



National Park Arevik



About National Park Arevik

Arevik National Park is located at South-eastern end of Armenia on the slopes of Meghri and Zangezur Mountain ridges, and in total covers 34.400 hectares of land. It was established in October of 2009, as joint effort of Ministry of nature Protection of RA and WWF Armenia. Being situated at the elevation range from 800 m up to 3700 meters above sea level, the park includes wide variety of habitats such as semi-deserts, scrublands, juniper woodlands, deciduous mountain forests, mountain steppes, alpine grasslands, riparian forests, etc. The terrain is fairly steep and rigorous, with number of cliffs, and rocky canyons. The species diversity of the area is also significant. There is a wide variety of species of animals and plants including over 180 species of birds and over 1500 species of vascular plants. Among mammals there are such significant species such as Persian Leopard, Bezoar Goat and Armenian Mouflon, birds are represented by Bearded, Egyptian and Griffon Vultures, Caspian Snowcock, Caucasian Black Grouse, Black-eared and Persian Wheatears, Orphean, Menetrie's and Upcher's Warblers, Eastern and Western Rock Nuthatches, among reptiles one can find Four-lined, Dahl's Whip, and Iranian Cat Snakes, Levant and Schneider's Skinks, in the fauna of dragonflies there are Emperor Dragonfly, Small Pincertail, and Slender Skimmer, in beetles there are some beautiful ones as Huge Violet Ground Beetle, Great Capricorn Beetle, the flowers are presented by Caucasian Iris, Grossheim's Iris, Early Purple Orchid, Monkey Orchid, Lady Orchid, etc. The area of National Park Arevik and adjacent territories are home for 154 species of butterflies. Among those there are endemics of Caucasus, Middle-eastern and Asian species, and also typical European species of butterflies. For seven butterfly species (such as Skipper *Gegenes nostradamus*, and Copper *Athamanthia phoenicura*) the National Park Arevik is the only place,



where they can be observed in Armenia. Remote areas of the Park still keep the spirit of wilderness - which gradually becomes a rarity in Armenia. The area is very safe for tourists, but for the reason of minimizing the damage of nature it is recommended to keep the trails only. The staff of National Park is ready to provide necessary guidance and to show the most pleasant sites and creatures of this part of the world.

Trail Meghri



The trail is within an elevation range from 950 to 1060 m a.s.l. and is designed for watching butterflies that are typical of the semi-deserts of southern Armenia, but also some species that can be found only in the Meghri region of Armenia. The length of trail is about 600 meters, the steepness varies from 5° to 10°.

There are more than 50 species of butterfly that can be observed on the trail during the year. They include Inky Skipper *Erynnis marloyi*, Grüner's Orange Tip *Anthocharis gruneri*, Powdered Brimstone *Gonepteryx farinosa*, Freyer's Grayling *Hipparchia fatua*, Black-spotted Pierrot *Tarucus balcanicus*, the specialty of the area – *Agrodiaetus damonides* and other semi-desert

specialists. The best time to visit is between mid-May and mid-June, when over 30 species are on the wing.

In spring, it is recommended to walk the trail between 11:00 and 15:00. On hot days during the summer, it is recommended to start at 9:00 and finish by 11:30 at the latest. Other interesting wildlife can be seen on the trail including birds such as Black-eared Wheatear, Roller, Woodchat Shrike and Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin.



Trail Agarak



The trail is within an elevation range from 690 to 700 m a.s.l., and is designed to watch butterflies that are specialists of riparian areas – a unique jungle-like habitat surrounded by dry and hot semi-desert. Orchards on the outskirts of small towns and villages in southern Armenia are integrated into the riparian forests and scrublands. Some butterflies from semi-desert habitats also concentrate in this humid area. The length of the trail is about 300 meters, the steepness is less than 5°. Over 70 species of butterfly can be observed on this trail during the year. They include Dingy Swift *Gegenes nostradamus*, *Eogenes alcides*, White-edged Rock Brown *Hipparchia parisatis*, Ionian Emperor *Thaleropsis ionia*,

Short-tailed Blue *Everes argiades*, Iolas Blue *Iolana iolas*, and other species typical of both semi-desert and riparian habitats. The best time to visit is between mid-May and mid-June, when 40-50 species are flying.

In spring, it is recommended to walk the trail between 11:00 and 15:00. In summer time butterflies are active from 9:00 to 15:00, and the riparian area provides abundant shade, so staying here is not as dangerous as in the surrounding hot semi-desert. Some interesting birds can be seen on the trail including Levant Sparrowhawk, Hobby, Syrian Woodpecker and Golden Oriole.



