

VULTOURIS ROUTES:



Bilhères en Ossau: Cromlechs (Vallée d'Ossau)



Information on the Vultouris birding routes can be found at the Centre d'Interprétation de la Falaise aux Vautours (Cliff of the Vultures Education Center) in Aste-Béon. The start and finish point of the route is at the parking area to the right of the highway, 200 metres beyond the chapelle de Houndas (Houndas Chapel).

The route reveals evidence of our ancestors in the form of stones arranged in circles, also known as Cromlechs. It's a walk with beautiful, expansive views of the Ossau Valley, the town of Bilhères and the Bénou Plateau, as well as being favorable for viewing the ascending flight of vultures.

Commonly observed: griffon vultures in flight, red kite, Egyptian vultures feeding in the meadows, woodpeckers and forest passerines. Occasionally observed: short-toed snake eagle, lammergeier (bearded vulture), European honey buzzard, common buzzard, booted eagle, peregrine falcon, common kestrel, Eurasian hobby, Eurasian sparrowhawk.

1) From the parking area - The walk's starting point is marked by yellow signs indicating "Cromlechs routes".

2) Viewpoint of Bilhères and Ossau Valley - From here one can observe the terraced plots of land; present for more than 5,000 years, they are testimony to man's ability to adapt his needs to the demands of the mountainous environment.

3) Viewpoint of the Ossau Valley - A spectacular perspective on the U-shaped valley carved out by the bygone Ossau Glacier with views of the vultures taking

ROUTE FILE

Distance: 6.19km.
Minimum elevation: 827m.
Maximum elevation: 958m.
Total ascent: 131m.

Centre d'Interpretation La Falaise aux Vautours 64260 ASTE-BEON (Vallée d'Ossau)
Telephone: (+33) 05 59 82 65 49
falaise.aux.vautours@wanadoo.fr

<http://en.wikiloc.com/wikiloc/view.do?id=1815953>
More information: www.vultouris.net · info@vultouris.net

advantage of the rising thermal columns to glide across the valley and Marie-Blanche Pass.

4) The stone circles - In the 19th century archeologists found 16 groups of stones arranged in circles at this site. They are believed to date back to the Iron Age (700-1 BC). The discovery of burned bone fragments in the middle of one of the circles suggests that they were used for funeral rites, perhaps involving the incineration of the dead (among other hypotheses).

5) Viewpoint of the Bénou Plateau - this plateau is an important site of pastoralism in the Ossau Valley, with numerous flocks and shepherd's huts. The Bénou Plateau, in like manner to the far side of Castet Pass, was formed during the Quaternary Period by the gradual advance of gigantic glaciers. Obstructed in its descent by a bottleneck of calcareous rocks superior in resistance, the 500 metre wide Ossau Glacier expanded out around both sides. In this way it sculpted the mountains and gave birth to this raised grassy plateau.