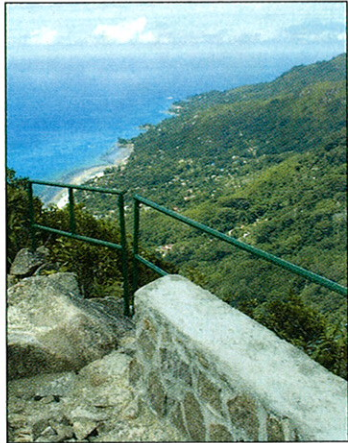


Half way up, there is a short metal ladder to aid the climb over some boulders. In fact, enormous boulders and chaotic rock formations are an impressive feature of this forest. As you approach the end of the path, there are safety railings along the side of the rocky outcrop.



Sounds from the town of Victoria, below, greet you as soon as you reach the top. Here too the site is made safe so that you can enjoy the panoramic view which extends from the West (Beau Vallon) to Mont Signal and the North, right around to the South East (the airport), with the whole of Victoria at your feet.



Protected viewpoint

than any ecological richness. In fact the Le Niol highlands have been badly affected in the past by the exploitation of timber, as much for the distillation of cinnamon leaves as for the value of the timber. Later, plantations of Eucalyptus species were established to control the effects of soil erosion.

In the valley to the south of the ridge are forestry plantations of santol, mahogany and pine. Along the ridge, the vegetation is secondary, with common exotic species dominating, but scattered amongst these are hardy endemic species such as Bois Rouge, Coco Marron, Bois Calou and Vacoa.

Only on the rocky top of Dan Gallas is there a greater proportion of native vegetation, with Bois Calou and Café Marron Petite Feuille, reflecting a little of the biological diversity of the adjacent hills and cliffs of Trois Frères.

To return, follow the same route as far as the forestry road. There, you can either go back to the Information Point or follow the forestry road to the right, which leads directly to the Le Niol road close to a bus stop.

ECOLOGY OF THE SITE

The main features of this trail are the panoramic views and the scenery which you discover as you follow the route, rather

Nevertheless, the Cinnamon and Albizia forest on the upper slopes of Dans Gallas shelters several Scops Owls (*Otus insularis*), which can be heard at twilight for one or two hours. If you hear a second call coming in-between the first, rather like two saws working alternately, a pair is probably courting. Fruit bats are frequently seen from the ridge in the late afternoon, flying off in search of food.

Fruit bats,



Length : 2 km Change in altitude : 310m
 Time to go and come back : 2 h 30
 Main interest : panoramic views
 Physical difficulty : medium to high
 Attention: Parts of the trail are exposed to the sun

Café marron (wild coffee)



produced by:
 Environment Division
 Forestry Section,
 National Parks Unit

Botanical Gardens
 Mont Fleuri
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Dans Gallas

— NATURE TRAIL 3 —



WHY THIS NAME?

The site was inhabited by the Gallas, Ethiopian people who were released on Mahé during the 19th century after their liberation by the British Navy from the Arab dhows, which continued to trade in slaves along the East African coast. People say that the place was inhabited by giants on account of the stature of these tall and thin people.

HOW TO GET THERE

The simplest way is to take the SPTC bus no. 32 as far as the terminus at Le Niol. On the opposite side of the road is an Information Point for the National Park, where you can get more detailed information during working hours. This is also the starting point of the trail.

