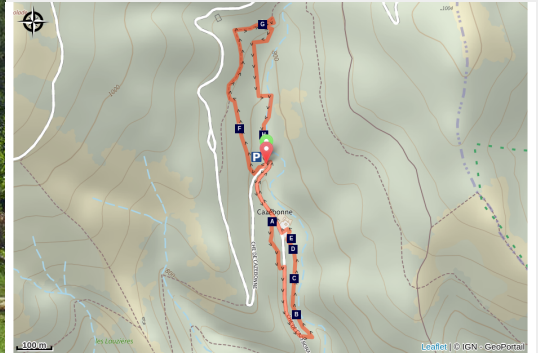


Around Cazebonne

Aigoual



Cazebonne (© C. Daquo)



Immerse yourself in the forest with two à-la-carte circuits exploring the surroundings of the small hamlet of Cazebonne, in a peaceful valley setting or alongside the brook towards a waterfall.

This walk takes you through the evolution of the forest, from reforestation and the creation of the Cazebonne arboretum in the very early 20th century (first loop) to today's forestry management (second loop). The 3.4 hectare arboretum was built around the hamlet of Cazebonne in 1903 and is part of a network of ten arboretums created during the large reforestation programme on the Aigoual massif. The objective was to test the adaptability of various exotic species to a representative sample of local environmental conditions. During

Useful information

Practice : Discovery trails

Duration : 2 h 30

Length : 2.5 km

Trek ascent : 161 m

Difficulty : Very easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna and flora, Forest

reforestation, a tree nursery was attached to the arboretum, which supplied plants used locally.

Trek

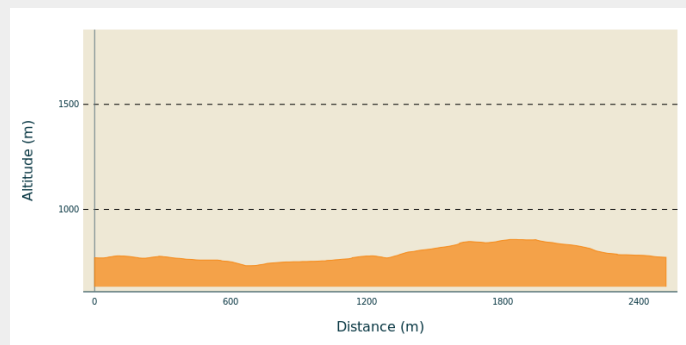
Departure : Cazebonne hamlet

Arrival : Cazebonne hamlet

Markings :  Yellow waymarks

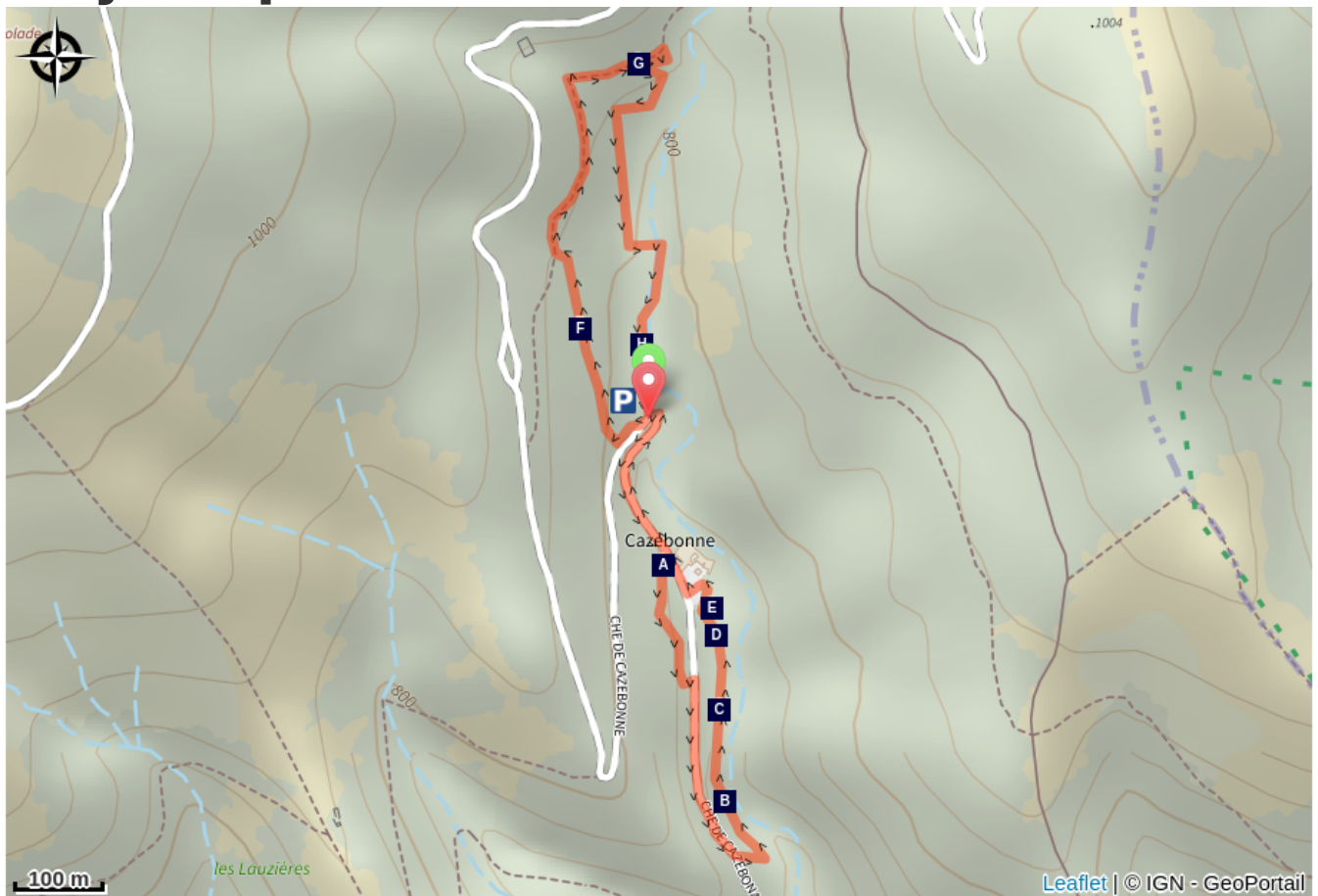
Cities : 1. Alzon

Altimetric profile



Min elevation 732 m Max elevation 857 m

On your path...



