



STROLL THROUGH “LE MONT DES SENS”

WITH THE « MONT DES SENS », LIVE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE 5 SENSES AT THE HEART OF THE CALESTIENNE, A PIECE OF PARADISE OF PARTICULARLY MILD AND DRY CLIMATE SHELTERING MANY TYPICAL ANIMAL AND PLANT SPECIES. FOLLOW THE YELLOW ARROWS TO DISCOVER THIS ENCHANTING PATH...

ALONG THE WAY, DIFFERENT WOODBURNT PLATES ON COMMON TREE SPECIES WILL SHOW YOU THE FORM OF THEIR BLADES.

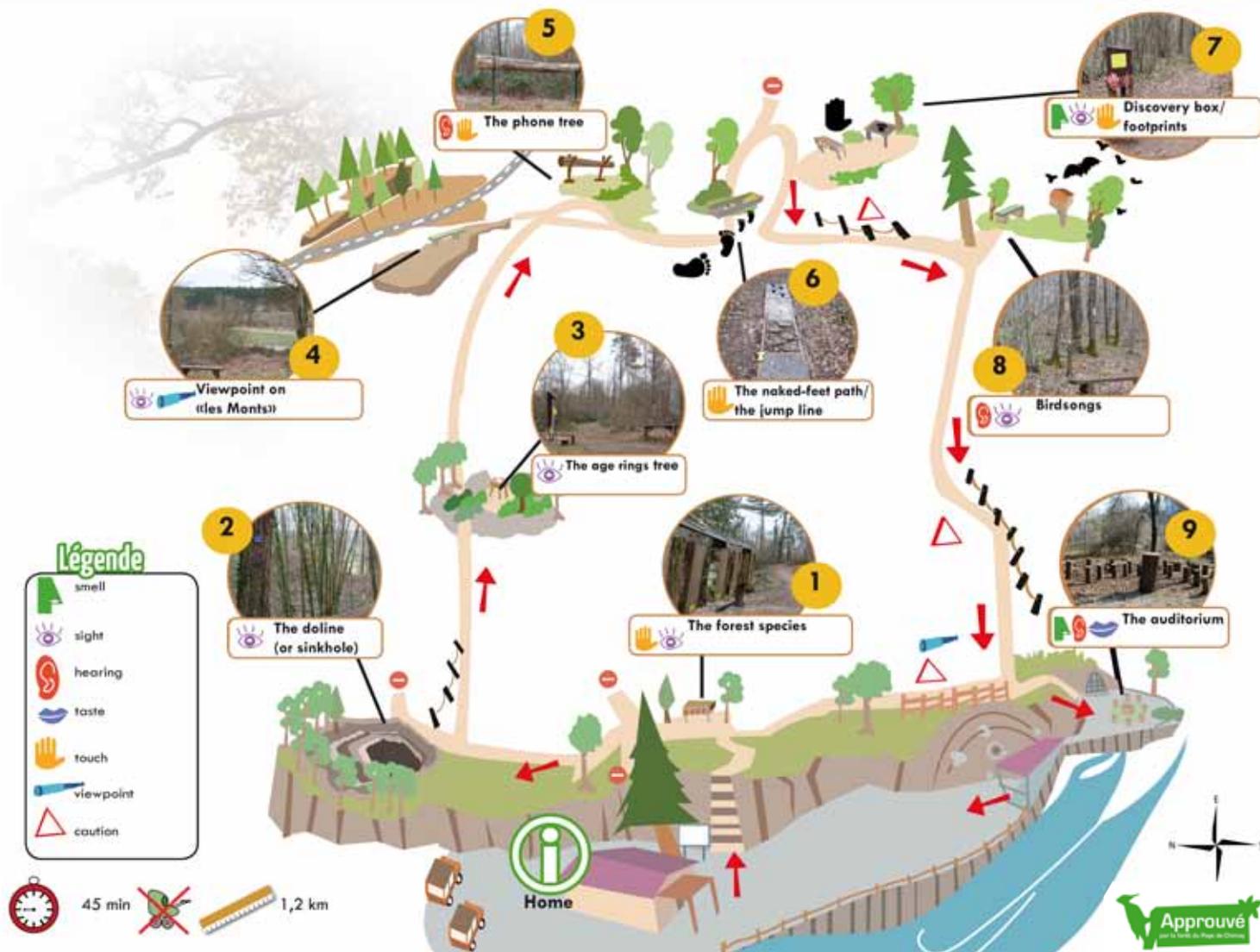


Walking code of conduct

You are entering a zone of protected habitats Natura 2000, housing relatively rare animal and plant species. Please respect nature and follow the instructions below:

