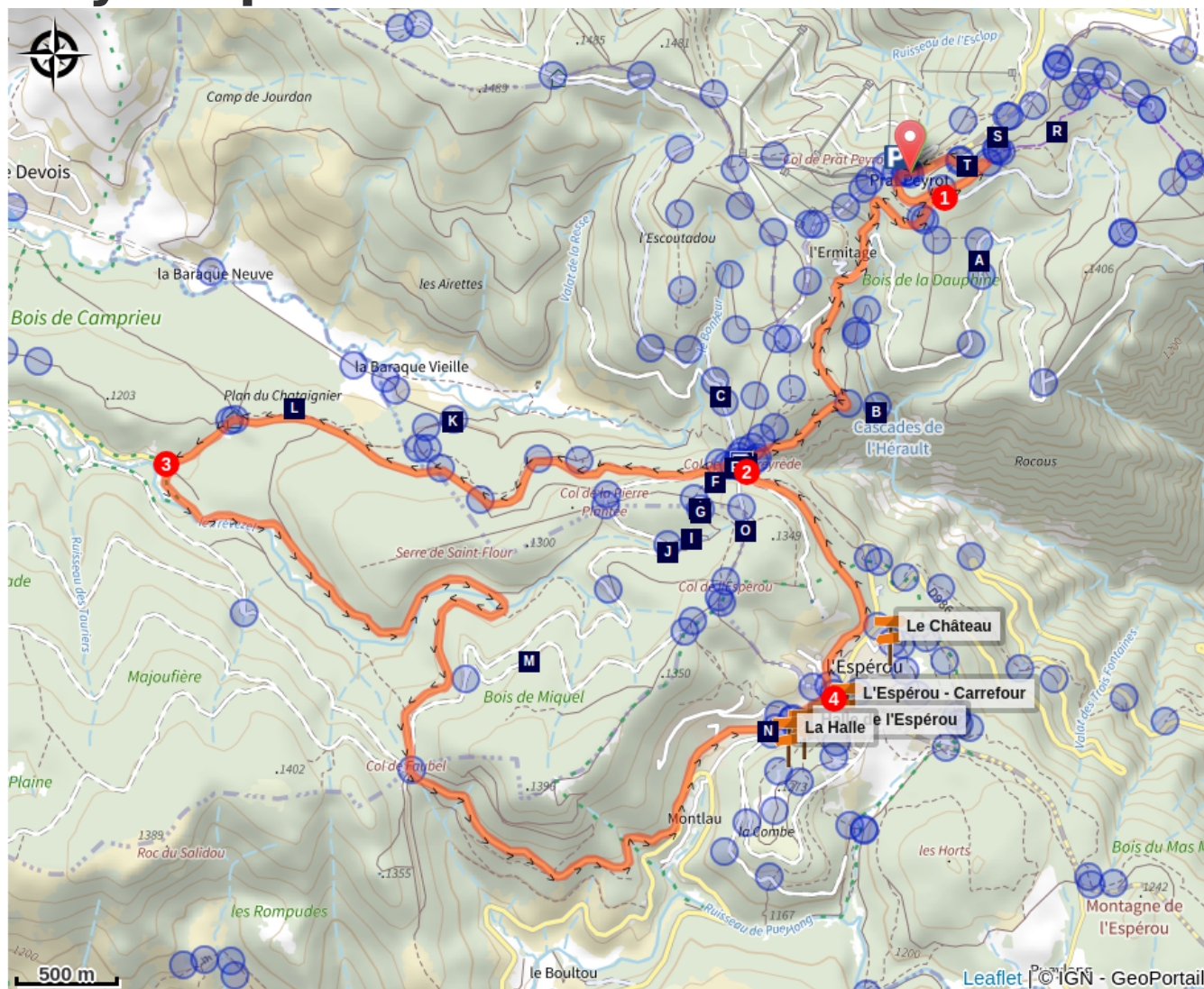
Min elevation 1159 m Max elevation 1413 m

From the activity centre at Prat-Peyrot, bike downhill to reach the D269.

1. Turn right onto the D269 to reach the Col de La Serreyrède pass.
2. At the pass, turn right onto the D986 towards Camprieu.
3. Before you reach Camprieu, turn left onto the D986a towards the Col de Faubel pass and L'Espérou.
4. At L'Espérou, go back uphill on the D986 to the Col de La Serreyrède, then follow the D269 to return to Prat-Peyrot.

Possible start from l'Espérou and Camprieu.

On your path...



