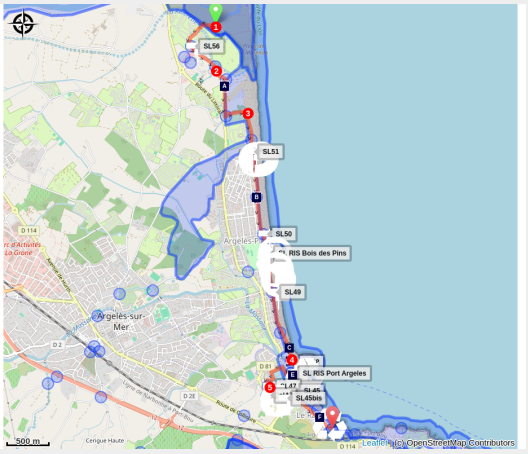
(E 12-Sentier Littoral/guide OTI) Mas Larrieu Nature Reserve - The Racou

Albères



(Frédéric Hédelin)



An ideal walk to do with the family.

Discover the sandy coastline of Argelès-sur-Mer, which leads you to the Racou beach, passing by the port.

Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 2 h

Length : 7.2 km

Trek ascent : 38 m

Difficulty : Easy

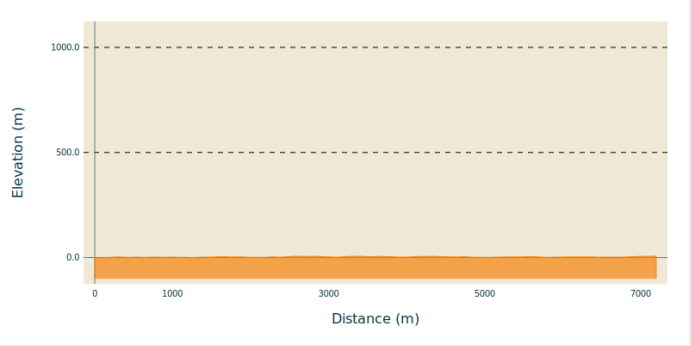
Type : Traversée

Themes : Fauna, Flora, Histoire, Littoral, Artisanat

Trek

Departure : Mas Larrieu Nature Reserve
Arrival : Le Racou
Cities : 1. ARGELES SUR MER

