

# Crete

## Naturetrek Tour Report

22 - 29 April 2008

---



Lassithi Plateau



Juvenile Long-eared Owl, Knossos



*Cyclamen creticum*



*Ophrys ariadnae*

Report compiled by Su Gough & Cliff Davies  
Photographs by Su Gough



Naturetrek Cheriton Mill Cheriton Alresford Hampshire SO24 0NG England

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

F: +44 (0)1962 736426

E: [info@naturetrek.co.uk](mailto:info@naturetrek.co.uk)

W: [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk)

---

Tour leaders:	Su Gough (botanist) Cliff Davies (ornithologist)
Participants:	Mary Jo Darrah Graham Darrah Val Goldsworthy John Goldsworthy Richard Hancock Tricia Harrison Ron Harrison Devi Marshall Gerry Marshall Richard Reader David Richards

## Day 1

Tuesday 22nd April

The afternoon flight from Gatwick arrived on time, landing in sultry Heraklion in the early evening. We met Cliff Davies and picked up the vans then set off on the half-hour trip to the Hotel Golden Star at Analipsi. A delicious buffet dinner was waiting for us, so we tucked in immediately, only later finding our rooms and settling in for the night. We wondered what we would find during our week on the island, as it had been unseasonally hot – the previous week temperatures had reached the 40's, and it was 38°C when we landed.

## Day 2

Wednesday 23rd April

Weather: hot and sunny – 29°C.

A few keen members of the group got up early to make a pre-breakfast foray to the nearby Creta Sun Pools for some birding. We saw Little Egret, Ruff, Red-rumped Swallow among a group of other Swallows, House and Sand Martins, Little Stint, Snipe and an unexpected sighting of a Spotted Crake. Plants included Yellow Horned Poppy (*Glaucium flavum*) and Wavy-leaved Sea Lavender (*Limonium sinuata*).

After breakfast we left the hotel and headed for the most famous and largest of the Minoan palaces at Knossos. In this exposed spot many of the plants were burned off, but we all admired the stunning Morning Glory on the way into the site. As well as the fantastic history it was the birds that stole the show here, with Booted Eagle joining the ever-present Buzzards circling overhead. When someone spotted a young 'raptor' sitting in one of the pine trees surrounding the site we went over for a closer look. The 'raptor' turned out to be a baby Long-eared Owl – in fact there were three in the tree. Although suspected, there are no proven breeding records of this species on the island and this record, along with the photographs, have been passed on to the Hellenic Ornithological Society! By midday the site was becoming busy, so we moved on along the coast to the east, beyond our hotel village and on to Malia, with a quick stop to purchase lunch en-route.

The site holds another major Minoan palace, this time on the edge of the sea in a beautiful location. Lunch was served near the buses, giving us an opportunity to drink in the scenery. Much refreshed, we were ready for a post-lunch wander to look for birds and flowers. The shore and cliff tops proved rich in flowers with drifts of Three-horned Stock *Mattiola tricuspidata* with its strange shaped seed pods, Hoary Stock *Malcolmia flexuosa* and *Silene colorata*. Other scarcer finds included the strange *Anthemis rigida* and *Clematis cirrhosa*. The birders busied themselves with several migrant Red-throated Pipits in breeding plumage, and some Yellow Wagtails.

Our final stop for the day was a little further along where the coast road swings inland and enters the Selena Gorge. At the very entrance we found a roadside simply covered with orchids – mostly Bug Orchid *Orchis fragrans* (although these all smelt very musky and unpleasant, suggesting they were in fact *O. coriophora*, which is not supposed to grow on the island!) and Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* in its beautiful Mediterranean white-petalled form. In amongst all these were our first Serapias orchids, *S. parviflora*, *orientalis* and *cordigera* – all allowing close comparison, and one of the target plants of the week – the endemic Cretan Bee Orchid *Ophrys cretica*. For the birders their patience was rewarded by good views of an Eleonora's Falcon circling the cliffs. On a high from these treasures we finished off a great first day by watching a Griffon Vulture on a nest, before returning to the hotel for a quick get-together before another delicious meal.