Trail Gudemnis



The trail is located at elevation from 1330 to 1390 m a.s.l. It lays through the steppe area covered by thorny *Astragalus* bushes alternated by some groups of trees. Various legumes and grasses grow here providing wide variety of host-plants for butterflies, while thorny bushes and walnut trees provide shelter and shade. The length of trail is about 400 meters, the steepness varies from 5° to 10°. There are about 60 species of butterflies that can be observed on this trail during the year. They include such specific ones as Marbled Skipper *Carcharodus lavatherae*, *Colias aurorina*, *Melanargia larissa*, *Tomares romanovi*, *Vacciniina alcedo*, and other species that live in this so-called tragacanth steppes. The



best time when about 50 species are on wing is from 20th of May till 10th of July. In spring time it is recommended to walk the trail in 12:00 till 15:00 when the weather is warm enough. In summer time the recommended time for walking is from 10:00 to 13:00.

The observations on this trail can be supplemented by birds, such as Snake Eagle, Booted Eagle, European Bee-eater, Stonechat, etc.

Trail Shvanidzor semi-desert



The trail is within an elevation range from 950 to 1030 m a.s.l. The semi-desert area in surroundings of village Shvanidzor is a unique habitat that attracts wide variety of semi-desert species. Specific soil, and Mediterranean climate make the place exceptional for Armenia. One species – Grass Jewel *Chilades trochilus* – can be observed only here in entire Armenia. The length of trail is about 500 meters, the steepness varies from 5° to 10°. There are about 50 species of butterflies that can be observed on this trail during the year. Beside the mentioned Grass Jewel, they include Southern Swallowtail *Papilio alexanor*, Jerusalem fritillary *Melitaea ornata*, Brown *Chazara bischoffi*, Orange Banded

Hairstreak *Satyrrium ledereri*, Copper *Lycaena phoenicura*, and others. The best time to visit this area is from 15th of May till 20th of June when about 30 species are on wing.

In spring time it is recommended to walk the trail in 11:00 till 15:00. On hot days during the summer, it is recommended to start at 9:00 and finish by 11:30 at the latest. The observations on this trail can be supplemented by birds, such as Orphean and Upcher's Warblers, Black-headed Bunting, etc., starting from June Pale Rock Sparrows can be observed as well.



Trail Gyumorats forest



The trail is within an elevation range from 1570 to 1600 m a.s.l. and is located at southern type of mountain forest that is characterized by absence of beech trees. This type of forest is often altered by steppe like habitats, which make the butterfly diversity even more reach than the one of typical old-growing forest. Calcereous type of soil supports wide variety of legumen crops. The length of trail is about 500 meters, the steepness is from 5° to 10°. There are over 80 species of butterflies that can be observed on this trail during the year. They include such typical widespread forest species as Great Banded Grayling *Brintesia circe*, and Pearl-bordered Fritillary *Boloria euphrosyne*, as well as specific *Hipparchia syriaca*, *Plebejus zephyrinus*, and the specialty of the area – a Blue *Agrodyetus zarathustra* ssp. *neglectus*. The best time of year to visit is July 5th to 20th when over 50 species are on wing.

The recommended time of walking the trail is from 11:00 till 15:00.

The observations on this trail can be supplemented by birds, such as Booted Eagle, Green and Middle Spotted Woodpecker, Semi-collared Flycatcher, Green Warbler, etc.



Trail Gyumorats steppe



The trail is within an elevation range from 2100 to 2170 m a.s.l. The steppe in surroundings of summer village Gyumorats is a paradise for grasses and legume herbs. One of the dominating subshrubs here is a Sainfoin *Onobrychis cornuta* that hosts four species of specialist butterflies. The tufts of greenweed are coloring the slopes in a bright yellow during the summer period. The length of trail is about 450 meters, the steepness is about 15°. There are about 40 species of butterflies that can be observed on this trail during the year, but most of them are very specific ones. They include False Marbled Skipper *Carcharodus stauderi*, White *Leptidea duponcheli*, Hairstreak *Callophrys paulae*, Blues

Agrodiaetus vanensis and *Agrodiaetus firdussi* and other species specialized in living in this hard conditions. The best time when 20 to 30 species are flying is 10th to 30th of July.

The trail is somewhat steep and might be slippery so one should consider having stick and good boots. The recommended time to walk the trail is 11:00 till 15:00.

The observations on this trail can be supplemented by birds, such as Stonechat, Common Rosefinch, Radde's Accentor, Ortolan Bunting, etc.