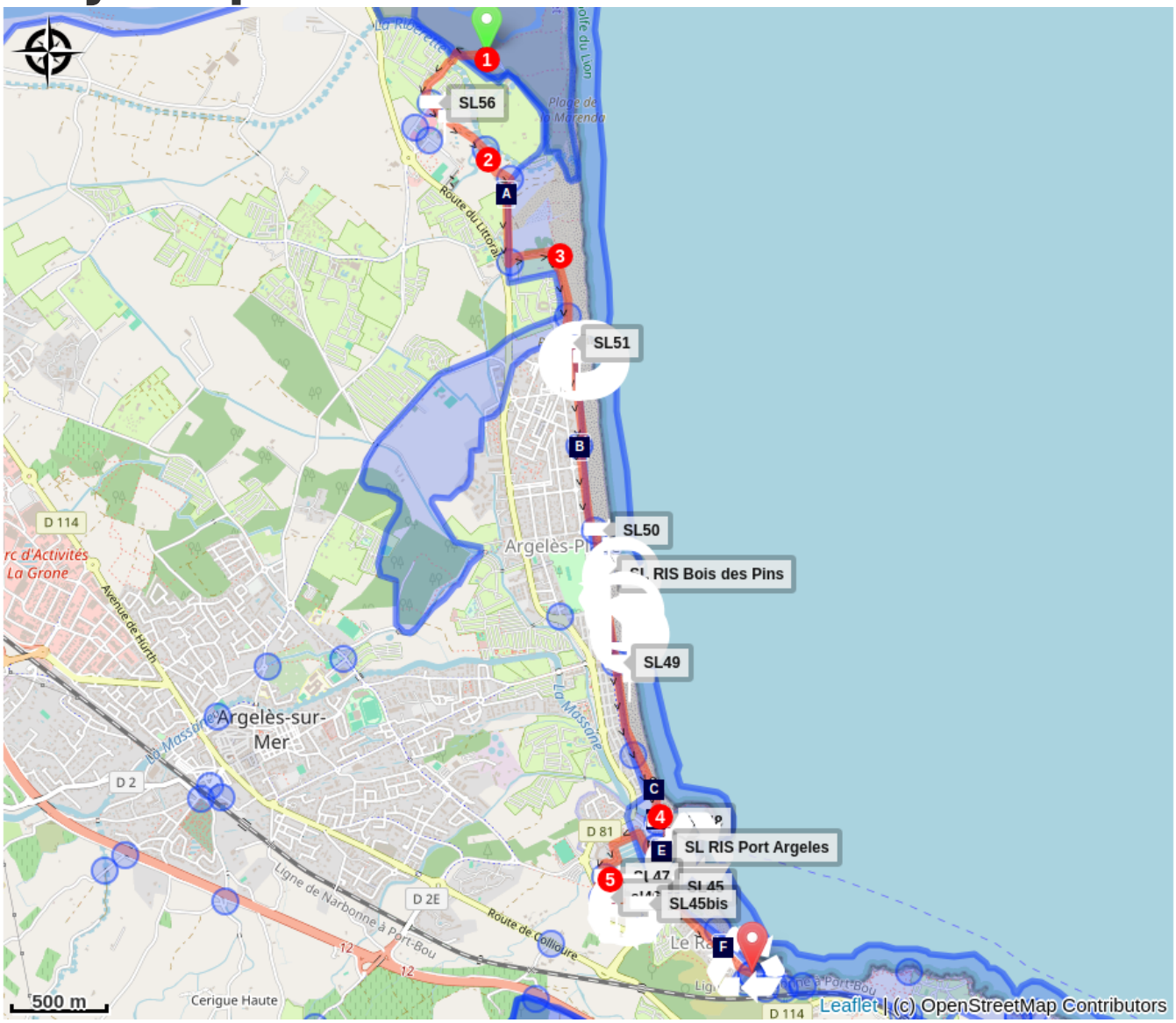
Altimetric profile



Min elevation -1 m Max elevation 7 m

1. From the Luna Park parking lot, you have two options.First option: Head north, cross the Equinoxe campsite, ford the stream, and you will find access to the Mas Larrieu nature reserve. The Argelès-sur-Mer tourist office offers guided walks. Additionally, information panels on the dune discovery trail are accessible year-round, explaining the management, history, flora, and fauna of this protected coastal site. To join the coastal path, simply follow the shore southward. Cross the mouth of the Riberette River and continue towards Argelès beach.
2. Second option: Head to your right towards Argelès-sur-Mer. Leave the road to walk along the leisure park and the Riberette on your left, which flows into the sea a bit further on. A first ford allows you to cross a ditch. Follow the path briefly winding through the undergrowth, where a second reed-lined ford awaits you. Once out of the shade, take the road to the right, then head to the beach on your left, passing along the Marende parking lot.
3. Now, continue to the right with your feet in the sand. Be mindful of the vegetation growing here and there, as it helps to maintain the beach! In the depression known as "Tamariguer," take the walk under the pine trees. Dotted with signs describing notable sites, it will naturally lead you to the port.
4. Cross the Massane River via the bridge, and take the left along the quays, welcoming fishermen and boaters.
5. Leave the quays via the stairs leading to the parking lot before the port's technical area. Follow the bike path towards "Le Racou." This path will lead you to a trail that skirts the Racou wetland on the left. You can stop at the beach to observe this wetland area, along with its developing flora and fauna. This part of the trail ends at the Racou parking lot.

On your path...



North Plaque of the Argelès-sur-Mer Memorial Trail (A)

The Camp Monolith (B)

Argelès Photo Nature Exhibition (C)

Port Footbridge (D)

Catalan Boat (E)

Un petit recoin catalan : « Le Racou » (F)

All useful information

⚠ Advices

You enjoy nature, you love it, take care of it...

