Dogs are not allowed, even on a lead, as they can harm ground-nesting birds and disturb wildlife and livestock. Only sheepdogs or rescue dogs may be admitted.

Bivouacking is tolerated from 7pm to 9am but it is forbidden to pitch a tent outside these hours or for several days.

Flying over the nature reserve at less than 300 m from the ground is prohibited except with a prefectural authorization. Drone, paraglider or any other aircraft are concerned.

In order to respect the peace and quiet of the area and to avoid damaging the soil, the use of motor vehicles is forbidden except for those entitled to use them (shepherd, owners of chalets, etc.).

Key
- Nature reserve boundaries
- Nature reserve entrance gate
- Summits
- Passes
- Refuges / Hostels
- Marked pathway
- Franco-swiss border
- Dangerous crossing

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 flora, fauna, landscapes and natural areas. The agents of nature reserves, the French Office of Biodiversity, the National Forestry Office and the National Gendarmerie, among others, are responsible for enforcing these regulations.

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Landscapes, nature and culture
A listed site preserves the landscape, a nature reserve the fauna, flora and ecosystems and a grand site also enhances the cultural heritage of the area. These three tools work together to welcome and guide the hundreds of thousands of visitors, while preserving the incredible natural, landscape and cultural heritage which Sixt Fer-à-Cheval is famous for!
The nature reserve of Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval / Passy, located in the commune of Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval and Passy, is managed by Asters, the Haute-Savoie Conservatory of Natural Areas.

THE PURPOSE OF A NATURE RESERVE

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 zoning.

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

Learning, discovering, learning, respecting... this space is open to the public and takes visitors for a journey into the past.

Insect species

Nearly 630 species of which are rare or protected

Nearly 940 species of plants

More than 80 km of marked pathways

Nearly 30 000 visitors each year

Phytosociological and palaeontological sites

Administration sites

The beauty of the site attracts many mountain sports enthusiasts (mountain biking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering, etc.). They have to comply with the regulations. Hikers are advised to stay on the paths. Climbers and mountaineers should limit disturbance to wildlife, especially in the avian. It is therefore advisable to find out all you can about the nature reserve.

Scientific monitoring is carried out to understand ongoing developments. A scientific committee supports the nature reserve manager in measuring the effects of climate change, the evolution of species populations and understanding the functioning of high altitude habitats.

The team of the Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval / Passy nature reserve manager regularly scans the area. Their tasks include scientific monitoring, restoration of natural environments and observations. The manager is also responsible for organizing and welcoming the public. Every summer, nature volunteers offer activities, outings and conferences to satisfy the curious.

ACTIVITIES IN THE NATURE RESERVE

The high peaks and ridge lines form a barrier to clouds. Often snow-covered, the ridges form a receptacle for atmospheric disturbance, which is why it rains a lot in Sixt.

Glaciers, such as the Roan, are present in the nature reserve. These glaciers and snowfields provide water reserves for the summer.

In some depressions water accumulates and forms valuable and sensitive wetlands.

The lakes on the Platé crest are the result of erosion. The flow of water has sculpted the relief, creating formations which are typical of limestone massifs: lapiaz but also caves, chimneys or glacial cirques.

The Ronda Serrana is carved out of four mountains. Conceived at the beginning of the 20th century, it owes its comeback to the work of passionate and determined ornithologists.

If you’re lucky enough to see one, it’s the result of the largest animal reintroduction programme in Europe! And don’t worry, it’s a scavenger which mainly feeds on bones.

Many iconic alpine animals are present in Sixt, including Marmots. They live between the snow and the snow. Initially in caves with panoramic views, they withdraw. They live in a family in a burrow with galleries and chambers lined with dry grass in which they set up their winter quarters to hibernate.

The ibex, which is now protected, almost disappeared from the Alps due to hunting and poaching. Successive reintroductions have increased the size of the populations. You’ll usually see them near large rocky ledges.

The Rock Ptarmigan lives at high altitude. It changes colour according to the season to blend in with its environment, and relies on its ability to escape predators. Climate change will greatly alter its habitat, making it an endangered species in the Alps.

The Bearded Vulture is the tallest bird in Europe. It likes the forests of the nature reserve, which have retained fairly wild due to the relief, which makes them difficult to exploit. This small owl hunts at dawn and dusk because its vision is poor in complete darkness. It builds up reserves of fat which it stores in anticipation of periods of scarcity.