



**D Starting Point**

**P Car Park**  
Car park at the belvedere (viewpoint)

**Be careful:**  
Hunting is carried out on this site.  
Please contact the local authorities to find out the dates of the hunting periods.

**Protect the natural environment**  
To help with the conservation of the rich natural habitats of this fragile site, please:  
 . Always use the marked trails  
 . Keep gates and stiles closed  
 . Respect the fauna and flora  
 . Take your litter away with you  
 . Always keep dogs on leads

This trail is maintained by the Poppy Country



**This leaflet was created by the Somme County Council**  
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**For more information:**  
 • Tourist Office:  
Poppy Country: 03 22 75 11 72  
www.tourisme-paysducoquelicot.com  
 • Audio-guide for the walk:  
www.zévisit.com/tourisme/pays-du-coquelicot  
 • Somme Tourist Board:  
www.somme-tourisme.com  
www.somme-nature.com

Managers of the site:  
 Conservatoire d'espaces naturels Picardie



# La Somme

## The Mountain of Frise

**Frise**, 9km from Bray-sur-Somme, 20km from Albert, 44km from Amiens

Discover the magnificent panoramic views that the Mountain of Frise has to offer and stroll around this natural site rich in history and nature!

**D Starting at:** Car park at the Belvedere of Frise

**Time:** 50 mins

**Distance:** 2,3km

**Route:** moderate

- ▶ Spring
- ▶ Summer
- ▶ Autumn
- ▶ Winter



## Exploring the natural sites

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# The Mountain of Frise

The Mountain of Frise is to be found on the chalk grasslands of the Haute Somme. Managed by the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie, this site, hosting a rich and unique natural habitat, proudly stands on its chalky cliff offering exceptional panoramic views over the wetlands and ponds of the upper Somme Valley. A nature and culture walk immersed in history.



**Bernard Decroix,**  
Mayor of Frise  
"Being a theatre of war, the site was classed as a red zone and left untouched after the First World

War. A lot of maintenance work has been carried out in this area and grazing has been reintroduced from May to October to preserve the habitat. Today, it is a recreational site enjoyed by locals and tourists."

## About the site

- > **Proprietor:** Municipality of Frise
- > **Size:** 10ha
- > **Managed by:** Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie
- > **Financial partners:** Europe, Regional Council, County Council

## A little bit of history

When visiting this site and setting out to discover its natural heritage, you will be walking over a tortuous relief: a testimony of its past history. A theatre of the Great War, the Mountain of Frise has retained its lasting traces of those terrible battles.

## Guided tour

To reach the site, take the direction of the Belvedere (viewpoint) of Frise and continue to the end of the track and car park. Opening the gate, you will discover the chalky hillside carved out by the Somme Valley. On the plateau, war has scarred the ground and you will find the remains of shell holes and trenches.

This walk is a real change of scenery where you will find exceptional species of fauna and flora, such as the beautiful



Fragrant Orchid

Swallowtail butterfly; or Blue Moor Grass, a Gramineae more familiar to mountainous regions. This is a protected species and exceptional in Picardy.

Arriving at the viewpoint, you will discover incredible views over the wetlands of Frise and Eclusier-Vaux or even the Somme Canal and, a little further away, the Mountain of Notre Dame de Vaux.

The ponds of the Somme have an unusual wetland system, and islands of reed beds partly wooded as the traditional activities that preserved the

areas have ceased. All along the walk you will notice striking contrasts between the types of vegetation: the sparse areas, covered with blankets of Wild Thyme; the mounds, home to Pasque Flowers and St. Bruno's Lillies; or the shady path leading downwards, where the Blue Moor Grass likes to shelter.

Follow the trail to the left to walk down the steps that will take you into the copse. Be careful as the slope is very steep. Cross the stile on the left to enter the clearing, which is transformed into a carpet of flowers in the warm seasons. Here, you may see St. Bruno's Lilies, characteristic of these dry, chalk grasslands and also found at the edges of woodlands. A protected species, from the Lys family, it is becoming rarer because of the loss of these short-grass areas. Several beautiful plots of these long stemmed plants adorned with delicate white flowers stand in the clearing of the Vache Woods.

On the right you will find an information panel revealing the secrets of the novel "The



**Pasque Flower:** The Pasque Flower is emblematic of the chalk grasslands (chalk-banks). This purple, bell-shaped flower with a golden centre is one of the first plants to flower on the chalk-banks from the beginning of April. This rare and fragile species has only been noted in very rare spots of the north of the Somme Valley; the site of Frise is one of its most northern localities.

Severed Hand", by Blaise Cendrars, who mentions Vache Woods (Bois de la Vache) during his stay at Frise as a soldier with the Allied forces.

Follow the trail to the right where old trenches built in stone are tucked away. Continue on to reach the copse. At the bottom of the steps, a stile will take you to the road. Turn right and follow the canal for 360 metres until you come to steps that will take you back to the clearing in the Vache Woods. To exit the site return to the first plateau.

## One of the last chalk-banks

Today, the Mountain of Frise is one of the last great chalk-banks of the Haute Somme. Various, emblematic flora and fauna, aided by the positioning of the banks and their proximity to the wetlands, can be seen and enjoyed here. Because of this, species more familiar to mountainous regions enjoy the north-facing banks, while in close proximity, species of a more southern nature can be found in the sunnier spots. In order to preserve the natural heritage of the chalk-banks the management of the site has been entrusted to the Conservatoire d'Espaces Naturels de Picardie. Notably, it has restored grazing in partnership with a local farmer, fitted the site with fences and, with the help of many volunteers, carried out maintenance strimming and scything operations.



**Southern Marsh Orchid**  
The Southern Marsh Orchid usually grows in peat bogs and wet grasslands. Here, this plant finds sufficient cool air and dampness from the wetlands at the foot of the site. Very robust, it reveals its beautiful palette of light pink to violet-red colours when it flowers from June to July.