

8. The Ruined Building



The El-khouri family, owners of the Khouri farmhouse on the Spring Trail, built this building for their workers in the 19th century. Its residents the olive trees around it and cultivated the small vegetable plot. The building belonged to the El-Khouris until Baron Edmond de Rothschild purchased the area in the early 20th century.

The trail winds into a dense woodland of native oaks with an understory of butcher's broom, and passes through alternating layers of limestone and tufa rock. After an easy climb, the path descends to a pit surrounded by a low fence. This is where a lime kiln (Station #9) was located during the Ottoman period.



9. Lime Kiln

A large pit, its walls lined with stone, is all that remains of the lime kiln. Limestones were laid inside this structure and, through slow and controlled firing, they were transformed into plaster.

The trail comes to a three-way intersection on a dirt road, where it takes the left-hand path. After about 10 metres it turns right and enters a tunnel carved through the bush, eventually arriving at some trial plots used as goat pasture (Station #10).

10. Trial Plots: Goat Pasture

For those who manage open landscapes in Mediterranean regions, scrublands pose a major challenge. The woody vegetation (shrubs and trees) tends to form dense thickets that eventually become impassable. Wild grasses, which dry out in the summer, grow among the stands of woody plants. This volatile combination of dry, grassy plants and dense, shrubby thickets creates serious fire hazards. In Ramat Hanadiv's trial plots, researchers are studying the impact of goat grazing on this kind of landscape and investigating whether goats can be used as a tool to open up the scrubland, thereby preventing forest fires and increasing the area's biodiversity.

The trail turns right, goes up a bit, crosses a dirt road, continues through the Mediterranean scrubland, and comes to the large Tabor oak (Station #1), whence it returns to the trailhead.

Enjoy your hike and come back soon!



Rambling with goats (see our website for details)



Printed on fully recyclable, wood-free paper.



Welcome to Ramat Hanadiv!

Ramat Hanadiv is a private park dedicated to commemorating the life of Baron Edmond de Rothschild and to conserving nature, for us and for future generations.

Ramat Hanadiv expends great effort to maintain and protect nature's resources for your enjoyment. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us.

Please note:

- The Nature Park is always in danger of forest fires. Lighting a fire is permitted only in the picnic area next to the Memorial Gardens.
- Though dogs may be our best friends, they are not part of the park's natural ecosystem. Dogs must be kept on leashes.
- Please stay on marked paths at all times!
- Bikers: Hiking paths are meant exclusively for pedestrians. Cycling is allowed only on the roads for vehicular traffic.
- Many wild animals live in the Nature Park. At dusk, we humans clear the way for the animals to wander about freely and safely. Please complete your visit before sundown.

