

## Anse Songe Nature trail

### Ecology

The short trail features mostly coastal vegetation. From the entrance, you will be greeted with large Takamaka (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) and Indian-Almond trees (*Terminalia catappa*). These trees are vital for the survival of many species, including the very famous endemic flycatcher (*Terpsiphone corvina*), which nest in the trees. The large amount of decomposed leaf litter from these trees also creates the perfect environment for insects, the flycatcher's favorite food source.

In the streams, a small endemic Gouzon fish (*Pachypanchax playfairii*) may be seen swimming in the shadows. It is rare for isolated oceanic islands to have unique fresh water animals because these creatures cannot survive ocean crossings. The presence of this fish is evidence of the ancient origins of the granitic Seychelles Island as part of a micro-continent once attached to India and Madagascar.



Seychelles Bulbul

aggressive when it comes to their territory, chasing away birds as large as herons.

While walking through the forest canopy, you might come across a curious black mohawk bird, making loud crackling sounds. The bulbul (*Hypsipetes crassirostris*), endemic to the Seychelles, is the most common of the endemic birds. They are very

On the beach, there is nothing more striking than the rock formations, that has seem to be carved by hand. These granitic rock features has become iconic, since Seychelles is not only the only oceanic island in the world but it is also one of the oldest islands in the world .



Morning Glory covered field

Morning glory (*Ipomea pes-caprae*) can also be seen in many parts of the trail. This coastal vine is a pioneer plant, meaning it is a fast growing, sturdy plant, being able to colonize barren environments, although in some countries they have become an invasive. In addition, they help in preventing soil erosion, becoming vital for the beach fringe.



La Digue, Seychelles





## Getting there

From the La Passe jetty, make your way to the right, passing fish trap restaurant. Continue on the main road, which is found on the plateau. The first junction, is about 900m from the jetty, right after Gregoires's supermarket. Take a left on this junction, passing by the Veuve reserve until you meet another intersection, where now you should make a right turn.

You now have about 2 km to go. The road now gradually ascends to an altitude of 63m meters, before sloping down to the other side, leading you to Grand Anse beach. From there, the pavement ends and the road is now a mixture of sand and soil, which can get muddy in rainy seasons.

### Caution;

Because the trail starts off steep, make sure you have proper hiking boots, hat and plenty of water. It gets really hot and humidity is high.

Length of trail: 1 km  
Highest peak: 28 m  
Difficulty: Low  
Duration: 0.5 hrs.

## Map of LA Digue



## The trail

The trail is about a km long reaching an altitude of 28m in Grand Anse District. It is one of the easiest trails that exist on La Digue. The second half of the trail runs along the coast, with the glistening sun and the white sand under your feet.

Your journey begins at the end of Grand Anse's main road. On the right hand side, you will find Anse Songe's welcome board. From there, the trails runs under a canopy of Takamaka and Bodamier trees, before reaching an open area, where you will see an abandoned house. The trail is a mix of coastal forest and open clearings covered with vines, such as morning glory (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*). Please keep to the path, as the surrounding area is mainly marshland covered by vines.

Soon after the swamp, you will find some steps, that will lead you to some intriguing rock formations. The path now continues parallel with a stream called Rivier Anse Songe. Once you are out of the canopy you will be greeted with a spectacular view of the beach, decorated with granite boulders.

Turn right along the coast, until you reach the sandy beach. At this point you will see the wave crashing on the eroding limestone, leading you to the end of the trail, which will be demarcated by a sign board.

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