## Day 3

Thursday 24th April

Weather: hot and dry – 25°C.

Our visit to the Creta Sun Pools was not as productive today, though there was one star find – a Temminck's Stint. The other more usual waders were accompanied by Little Egret and Cetti's Warbler. Those who didn't go found a Tree Sparrow hopping around in the hotel grounds! After our filling breakfast, and looking forward to a slightly cooler day, we set forth east along the coast towards the Lassithi Plateau and the Dikti Mountains. We made several stops along the way to admire the view, and have a look at some of the plants and birds of the mountain roads. Our finds included *Cyclamen graecum* leaves, the awesome Dragon Tree *Dracunculus vulgaris* and *Centaurea raphanina* and our search was serenaded by Woodlark and Turtle Dove. We made a stop in the pretty village of Mohos, sitting outside in the square for coffee/orange juice and the café owner insisted we all had some Raki! Many of us also decided to make a brief visit the highly ornate church, which smelt wonderful with big bunches of white lilies ready for the Greek Orthodox Easter celebrations.

We found another Serapias (*S. lingua*) under Olives, growing alongside a wonderful display of Wild Gladioli *Gladiolus italicum*. We reached the windmills on the cliffs at midday. We stopped here, set out lunch and enjoyed the scenery while six or more Griffon Vultures circled high above the windmills. After lunch we set about exploring the area further, finding the diminutive *Evax pygmaea* alongside *Onosma graecum*. Moving on around the plateau we stopped at the cave of Dakis with stunning views back over the massive plateau nestled in the mountains. Although we knew the cave itself was closed, the surrounding wooded hillside was the draw, with *Orchis pauciflora* and *Ophrys lutea* growing among the boulders, and drifts of the white, spring-flowered Cretan Cyclamen *C. creticum*.

Driving back around the other side of the plateau towards the hotel, we were treated to the sight of 15 Choughs playing in a thermal. We then returned in time for a pre-dinner chat and drinks by the pool and our final dinner at this hotel.

## Day 4

Friday 25th April

Weather: cloudy, increasing wind – 25°C.

A pre-breakfast walk around the hotel grounds produced Sardinian Warbler and Crested Lark before we packed the vans and headed back towards Heraklion and then inland to cross the heart of the island. The drive was very scenic, with some plants such as Pale Bugloss *Echium italicum* and Cretan 'Ebony' *Ebenus creticus*, identifiable from the van along with birds like the Blue Rock Thrush.

Our first stop was the Minoan palace at Phaistos. One of the largest of the Minoan palaces, it is considered by some to be even more splendid than the one at Knossos. Alpine Swifts were seen from the car park, and a short walk up the road before the site opened was suggested. Sadly, here the unseasonal heat had affected the plants badly and many were brown and crispy. However, we did find several interesting ones such as banks of the Crown Daisy (*Chrysanthemum coronaria*) in both its colour forms, and the incredibly stately flower spikes of the grass *Avena barbata*. We enjoyed the many and highly varied – even wacky – pod structures of the pea family on our way back to the ruins. We did get distracted, though, by two Chukar Partridges on the road, and a Hoopoe calling from further down the valley.

The ruins were both spectacular and very well-preserved, and we enjoyed wandering around these for free as it was a National Monuments Day (Good Friday). We found Cretan Pellitory and one spike of Wall Lettuce (*Petromarula pinnata*), the endemic and unusual member of the bellflower family. Moving a short way down the valley to the ruins of Ayia Triada we set up lunch on the steps under shade with views out to the south coast and, while enjoying this, we were able to examine the beautiful endemic shrubby Sainfoin, known locally as Cretan Ebony.