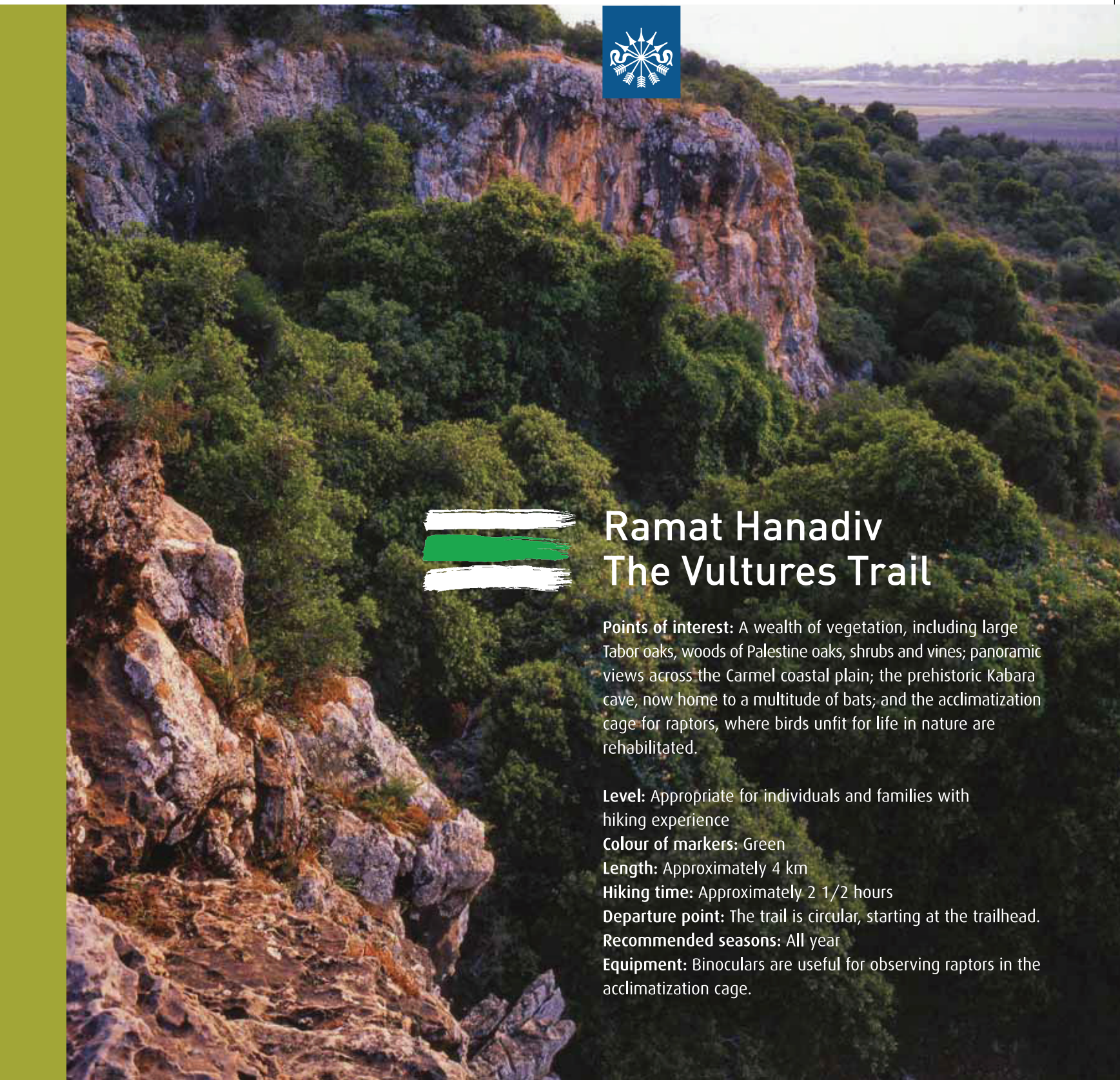
Visiting Hours

Sunday – Thursday: 8 am – 4 pm | Friday: 8 am – 2 pm
Saturday: 8 am – 4 pm (The crypt is closed on Saturday.)

Last admission to the Memorial Gardens is 15 minutes before closing.

Visiting hours may vary on holidays and festivals; check our website for details.

InfoShop: 04-6298111 | www.ramathanadiv.org.il



Ramat Hanadiv The Vultures Trail

Points of interest: A wealth of vegetation, including large Tabor oaks, woods of Palestine oaks, shrubs and vines; panoramic views across the Carmel coastal plain; the prehistoric Kabara cave, now home to a multitude of bats; and the acclimatization cage for raptors, where birds unfit for life in nature are rehabilitated.

Level: Appropriate for individuals and families with hiking experience

Colour of markers: Green

Length: Approximately 4 km

Hiking time: Approximately 2 1/2 hours

Departure point: The trail is circular, starting at the trailhead.

Recommended seasons: All year

Equipment: Binoculars are useful for observing raptors in the acclimatization cage.

The Trail

The trail marked in green turns right (west) from the trailhead. It wends its way through typical low scrubland (batha) vegetation near a stand of pine trees and comes to a concrete, low water crossing ('Irish bridge') across a dirt road. The trail traverses the dirt road and continues straight on, past a group of Tabor oaks (*Quercus itaburensis*) planted by Ramat Hanadiv staff from the seeds of native trees. The trail proceeds across another dirt road, beyond which grows the large Tabor oak (Station #1).



1. Tabor Oak

The deciduous Tabor oak flourishes from the Sharon plain and Ramot Menashe to the Galilee and the Golan. Its large acorns are an important source of food for rodents, Eurasian jays and wild boars.

The trail negotiates a scrubland among phillyrea trees and mastic shrubs until it reaches some benches in the shade of a pergola (Station #2).



2. Pergola

An olive grove is planted next to the pergola. Until the 1950s, the farmers of Binyamina grew wheat here. Today the Ramat Hanadiv staff sows wheat, barley, and other crops that were cultivated in this area in the past. Since the wild animals living in the Nature Park are satisfied with the nourishment they get from these crops, they no longer need to search for food in the residential gardens of nearby Zikhron Ya'akov.

The trail ascends to the terraces via a flight of wooden steps, then enters a dense woodland of Palestine oaks (Station #3).



3. Native Oak Woods

The oak trees growing abundantly here take advantage of the geologic meeting point between the layers of limestone rock and tufa (volcanic) rock. Because the tufa prevents water from draining further into the soil, the large tree roots

in the limestone layer above the tufa enjoy a relatively large quantity of accessible water. The shade and humidity created by the oak woods encourage the growth of vines like prickly asparagus (*Asparagus aphyllus*) and rough bindweed (*Smilax aspera*). In winter, wild cyclamen (*Cyclamen persicum*) bloom among the stones. Several pine trees have invaded the woods. One of these, next to the Station stand, serves as a scratching pole for wild boars. The lower part of the trunk is rubbed away, and sometimes a few hairs can be spotted in the bark where the coat of a wild boar got caught.



