

#agriculture

#forest

A NATURE OUTING IN A 500-HECTARE NATURAL AREA

Structure : Ark of Nature

Difficulté : facile



Le Mans (72)

Who are we?

A 500-hectare natural area managed by Le Mans Métropole and located just outside Le Mans. Located ten minutes from Le Mans city center and just a few meters from the Abbey of L'Epau, the Arche de la Nature estate offers visitors a vast natural area representative of the main landscapes of the Sarthe region. As they wander the paths, visitors will discover the river, the forest, and the bocage, and can visit the **Maison de l'Eau**, the **Maison de la Forêt**, and the **Maison de la Prairie**. The sports fields and playgrounds will delight young and old alike. In total, 500 hectares of nature are permanently open to the public.

Since 1997, L'Arche de la Nature has been offering its many nature events. This natural space, created and managed by Le Mans Métropole, combines a spirit of nature exploration with relaxation, particularly during large themed community festivals that welcome over 70,000 visitors each year. On the website, find all the information about these activities (workshops, outings, festivals) by browsing the various sections.

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Organization of various school activities:

- **Water activities:** The Maison de l'Eau hosts activities to explore the river.
- **Forest activities:** The Arche de la Nature forest covers 300 hectares to the east and south of the site.
- **The Farm:** Here, visitors can see farm animals grazing in pastures (from April to October) or

sheltered during the winter season (from November to March), as well as agricultural crops and the barnyard. Above all, the farm offers the opportunity to discover animals native to the region, including certain endangered breeds that are part of a conservation program.

- **The Arche de la Nature Garden:** In the heart of the Prairie Farm, next to the barn and the farmyard, lies the Arche de la Nature Garden. This 2,100-square-meter garden showcases the traditional vegetable garden and features innovative techniques from organic farming, such as raised-bed gardening, composting, mulching, and plant combinations and rotations to avoid pesticides and weeds. Gardeners looking for a small-scale garden can explore raised-bed or hanging gardens. A 600-square-meter space dedicated to schoolchildren since 2013. In the vegetable garden, you'll naturally find heirloom vegetables, including various varieties of cabbage, leeks, squash, potatoes, and radishes. The fruit trees and flowers reveal their wealth of colors and shapes. The aromatic plants near the pond surprise us with their varied scents and flavors. The apiary and the bee house, which features a transparent hive, offer a better understanding of the social life of these insects, known for making honey.

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L'Arche de la Nature is one of the favorite sites among the city's residents. The 70,000 visitors to the nine L'Arche festivals in 2024 and the 14,000 schoolchildren who attended the activities are proof of this

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<https://www.arche-nature.fr/>

Galerie d'images