Moving on we turned back inland, passing through the village of Spili and taking a turning back into the mountains before finding the 'Spili Mound' – this is famous for its orchids and is protected from goat grazing by the surrounding crops. The walk to the mound yielded *Tulipa doefleri*, alongside many cornfield flowers, before we crossed the river and continued up to the mound. Excitement mounted as we realised the whole mound was covered in orchids!

We added many new species, some widespread such as Man Orchid *Aceras anthropoborum*, Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, Lax-flowered Orchid *Orchis laxiflora* and Naked Man Orchid *Orchis italica*, and other (perhaps more exciting) endemics such as Ariadne's Orchid *Ophrys ariadnae*, *O. heldreichii*, several members of the *O. fusca* group, and *Orchis boryi*. Corn Buntings and Cirl Buntings kept us company during our botanical ramble before heading finally towards our base for the night at Plakias on the south coast. Driving through the Kotsifou Canyon we saw Blue Rock Thrush, Crag Martins, and Griffon Vultures. Despite our busy day we arrived at our delightful hotel in very good time as the wind was rising, and had a chance to relax before going in for a delicious dinner and a good night's sleep.

## Day 5

Saturday 26th April

Weather: very windy to start, but hot and dry. Wind dying, rain in evening.

An extremely windy night had moderated by the time we headed for breakfast and the sun was out, which promised a better day. We, sadly, said goodbye to Plakias after buying our picnic lunch in the local shop.

Then we headed a little way along the coast before exploring the cliffs here, spotting Cottonweed *Otanthus maritimus* growing on the beaches. The area is dominated by Tree Spurge (*Euphorbia dendroides*), and growing among these shrubs we also found such delights as Cretan Vipers-grass (*Scorzonera cretica*) and we were surrounded by Black-eared Wheatears and Swifts. Leaving the cliffs, we ventured further along the coast towards Prevali Monastery then stopped at the Turkish Bridge. Here, *Arum concinatum* was growing by the ford, and as we enjoyed the stunning bridge and lush vegetation we spotted a Wood Sandpiper along the river (plus some domestic ducks!) and a Pied Flycatcher in a nearby Olive tree. Returning to the vans, we watched a group of Red-footed Falcons flying pretty high over us.

Driving over the river we continued down a long dirt track towards the beach. Several of the group decided to walk down and their efforts were rewarded with an incredibly close Griffon, and excellent views of a group of eight Red-footed Falcons hunting along the track. Down at the beach we laid lunch out. We found Squacco Heron and Marsh Frogs in the little stream here.

After lunch we had to begin our crossing of the island again to the north coast. We carried on through the dramatic Kourtaliotiko Gorge, where a brief stop produced Blue Rock Thrush, Crag Martins and Griffons, which we were expecting to see, as well as a welcome and unexpected pair of Bonelli's Eagles.

Another stop by the roadside part way across the island proved very rich in flowers, with purple *Lytbrum junceum* and yellow *Parentucellia viscosa* vying for attention, but again the stars of this damp area were the orchids. Many species we'd already seen were there, but we also found another new Serapias (*S. bergonii*) plus the scarce and diminutive Bumblebee Orchid (*Ophrys bombyliflora*).

After that we went on to the Late Minoan cemetery at Armeni, where ducking under the fence brought us round some of the outer tombs and to a range of new flowers – the towering spikes of *Ornithogalum narbonense* and *Allium nigrum*, alongside Thyme Broomrape (*Orobancha alba*), before deciding that we had to make tracks for Chania and our final hotel, Hotel Halepa. Arriving once more in good time along the fast north coast road, we all relaxed and had a leisurely pre-dinner chat before organising taxis to take us to a delightful restaurant in the harbour area of this beautiful old town.

## Day 6

Sunday 27th April

Weather: torrential rain overnight. Heavy Showers and more persistent rain in the morning, clearing by lunchtime, warm and dry in the afternoon.

