

THE "PERREYEUX"... AND SLATE



The slate deposit of "La forêt" has been mined since the 19th century. Open quarries, Recognisable now by the churned up ground, gave way to underground mining.

The 1st shaft was dug in 1884. The nearness of several shafts caused some landslides. Fortunately, no casualties were reported.



From 1884 until 1894, over 600 miners used to work in the quarries. Each day, most of them used to take Le Chemin bleu to go to work. They were given the name of "perreyeurs" (slate workers).

(Mots et expressions des Patois d'Anjou - Yavard - 1999)



From 1880, several council estates were built away from the deposits to prevent landslides.

The buildings were sometimes connected to each other by walkways. Slate is everywhere: roofs, stairs... It is even used as garden fences.

This trail is registered in the P. D. I. P. R.
(Departmental Map of routes dedicated to walks and trails).

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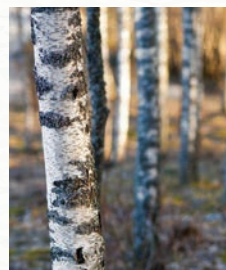
Do not litter.

COLONISING PLANTS



Today, the lands next to the former slate mine shafts are being colonized by pioneering plants. These species are able to take advantage of poor depleted soils such as slag heaps (piles of mining wastes).

The **silver birch**, identifiable by its white bark and light foliage, can grow in poor but damp and sunny grounds.



Grey lichens are growing on rocky grounds and trunks. Either completely flat or cushion-like, they offer quite unusual scenery.

Source: Guide des arbres et arbustes - Reader's digest selection - 1986



Also not to be missed in Bel-Air, the "boule de fort". The game is played on a settled, hull-shaped ground on which the balls have a strong-impact side and light-impact side to them.

Cercle des Perreyeurs - Rue Vicor Richard

In case you notice any anomaly on your way through, please inform the Commune d'Ombree d'Anjou. Your remarks will help us maintain all the trails in good condition.

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IGN MAP:
1420 0

COMBRÉE



Le Chemin Bleu

In the footsteps of the miner in a mask

Start: Picnic area of Bel-Air de Combrée,
on your right behind the school

➔ 13 km - 3.15 hours

— Road markers

In the footsteps of the Perreyeux (slate workers), take the Chemin Bleu and discover our mining heritage and landscapes near the Misengrain valley...



Le Chemin Bleu

Start: in the footprints of the Perreyeux (slate workers)...

From the picnic area, on your right behind the school, swimming-pool and sports centre and then on your left after the "pétanque" court (bowling game) up to the wide trail.

1: On your way to the former mines

Turn left in **Le Chemin bleu** then 1st on your right towards the houses. Cross the main road, walk along by the slate fences on the left-hand side, walk further up the trail and then along the field. You then reach the **Cité de la Forêt**, a former miner council estate.

2: From the slate quarries of Bel Air to Misengrain's

On your right, walk along by the houses and then on the trail up to a tarred road. Turn right then left (stride over the wire) and walk up the lane to the main road. **Former railroad that used to connect Misengrain slate quarries to Bel Air's.**

3: Near the former railroad

Turn right, take the 1st road on your left, coming up to the last houses take the lane on your right along the housing estate. Walk under the former railway, keep walking on the lane on your right and then on a road.

