

Regional Nature Park Pfyn-Finges Brief Portrait



since 2009: Regional Nature Park Candidate
237 km² area
26,091 Inhabitants
Canton of Valais



Mysterious Nature Park

In the heart of the canton of Valais the Pfyf-Finges nature park stretches over the park communities of Gampel-Bratsch, Oberems, Unterems, Guttet-Feschel, Erschmatt, Turtmann, Agarn, Leuk, Varen, Salgesch, Mollens and Sierre. The area lies between 500 and 4,100m above sea-level, a height difference of 3600m. More than in almost any other region of Switzerland the visitor is confronted with a widely contrasting and fascinating spectrum of nature and culture ranging from the wild River Rhone up to the glaciers, from flower meadows to rock faces, and from the language boundary to another mentality. For both indigenous inhabitants and visitors it is a unique habitat and area for experience.

Each of the twelve communities has an abundance of natural resources and mysterious places to be discovered. In this culturally rich region you do not only come across plants and animals, but also castles, mercenaries and witches!

The place of unusual dynamic biodiversity at the language boundary

The heart of the nature park is the Pfyf-Finges nature reserve forest, one of the largest pine forest in the Alps. The forest of Pfyf-Finges covers 17 km² and is one of the most important places of biodiversity in Switzerland. The region is

not only popular with visitors but is also extremely interesting for researchers.

The wild River Rhone and the ponds characterise the area as do the steppes, water meadows, jungle-like stretches and flower meadows rich in species. The landscape tells many stories; the geology here shows what has changed during the course of the centuries.

A imposing contemporary witness is the Illgraben - the largest slide in the world. One of the wildest torrent channels in the Swiss Alps has an erosion crater of 10 km² and consists of quartzite, limestone deposits and dolomite. Over the past 10 years, 35 mudslides per year have been registered. On average, the Illgraben transports 30,000 m³ material, which corresponds to 3000 fully-loaded big lorries - every time!

The area between Siders/Sierre and Gampel is renowned for its numerous, some very rare species of birds, which can only be found here.

Welcome in the Nature and Landscape Centre of Salgesch

The nature park has found its home in the renovated 300 year-old St. John's Commandery. The Salgesch Nature and Landscape Centre is the contact point and administrative centre of the nature park. Here is the reception, office premises, an exhibition of a topical theme and the nature park shop. In the

shop you can discover to your heart's content local products, souvenirs and ideas for gifts.

A chance for the region

The Pfyf-Finges nature park offers the region a unique chance. The nature park can be used as a communication and marketing platform for partnerships and cooperation, that would hardly be possible otherwise. New marketing channels are opening. Traditional values are the cornerstone for a regional identity, which can be actively shaped by the population.

www.pfyf-finges.ch