Easter Sunday dawned very wet, but after breakfast we headed out onto the large peninsula on which Chania is built with the monastery of Ayia Triada as our goal. The whole area was covered in Dragon Trees (*Dracunculus vulgaris*), which added a strange look to the peninsula. In teeming rain we visited the monastery, a fascinating building with its ochre-painted walls, and spent some time in the chapel, which was richly decorated and strewn with fragrant leaves as part of the Easter celebrations.

Leaving here and moving up the road towards the deserted monastery of Gouvernetou, we spotted a gentleman in the middle of nowhere spit-roasting a whole sheep in the rain! We eventually decided to take shelter from the rain and headed to a taverna for lunch back in Chania. We had a lovely time in the Venetian Harbour and found some stunning *Petromarula pinnata* on the walls before enjoying souvlaki and moussaka.

The weather improved just as we were ready to head out again, and so we set back off towards Ayia Triada. Two Golden Eagles were spotted from the vans, so we stopped for a better look at these – an adult and a juvenile, while a Stonechat and Woodchat Shrike vied for attention on a nearby wire. Back at the monastery a quick birding break produced a Wood Warbler. Then we continued towards Gouvernetou again, distracted part way there by a fantastic group of 16 hunting Red-footed Falcons and a passing male Montagu's Harrier.

A botanical ramble around the cliffs of Gouvernetou produced several new species, although here the heat had again been at work. Seed pods of *Fritillaria messanensis* poked through the phrygana shrubs and the ground was covered by the creeping club moss *Selaginella*. Some very strange seed pods proved to belong to the Birdcage Plant (*Atractylis cancellata*) and *Nepeta mellisifolia* clothed the ground.

Once back in Chania, we had found a restaurant in the Venetian Harbour serving a traditional Greek Easter dinner, so we happily joined in – with the main course being spit-roast lamb and the whole meal, of course, being finished off with some Raki. Christos anesti – Happy Easter!

## Day 7

Monday 28th April

Weather: warm and sunny with high cloud.

Our last full day on Crete started with breakfast in the Halepa Hotel and was followed by a prompt start. Our first stop was about 30 minutes inland of Chania at a reservoir called Aghia which proved incredibly rich for birds. Vast flocks of martins, swallows and swifts were joined by Alpine Swifts, and on the water the large numbers of Little Grebes, Coot and Egrets were joined by a pair of Garganey. Hobbies and a Booted Eagle flew over, a female Marsh Harrier quartered over the far reeds as Wood Sandpiper, Ruff and a Temminck's Stint stalked around the edges. Herons were very much in evidence with Squacco and Little Bittern easily visible. We spotted terrapins sunbathing and many Dice Snakes swimming in the shallows, on the lookout for small fish and tadpoles.

Leaving this fantastic place, we continued up towards the Omalos plateau with several stops en-route for superb views of Golden Eagle. French Lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*) was growing along the roadsides and at one stop we were rewarded by a patch of the endemic *Arum idaeum* growing among highly fragrant *Daphne sericea*. There was a very photogenic specimen of *Onosma erecta* drooping from the cliff above us, too, and all the time here we were all 'serenaded' by Black-eared Wheatear. The best was still to come, however, when one flower of *Paeonia clusii* – endemic white Cretan Peony – was found growing through a bush.

A brief stop on the Omalos plateau revealed just a handful of *Tulipa bakeri*, the rest casualties of the heat. This find was followed by an aborted attempt to drive up to a taverna, before finally stopping, successfully, for lunch at the head of the Samaria Gorge. Almost before we had got out of the vans a cry went up of "Lammergeier!" as one drifted over us.

A leisurely lunch here at the head of the longest gorge in Europe – a spectacular spot – was rounded off by the choice of a plant hunt, or a cup of Greek coffee in the higher café. Those who ventured higher were rewarded with excellent views of two 'Kri-Kri' – endemic Cretan goats – on the far side of the canyon.

