



Picher Plant (N. pervillei)



Seychelles
National Parks
Authority

COPOLIA NATURE TRAIL

CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAIL.

Length: 1.2km

Change in altitude: 180m

Time to go and come back: 1h30m

Main interest: panoramic view, glacia
ecology, pitcher plant.

Physical difficulty: medium to high

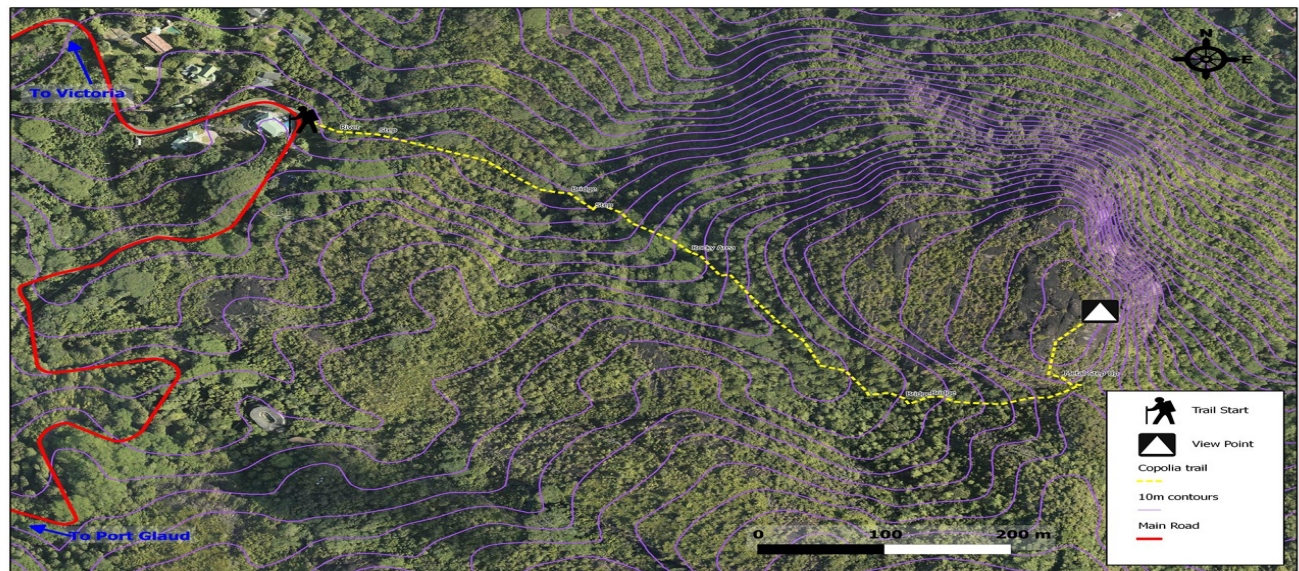
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MORNE SEYCHELLOIS
NATIONAL PARK
MAHE

HOW TO GET THERE

Take the Sans Souci road, which goes between Victoria and Port Gland, as far as Val Riche which is about 6km from Victoria. There is a trail sign board at a bend in the road.

From the entrance of the trail you may park your car along the roadside but be careful so as not to obstruct the flow of traffic as this is a very well frequented area. This trail permits you to have a soft start to begin with and eventually the difficulty increases bit by bit as you progress. When you finally get to the top you are welcomed with a breathtaking view. See picture below



was cut for the production of cinnamon bark and cinnamon leaf oil, both of which were commercially important.

and boulders to negotiate.

There are steps, small bridges and handrails to help you. As you go higher, the proportion of endemic and indigenous plants increases, with Bois Rouge (*Dillenia ferruginea*) Colophante (*Soulamea terminalioides*), Bois Cassant (*Timonius sechellensis*), Ixora (*Ixora pudica*), Café Marron Petite Feuille (*Erythroxylon sechellarum*), Bois de Natte (*Mimusops sechellarum*) Bois Calou (*Memecylon eleagni*), although there is still bracken fern indicating previous disturbance and soil erosion.

There is a short but steep final rocky ascent onto the top of Copolia, with a small ladder near the top. The highest mountain, Morne Seychellois, and the triple peak of Trois Frères are seen from this area. Walk across the extensive glacis to get magnificent views over the east coast of Mahé, Ste Anne Marine National Park, and beyond to Praslin and La Digue.

THE ROUTE

The trail starts with a descent through secondary woodland Takamaka (*Calophyllum Inophyllum*) and Calice du Pape (*Tabebuia pallida*), traversing across small rivulets and upwards towards an area affected by fire in the past. The vegetation is slowly recovering on the eroded soil and *Cocoplum* (*Chrysobalanus icaco*) predominates. At this point you get a brief view upwards to the summit of Copolia and across towards Ste Anne island and the east coast.

The river can usually be heard, if not seen, where it emerges from beneath rocks below the path.

The path begins its steep ascent to Copolia, and it is advisable to take this section slowly. The forest is mainly of cinnamon (*Cinnamomum verum*), which in the past

Coco Marron (*C.sechellensis*)

Endemic palms make appearance, together with the smaller Coco marron (*Curculigo sechellensis*) above and other endemic plants, usually Seychelles bulbul (*Hypsipetis crassirostris*) will come to investigate your presence and will chatter with its characteristic raucous voice. See picture below

Seychelles Bulbul (*H.crassirostris*)

At the head of this valley the path continues to wind upwards to the left and becomes a little more adventurous, with roots