



wildlife

Regional Nature Reserve of the Partias

Natural Heritage

The Reserve extends between 1,600 meters and 2,900 meters in altitude (Cime de la Condamine). This broad altitude gradient, along with a great variety of geological substrates, allows the Partias to host a rich and diverse floristic and faunistic heritage.

Fragile Fauna

Because they live in a challenging environment, some species are highly sensitive to repeated disturbances, especially during hibernation and breeding periods. The regional nature reserve of the Partias is an important refuge area for alpine birdlife, with 107 bird species recorded in the site, particularly for the Western Capercaillie, Alpine Ptarmigan, Rock Partridge, Tengmalm's Owl, Alpine Accentor, Eurasian Crag Martin (with a colony of around thirty individuals nesting at an altitude of 2750 meters!), and the Ring Ouzel.

Among mammals, sixteen species of bats of community interest have been identified, including the Barbastelle, Nathusius' Pipistrelle, Northern Bat, and Savi's Pipistrelle. Typically mountainous species frequent the site, such as the Stoat, Alpine Marmot, Mountain Hare, and Chamois. The Eurasian Water Shrew (a shrew), although not limited to high-altitude environments, is a mammal of heritage interest found in the reserve.

The Western Green Lizard has been observed in alpine meadows at 2350 meters above sea level. This represents a record altitude, with the previous record being 2050 meters in the French Pyrenees and 2020 meters in the Swiss canton of Ticino.

Among amphibians, the Common Toad and the Common Frog, two protected species, are also present in the Partias reserve.

Finally, not all insects are inventoried on the site, but a good number of butterfly species have already been identified, including the Apollo, Clouded Apollo, Provence Chalk-hill Blue, and Marsh Fritillary, which are heritage species. The Black Darter and the Beautiful Demoiselle, odonates of community interest, inhabit the wetlands of the reserve. Some beetles, dipterans, hemipterans, and orthopterans (including the Alpine Longhorn Beetle) have been recorded.

Rich Flora

Approximately 520 plant species have been recorded in the regional nature reserve of the Partias, some of which are rare and threatened. Several species are nationally protected: Alpine Columbine (*Aquilegia alpina*), Swiss Rock Jasmine (*Androsace helvetica*), Dwarf Club-rush (*Trichophorum pumilum*), and Dauphiné Cinquefoil (*Potentilla delphinensis*). The latter is endemic to the Dauphiné Alps. Its small distribution and low population make it a species to be closely monitored! Arctic Rush (*Juncus arcticus*), also present in the reserve, is protected in the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. At least 66 species are listed in the national and/or regional red book. Species with admirable flowering, such as Turk's Cap Lily and Edelweiss (*Leontopodium*), are threatened by picking.

Among the remarkable plant species are endemic scree species of the Western Alps, such as Alpine Bellflower (*Campanula alpestris*) and Mont Cenis Violet (*Viola cenisia*), arctico-alpine species with a holarctic or Euro-Siberian distribution linked to low marshes and marshy areas, such as Slender Sedge (*Blysmus compressus*) and Alpine Butterwort (*Pinguicula alpina*), steppe-affiliated species confined to dry grasslands (Danish Milk-vetch, Feather Grass), and rare species found in France only in the Southern Alps (Cornelian *Gymnadenia*).

Natural Environments

Stretching between 1,600 to 2,940 meters above sea level, the regional nature reserve of the Partias covers the montane, subalpine, alpine stages, and reaches the limit of the nival stage. All the natural environments corresponding to this gradient are found on the site: larch forest, mountain meadows, alpine and subalpine heaths and grasslands, mountain bogs (bas-marais), scree slopes, and cliffs. Additionally, the nature reserve is home to two small mountain lakes.