Those who had stayed lower were also richly rewarded, with anemones – both *A. coronaria* and *A. hortensis*, Toothed Orchid *Orchis tridentata* and the very rare, endemic *Orchis sitiaca*. The hillsides also sported a clothing of Calabrian Pine *Pinus brutia* – a remnant of the original forest cover, and the beautiful prostrate form of Cypress.

Heading back to Chania, we decided to stop once more at Aghia Lake as it had proved so productive earlier. We got great views of a Little Bittern, allowing us to take frame-filling shots, while Su finally managed to find one of the Striped Tree Frogs that had been calling from the surrounding trees.

Eventually, we headed wearily back to Chania to have some relaxation time and refresh ourselves. Then we set off a little way along the road to a nearby taverna for an interesting meal.

## Day 8

Tuesday 29th April

Weather: warm and sunny.

Richard and Cliff returned to the lake at Aghia adding Purple Heron to the list, while for the rest a leisurely breakfast was followed by a free morning. Many of the group decided to make their way down into Chania for a look at this most ancient of towns (supposedly the oldest continuously inhabited town in the world). We left the hotel around midday and headed east towards Heraklion, stopping first for lunch back at the Late Minoan cemetery at Armeni. Wandering around the tombs while lunch was being sorted we found many new orchids, including the beautiful *Ophrys episcopalis* and *O. candica* alongside some dead flower spikes of the Giant Orchid (*Barlia robertianum*).

Continuing along the road towards the airport we spotted a couple of Golden Eagles from the buses, as well as numerous Buzzards. We made another quick stop at the Geropotomos Bridge – we found Ferruginous Duck, serenaded by the ever-present Cetti's Warblers. Plants here included *Campanula spatulata* and the very spiny *Centaurea idaea*. We had a final stop at a taverna in Bali for a Greek coffee or some freshly squeezed orange juice, before making the final stretch to the airport. Our evening flight was on time, and we actually landed in Gatwick early. We then said our goodbyes and continued on our onward journeys.

## Receive our e-newsletter

Join the Naturetrek e-mailing list and be the first to hear about new tours, additional departures and new dates, tour reports and special offers. Visit [www.naturetrek.co.uk](http://www.naturetrek.co.uk) to sign up.

## Naturetrek Facebook

Many participants of Naturetrek tours like to remain in touch after the holiday, to share photos, comments and future travel plans. Until now we've provided no suitable platform for post-tour networking. Now, though, we're delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page.

The Naturetrek Facebook page is now live: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Naturetrek-Wildlife-Holidays/9765181485>. Setting up a personal profile at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) is quick, free and easy. Do please pay us a visit!

## Species Lists

### Plants

Species/Group	English Name (If any)
<b>Pteridopsida</b>	<b>Ferns and their Allies</b>
<b>Selaginellaceae</b> <i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	<b>Lesser Clubmoss Family</b> Mediterranean Clubmoss
<b>Equisetaceae</b> <i>Equisetum telmateia</i>	<b>Horsetail Family</b> Giant Horsetail
<b>Adiantaceae</b> <i>Adiantum capillus-vereris</i>	<b>Maidenhair Fern Family</b> Maidenhair Fern
<b>Aspleniaceae</b> <i>Asplenium ceterach</i> <i>Cystopteris fragilis</i> <i>Dryopteris</i> sp.	<b>Spleenwort Family</b> Rusty-back Fern Brittle Bladder Fern
<b>Dennstaediceae</b> <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	<b>Bracken Family</b> Bracken
<b>Pinopsida (Gymnosperms)</b>	<b>Conifers</b>
<b>Araucariaceae</b> <i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	<b>Monkey Puzzle Family</b> Norfolk Island Pine
<b>Pinaceae</b> <i>Pinus brutea</i> <i>P. halepensis</i> <i>P. pinea</i>	<b>Pine Family</b> Calabrian Pine Aleppo Pine Umbrella Pine
<b>Cupressaceae</b> <i>Cupressus sempervirens forma horizontalis</i> <i>C. sempervirens forma sempervirens</i> <i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i> subsp. <i>oxycedrus</i> <i>J. phoenicea</i>	<b>Juniper Family</b> Italian Cypress  Prickly Juniper Phoenicean Juniper
<b>Magnoliidae (Dicotyledons)</b>	<b>Flowering Plants</b>
<b>Acanthaceae</b> <i>Acanthus spinosus</i>	<b>Bears Breaches Family</b> Spiny Bears Breeches
<b>Aceraceae</b> <i>Acer sempervirens</i>	<b>Maple Family</b> Cretan Maple
<b>Aizoaceae</b> <i>Carprobrotus acinaciformis</i>	<b>Dew Plant Family</b> Red Hottentot Fig
<b>Anacardiaceae</b> <i>Pistacia lentiscus</i> <i>Schinus molle</i>	<b>Sumach Family</b> Mastic Tree Californian Pepper Tree