THE ROUTE

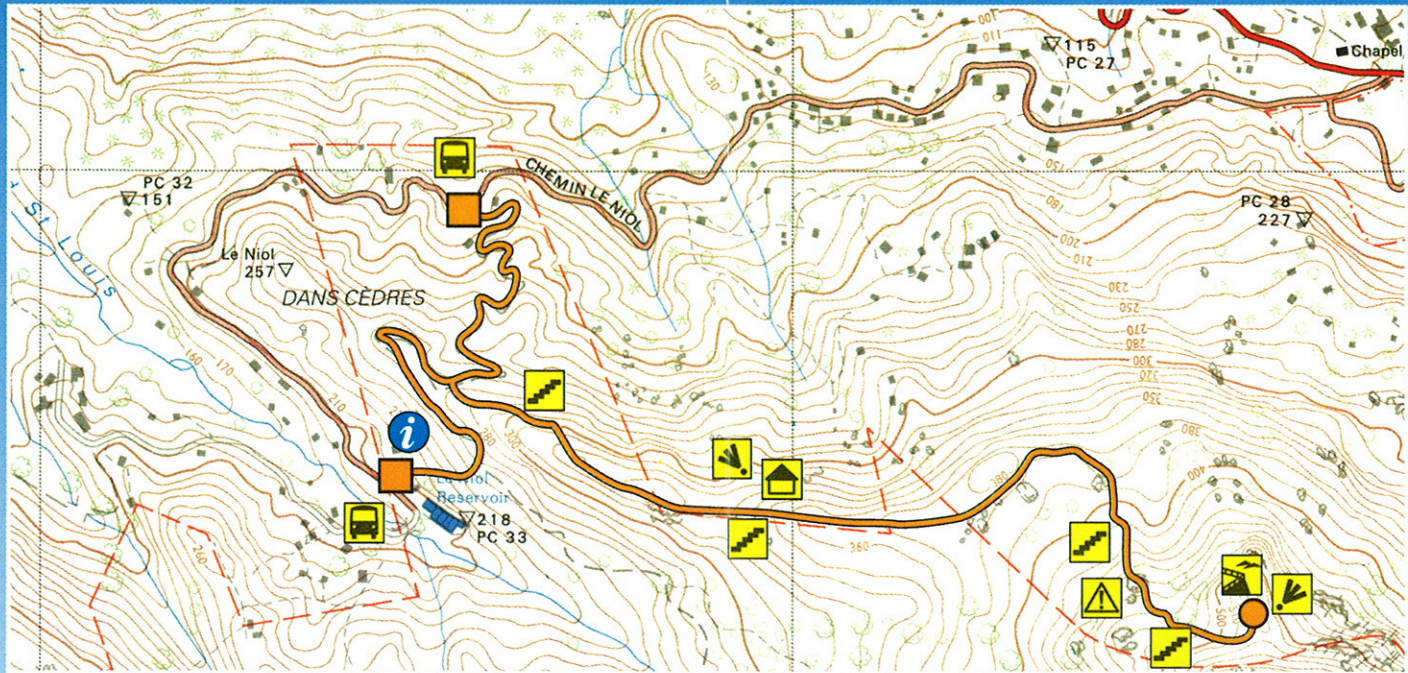
After the Information Point, the path proceeds steeply upwards to join an old forestry road which was opened up and built manually during the colonial era. Follow this more gently sloping track to the left for about 250m.

The trail then leaves the track to go up along the ridge. The steepest parts are equipped with wooden steps. Half way along, a wooden shelter welcomes you for a break and gives you a chance to enjoy the view over Beau Vallon Bay, with Silhouette island and the smaller North island on the horizon.

Close to the shelter are wild pineapple plants. The surrounding vegetation is mainly bushes of *Cocoplum* and *Cinnamon*, with taller *Eucalyptus* trees remaining from an old plantation, and some endemic spiny-leaved screw pines (*Pandanus*) known locally as *Vacoo*.



Steep parts are equipped with wooden steps



Wooden shelter overlooking a viewpoint

After the wooden shelter the path is easier. Endemic palms make an appearance, along with *Coco Marron* (*Curculigo sechellarum*) which looks like a coconut seedling but has short black prickles and belongs to a different plant family. Forest then progressively replaces the scrub.

The small river marks where there was previous habitation, with planted breadfruit trees and bamboo. The final part of the route requires more physical effort, so each person should take it at their own pace. The path is again equipped with wooden steps to make it easier. You climb through Cinnamon forest, with majestic *Albizia* trees and tall palms. The large broad leaves of one palm, *Latanier Feuille*, were used extensively in the past as thatching material for houses.

