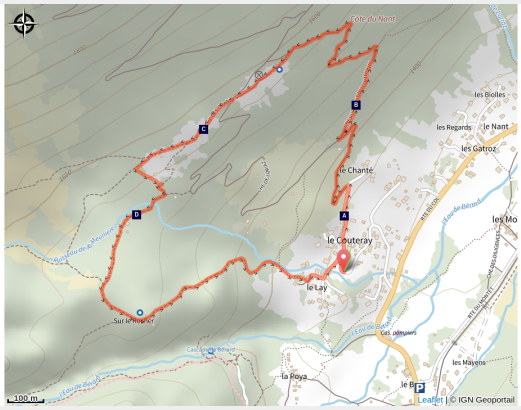
Granges loop: snowshoe Vallorcine

CC de la Vallée de Chamonix-Mont-Blanc - Vallorcine

(@LaurentDelomez)



Where is the wildlife?.. Learn how to protect this mixed larch and spruce forest and its inhabitants.

A lovely loop towards the traditional village of Les Granges, with exceptional views of the Aiguille Verte and the Mont-Blanc massif. A family-friendly route for an easy snowshoe hike.

Useful information

Practice : Winter Hike

Duration : 1 h 20

Length : 3.6 km

Trek ascent : 249 m

Difficulty : Easy

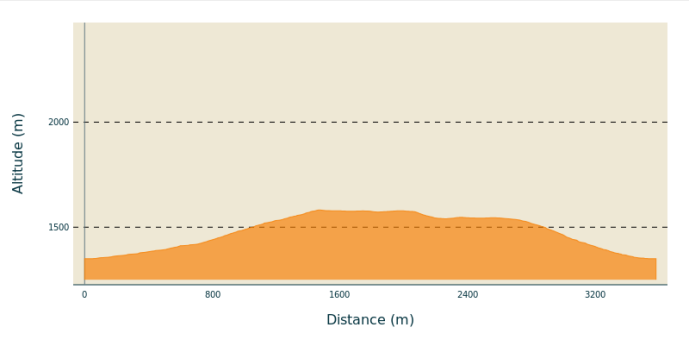
Type : Boucle

Themes : Fauna, Flora, Montagne sans voiture

Trek

Departure : Parking « Buet / Couteray »
Arrival : Parking le Buet / Couteray
Cities : 1. Vallorcine