**Apiaceae (Umbelliferae)**

*Buplerum* sp.  
*Crithmum maritimum*  
*Daucus carota* agg  
*D. gutatus*  
*Eryngium maritima*  
*Ferula communis*  
*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*  
*Scandix pecten-veneris*  
*Smyrniolum olusatrum*  
*S. perfoliatum* subsp. *rotundifolium*  
*Tordylium apulum*  
*T. officinale*  
*Torilis nodosa*

**Apocyanaceae**

*Nerium oleander*

**Araliaceae**

*Hedera helix*

**Aristolochiaceae**

*Aristolochia cretica*

**Asteraceae (Compositae)**

*Achillea cretica*  
*Anthemis chia*  
*A. rigida*  
*Atractylis cancellata*  
*Bellis annua*  
*Calendula arvensis*  
*Centaurea idaea*  
*C. raphanina*  
*C. spinosa*  
*Chrysanthemum coronarium*  
*C. coronarium* var *bicolour*  
*C. segetum*  
*Cichorium intybus*  
*C. spinosum*  
*Cirsium creticum*  
*Crepis rubra*  
*Crupina crupinastrum*  
*Cynara cornigera*  
*C. scolymus*  
*Echinops spinosissimus*  
*Evax pygmaea*  
*Filago pyramidata*  
*Galactites tomentosa*  
*Helichrysum italicum*  
*H. stoechas*  
*Onopordium tauricum*  
*Otanthus maritimus*  
*Pallenis spinosa*  
*Phagnalon rupestre*  
*Picris echinoides*

**Carrot Family**

a Thorowax  
 Rock Samphire  
 Wild Carrot  
  
 Sea Holly  
 Giant Fennel  
 Corky-fruited Water Dropwort  
 Shepherd's Needles  
 Alexanders  
 Perfoliate Alexanders  
 a Masterwort  
 a Masterwort  
 Knotted Hedge-parsley

**Periwinkle Family**

Oleander

**Ivy Family**

Ivy

**Birthwort Family**

Cretan Birthwort

**Daisy Family**

Cretan Sneezewort  
 Cretan Chamomile  
 Rayless Chamomile  
 Bird-cage Plant  
 Annual Daisy  
 Field Marigold  
  
 Crown Daisy  
 Crown Daisy  
 Corn Marigold  
 Chicory  
 Spiny Chicory  
 Cretan Thistle  
 Pink Hawksbeard  
 Crupina  
  
 Globe Artichoke  
 A Globe Thistle  
 Evax  
 Broad-leaved Cudweed  
 Galactites  
  
 Cottonweed  
 Pallenis  
 Phagnalon  
 Bristly Oxtongue

*Rhagadiolus stellatus*  
*Scorzonera cretica*  
*Silybum marianum*  
*Tolpis barbata*  
*Tragopogon hybridus*  
*T. porrifolius*

