

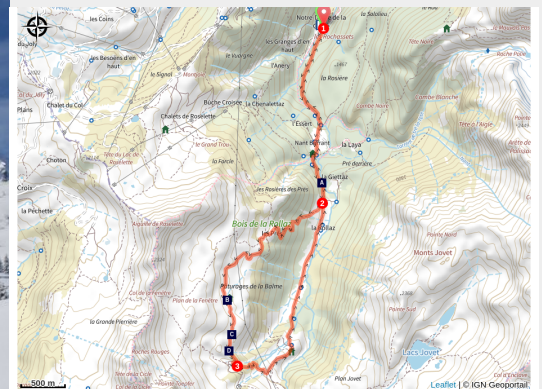
# Les Prés refuge : Snowshoeing and ski touring in Les Contamines Monjoie



CC Pays du Mont-Blanc - Les Contamines-Montjoie



(@GeoffreyGarcel)



*Unmarked ski trail and snowshoeing route to the new Refuge des Prés. If you are a beginner, please get in touch with the Compagnie des Guides.*

A beautiful trail at the gateway to the Beaufortain region where you can learn about various hardships that affect wildlife in winter.

## Useful information

Practice : Winter Hike

Duration : 5 h

Length : 10.8 km

Trek ascent : 754 m

Difficulty : Very hard

Type : Aller-retour

Themes : Fauna, Flora, Architecture, Refuge

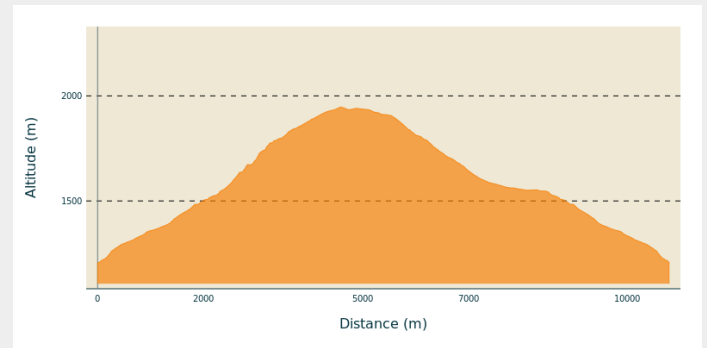
# Trek

**Departure** : Notre-Dame de la Gorge parking area, Les Contamines Montjoie

**Arrival** : Notre-Dame de la Gorge parking area, Les Contamines Montjoie

**Cities** : 1. Les Contamines-Montjoie

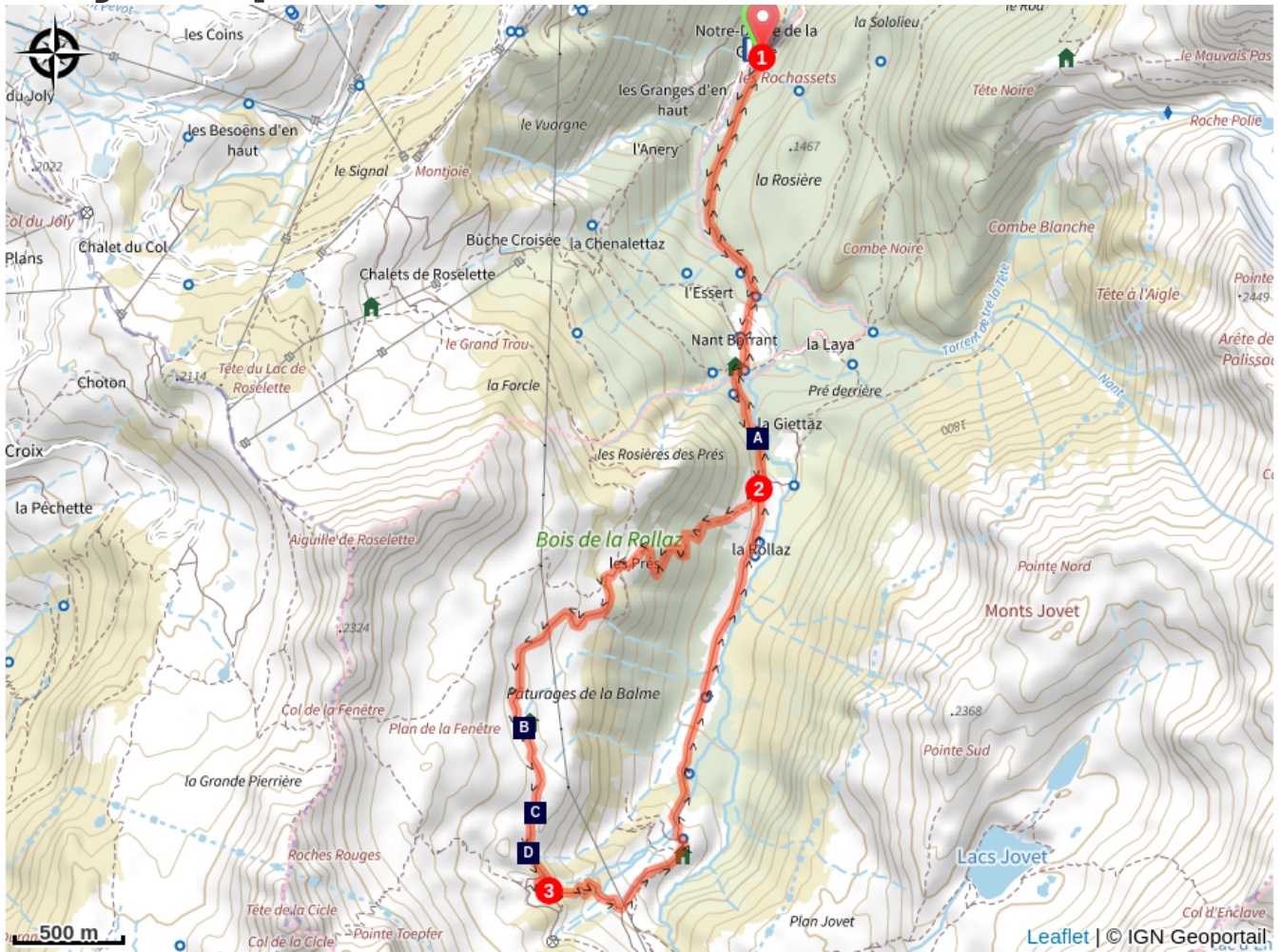
## Altimetric profile





Min elevation 1206 m Max elevation 1947 m

From the Notre-Dame de la Gorge car park: after the footbridge, take the main path, the Roman road, towards the "Roman bridge" with the stream on your right. Walk up this path; be careful, it is often icy! Anti-slip shoes can be useful. Continue along the Tour du Mont-Blanc GR until you reach the Rollaz plateau with its spectacular views of the Col de la Fenêtre, Col de la Cicle and Col des Chasseurs. Turn right into the Rollaz forest and after the Chalets des Prés you'll reach the Prés Refuge. To descend, go past the Balme Refuge avoiding going to the signposted Wildlife Reserve.

# On your path...



 The Stoat, a mountain chameleon  
(A)

 Black Grouse winter survivorship  
(C)

 Les Prés Refuge (B)

 What is an overwintering den? (D)

# All useful information

## **Advices**

Warning: The conditions of the trails are subject to change, remember to inquire before leaving!! Always be careful and plan ahead when hiking. Asters, CEN 74 can not be held responsible for the occurrence of any accident or incident on this itinerary!!! Access to the trail is subject to weather conditions.

## **Gear**

Périodes de pratiques  
Du 01/12 au 31/03.

Sous réserve de conditions d'enneigement.

## **How to come ?**

### Transports

Free bus shuttles, departure from the village centre; Bus shuttles timetables <https://www.lescontamines.com/hiver/pratique/acces-et-se-deplacer/navettes>

### Access

Go to Les Contamines-Montjoie (74170). Drive through the Contamines-Montjoie village and stay on the Route de Notre-Dame de la Gorge (D902) for 2 kilometres until the end of the road. The Notre-Dame de la Gorge car park will be on your left.

### Advised parking

Notre-Dame de la Gorge parking area, les Contamines Montjoie

# 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.

## **Black grouse - winter**

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, Decembre

Zone d'hivernage de Tétràs lyre de la Balme, matérialisée par des fanions en décembre 2020 dans le cadre du POIA bidrski.

Ne pas y pénétrer lors des pratiques hivernales (ski de randonnée, raquettes).

