

**D** Starting point

**P** Car Park  
Discovery trail car park or the Authie car park

**V** View point

**1** Follow the trail from the car park

**2** On arrival at the junction, take the path to the left

**O** Observation point

**i** Information point

**D** Be careful  
The trail is not suitable for bicycles. No horse riding.

This trail is maintained by the Syndicat Mixte Baie de Somme – Grand Littoral Picard (SMBS-GLP)

Sign posts	Route continues	Wrong direction	Change of direction

This leaflet was created by the Somme County Council

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03 22 71 80 80  
www.somme.fr

#### For more information:

- Tourist Offices:  
Fort-Mahon-Plage : 03 22 23 36 00  
Quend-Plage : 03 22 23 32 04  
www.office-tourisme-quend-plate.com
- Syndicat mixte Baie de Somme - Grand Littoral Picard : 03 22 20 60 30  
www.baiedesomme.org
- Somme Tourist Board:  
www.somme-tourisme.com  
www.somme-nature.com

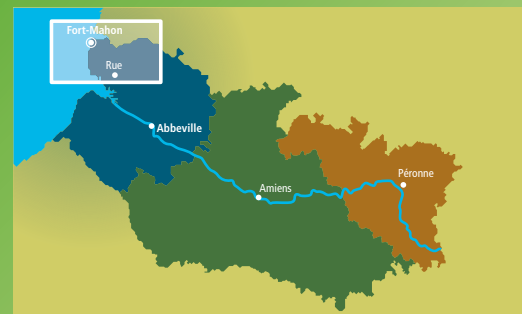


La Somme

## The Dune of Authie

Fort-Mahon, 12km from Rue, 40km from Abbeville

Walkers will be able to explore the dune slacks - water-filled depressions containing a rich biodiversity - when following this trail through the Dune of Authie.



**D** Starting at: the discovery trail car park

**C** Time: 1 hour

**R** Distance: 2,5km

**D** Route: very easy

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

Exploring the natural sites

Walk 1



# The Dune of Authie

The trail through the Dune of Authie will allow you to discover a variety of areas inhabited by many different species. Who would have thought that the European Tree Frog would thrive here? Keep your eyes open and prick up your ears because there are surprises around every corner on this walk.



**M Kramer,**  
Assistant Mayor of  
Fort Mahon Plage

"The dunes of Authie make a wonderful retreat away from the rapid pace and noise of the town. Knowing how to observe is a must; everyday the light and atmosphere is different. With a little patience and quiet, sometimes deer can be seen..."

## About the site

- > **Proprietor:** Conservatoire du Littoral
- > **Size:** 162ha
- > **Managed by:** Syndicat Mixte Baie de Somme-Grand Littoral Picard
- > **Maintenance partners:** Conservatoire botanique de Bailleul, Fort-Mahon-Plage Hunting Association, Municipality of Fort-Mahon-Plage
- > **Financial partners:** Somme County Council

## Specific Wetlands

Contrary to appearances these dunes are not dry areas. They house temporary ponds, known as dune slacks, where a remarkable biodiversity develops. These wet zones came about during the 19th Century. They started as simple depressions on the foreshore, covered by sea water during the high tides. Progressively belts of sand isolated the dune slacks from marine intrusions. Now, these shallow marshes are fed by rain falls and water rising from the water table. This is why the dune slacks are often dry in the summer.



Grass of Parnassus

## Varied Natural Habitats

During this visit you will discover five restored dune slacks well suited to many species of animals and plants. A perfect place for apprentice nature guides to learn to recognise plants such as: Marsh Pennywort, Various-leaved Pondweed, Grass of Parnassus, Water Mint and certain orchids, such as the Early

Marsh Orchid.

The plants grow according to the rise and fall of the water level. Certain plants can disappear and then re-inhabit the area several years later.

## A Naturalist's Dream

The dune slacks are a living store cupboard; many species find the necessary resources to live and reproduce here. In the springtime, if you look carefully you can see frogs, tiny daphne and many species of birds, like the Great Crested Grebe, the Little Grebe, thrushes or tits.

Dragonflies thrive here as well, and this indicates the quality of the wet zones.

Because they create a true oasis in the dunes, dune slacks are wonderful places to observe the fauna. It is not rare to see a deer grazing or a grey heron on the lookout for a Natterjack Toad, recognisable by the yellow line which highlights its backbone.



View of the dune slacks

## An Informative Route

Because the dunes, and notably the dune slacks, are fragile areas, a discovery trail has been created to avoid unnecessary disturbance. The trail has been equipped with interpretation panels, which enable visitors to learn about the whole area.

## An Objective for Preservation

To reduce the progressive loss of the dune slacks deforestation and clearing work has been carried out. Cleaning the ponds has allowed different species of plants to reappear as their seeds are brought to the surface. Each year, maintenance trimming is carried out in order to maintain an open and natural habitat.



Dragonfly