**Berberidaceae**

*Berberis cretica*

**Bignoniaceae**

*Jacaranda ovalifolia*

**Boraginaceae**

*Anchusa azurea*  
*A. undulata*  
*Borago officinalis*  
*Cynoglossum creticum*  
*Echium angustifolium*  
*E. italicum*  
*E. plantagineum*  
*Onosma erectum*  
*O. graecum*

**Brassicaceae (Cruciferae)**

*Aethionema saxatile*  
*Arabis verna*  
*Aubrieta deltoidea*  
*Biscutella didyma*  
*Brassica cretica*  
*Cakile maritima subsp. aegyptiaca*  
*Eruca sativa*  
*Erysimum mutabile*  
*Lepidium (Cardaria) draba*  
*Malcolmia flexuosa*  
*Matthiola incana ssp. incana*  
*M. tricuspidata*  
*Sisymbrium officinale*

**Campanulaceae**

*Campanula erinus*  
*C. pelviformis*  
*C. spatulata*  
*Petromarula pinnata*

**Caprifoliaceae**

*Lonicera clymenum*  
*L. etrusca*  
*Sambucus nigra*

**Caryophyllaceae**

*Cerastium ligusticum*  
*C. scaposum*  
*Kohlruschia velutina*  
*Silene colorata*

Star Hawkbit  
 Cretan Viper's-grass  
 Milk Thistle  
 Tolpis  
 Slender Salsify  
 Salsify

**Barberry Family**

Cretan Barberry

**Bignonia Family**

Jacaranda

**Borage Family**

Large Blue Alkanet  
 Wavy-leaved Anchusa  
 Borage  
 Blue Hound's-tongue  
 Narrow-leaved Bugloss  
 Pale Bugloss  
 Purple Viper's-bugloss  
 Erect Goldendrops  
 Greek Goldendrops

**Cress Family**

Burnt Candytuft  
 Spring Rockcress  
 Aubrieta  
 Biscutella  
 Cretan Cabbage  
 Sea Rocket  
 Eruca  
 a Treacle Mustard  
 Hoary Cress  
 Sea Stock  
 Hoary Stock  
 Three-horned Stock  
 Hedge Mustard

**Bellflower Family**

Annual Bellflower

Wall Lettuce

**Honeysuckle Family**

Honeysuckle  
 Etruscan Honeysuckle  
 Elder

**Pink Family**

Mouse-ear  
 Cretan Mouse-ear  
 Tunic Flower

<i>S. cretica</i>	
<i>S. italica</i>	Italian Catchfly
<i>S. gallica</i>	
<i>S. sedoides</i>	
<i>Stellaria media</i>	Common Chickweed
<i>Vaccaria hispanica</i>	
<b>Chenopodiaceae</b>	<b>Goosefoot Family</b>
<i>Salicornia europaea</i>	Common Glasswort
<i>Sueda maritima</i>	Annual Sea-blite
<i>S. vera</i>	Shrubby Sea-blite
<b>Cistaceae</b>	<b>Rock-rose Family</b>
<i>Cistus incanus</i> ssp. <i>creticus</i>	
<i>C. monspeliensis</i>	Narrow-leaved Cistus
<i>C. parviflorus</i>	
<i>C. salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus
<i>Fumana arabica</i>	Arabian Fumana
<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	Common Rock-rose
<b>Clusiaceae</b>	<b>Hypericum Family</b>
<i>Hypericum empetrifolium</i>	
<i>H. jovis</i>	
<b>Convolvulaceae</b>	<b>Bindweed Family</b>
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Larger Bindweed
<i>C. soldanella</i>	Sea Bindweed
<i>Convolvulus altheoides</i>	Mallow-leaved Bindweed
<i>C. oleifolius</i>	Olive-leaved Bindweed
<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Common Dodder
<i>Ipomea purpurea</i>	Common Morning Glory
<b>Crassulaceae</b>	<b>Stonecrop Family</b>
<i>Sedum acre</i>	Biting Stonecrop
<i>S. album</i>	White Stonecrop
<i>S. creticus</i>	Reddish Stonecrop
<i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	a Pennywort
<b>Cucurbitaceae</b>	<b>Gourd Family</b>
<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber
<b>Dipsacaceae</b>	<b>Teasel Family</b>
<i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	
<i>Scabiosa cretica</i>	
<b>Ericaceae</b>	<b>Heath Family</b>
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree
<b>Euphorbiaceae</b>	<b>Spurge Family</b>
<i>Euphorbia acanthothamnos</i>	Greek Spiny Spurge
<i>E. characias</i> subsp. <i>characias</i>	Large Mediterranean Spurge
<i>E. dendroides</i>	Tree Spurge
<i>E. helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Annual Mercury

