



Geolocation

N°84012

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Parc National du Mercantour

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Credits: J. Chaudet / PNM

Caption: Référence : 45838_PNM Titre : Reflets d'été à Camp Soubran, au dessus du col de Salèse.



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Credits: A. Turpaud / PNM

Caption: Reflets dans un des lacs de Morgon , (2400 m), en été.



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Credits: P. Pierini / PNM

Caption: Les lacs Morgon et l'Enchastraye un 14 juillet.



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Credits: S. Roux / PNM

Caption: Lever de soleil sur le refuge du Col d'Allos



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Credits: S. Roux / PNM

Caption: Lac d'Allos et ses tours

LOCATION TYPE

CATEGORIES

Mountains

Natural park

ENVIRONMENT

Mountain

GENERAL PRESENTATION

It is a generally vast territory whose biological richness, landscape beauty, cultural interest and historically preserved character justify special protection. This protection must guarantee the durability of this exceptional heritage. The designation 'national park' is recognized worldwide as the highest level of quality and protection of remarkable natural areas.

The unique character of the Mercantour territory, on the border between France and Italy, justified its classification as a 'national park' on August 18, 1979.

Like all French national parks, the Mercantour Park has a core zone and a buffer zone (formerly the peripheral zone).

The core zone is 679 km². Its regulations protect nature from the main human activities and the permanent presence of inhabitants. However, there are some traditional hamlets that are inhabited on a seasonal basis. Endowed with an exceptional heritage, this area is subject to strict regulations that visitors must respect.

Its buffer zone is currently 1 122 km². It has about 20,600 permanent residents spread over 23 communes. The Park contributes to local economic development, with the constant concern to harmonize the impact of human activities and environmental protection.

Geographical location of Mercantour

The Mercantour National Park covers 1,801 km² (679 in the core zone and 1,122 in the buffer zone), in the extreme southeast of France.

Adjacent to the border of the Italian Piedmont, with which it shares nearly 33 km of ridges, the Mercantour massif is the last promontory of the Alpine arc in the south, before its sudden plunge into the Mediterranean Sea. At the top of the Gélàs, the highest summit of the Mercantour at 3,143 m, you are only 50 km from the sea as the crow flies!

It presents two large massifs separated by the axis of the Tinée: in the northwest a limestone or schistose massif, in the southeast the crystalline massif shared with the Argentera. With a length of 150 km, the territory extends over six valleys in the Southern Alps and covers two departments: the Alpes-Maritimes, for about two thirds of its surface, and the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence. Verdon, Var-Cians, Ubaye, Tinée, Vésubie and Roya-Bévèra, each valley has its own distinct character!

Located at the crossroads of multiple climatic, geological and altitudinal influences, the Mercantour National Park is made up of a mosaic of natural environments whose extreme diversity explains the exceptional richness of the fauna and flora.

The Mercantour National Park in a few key figures - Identity card

Creation of the Park : August 18th 1979

Core zone (or 'Coeur du parc'):

Area: 679 km²

Minimum altitude: 490 m

Maximum altitude : 3 143 m (La cime du Gélàs - Vésubie)

Optimal buffer zone (or 'Aire optimale d'adhésion' - AOA) :

28 municipalities

Minimum altitude : 180 m

Maximum altitude: 3 193 m (The summit of the Rocca Blanca - Ubaye)

Buffer zone: 23 communes for 1 122 km².

Permanent inhabitants: nearly 20,600 in the adhesion area

Natura 2000 : 14 sites

International relations: Twinning, Parco Naturale Alpi Marittime (Italy) and Banff National Park (Canada)

Flora: the highest diversity at the national level with more than 2,000 plant species, including 200 rare and 30 endemic.

Fauna: 78 species of mammals - including the 6 wild ungulates found in France and the wolf - and 199 species of birds

Eight valleys (Roya, Bévèra, Vésubie, Tinée, Cians, Var, Verdon, Ubaye), 5 territorial services