You are about to embark on a hiking trail along which regular household waste collection points are available for your use.
Out of respect for this exceptional area, which is visited each month by tens of thousands of hikers and walkers, we invite you to dispose of all your waste (glass, paper, food scraps, etc.) at these collection points, as well as any litter you might unfortunately come across during your walk.
By following these simple yet essential steps, we can keep this site as clean as nature graciously provided it to us.

How to come ?

Transports

Bus 2€

Access

From the D81, enter the grounds of Luna Park at the northern roundabout of Argelès-sur-Mer (towards Bowling). There are parking areas available, and a sign will indicate the trail.

Advised parking

Luna Park Parking Lot

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.

Zone Natura 2000 Directive Habitat

Sensitivity period:

Zone Natura 2000 Directive Oiseaux

Réserve Naturelle du Mas Larrieu

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, Decembre

Réserve Naturelle du Mas Larrieu

On your path...



North Plaque of the Argelès-sur-Mer Memorial Trail (A)

This plaque symbolizes the northern boundary of the Argelès-sur-Mer camp.

Attribution : Mémorial du camp d'Argelès



The Camp Monolith (B)

The monolith at the camp marks the southern entrance to the Argelès-sur-Mer camp, which was opened in early February 1939 to intern some of the refugees who had fled Spain during "La Retirada." Over 100,000 refugees, including women and children, passed through the camp until summer 1939, all sleeping directly on the sand in makeshift shelters. The camp was reorganized and reopened following the declaration of war in September 1939. After France's defeat in June 1940, the camp became more international, with refugees from Northern and Eastern Europe, including foreign Jews, and the return of Spanish workers. The Vichy government used it as one of the main camps in southern France, interning French nomads there in the autumn of 1940.

People from over fifty nationalities lived together behind the barbed wire at Argelès. These "undesirables" were confined on a beach where living conditions were extremely harsh, with high mortality rates, particularly among infants. In 1941, the Ministry of the Interior transferred most of the internees to the Rivesaltes camp and deported some Spaniards and international brigadiers to camps in Algeria. By June 1942, with only a hospital remaining, the Argelès-sur-Mer camp was converted into a French Youth Work Camp before closing permanently in November. Erected in 1999, this monolith pays tribute to all the refugees who passed through the camp.

Attribution : Mémorial du camp d'Argelès



Argelès Photo Nature Exhibition (C)

Created in 2009 by the town of Argelès-sur-Mer, Argelès Photo Nature – Enfants de la Mer offers over six months of outdoor exhibition featuring around a hundred giant photographs along the seafront promenade in Argelès-sur-Mer, which attracts over a million visitors each year.

In 2020, the exhibition focuses on bears, with photographic perspectives accompanied by watercolor paintings and monumental sculptures. Issues related to climate change are also explored through stunning exhibits on the Arctic and coral reefs.

Attribution : Stephane Ferrer



Port Footbridge (D)

A true link between the Port and the Beach, the Massane Footbridge is crossed by more than 200,000 visitors each summer.

Attribution : Stephane Ferrer



Catalan Boat (E)

Catalan boats were used for net fishing of sardines and anchovies along the Catalan and Spanish coasts. In Collioure in 1900, there were 120 Catalan boats dedicated to sardine ("sardinal") and anchovy ("anxove") fishing. You can still find them along the coastline, lovingly restored by enthusiasts.

Attribution : Stephane Ferrer



Un petit recoin catalan : « Le Racou » (F)

The term "Racou" means "nook" in Catalan. Located between rocky coast and sandy beach, it is one of the typical places of the Argelesian coastline. The first installations of "demountable" wooden cabins go back to the 1920s but will be destroyed during the German occupation. In the 1960s, the Racou already has three lines of houses. This place is almost a village in its own right. Through its tiny alleyways floats a retro atmosphere where there is good walking.

Attribution : CCACVI