

La Roque Magnanerie (silkworm farm)

Vallées cévenoles - Molezon



Magnanerie de La Roque (© A. Bouissou/TERRA)



Keep your eyes open! Beneath its ordinary appearance, this trail offers a new perspective on an unexpected biodiversity.

Forget wilderness: here, meadows, tracks and old trees all bear witness in their own way to the human presence of times gone by, namely those who lived and worked at the La Roque silkworm farm and shaped the valley. Each stage of the walk, whether in the open or shade, reveals a facet of the universe of insects and small mammals.

Useful information

Practice : Discovery trails

Duration : 1 h 30

Length : 1.4 km

Trek ascent : 84 m

Difficulty : Very easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Fauna and flora, History and culture

Trek

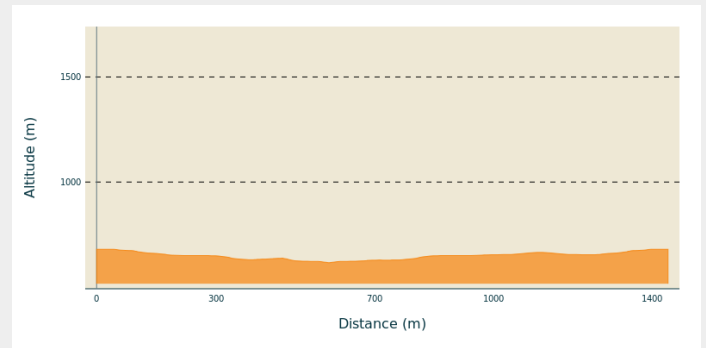
Departure : Parking spaces at the Magnanerie on the D983

Arrival : Parking spaces at the Magnanerie on the D983

Markings : 🌀 découverte PNC

Cities : 1. Molezon

Altimetric profile







Min elevation 616 m Max elevation 680 m

After going alongside the road for a few metres, the trail heads down to a small field and continues among the chestnut trees. Joining a larger track, it leads to the silkworm farm building and goes around it. The path continues alongside a field lined by mulberry trees before going uphill into the chestnut grove to rejoin the track. To return to the parking area, retrace your steps.

On your path...



-  Sounds in the grass (A)
-  In shade or light (C)
-  If trees could talk (E)

-  Open your eyes ! (B)
-  The farm with 60,000 worms (D)
-  Busy nights (F)

All useful information

AdVICES

The trail has rocky sections and hangs over the river below. For your own security, you must stay on the waymarked path.

How to come ?

Access

From Barre-des-Cévennes, on the D983 towards Molezon and Sainte-Croix-Vallée-Française.

Advised parking

Park alongside the D983 by the Magnanerie's sign post

Information desks

Tourism'house and national Parc at Florac

Place de l'ancienne gare, N106, 48400 Florac-trois-rivières

info@cevennes-parcnational.fr

Tel : 04 66 45 01 14

<https://www.cevennes-gorges-du-tarn.com>



Tourism office Des Cévennes au mont-Lozère, Sainte-Croix-Vallée-Française

Mairie, 48110 Sainte-Croix-Vallée-Française

info@cevennes-montlozere.com

Tel : 04 66 45 81 94

<https://www.cevennes-montlozere.com/>



Source



Parc national des Cévennes

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

On your path...



👉 Sounds in the grass (A)

Have you noticed that meadows are a unique environment? You hear them before you see them. You can guess a meadow is nearby by the chirping and repetitive calls, which combine to create a heady concert.

There are no vocal chords here, but only legs, wings and elytrons being rubbed again and again. Would you be able to imitate the throbbing sound made by crickets rubbing their legs on the edge of their wings ?

How would you know the biodiversity of a meadow if its inhabitants were silent ?

Attribution : © M. Lanière



👉 Open your eyes ! (B)

Among the chestnut trees, animals keep silent. Only the tiniest of traces allow us to spot them while they are at work. There is nothing flamboyant in their appearance: they are often small, dark and even rather ugly, but their discretion means that they are left in peace to pierce, lay eggs and nibble. You need very good hearing, like the great spotted woodpecker, to hear insects nibbling wood. Holes in tree trunks hint at the presence of the insect-eating woodpecker. Small owls, tits and nuthatches nest in the abandoned holes.

Attribution : © R. Descamps



🌿 In shade or light (C)

Paths made by wild animals, tracks opened up by humans. Without these openings to let in light, these breathing spaces between trees, how could any animal leave its clearing? Many dislike too much shade: lizards scuttling over hot rocks; praying mantises with their short and slow flight; large dragonflies and butterflies, etc. The stag beetle stays on the edge of the forest, flying heavily from tree to tree. Others, such as arachnids or small mammals, also like these treeless corridors, where they find food in abundance.

Attribution : © J.-P. Malafosse



🌿 The farm with 60,000 worms (D)

Such a big building just for silkworm larvae? It is hard to imagine the not-so-distant past when the silk thread made from the worms' cocoons was a miracle crop for the region. Farmers planted mulberry trees (whose leaves are all that the silkworm eats) and built odd-looking farms to raise these silkworms, which were so voraciously hungry that they were called manhan (eater), and so fragile that magnaneries had to be provided with numerous windows and chimneys to ensure their wellbeing.

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🌿 If trees could talk (E)

The fate of some insects and plants is linked to humans, who see them as precious helpers: the bee for its honey; the hummingbird hawk-moth, whose long proboscis enables it to pollinate lavender and sage with their deep flowers; the marmalade hoverfly whose larvae eat aphids... Mulberry leaves were once used to feed silkworms. Some mulberry trees have survived and retain their stocky silhouette and a trunk. Don't get any closer; watch from afar. It would be a shame to disturb insects at work.

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🌿 Busy nights (F)

Night-time is for animals, whose sharpened senses easily handle the dark that makes us so clumsy. This is the time when genets, martens, foxes and tawny owls set out to hunt. Dormice and wild boar can rummage at leisure looking for acorns, seeds and other roots. Moths take over from their diurnal cousins to fill up on flower nectar – if they manage to escape barbastelles and other bats. The night is an endless feast !

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