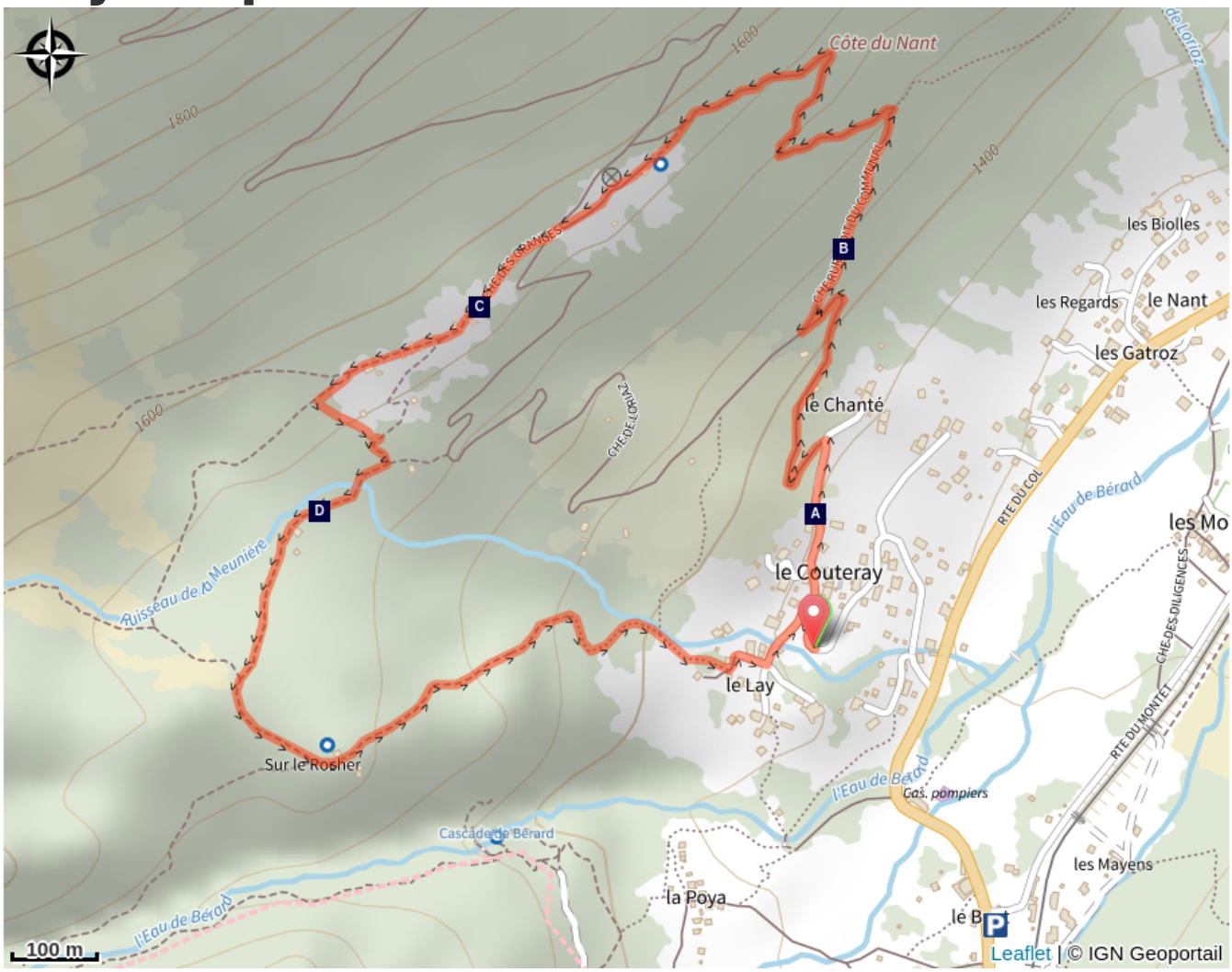
Altimetric profile



Min elevation 1350 m Max elevation 1582 m

From the village of Le Couteray, follow the forest track north towards La Loriaz. Take the signposted path after a sharp bend. At the highest point on the signposted path (1580 metres), turn left towards Les Granges. At the cliff (former sheepfolds), go back down to the left towards Le Lay - Le Couteray.

On your path...



- Hibernation or overwintering? (A)
- The European brown hare (C)
- Larch forest (B)
- What to do if you encounter a wild animal? (D)

All useful information

Réserve naturelle

La réserve naturelle est un espace exceptionnel, ouvert à tous, dont les patrimoines naturels, culturels et environnementaux sont rares. Pour profiter et admirer encore longtemps de cette nature sauvage et préservée, merci de prendre connaissance de la réglementation.

Advices

Before setting off : - Find out about the weather conditions: adjust your equipment accordingly. - Hike along signposted routes at your own risk. - Walking times are given as an estimate only. Please note: Trail conditions are subject to change, so be sure to check weather conditions before setting off. Trail access subject to weather conditions. For more information, contact the Chamonix High Mountain Office: +33 (0)4 50 53 22 08. https://www.chamoniarde.com/ What should I do if I come across a wild animal? The harsh conditions of winter leave animals no choice but to try and survive on a day-to-day basis. Our presence in their territory will not only upset them, it may even frighten them. So let's try to keep the disturbance to a minimum: - Stop and let the animal calmly move out of the way. - Don't shout or make any sudden movements so as not to stress the animal further. - Don't approach the animal nor follow it.

How to come ?

Transports

Stop at the Le Buet SNCF train station, which is served by the TER Mont Blanc Express line, then walk along the road to the village of Le Couteray on your left. https://www.chamonix.com/gares-et-arrets-de-train/arret-sncf-le-buet

Access

Take the D1506 from Chamonix via Argentière and le Col des Montets or from Switzerland via Martigny, le Col de la Forclaz and le Châtelard.

Advised parking

Parking Le Buet

Accessibility

Environmental sensitive areas

Along your trek, you will go through sensitive areas related to the presence of a specific species or environment. In these areas, an appropriate behaviour allows to contribute to their preservation. For detailed information, specific forms are accessible for each area.

Réserve naturelle nationale des Aiguilles Rouges

Sensitivity period:

Contact: Asters - Conservatoire d'espaces naturels de Haute Savoie
contact@cen-haute-savoie.org

La Réserve Naturelle des Aiguilles Rouges est un espace naturel protégé. Merci de respecter la réglementation :

Pensez à rester sur les sentiers.

Information desks

Office de toursime de Vallorcine
183 Route des Confins, 74660 Vallorcine
Tel : 04 50 54 60 71
https://www.chamonix.com/la-vallee/les-stations-villages/vallorcine

On your path...

Hibernation or overwintering? (A)

Many animals adapt their behaviour during the winter by hibenating or overwintering. Insects and birds, for example, hibernate. The marmot is known to hibernate. From the end of September, it takes refuge in its burrow and sleeps soundly until April. During this hibernation period, it is in a "comatose state": its heart beats 5 times per minute and its temperature drops to around 10 Celsius (the temperature may somewhat vary, depending on the ground temperature). Overwintering = spending the winter in a sheltered hideout Hibernation = spending the winter sleeping

Attribution : @brindenature

Larch forest (B)

Larch forest is an ecosystem with high biodiversity and one of the best refuges for mountain animals. Larch is the only conifer in Europe to shed its needles! They turn yellow and fall off in autumn.
These needles are essential for the soil and the ecosystem: once transformed into humus, they facilitate the growth of other plant species. In spring, new flexible needles grow back in a form of a bouquet.

Attribution : @JulienHeuret

The European brown hare (C)

The brown European hare lives in forests. The mountain hare, known as the "white coat", lives in the upper part of the forest and in the mountain pastures. Like rabbits, these mammals are lagomorphs and can be distinguished by the length of their ears. The brown hare has longer ears and a more slender shape. The hare's coat changes with the seasons to blend in better and hide from predators. The white coat hare is a nocturnal animal, building shelters under the snow so as to sleep during the day. Please ensure that you stay on the trail at all times, as you could accidentally trample its hideout!

Attribution : @GuillaumeCollombet

What to do if you encounter a wild animal? (D)

During the harsh winter conditions, animals have no other choice than trying to survive, one day at a time. Our presence on their territory will obviously disturb them, and even frighten them; so let's try to minimize this disturbance: - Stop and wait quietly untill the animal goes away. - Do not shout or make sudden movements which would stress the animal even more. - Do not try to approach it nor follow it.

Attribution : @Asters