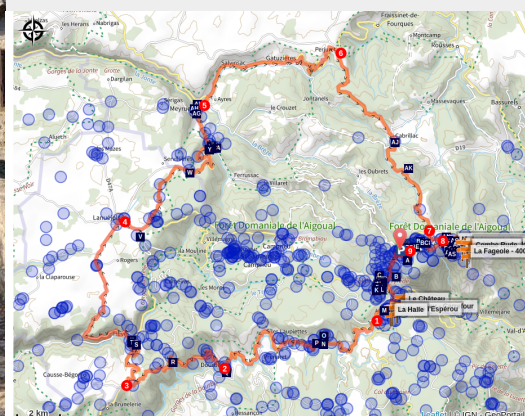


Station Prat-Peyrot - Road bike circuit #10

Cévennes



Le Pont de Trèves (Béatrice Galzin)



A long but superb bike ride for those who love open spaces to explore the multiple facets of Mont Aigoual !

This circuit is the most handsome and westernmost in the Gard department. It promises a pleasant surprise at every turn : the charming village of Dourbies in its preserved valley, Trèves and its stone lanes at the foot of the limestone cliffs overlooking Le Trévezet, the village of Lanuéjols at the edge of the Causse Noir plateau, the small town of Meyrueis and its centre that sparkles in the sunlight...