## **Black grouse - winter**

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, Decembre

Les contreforts de Jovet abritent des zones d'hivernage pour la faune : tétras-lyres, chamois, cervidés.

Les zones arborées sont à éviter pour ne pas déranger les animaux. Repérer le couloir unique de descente qui évite les zones de quiétude.

## **Réserve naturelle nationale des Contamines-Montjoie**

Sensitivity period:

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

## **Information desks**

### **Office du Tourisme des Contamines-Montjoie**

18 Route de Notre Dame de la Gorge,  
74170 Les Contamines-Montjoie

info@lescontamines.com

Tel : 0450470158

<http://lescontamines.com>





# On your path...

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## The Stoat, a mountain chameleon (A)

White in winter and with brown backs and beige bellies in summer, stoats have black tail tips all year round. Often confused with the common weasel, the stoat differs in size. It is larger (17 to 33 cm) and has a two-coloured tail. A carnivore, its favourite prey are voles. Stoats are vivacious and playful. The Stoat often moves in leaps of up to 50 centimetres in height, covering great distances for its size of up to 15 km.

Attribution : @LionelRoux

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## Les Prés Refuge (B)

The new Les Prés Refuge was built at an altitude of 1935m at the foot of the Aiguille de la Cicle (2552m), ideally situated in the heart of the nature reserve and right next to the hiking trails. This former mountain pasture farmhouse was restored in 2020 at the initiative of the Compagnie des Guides de Saint-Gervais-Contamines. This refuge is one of the few to be manned for more than 7 months of the year, including winter.

Attribution : @GeoffreyGarcel

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## Black Grouse winter survivorship (C)

Animals are in survival mode during the winter. Disturbing them because of our actions (skiing, snowshoeing) weakens them, jeopardises their reproductive capacity and makes them vulnerable to disease. Fleeing can cost them their lives by draining all their energy. To protect themselves from the cold and predators, black grouse will take refuge in a hole under the snow called an "iglo" near the edge of a forest or in lightly wooded areas. For its protection, we should respect its designated wintering areas!

Attribution : Geoffrey Garcel - CEN 74

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## What is an overwintering den? (D)

Wildlife is most vulnerable during winter. At this time of year, the cold and lack of food forces animals to conserve their energy and shelter in dens for overwintering. As animals flee from constant disturbance, they expend a great deal of energy that can negatively affect their chances of survival. Let's help animals get through the winter by giving them some space: - Choose non-wooded areas for your hikes - Don't tread new trails (don't step off the existing trails) - Avoid quiet areas

Attribution : @CarolineKoelhy