



D Starting point
At Amer Sud at Cayeux-sur-Mer

P Parking
Car Park situated alongside the sea-wall at Cayeux-sur-Mer

1 From the car park at Amer Sud, follow the sea-wall

2 Follow the path to the left that crosses the Low Lands

3 Take the path to the left

Observation Point

View point

Be careful:
The trail is not suitable for cycling or 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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For more information:

- Tourist Offices:
Cayeux-sur-Mer : 03 22 26 61 15
www.ot-cayeuxsurmer.fr
Ault : 03 22 60 57 15
www.ot-ault.fr
- 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 Hable D'Ault Avifauna Reserve

Cayeux-sur-Mer,
13km from Saint Valery-sur-Somme, 30km from Abbeville.

On the Picardy coast, explore this unique and preserved site: the Hable d'Ault, former lagoon protected from the sea by a wall of pebbles, is an important ornithological site.



D Starting point: Car park alongside the Cayeux-sur-Mer sea-wall at Amer Sud

Time: 1 hour 45 mins

Distance: 5km

Route: easy

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

Exploring the natural sites

Walk 4



The Hable d'Ault Avifauna Reserve

The Hable d'Ault is a unique site in France. The wet zone, protected by a sea-wall of pebbles, is a favourite site for nature lovers. No less than 270 different species of birds frequent it. This walk will allow you to discover a multitude of natural habitats in the heart of the Low Lands.



Alex Pion,
Hunter

"For 30 years, I have been fighting to preserve the Hable d'Ault and its wonderful biotope. Here, birds, plants, hunters, fishermen, walkers and tourists live alongside each other. To preserve this natural area, you must know how to maintain it, and disturb it as little as possible. I recommend the view point from the top of the sea-wall, where the beach, the cliffs and the sea can be seen. And I recommend people coming in groups to take a local guide, to better appreciate and respect the area".

About the site

- > **Proprietor:** Conservatoire du Littoral, National Office of Hunting and Wild Animals, Municipalities of Cayeux-sur-Mer and Woignarue
- > **Size:** 168ha
- > **Managed by:** Syndicat Mixte Baie de Somme-Grand Littoral Picard
- > **Maintenance partners:** Conservatoire botanique de Bailleul, ONCFS, Hunting Associations, Farmers
- > **Financial partners:** Somme County Council

A Little Bit of History

The term "Hable" comes from the word "hâvre" which means "port". In the Middle Ages, the site was the largest fishing centre in the North of France. The body of water was finally separated from the sea in 1766 by the Grand Barrement sea-wall to protect dwellings and fields from marine intrusions. Once free of sea water, it was developed for farming and then for waterfowl shooting, a traditional activity which has been continued as the numerous hides will show. Even though the port has now been lost, the area has kept its name.

Varied Natural Areas

The walk starts near the monument at Amer Sud at Cayeau-sur-Mer, where you will find a car park. From here you have a superb view of the Normandy Cliffs which start at Ault. Through the combined

actions of the tides, the weather and the frost, they are eroding, freeing blocks of chalk and flint.

The pieces of flint, taken by the current, crash together, break and smoothen to form pebbles. They then drift up alongside the Low Lands, forming a wall of natural protection, finishing their course at the Point of Le Hourdel. However, made fragile by human activities, the wall is today reinforced by more pebbles and concrete groynes.



Sea Kale

Follow the Low Lands pebble wall in front of the sea. Claimed from the sea, the Low Lands offer a great diversity of natural habitats to the walker. Birds reign supreme here and Henson horses can also be seen in their pastures. These are handsome horses of the bay, with their beautiful coats the colour of sand. All along the walk, a rich ecosystem is unveiled to you, where ponds framed with reeds and wet prairies alternate. Along the path you will certainly come across Ringed Plovers, small birds that nest on the ground: be careful not to leave the path, you could disturb a nest. The areas of pebbles, exceptional in France, host a rare protected plant: Sea Kale; in summer, its white flowers brighten up the grey of the pebbles.



A Nature Walk

When you arrive at the Hable d'Ault Avifauna Reserve you are in the Kingdom of the Birds: some 270 different species have been counted here. The most common are: the Great Crested Grebes, Shelducks, Great Cormorants, Ringed Plovers, Common Pochards and Common Reed Buntings, to name but a few. Use your binoculars to watch them so as not to disturb them.

As you continue your walk you will look down upon the gravel pits, which are frequented by many species of birds despite their seemingly hostile nature.

Lastly, you will return to the starting point invigorated by this walk between land and sea.

"Chers" Pebbles

"Chès Cayeux" is the name for pebbles in the Picardy Language. Blue or grey, these pebbles are an industrial wealth for the area. In their natural state they are used for decoration, when ground, they are used in poultry farming and to make sand paper. When processed, they make a fine powder which is used notably in surface coatings, ceramics and paints.

An Impressionist's Painting

In the springtime, the landscapes are painted with glowing colours. The tiny mauve flowers of Wild Thyme compete with the yellow petals of the Horn-poppy. Rare and fragile, these flowers are protected, please do not pick or trample them.



Wild Thyme in flower