

## WHY DO WE NEED REGULATION ?

The purpose of a nature reserve is to protect an exceptional and recognised natural heritage.

To find the right balance between heritage issues and human activities, regulations apply.

They serve as a safeguard and allow everyone to make the most of the site while preserving the fauna, flora, landscapes and natural environments. The agents of the nature reserves, the French Office of Biodiversity, the National Forestry Office and the National Gendarmerie, among others, are responsible for enforcing these regulations.



Dogs should be kept on a lead as they can harm ground-nesting birds and disturb wildlife and livestock. They can also cause stress to wildlife through the predatory odours they release, particularly through their urine. There are some exceptions, for sheepdogs or working rescue dogs.



Bivouacking is tolerated from 7pm to 9am but it is forbidden to pitch a tent outside these hours or for several days. Use the bivouacking areas of La Balme and Pont de la Rollaz instead.



In order to limit the high fire risk - especially in summer - damage to the flora and disturbance of the fauna, it is forbidden to make fires.



The flower allows the plant to reproduce, and it also provides valuable food for pollinating species. Cutting off a flower prevents new seeds from growing. Let everyone enjoy the beauty of the wild flowers.



Flying over the nature reserve with a drone, paraglider or any other aircraft is prohibited to limit the disturbance to wildlife and livestock.



In order to respect the quietness of the area and to avoid soil degradation, motorised vehicles are prohibited. There are some exemptions for rescue services or certain users such as refuge wardens or shepherds.

## KEY

- Nature reserve boundaries
- Nature reserve entrance gate
- Summits
- Passes
- Refuges / Hostels
- Marked pathway

## NATURE RESERVE OF CONTAMINES-MONTJOIE



## THEIR LIVING SPACE, OUR PLAYGROUND !

Many animals find a refuge in the nature reserve. To preserve them and their habitats, stay on the trails and don't approach them if you encounter them. In winter, animals are even more fragile! When snowshoeing or ski touring, don't multiply the tracks and avoid the quiet areas.

Réserve Naturelle  
CONTAMINES-MONTJOIE

Asters  
Conservatoire  
d'espaces naturels  
Haute-Savoie

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www.facebook.com/mcontamines

## MANAGER AND INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

Asters  
Conservatoire  
d'espaces naturels  
Haute-Savoie

MINISTÈRE  
DE LA TRANSITION  
ÉCOLOGIQUE

Pays du Mont-Blanc  
communauté de communes

CONTAMINES  
MONTJOIE



0 1 2 km

The Contamines-Montjoie nature reserve, located in the commune of Contamines-Montjoie, is managed by Asters, the Haute-Savoie Conservatory of Natural Areas.

### THE PURPOSE OF A NATURE RESERVE

#### KNOW

Science is a fundamental tool for better understanding the world around us and its fragility. The nature reserve is an open-air laboratory!

#### PROTECT

Specific regulations apply to each nature reserve. The manager ensures the protection of this area through environmental policing.

#### MANAGE

A project for the conservation and management of species and natural environments exists in this area, in search of a delicate balance between humans and nature.

#### SHARE

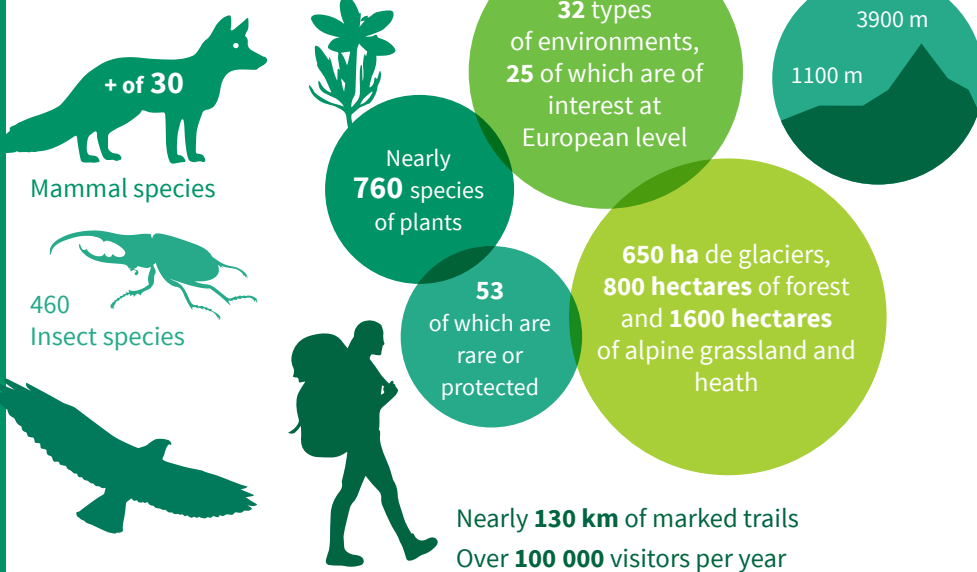
Loving, discovering, learning, respecting... this space is open to the public and takes visitors far beyond wonder..