4: Private forest boundary

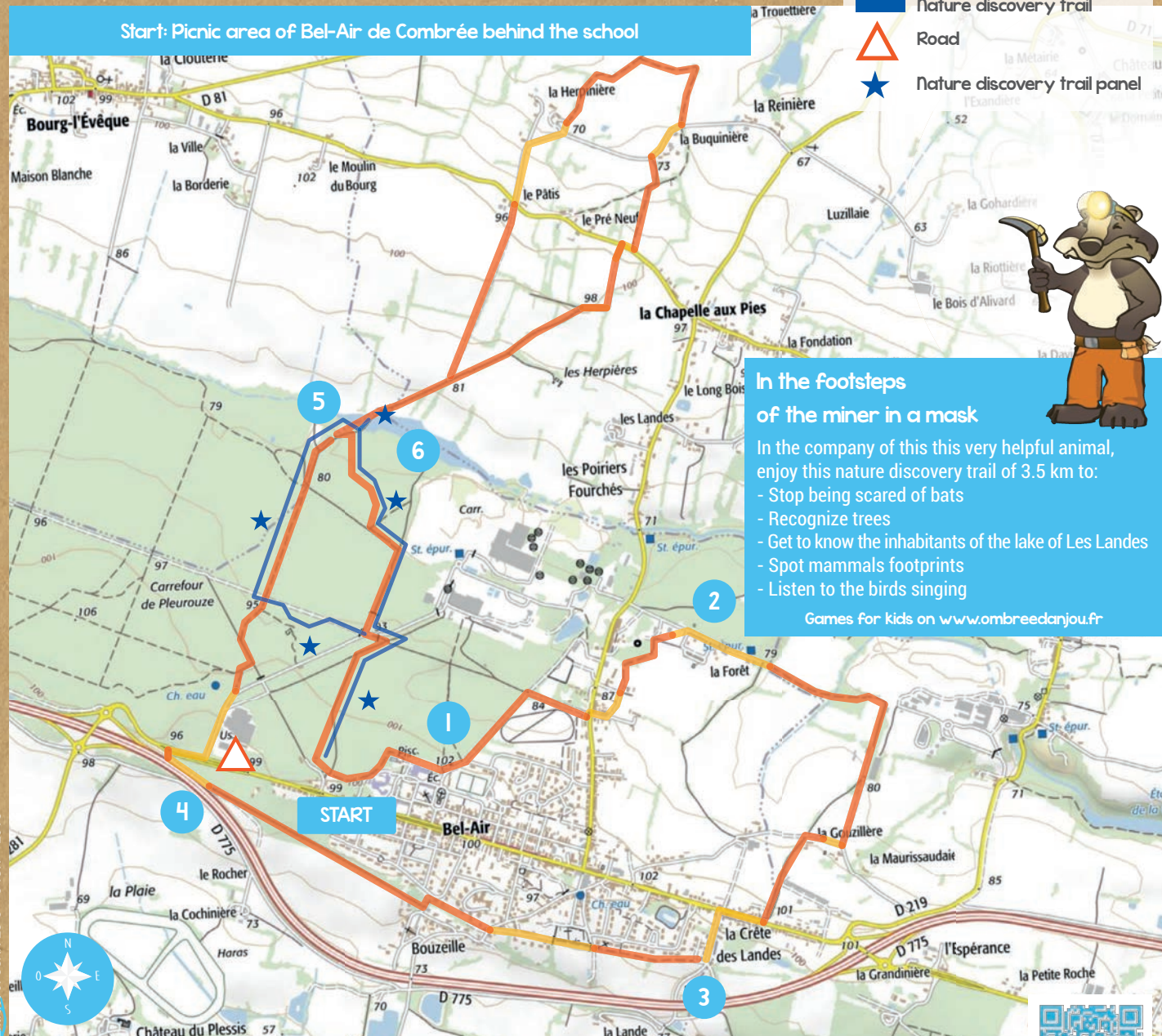
Take a lane on your right going up to the road. Cross it and continue towards the workshops. Coming up to the bend, walk to the forest road on the opposite side up to Misengrain walkway.

5: Damp area and agricultural landscape

Cross the walkway and then at the junction, take the lane on your left up to the Pâtis. Walk opposite towards la Herpinère. On your left, follow the hollow lane. Turn on your right twice then take the road on your right over 200 m. Take the trail on your left, then coming up to the road, turn right then left. Walk on the trail up to the walkway.

6: Back to the woods

After the walkway, take the lane on your left. Coming up to the forest road (**former railroad track to slate quarries**), turn left. Cross the road, take the forest road on your left over 20m then turn right. Near the houses, turn left, walk along a kettle (former stone mining) and get back to the picnic area.



Rest room next to the start in the camper vans area on your right when leaving the car park.



Picnic tables near the start.

500 m

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