

# The Bois Chétif bocage

Balades et randos région de Chinon - Huismes



Photographie d'une toute sur la Loire (Aurore Poveda)



*Located at the confluence of the Indre and Loire rivers, the Sensitive Natural Area of Bois Chétif - Dr. Marc Jacquet (former departmental councillor who initiated protection of the site) is a wet bocage rich in biodiversity. It has been preserved thanks to a partnership with farmers. You will be crossing grazed meadows, so please respect the work of the farmers: don't open the gates, don't approach the animals, and keep your dog on a lead. Please note! This is a wetland area, and part of the path is impassable in winter.*

## Useful information

Practice : Hiking

Duration : 2 h 30

Length : 8.2 km

Trek ascent : 16 m

Difficulty : Easy

Type : Loop

Themes : Flora, River and stream

**Departure** : Picnic area in Huismes

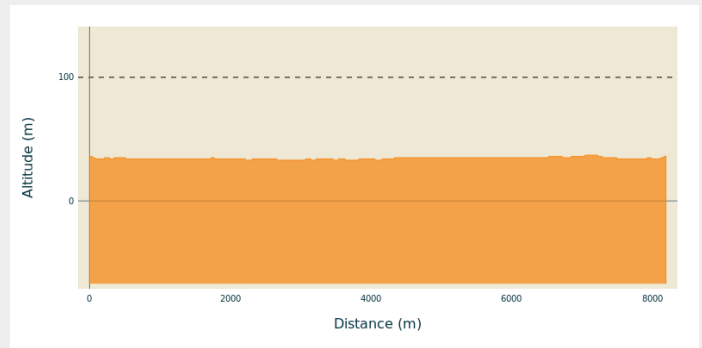
**Arrival** : Picnic area in Huismes

**Cities** : 1. Huismes

2. Avoine

3. La Chapelle-sur-Loire

## Altimetric profile



Min elevation 33 m Max elevation 37 m

### 1. Parking and picnic area

This area, with its children's games, toilets and tables, is the starting point for your walk. Take the narrow road northwards. After the bridge over the Indre, turn left and head west.

### 2. View of the Indre

The Indre flows through southern Touraine, meeting the Loire a few hundred metres from here. The river frequently floods the surrounding meadows. They fertilise the meadows. These are natural flood expansion zones that protect the market towns from damage.

Continue straight ahead and take the wooden walkway next to the meadow fence. You are now on a farm track laid out between hedgerows.

### 3. Pastures

The bocage landscape is shaped by livestock farming, with meadows interspersed with hedgerows that delimit the plots and shelter the animals from the heat, wind and rain. The wet meadows produce good quality grass, in large quantities and for a large part of the year.

### 4. Pollarded trees

A pollarded tree is one that is periodically pruned to the same height (every 5 to 10 years), giving it a characteristic bloated head. Trees surrounding meadows were once pollarded to produce firewood and fodder for animals in dry years. This high pruning protected the branches from the teeth of animals, thus ensuring the tree's survival. These 'trognes' are extremely valuable for biodiversity, as the old trees contain cavities that provide a habitat for wood-eating insects, bees, bats, owls, etc. ....

Follow the signs through the undergrowth, cross the meadow and return to the farm track. At the end of this path, turn right to join the Loire by bike.

### 5. Viewpoint over the Loire and La Chapelle-sur-Loire

This is one of the best views of the Loire. Take your time to admire it. The last 'wild' river in France, it is still home to unspoilt nature, including many birds. On the other bank, you can see the village of La Chapelle-sur-Loire and its church in

the distance.

#### 6. Embarcadère

In summer, the Vents d'la Galerne boatmen from La Chapelle-sur-Loire offer scheduled crossings of the Loire. On a toue - a boat that used to be used for traditional fishing - you can go to the right bank of the river. Please note that the landing stage can be moved depending on the location of the sandbanks in the Loire and the water level.

#### 7. Ponds

There are a number of woodland pools along the Bois Chétif levee, most of which were created when land was borrowed to build the levee in the 1850s. Forest pools are useful for amphibian reproduction.

#### 8. The dyke

The end of your walk is approaching. After walking along a small cobbled passageway, which bears witness to the partial levelling of the dyke following the flooding of La Chapelle-sur-Loire in the 19th century, you will leave the banks of the river by taking the path on the right to return to your starting point. We hope you've had a great time, and that you'll be keen to discover more of Touraine's rich heritage and environment.

# On your path...



# All useful information

 **At the water's edge**

 **Vue sur fleuve ou rivière**

# Environmental sensitive areas

Along your trek, you will go through sensitive areas related to the presence of a specific species or environment. In these areas, an appropriate behaviour allows to contribute to their preservation. For detailed information, specific forms are accessible for each area.

## **Site Natura 2000 des basses vallées de la Vienne et de l'Indre**

Sensitivity period: January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, Decembre

The site was designated in 2005 under the Birds Directive. The Park has been coordinating the site since 2010 (initially for the period 2010-2016, then renewed for 2016-2019 and 2019-2022), in conjunction with the CPIE Touraine-Val de Loire and the Indre-et-Loire Chamber of Agriculture.

The low valleys are largely covered by natural flood meadows, which are mown and/or grazed. These meadows form large complexes that are home to rare and endangered birds: corncrake, red-backed shrike, meadowlark, spotted crake, etc.

Certain sectors are characterized by a dense bocage network, with pollarded trees surrounding the meadows (Véron bocage): this is the home of the Common Fritillary, Natterjack Toad, Great Capricorn...

Finally, the banks of the Vienne and Indre rivers are occupied by alluvial woodlands and poplar plantations.