Nordmann firs (A)

Schist (C)

The chestnut tree (E)

Tree stands (G)

The béal (irrigation channel) (B)

The landscape closes in (D)

Forestry management (F)



River fauna (H)

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

Lio 101 – Campestre and Luc – Le Vigan. Arrêt Alzon
www.lio.laregion.fr

Access

From Le Vigan, D999 towards A75. In the village of Alzon, take the D231.

Advised parking

Marked car park before the hamlet of Cazebonne

Information desks

Tourism office Cévennes and Navacelles, Le Vigan

Maison de pays, place du Marché, BP 21,
30120 Le Vigan

contact@sudcevennes.com

Tel : 04 67 81 01 72

<https://sudcevennes.com/>



Source



Office national des Forêts

<http://www.onf.fr/>



Parc national des Cévennes

<http://www.cevennes-parcnational.fr/>

On your path...



Nordmann firs (A)

In the arboretum, several Mediterranean fir species were acclimatised. The trees girded in white were monitored by scientists. A report from 1976 by the French Forestry Office engineer Jean Pourtet states: “A very handsome cluster of *Abies nordmanniana* planted in 1903-1904 contained, in 1953, 32 high-quality trees that were numbered and measured. Their average circumference at 50 years of age was 125 cm”. Today, these same specimens have an average circumference of 230 cm and an average height of 40 m.

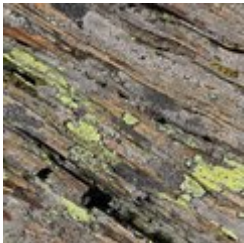
Attribution : © Hans Braxmeier



The béal (irrigation channel) (B)

In the Cévennes, the impetuous torrents of March shrink to rivulets by mid-June. To make up for the lack of water, this irrigation system combines a dam in the riverbed with a small canal (béal) dug into the bank, which diverts the water towards a storage basin built out of dry stones (pesquier). This method used the natural energy of the current and irrigated the hayfields and even gardens and orchards.

Attribution : © Valère Marsaudon



Schist (C)

The region's schist was formed in the Palaeozoic, between 550 and 500 million years ago. It is mainly composed of micas, hence its precise name of mica schist. Its particularity is to divide into parallel layers. Chemical weathering turns schist into clay. This rock was much used in construction and has shaped the landscape: house walls, stone roofs; crop terraces; slab floors, paving; hive covers, chimney cowls, etc.

Attribution : © Valère Marsaudon



The landscape closes in (D)

When hayfields are abandoned, their flora develops very quickly. Grasses give way to tougher plants, such as stinging-nettles, brambles and dog rose. Then come wild fruit trees (sloe, hazelnut, dogwood, cherry, etc.), and finally shrubs and trees such as Scots pine, black pine, ash, black locust, oak and chestnut.

Attribution : © C. Daquo



The chestnut tree (E)

Before reforestation in the late 19th century, the local landscape was varied: sheep pasture on moors and meadows; crops: potatoes, cereals, hay fields, orchards and gardens; woods (chestnut, oak or beech).

A few enormous chestnut tree trunks bear witness to this past. These grafted trees produced food for people (chestnuts, flour, etc.), flowers for the bees, dry wood for the fire, timber (for wooden roof structures, boards, battens, etc.), hives (rusquet), stakes and canes, wooden gutters (hollowed-out half trunks), etc.

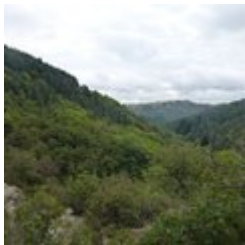
Attribution : © Atelier Chatersen



Forestry management (F)

This forest parcel consists of several units, which are managed differently. Some of its stand of large Corsican pines were “regeneratively” felled in 2007 to gather wood and encourage the regeneration of young trees. The parcel’s copses of oak and chestnut will be managed so as to preserve and favour tillers (young trees judged straight and vigorous enough to grow into handsome mature forest). Below you on the slope is a stand of protected ash trees, which are being left to evolve naturally.

Attribution : © Mathieu Baconnet



Tree stands (G)

From the viewpoint over the cascades at La Fabrié, the opposite slope presents a neat demarcation between stands of leafy trees (oaks and chestnuts) lower down and, higher up, conifers that were planted in reforestation operations. Different species were chosen to take account of local environmental conditions, such as the nature and depth of the soil, water reserves, microclimates, exposure: Douglas firs on one side and Atlas cedars with their blueish branches on the other.

Attribution : © C. Daquo



River fauna (H)

This river is the kingdom of the brown trout, which reproduces (spawns) here. A ball of brown and white feathers level with the water is the emblematic bird of torrents: the white-throated dipper. It feeds on insects and larvae, which it eats submerged while moving against the current by walking on the riverbed! Its nest is a big ball of moss, which shelters two broods of 4 to 5 baby birds a year.

Attribution : © Gaël Karczewski