River capture (A)



Boreal owl (C)

The association "Terres d'Aigoual" (E)



Irregular forest (G)



Le Trévezel molière (peat bog) (I)

Notre-Dame-du Bonheur (K)



The Aigoual forest (M)

Two waterfalls... Find the Hérault!

(B)

La Serreyrède (D)

From beech copse to mature plantation (F)

Productive forest (H)

Peat bog and acclimatisation garden (J)



The goldcrest (L)

The village of L'Espérou (N)

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

Before committing yourself to a circuit, ensure that it is suitable for your activity level and ability. Respect traffic laws and other road users; stay in control of your speed and trajectory. Make sure to be seen and travel in single file when in a group. Remember that the weather changes quickly in the mountains. Take enough water. Safe trip !

How to come ?

Access

From Valleraugue to L'Espérou and the Col de La Serreyrède pass on the D986; then to Prat Peyrot on the D269.

From Meyrueis to St-Sauveur-Camprieu and the Col de La Serreyrède pass on the D986; at the pass, head to Prat Peyrot on the D269.

Advised parking

Prat-Peyrot



Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

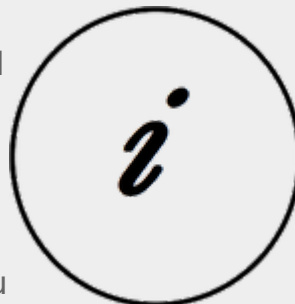
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

maisonde-laigoual@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 67 82 64 67

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>

Accessibility : Accessible aux personnes à mobilité réduite sur les trois niveaux du bâtiment (ascenseur)



Source



CC Causse Aigoual Cévennes Terres Solidaires

<http://www.causse-aigoual-cevennes.fr/>



Pôle Nature Aigoual

On your path...



River capture (A)

Violent precipitation and the steep gradient of Mediterranean torrents cause regressive (i.e. upstream) erosion of the valleys through which they flow. This erosion can invert the sense of flow and thus “capture” for the Mediterranean a waterway that had, until then, flowed into the Atlantic. One example is the Hérault with its waterfalls, the capture being located at the falls. The Hérault and the Dauphine brook used to flow via L'Espérou into the Dourbie... River pebbles found around the village by geologists attest to the existence of a waterway in the past.

Attribution : Arnaud.Bouissou



Two waterfalls... Find the Hérault! (B)

Faced with these two threads of rivers, geographers hesitated between flow rate and length, and finally designated the waterway below you the Hérault while the waterfall opposite you was named the Dauphine. Two remarkable plants can be seen here: orpine (*Hylotelephium telephium*) with its succulent leaves, a food source for the larvae of a butterfly that is in strong decline all over the Massif central: the Apollo (which may be seen from mid-July to mid-August); and Prost saxifrage, which forms regular cushions that are easy to recognise. They enable it better to store what little water is available. It is a plant endemic to the Cévennes.

Attribution : Mario Kleszczewski



Boreal owl (C)

Abandoned woodpecker chambers are a boon for small mammals and other birds, such as the boreal owl, which has come from Nordic countries to settle here at altitudes of 800 m. Very discreet, it confines itself to the depths of our forested mountain ranges. It can be identified in March by its sonorous and gentle call. To maintain the species, the Cévennes National Park and the French forestry office protect trees with nesting chambers and old-growth forests from being logged.

Attribution : Gaël.Karczewski



La Serreyrède (D)

Before 1861, the house at the Col de la Serreyrède was inhabited by two families of farmers. They owned some livestock and had a vegetable garden, whose terraces you can still see above the La Caumette track. From 1861 on, the farm was inhabited by a forest ranger. It was only bought by the state body Eaux et Forêts in 1883, to be turned into a forester's house. It became one of Georges Fabre's headquarters during the reforestation of the Aigoual massif. The Cévennes National Park, tourism office and Terres d'Aigoual growers have now joined forces to revive La Serreyrède with the help of the Communauté de Communes Causses Aigoual Cévennes – Terres solidaires.

Attribution : © Office National de la Forêt



The association "Terres d'Aigoual" (E)

The Cévennes National Park rents out part of the building to the association, enabling local farmers to sell their products directly to the public. The association brings together farmers who wish to promote what they produce and share their know-how. They also enjoy sharing their vision of farming- high quality produce and products,

- human-sized farms,
- mutual aid.

Come and discover their products!

