

Serra Oseli & Gorroppeddu walk

A fine walk, taking you on an improbable-looking route between the crags on the west side of Serra Oseli with challenging route finding (take IGM map, compass & GPS, we can lend you one if you don't have one) on centuries' old shepherds' tracks and passing below the spectacular Gorroppeddu gorge, before returning more easily on the east side of Serra Oseli past the famous old yew trees at the top of the Gorroppeddu gorge.

Distance 15 km, time 6 hours, grade EE. Map: IGM series 50 1:50000 Baunei. Times are indicated from the start of the walk

Drive to turn-off for Teletotes K. 172 on SS125, and follow the asphalted road to park on L after 1,3km, where there's a wooden sign for the Codula di Luna and just opposite where the unmade road (your return track) branches off to go round the east side of Monte Oseli. WP 009 32T 547077 4440043 Walk down the asphalted road for about 1km / 15' until, after a sweeping left-hand bend and just before some prominent rocks sticking up 100m ahead to the left side of the tarmacked road, and before the road makes a sharp hairpin to the R, a broad cart track branches off on the right towards the north (WP: 010 32T 547011 4440940). Take this. After 30', you see below the S-bend in the road going down to Teletotes. You continue to contour along the hillside, where the path forks continue to broadly maintain level/climb slightly by keeping to the R (cairns at path junctions, or stones wedged in tree trunks, at time faint/goat tracks... path junction WP 011 32T 547611 4441919)...you are aiming for some large yellow caves (WP 012 32T 547690 4442436 just S of them), in which there's a sheepfold called Coile Scartari and by the side of which there is a very distinctive 4m high limestone pinnacle which you arrive at after about 60'. From here you continue N, leaving the yellow caves on your L, and the path climbs (path not obvious) to go up to under the cliffs. Don't keep level or you only have to climb back up. After 1:30 you arrive under the cliff and can see some small old iron receptacles for collecting water. After 1:45, the path reaches a rocky spur s'Iscalone Orrubiu (WP 013 32T 547766 4443246), and look carefully so as not to miss cairns for where you descend back on yourself, down leftwards zigzagging and following big cairns on the scree to lose about 100m altitude until you pick up a yellow well-worn stony path which you can see coming in from the south (left) as you descend. Don't make the mistake of not descending enough and starting to contour north on faint animal tracks...you cannot get round! You are in the area marked Genna Ostuno on the IGM map, and see high cliffs above. Now follow the broad path to continue to contour northwards but at a lower level...you can see it ahead of you where, at one point, the path seems to disappear against a rocky spur after a section across scree, but you can find where the shepherds cross this by easy scrambling, with the path reinforced with a few juniper branches, though many of the previously-placed juniper branches having been washed away by rain. This place is called sa Pala Abbenta. After about 3:00 you drop down to arrive below the gorge of Gorroppeddu (WP 014 32T 547817 4444549), and can scramble up it until a 10m high "salto", "drop", bars your way.

From the base of Gorroppeddu, continue to follow the path, climbing, and heading for a sheepfold (ovile) su Coile 'e Ghirofai you can see under the cliffs opposite. Walk/scramble up right from this, and then back left, to head for the opening in the shepherd's fence at the top of the cliff above (see photo below), called s'Iscalone 'e Ghirofai . About 4:00.



The route from Gorroppeddu to Coile 'e Ghirofai and s'Isalone 'e Ghirofai



Steph and Tom, with the little gate in the shepherd's fence just visible above Steph's head (red border)

After this opening, you need to follow the very faint path but with frequent cairns, initially bearing 030° then 080°, to climb for 0:45 to pick up the broad unmade road heading upwards and southwards on Costa Esone. (WP 015 32T 548361 4444946) You reach the highest point of this road, before it starts to descend again and with prominent rocks on the L and also the R, after 4:30, to the east of Punta Turusele. Here you branch off to the right, and follow a faint track downwards (southwards), passing several rather broken down shepherds' huts, to reach the upper entrance to Gorroppeddu with its yew trees which are said to be thousands of years old. From here climb SE to pick up a broad track, which first climbs up with a couple of S bends and then descends to follow the eastern side of the Serra Oseli crest, past some shepherd's building around which are some huge limestone boulders and where you cross a stream by a couple of cherry trees*, and back to the start point.

*Above here are the climbing areas known as Serra Oseli.