### HERITAGE OF THE NATURE RESERVE

- 1** The golden eagle is a bird of prey with a wingspan of up to 2 metres. It rules in pairs over a territory equivalent to 10,000 football fields. Its legendary keen eyesight can detect the movements of prey at a distance of more than 1 km. Its eyes are like magnifying glasses and its field of vision is 240°. This large hunter can swoop down on its prey at a speed of 350 km/h. But no-one is perfect - it misses 9 out of 10 targets!
- 2** The black grouse, an icon of mountain fauna, is a shy bird. The male, or cock, with its blue-black plumage and red wattles above the eye, is impossible to confuse. The hen has a less flamboyant reddish-brown plumage which blends in with the vegetation.
- 3** Chamois and ibex: The female ibex is often confused with the chamois. The chamois is of similar build and they both have horns, but it can be distinguished by its characteristic facial markings: white or cream-coloured cheeks and muzzle.
- 4** The rock ptarmigan lives at high altitude. It changes colour according to the season to blend in with its environment, and relies on its mimicry to escape predators. Climate change will greatly alter its habitat, making it an endangered species in the Alps. 5
- 5** Marmots, emblematic of the Alps, live as a family in a burrow dug with galleries and chambers lined with dry grass in which they settle in winter to hibernate. The burrow is closed by a plug of earth and grass, covered with snow. This insulation keeps the temperature at a minimum of 4°C, below which the marmot cannot survive.
- 6** The Tré-la-Tête glacier, an ice giant, is the 4th-largest glacier in France. It is 8 km long and has a 1400 m vertical drop. In order to measure its volume variations, a "Mass Balance" has been conducted every year since 2014. Glaciologists, in conjunction with the nature reserve manager, assess the variation in the volume of ice. The analysis of the results provides information on the evolution of the overall mass of the glacier in the context of climate change.
- 7** Something of a mascot for the Commune of Les Contamines-Montjoie, the Eurasian Pygmy Owl is the smallest owl on the continent. This nocturnal bird of prey lives in the old mountain forests which are abundant in the reserve. Its presence is closely linked to that of the Great Spotted Woodpecker or the Eurasian Three-Toed Woodpecker, since it uses their holes in trees to settle and reproduce. Despite its size, this pygmy owl is a formidable predator.
- 8** Now a tourist route on the GR Tour du Mont-Blanc, the Roman road which crosses the Roman bridge was once an important artery controlled by a Celtic tribe which populated the Montjoie Valley. They were farmers who had salt transported from Moûtiers, on the backs of men, over the Bonhomme pass, to make their cheeses. The Romans also used this path to transport armies, administrators and merchants. Take a good look at the Rochassets section - it's cut into the rock to let chariots through!
- 9** In the mountains, the landscape and vegetation change rapidly with altitude. In the nature reserve, between 1000 and 2000 m altitude depending on the slopes, you'll see beautiful mixed forests, beech-fir forests where deciduous trees and evergreen species like spruce cover more than 80% of the forest in the nature reserve.
- 10** Le Bon-Nant is a torrent of more than 23 km in length, the first part of which, located under the Bonhomme pass, is called Nant-Barrant. The Bon-Nant valley has been a place of passage and pasture since the 1st century, known as Val-Montjoie. During the night of 12th July 1892, a pocket of water which had accumulated under the Tête Rousse glacier broke, releasing thousands of cubic metres of water which partially destroyed the village of Bionnay, before rushing into the Bon Nant gorge. The thermal bath which had stood there was washed away and completely destroyed.

### KEY FIGURES



### ACTIVITIES IN THE NATURE RESERVE

- A** Located in the heart or on the periphery, the refuges are part of the identity of the nature reserve. Some, like the Tré-la-Tête refuge (1970 m altitude), have more than a century of history. They were created to welcome the pioneers of mountaineering, and now they offer accommodation and meals to all hikers.
- B** Surrounded by peaks of over 3000 m, the nature reserve is a land of mountaineering, with classic routes to summits with evocative names. The "Dômes de Miages", "Aiguille de la Béragère" or "Aiguille des glaciers" can be discovered by ski mountaineering in spring or with crampons and ice axe in summer.
- C** Pastoralism is a very old activity which helps to maintain open landscapes in the mountain pastures. Today, the flocks are often guarded by a shepherd and dogs who defend the animals against attacks by large predators like wolves. When approaching the herd, be aware of the behaviour of these dogs, keep your distance from the herd, remain calm and keep walking without running. Don't hesitate to talk to them gently so that they get used to and accept your presence.
- D** The beauty and accessibility of the sites attract many visitors who practice mountain sports (mountain biking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering, etc.). These activities must comply with the regulations in force. Certain activities such as climbing or skiing can disturb certain species. It's important to stay on the trails and we recommend that you get information when choosing your route.
- E** Scientific monitoring is carried out under the aegis of a scientific committee of the Haute-Savoie nature reserves to understand changes in the natural heritage. Scientific monitoring helps to measure the effects of climate change on environments and species and to understand the functioning of high-altitude lakes.

### FIND OUT MORE

[www.cen-haute-savoie.org](http://www.cen-haute-savoie.org)  
[rando.nature-haute-savoie.fr](http://rando.nature-haute-savoie.fr)  
[www.facebook.com/rncontamines/](https://www.facebook.com/rncontamines/)  
[www.instagram.com/reserve\\_naturelle\\_contamines/](https://www.instagram.com/reserve_naturelle_contamines/)  
[www.lescontamines.com](http://www.lescontamines.com)

**The Nature Space at the Summit:**  
 Located in the heart of the village of Les Contamines Montjoie, this museographic space welcomes visitors who want to learn more about the nature reserve.  
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