Attribution : © Nathalie Thomas

From beech copse to mature plantation (F)

Marker 1

Around 1850, before reforestation began, the inhabitants of the Cevennes were using local wood resources on a massive scale for heating and in industry, especially spinning-mills. Gradually, only a few beech copses remained, which were cut every 25 to 40 years. Grazing by tens of thousands of sheep further reduced the herbaceous plant cover. Much weakened, the plant cover was then also subjected to heavy precipitation, the so-called Cevenol episodes. It is against this backdrop that the lengthy work of the foresters began. To reduce risks and establish a lasting forest cover, the first technique was to make use of what was already present by converting the disused copses into mature plantations.



Irregular forest (G)

This tree population consists of trees of very different diameters, ages and heights. Species are mixed: mainly pine, but also beech, rowan and whitebeam. This is an irregular mature forest, a forestry dynamic that is interesting for several reasons: it creates permanent forest cover; resistance to soil erosion; better resilience against storms or parasite attacks; regular production, etc. In the small clearing to the left of the path, the sunlight now penetrating to the forest floor has made natural regeneration of beech and fir possible, ensuring the renewal of the forest.

Productive forest (H)

Marker 2

Another method of creating a durable forest cover is to plant or sow. This work is carried out either on bare soil or among existing tree stands. The Aigoual reforestation programme was a gigantic effort, requiring 900,000 days of work, the planting of 60 million conifers and 7 million deciduous trees, and sowing of 38 tonnes of seeds. Spruces and pines, which can be planted in full sunlight and grow quite quickly, were widely used. Under the forest canopy, preference was given to firs.



Le Trévezel molière (peat bog) (I)

Marker 3

A peat bog is a thick layer of plant cover that has decayed little or not at all because of accumulated water, acid soils and the cold climate. This wetland has hardly changed for centuries. Once called molières, soulages, sagnes or fanga, these environments were long denigrated and “cleaned up”. Today, they are known to be well worth preserving. Peat bogs are home to a great variety of more or less specific species, such as the sundew, a little carnivorous plant.

Attribution : © Bruno Descaves



Peat bog and acclimatisation garden (J)

Marker 4

This peat bog was a site for experiments and research by Charles Flahault. Flahault, who studied the geographical distribution of species, was interested in what was then known as acclimatisation (adaptation to local environmental conditions). He attempted to introduce 200 plants from 40 non-indigenous species to Le Trévezel peat bog, echoing the way tree species were introduced into arboretums. The peat bog's history and the way it works are described in detail on the panel (in French only).

Attribution : © Jean-Pierre Malafosse



Notre-Dame-du Bonheur (K)

This Romanesque monastery was built in the 11th and 12th centuries by the rich Lord of Roquefeuil and Mandagout, with the noble intention of turning it into a “hospital for the poor”. He allowed the monks to reap the fruits and revenue of the land. In return, the villagers paid him sheep, pigs, poultry, wine and cheese. He also charged the transhumant herds on his vast estate pasture fees. The path that passed through this peatbog linked Languedoc to the Gévaudan. A snowstorm bell weighing 200 kg would ring in fog or blizzards to help merchants, peddlers, itinerant workers, farmers etc. find their way to safety. The monastery had six canons, the last of whom was forced to leave during the French Revolution. An association dedicated to preserving the Abbey of Notre-Dame du Bonheur is working to restore it.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The goldcrest (L)

As you walk through the woods, you may hear the shy zee zee of the goldcrest, which depends on conifers. But do you know where its name comes from?

Its Latin name is *Regulus regulus*, the little king. In Celtic tradition, the smallest bird is the druid of the avian world. In first-century local Celtic languages, the same word was used for 'druid' and 'goldcrest'.

Another reason for this royal title is that the goldcrest, when in love, raises the black-rimmed golden feathers on his head, like a little crown.

Attribution : Bruno.Descaves



The Aigoual forest (M)

In the 19th century, Mont Aigoual was almost totally bare of trees. Intensive use of the forest and the pressure of transhumant grazing together with the harsh local climate caused devastating floods. The rich vegetation of the grazing grounds was replaced by heather pastures and many gullies. In the valleys huddling at the foot of Mont Aigoual, terrible floods pushing tons of stones downstream carried off roads and pastureland. In response, a reforestation programme was launched in the second half of the 19th century, which created the forest you see today. Nowadays, the forested Aigoual massif protects the valleys while at the same time providing a space for economic production, biodiversity and leisure.

Attribution : © Olivier Prohin



The village of L'Espérou (N)

The village of L'Espérou lies on the border of Dourbies and Valleraugue local councils. A draille (track for livestock to migrate to summer pastures with their shepherds) crosses the village. As in many villages in the Gard, the two places of worship – one Catholic, the other Protestant – are opposite each other. The village is located in a varied environment that is suitable for outdoor activities and sports.

Attribution : Béatrice Galzin