

AN OLD LARCH – 860 YEARS OLD!

The Darbellec Forest at Chandolin is home to a centuries-old larch, one of the oldest in Europe.

At the entrance to the Darbellec Forest, at an altitude of 2020 m stands the “Grand Old Larch of the Armèles”. Dating techniques have enabled its age to be estimated to within +/- 20 years. The verdict is that the Grand Old Larch of Chandolin is around 860 years old and is one of the oldest larches in Europe. Appearance and characteristics of this exceptional conifer:

- circumference of the trunk (at ground level, following the slope) : 8.50 m
- circumference at ground level : 6.78 m
- diameter 1.20 m from the ground : 1.97 m
- Weight : around 7-8 tonnes
- according to estimates, the tree is probably hollow at a height of around 1.20 m

The reasons for its longevity have still not been explained. Why has it always been spared by the regular felling operations? Did it have the role of a boundary marker? Or perhaps it was simply protected, as its name indicates, by the “Armèles”, the village shepherds? The mystery remains unanswered.

CONTACT

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Practical information

- Around 10 minutes' walk from the tourist office
- The Grand Old Larch is item no. 7B of the Chandolin botanical walks guide

Useful documents