Some of the oaks are currently suffering from stress and dehydration. Ramat Hanadiv's staff is monitoring and studying this phenomenon to find its cause, which is most likely related to the decrease in rainfall and the increasing number and intensity of heatwaves in recent years.



The trail advances through the woods and descends to the end of the dirt path. Crossing through a fence, it enters the grounds of Hotem HaCarmel Nature Reserve, which is beyond the perimeters of Ramat Hanadiv.

Please note: From here the trail goes along the cliff and downward. Walking it is dangerous during the rainy season and can be slippery at other times as well. Caution is advised!

4. Observation Point: The Carmel Coastal Plain

This observation point is located at cliff's edge. The Carmel coast can be seen below in its full glory, a veritable mosaic of agricultural fields and fish ponds. Beyond them are calcareous sandstone ridges and the Mediterranean Sea. The many banana plantations here benefit from the relatively humid and generally frost-free climate.



The trail twists down the slope of the cliff and at a small flight of metal stairs crosses a cattle fence. Beyond it, just before Wadi Hanadiv, is a carob tree; there are a few small styrax trees standing next to it.

At the carob tree the trail forks, offering two paths:

- The short option (marked in yellow): The trail turns right (east) and ascends Wadi Hanadiv, where it rejoins the Vultures Trail and heads back to the trailhead (1 km., about 1/2 hour).
- The long option (marked in green): Cutting across Wadi Hanadiv, the trail traverses the western side of the cliff to the Kabara cave (Station #5), then proceeds to Wadi Kabara. It mounts the sides of the wadi, then climbs to the acclimatization cage (3 km., about 1 1/2 hours).



5. Kabara Cave (closed to visitors)

This karstic cave was the dwelling place of human beings tens of thousands of years ago. Since 1930, it has been the site of many archaeological excavations. The oldest finds, human bones and tools dating from the Mousterian culture, are more than 64,000 years old. One of the most thrilling discoveries from this period was the skeleton of a young Neanderthal man who was buried lying on his back, his arms across his chest. This well-preserved skeleton provided material evidence regarding some controversial issues: The structure of its tongue bone, for instance, points clearly to the Neanderthals' ability to pronounce consonants.

Animals in the Nature Park (left to right): Badger, wild boar, hedgehog, Eurasian jay, roe deer and kestrel

Groups of human beings lived here until some 10,000 years ago. The name of the cave lent itself to the Kabaric culture, a primitive human culture that existed from 20,000-10,000 years ago. Today the cave serves as the home of large fruit bats and various kinds of small insect-eating bats, whose sonar calls can be heard from afar.



At the foot of the cave, the members of Kibbutz Ma'agan Michael have planted an orchard of exotic plants with an observation deck tucked inside. From here the trail descends along a fence that bars entry into the orchard. It turns into Wadi Kabara and passes in front of a large Tabor oak, where visitors may be surprised by furry brown rock hyrax peering at them.

Pay close attention while navigating the wadi: Every year the path changes a bit due to winter flooding. After some 200 metres, the trail turns right and leaves the wadi behind, climbs up its southern bank, and approaches rustic terraces planted with olive trees (Station #6).



A 64,000-year-old human skeleton found in the Kabara cave



6. Olive Trees

Because of the winding nature of the slope, each olive tree in this grove has been given its own small terrace. The trail ascends to the grove, which overlooks the raptors' acclimatization cage (Station #7).

7. Raptors' Acclimatization Cage

The crevices of the Carmel cliffs were at one time the home of numerous raptors. In the 1950s their numbers began declining as a result of agricultural development, which brought with it the uncontrolled use of pesticides. Some 40 years later Ramat Hanadiv, in cooperation with the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, launched a project to reintroduce these raptors to their natural habitat.

The large cage houses chicks hatched from eggs taken from the nests of vultures also held in captivity. Generally, when the first egg is taken from her nest, a female vulture lays another egg. All the eggs harvested are incubated, and the chicks that hatch are adopted by either their biological parents or other pairs of vultures. Eventually the vultures brought up here will be released. They are expected to build their nests in the Carmel and adjacent areas, thereby re-establishing and expanding the raptors' presence in nature.



(Left) A vulture chick emerges from its egg; (right) a chick is fed with a glove designed like a vulture's head.



Please note: Visitors are not allowed near the acclimatization cage so that they won't disturb the vultures.

The trail turns left (eastward) and crosses a dirt road, coming to the ruins of a building (Station #8).