Useful information

Practice : Cycling

Duration : 5 h

Length : 84.9 km

Trek ascent : 2087 m

Difficulty : Hard

Type : Boucle

Trek

Departure : Prat-Peyrot

Arrival : Prat-Peyrot

Cities : 1. Meyrueis

2. Val-d'Aigoual

3. Dourbies

4. Trèves

5. Lanuéjols

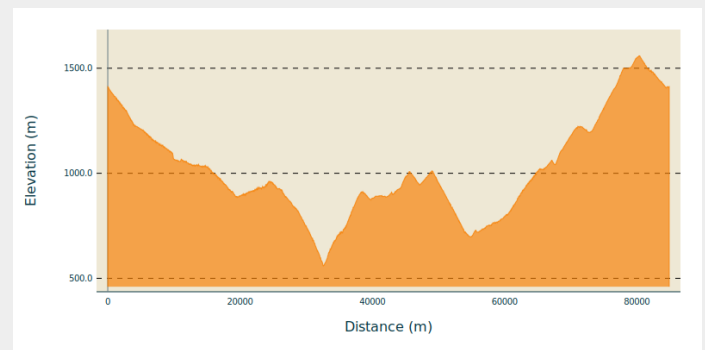
6. Gatuzières

7. Fraissinet-de-Fourques

8. Rousses

9. Bassurels

Altimetric profile

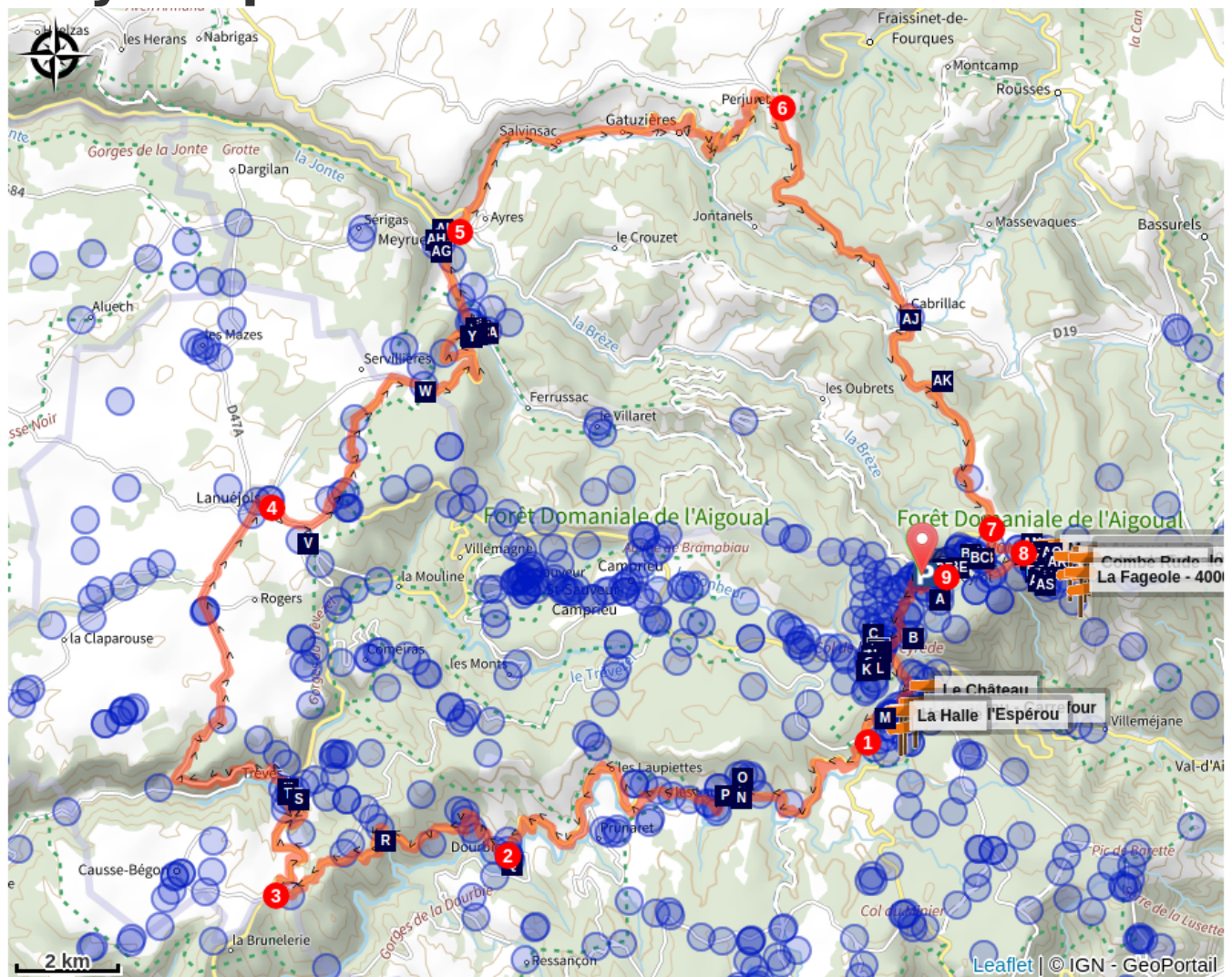


Min elevation 556 m Max elevation 1550 m

From Prat Peyrot outdoor activity centre, take the D269 to the Col de La Serreyrède pass, then the D986 to L'Espérou.

1. At the roundabout, head to Dourbies on the D151.
2. After the village of Dourbies, continue on the D151 towards Trèves/Nant.
3. At the Col de la Pierre Plantée pass, take the D47 to Lanuéjols via Trèves.
4. At Lanuéjols, take the D263 and then the D986 to Meyrueis.
5. As you leave Meyrueis, head towards Florac on the D996 to the Col de Perjuret pass.
6. At the Perjuret pass, take the D18 via Cabrillac.
7. Continue on the D18 to Mont Aigoual.
8. At the entrance to the parking lot, take the "greenway"
9. On your right, back to the Prat-Peyrot resort.

On your path...



River capture (A)

 Boreal owl (C)
The watershed (E)

 Irregular forest (G)

Productive forest (I)

 Le Trévezet molière (peat bog) (K)
The village of L'Espérou (M)

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

Climax forest (D)
The association "Terres
d'Aigoual" (F)

From beech copse to mature
plantation (H)

La Serreyrède (J)
Georges Fabre (L)
 The Dourbie (N)

All useful information

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 Meyrueis or Valleraugue, take the D986 towards the Col de La Serreyrède pass, then take the D269 to Prat Peyrot.

Advised parking

Car park at Prat Peyrot.

Information desks

Tourism & national parc'house

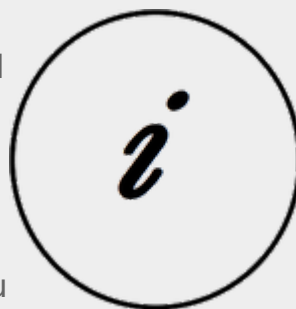
Col de la Serreyrède, 30570 Val d'Aigoual

maisondeilaigoual@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)



Tourism office Mont Aigoual Causses Cévennes, Saint-André-de-Valborgne

les quais, 30940 Saint-André-de-Valborgne

standredevalborgne@sudcevennes.com

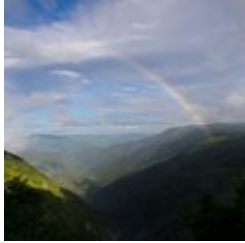
Tel : 04 66 60 32 11

<https://www.sudcevennes.com>



Source

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



Climate frontier (D)

The pass is also a climate frontier. The Atlantic side is predominantly exposed to the west wind and receives rainfall that is fairly regularly spread over the year. The Mediterranean side, however, is drier and hotter and constitutes a massive barrier to the occasional southeast wind (the marin), thus forcing its humid air to rise suddenly. This makes the clouds' water content condense, which can give rise to so-called Cévenol episodes: heavy rainfall (600 mm in 24 hrs) causing catastrophic floods. The Aigoual, Mount Aigualis the rainy (A. Bernard), is well-named! After Savoie, it is the rainiest place in France.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The watershed (E)

The current relief creates a frontier between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean: depending on the slope, water runs towards either the Ocean or the Sea. This is due to the uplift of the Cévenol sill, brought about by geological activity along the Cévennes fault, which borders draw the northern limit of the Languedoc region. This natural sill marks the geographical border between the northwest slope – verdant, not too steep – and the southeast slope, which falls away abruptly in the Languedoc and continues to be subject to powerful erosion.

Attribution : nathalie.thomas



The association "Terres d'Aigoual" (F)

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

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.

From beech copse to mature plantation (H)

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.

Productive forest (I)

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.



La Serreyrède (J)

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



🌿 Le Trévezel molière (peat bog) (K)

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

Georges Fabre (L)

A graduate of the Ecole polytechnique, and top of his year at the Nancy forestry school, the forester Georges Fabre devoted 30 years of his energy to reforesting the mountains of the Lozère and Gard. His goal was to stabilise mountain soils, but also to provide work for a local population that would otherwise have been condemned, in its entirety, to leave the countryside. In 1894, he initiated the construction of the Mont Aigoual weather observatory. In association with the Club Cévenol and Club Alpin Français, he also laid the foundations of the local “heritage tourism” (creating the Grand Hotel de l'Aigoual, building a shelter and viewpoint indicator at the summit, etc.) that continues to this day.



The village of L'Espérou (M)

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



The Dourbie (N)

In the upper reaches of the river, a diverse and fascinating wildlife has developed despite the strong current. The clear running waters condition the presence and future of the brown trout. It cohabits with minnows, otters... You may see a white-throated dipper on a rock, or else a grey heron or wagtail on the bank. But it is in the clear waters and under rocks that a whole little aquatic world exists: molluscs, crustaceans, insect larvae, etc. They pile up quite harmoniously, dozens per square metre. Some stick to the rocks; others drift, lurk or float. It all depends on the equipment nature has provided them with: bristles, suckers, hooks, sheaths weighted with gravel...

Attribution : nathalie.thomas