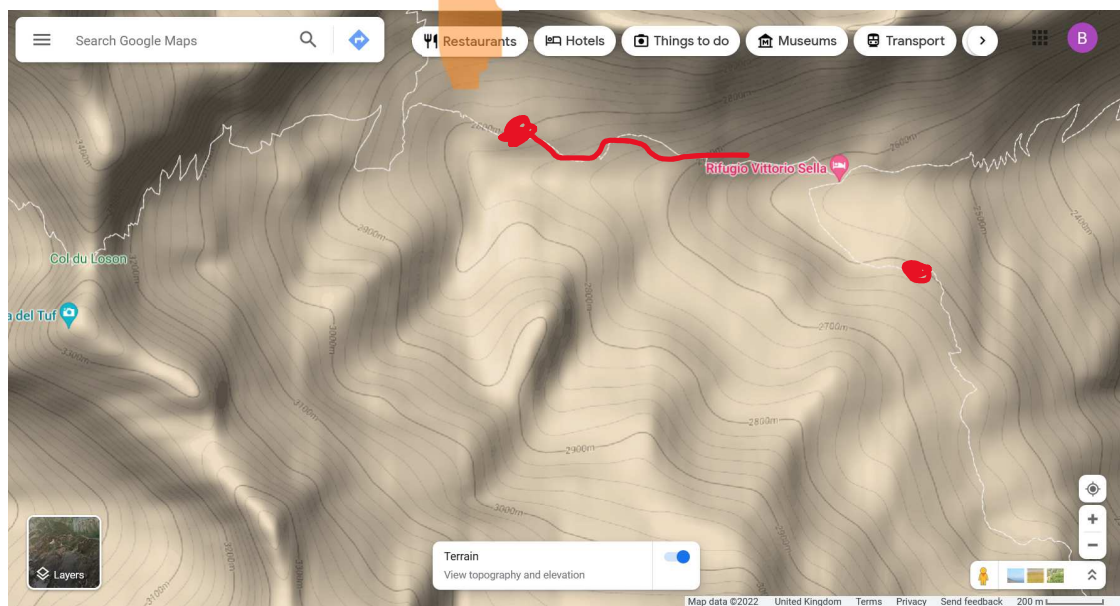


Italy, July 2022 (Balmfords + Altoés)

This was mainly a hiking trip for our two families to spend some time with each other... but me and dad sneaked in some mammaling too. We were based in northern Italy – broadly working our way east from Turin to Venice, with an extend stay in Gran Paradiso, a bit of time in Adamello-Brenta, and then a day at the spa in Sirimione. The below is just a couple of tips for particular species.

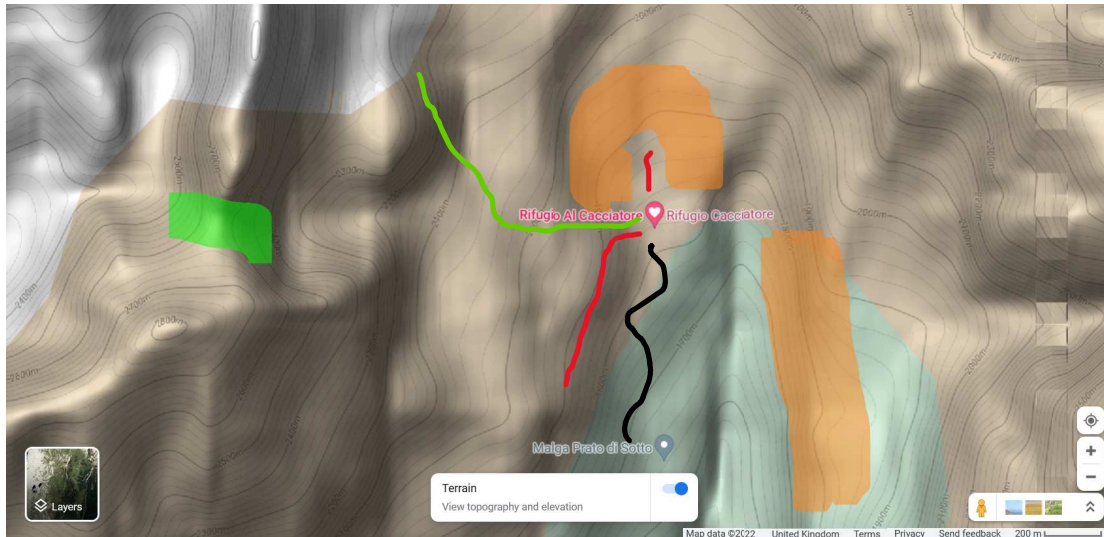
Chamois – common in Gran Paradiso

Ibex – these were the reason that we went to Gran Paradiso. The place to go is the [Vittorio Sella](#) refuge. Stay overnight (it is best to book in advance if you want a bed, I think you can also just turn up and camp if you want to/if it is fully booked) as the Ibex are best late in the afternoon/early in the morning. We did this walk <https://www.alltrails.com/explore/trail/italy/aosta-valley/rifugio-vittorio-sella-casolari-dell-herbetet> but clockwise (ie heading south out of Valnontey along the stream) and had not seen ibex before we arrived at the refuge. Just as we were getting there, I spotted what looked like ibex ~2km away on the scree ([here](#); see Map 1 too). We dropped our bags, and headed in that direction – climbing up the valley that drops down to the refuge. Having walked about 1.5km, we stopped and watched as a heard of 100+ ibex, including many gambolling kids, made their way down and along the slope above us. Later in the evening, and early the next morning, some of the larger herd would be pretty close to the hostel.



Map 1 – Where we saw Ibex. The orange is where the ibex were originally, the red on the right where we first saw them from, and the red along the path/blob where we walked to get a closer look and then to watched them from.

Bears – best around Rifugio Cacciatore in Adamello-Brenta. You can get a [Jeep Taxi](#) up to the refuge or walk there. We however didn't see the bears: they're far more common around June time when they're mating. The owner of the Rifugio had seen 8 in one day a month or so before our visit, but hadn't seen any for at least ten days or so since. Looking out of the refuge down the road you come up, apparently the best places to look are behind the refuge itself, in the valley above it; and along the paths to the right of the road below – keeping high above the road along a contour path, and then looking back left across the valley itself (see Map 2).



Map 2- Where to look for bears and mouflon in Adamello. Orange areas highlight the best areas for bears, and the red lines show where to look from. The green area is roughly where the mouflon were, which we saw from the trail that is roughly shown by the green line. The black line gives a vague indication of how the road snakes up to the refuge.

Mouflon – these are again best in Adamello. From Rifugio Cacciatore, we saw them as we walked towards Rifugio Val D'ambiez - Silvio Agostini. The place where they were is shown on Map 2.