- Stay on the path to preserve the balance between the growth of plants and the fauna that lives in it.
- You will find many protected species here; it is thus forbidden to mutilate trees or pick flowers (orchids, scilla bifolia, daffodils...)
- Keep your dog on a lead. It may otherwise disturb bird's nests build on the ground by some species, or frighten animals because of its odour
- Avoid throwing rocks; think of the people walking below
- Never build any fire; the damage caused is always far more important than you would think
- The path is accessible all year round... even during hunting times! Be especially careful between October 1st and December 31st. Respect red ban signs for your safety.

Caution : The walk takes place on a hillside; parts of the path may thus become slippery in bad weather. Remain careful !





The forest species



1 On this display are ten different tree species that are commonly found in our temperate climate and are very often exploited by the forestry industry. Just imagine: building of houses and furniture, tools, use as fuel... wood serves all purposes.

Close your eyes and touch the barks...can you make out the difference between all the species? Test your knowledge elsewhere now: choose a tree randomly, close your eyes and guess which tree species it belongs to only by touch.

The doline (or sinkhole)



2 The subsoil of the Calestienne is composed of limestone. Through the mechanical and chemical erosion caused by acid waters that abrade and dissolve the stone, caves and underground cavities are formed. If one of these is located close to the surface, it may happen that its ceiling collapses if it becomes too thin. On the outside, the ground caves in and creates a basin- or funnel-shaped depression: the doline. This creates a whole new environment to which nature will adapt; have you seen how the base of trees arches to seek the daylight?

The age rings tree



3 Trees, just as we do, grow and get old... but did you know that it is possible to know their age? The trunk of trees grows with a few millimeters each year, leaving a circle-shaped mark visible. This mark is a wood age ring: a light one grows during the spring and summer and a dark one during the autumn. To determine the age of a tree, all you need to do is count the number of rings it possesses... Try it out now! According to you, how old is our oak chopping?

Viewpoint on «les Monts»



4 Sit on the bench, relax and take time to look at the landscape of the Calestienne.

The phone tree



5 A phone tree ? Isn't it rather meant to be a beech trunk? To test it, go stand at one end of our phone tree and ask someone to go listen at the other end. Choose a number and knock it on the trunk...does the other person guess the number you chose? The wood of certain tree species possesses the incredible capacity of amplifying sounds. For that reason it is often used to produce music instruments such as violins (maple, spruce) or guitars (spruce, red cedar, lime, ash...)

The naked-feet path / the jump line



6 Nature offers such a diversity! So many sounds, colours, textures...
If the weather's nice enough, don't hesitate: take off your shoes and walk through our naked-feet path. By cold or rainy weather, give the jump line a try: place your joined feet at point zero on the bar and jump as far as possible. Can you do better than our forest animals (or than our cousin the ape?)

Chimpanzee: 60cm (1.9 ft) ; wood mouse: 70cm (2.2 ft) ; grasshopper: 1,2m (1.3 yd) ; hare: 3m (3.2 yd) ; squirrel: 4m (4.3 yd); roe deer : 6m (6.5 yd).

Discovery box/ footprints



7 It's the turn of your hands now! Thrust them into the openings and create the content of the boxes delicately...can you name all these small natural elements coming from your immediate environment? Crease, rub, scratch; these produce light sounds too... In the middle of it all, an animal element...have you found it?

Animals here may have left behind traces of their passage: empty nuts, gnawed cones, hollowed-out tree trunks...unless it were footprints? Look at the panel and lift the footprints to learn to whom they belong.

Birdsongs



8 Sit down on the bench, remain silent and listen with attention. Do you hear this concert that sometimes turns into high-pitched calls and cries of alarm ?

If you found nuts, berries or others on your way, place them in the animal feeder...birds and squirrels may only be thankful for your gift.

The auditorium



9 Behind the auditorium stand mysterious boxes. To discover their content, open the lid and place your nose above the round hole. Stick your hand in the lateral opening and create the bag inside. Do you recognise the smell of these aromatic plants? Most of them grow in their natural state on our calcareous soil.



For more information contact «les Grottes de Neptune» - Rue de l'Adujoir 24, 5660 Petigny
 info@grottesdeneptune.be - <http://www.grottesdeneptune.be>
 +32 (0)60 31 19 54

