The Domancy plain

CC Pays du Mont-Blanc - Domancy

Plaine de Domancy (@julienheuret)

A stroll along the agricultural plain around the Bialle stream

Learn about epizootics and understand animal migration on this iteninary. It's brimming with knowledge!

Useful information

Practice : Summer hike

Duration : 2 h

Length : 7.1 km

Trek ascent : 113 m

Difficulty : Easy

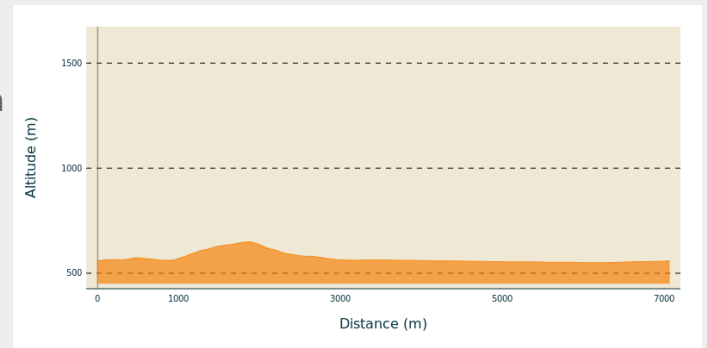Type : Boucle

Themes : Fauna, Ecogeste

Trek

Departure : Mairie de Domancy' parking area
Arrival : Mairie de Domancy' parking area
Cities : 1. Domancy
2. Passy

Min elevation 550 m   Max elevation 649 m

From the Mairie de Domancy parking area : Take the route du Cruet, the chemin du Creux and the chemin de la Viaz before reaching Vervex (oratory). From Vervex, follow the route that crosses the D1205 road and continue along the Chemin des Grandes Vernes. In the middle of the plain, after Les Bardets, the route continues along a farm track that forks to the left and runs parallel to the railway line until it reaches the main road. Take the chemin des Castors (Beaver's path) on the left as far as the bridge (on the right is Lac de Passy). This path runs alongside the Bialle stream, where you can watch the beavers at work. Return along the Chemin des Primevères. Cross and follow the D1205 road on your left. After a few metres, fork onto the route de Létraz to reach the town hall.

On your path...

🐾 Bird migration: how do birds navigate themselves in flight? (A)

🐾 Dog excrement (C)

☘ Dry grasslands (E)

🐾 The Red-footed Falcon (B)

🐾 The beaver: a protected species (D)

All useful information

⚠️ Advices

Crossing the D1205 departmental road on two occasions. Always be careful and plan ahead when hiking. Asters CEN-74 cannot be held responsible for any accident or inconvenience that may occur on this trail.
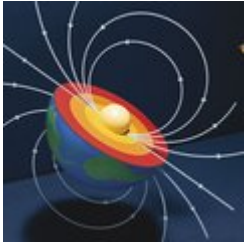
How to come ?

Transports

Advised parking

De la mairie' parking area in Domancy

On your path...

🐾 Bird migration: how do birds navigate themselves in flight? (A)

Migrating birds are sensitive to the Earth's magnetic field, that is aiding their navigation on long journeys towards their breeding and overwintering grounds. Magnetoreception is one of the many mechanisms that migratory birds use to navigate. They often combine this ability with other cues, such as stars, sun, gravitational field and visual cues. These incredible abilities of birds are being affected by urban/agricultural development. City lights confuse birds during nighttime. On top of this, the proliferation of large-scale farming and climate change are shifting the migratory patterns of certain species and endangering their journeys. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, one third of all nesting birds in mainland France are now at risk of extinction.

Attribution : © Kyle Bean

🐾 The Red-footed Falcon (B)

Smaller than a Kestrel, the Red-footed falcon has a slender body and a long tail. It is bluish-grey in colour. This falcon spends several days on the Domancy plain during its migration from late April to May. It is migrating from Africa where it overwinters, to Eastern Europe where it nests. The Alps are a major obstacle for migratory birds, which only cross the massif in valleys such as the Arve. You can see them perched on trees or fences during strong winds.

Attribution : @julienheuret
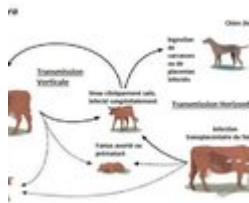
🐾 Dog excrement (C)

Dog faeces are more problematic than those of non-domesticated animals because of their high-protein diet, causing over-fertilisation of the soil and harming local flora and fauna. Even if the dogs were banned and were absent from any given territory, nutrients from dog faeces can remain in the soil for up to three years according to British scientific researchers Ecological Solutions and Evidence. If dog faeces are simply a nuisance on a city pavement or an annoyance on a beach, they can have far more serious, even fatal, consequences in meadows of fresh grass. Why, you may ask? A potentially fatal cattle pathogen, neosporosis is found in the faeces of certain canines. Dogs are potential viral hosts of this infectious pathogen, which is not transmissible to humans. Neosporosis is an epizootic: an epidemic affecting animals. This epizootic can cause miscarriages and embryonic lesions in cows. When out walking, pick up after your dogs to limit the risk of an infection.

Attribution : GDSdessavoie

🐾 The beaver: a protected species (D)

The beaver leaves behind a number of signs of its presence: jagged branches, burrows, lodges, etc. It prefers to come out at dusk, surveying its territory on either side of a watercourse. Water is essential to protect the entrance to its burrow and to escape danger, as well as to carry the branches it feeds on and needs for constructing dams. Europe's largest rodent, the beaver is perfectly equipped for swimming: it can remain underwater for up to 15 minutes without breathing. Translucent eyelids protect its eyes, like scuba goggles. Its webbed hind legs and flat tail act as propellers and rudders respectively.

Attribution : @LaurentTheophile

✿ Dry grasslands (E)

This was an alluvial plain in the past. The farmers of yesteryear managed to turn this place into valuable agricultural land after several river diversions. The Granges de Passy site, with its famous scattered barns, is a unique landscape in Haute-Savoie, although it has lost much of its landscape and ecological features as a result of various human activities: local infrastructure (motorway, etc.) and urban development. It is still an interesting area, owing to the preservation of its original natural habitat, dry grassland (e.g. Mesobromion, a thin grassland dominated by a graminaceous plant : upright brome, which survives in sparse patches in between cultivated areas. Cereal crops are grown here. This site is rich in botanical diversity, it is home to protected orchid species, bug orchid. Dry areas are home to rare xerophilous ('drought loving') species such as glossy sedge (Carex liparocarpos).

Attribution : @julienheuret