*Ricinus communis*

Castor Oil Plant

**Fabaceae (Leguminosae)***Acacia cyanophylla**A. pycnantha**Anthyllis tetraphylla**A. vulneraria* subsp. *praepropera**Calycotome villosa**Ceratonia siliqua**Cercis siliquastrum**Chamaecytisus hirsutus**Coronilla scorpioides**Ebenus cretica**Genista acanthoclada**Hedysarum spinosissimum**Hippocrepis unisiliquosa**Lathyrus annuus**L. aphaca**L. cicera**L. clymenum**L. hirsutus**Lotus corniculatus**L. uliginosus**Medicago arabica**M. arborea**M. disciformis**M. lupulina**M. orbicularis**M. polymorpha**Melilotus indicus**Onobrychis caput-galii**O. aequidentata**Ononis reclinata**O. spinosa**Ornithopus compressus**Psoralea bituminosa**Robinia pseudoacacia**Scorpiurus muricatus**Spartium junceum**Tetragonolobus purpureus**Trifolium arvense**T. campestre**T. hybridum**T. repens**T. resupinatum**T. stellatum**T. subterraneum**T. tomentosum**T. uniflorum**Vicia hybrida**V. sativa* subsp. *sativa**V. villosa***Pea Family**

Blue-leaved Wattle

Golden Wattle

Bladder Vetch

Mediterranean Kidney Vetch

Hairy Thorny Broom

Carob

Judas Tree

Hairy Spanish Broom

Annual Scorpion Vetch

Shrubby Sainfoin

Spiny Broom

Annual Vetchling

Yellow Vetchling

Hairy Vetchling

Bird's-foot Trefoil

Bird's-foot Trefoil

Spotted Medick

Tree Medick

Black Medick

Large Disc Medick

Toothed Medick

Small Melilot

Cockscomb Sainfoin

Small Restharrow

Spiny Restharrow

Pitch Trefoil

False Acacia

Scorpiurus

Spanish Broom

Asparagus Pea

Hare's-foot Clover

Hop Trefoil

White Clover

Reversed Clover

Starry Clover

Burrowing Clover

Woolly Clover

Hairy Yellow Vetchling

Common Vetch

Fodder Vetch

**Fagaceae***Castanea sativa***Beech Family**

Sweet Chestnut

*Quercus coccifera* subsp. *calliprinos*  
*Q. ilex*  
*Q. aegilops* (*Q. macrolepis*)

Kermes Oak  
 Holm Oak  
 Valonia Oak

#### **Gentianaceae**

*Blackstonia perfoliata*  
*Centaurium pulchellum*

#### **Gentian Family**

Yellow-wort  
 Lesser Centaury

#### **Geraniaceae**

*Erodium cicutarium*  
*Geranium molle*  
*G. robertianum*

#### **Geranium Family**

Common Stork's-bill  
 Dove's-foot Crane's-bill  
 Herb Robert

#### **Juglandaceae**

*Juglans regia*

#### **Walnut Family**

Walnut

#### **Lamiaceae (Labiatae)**

*Ballota pseudodictamnus*  
*Lavandula stoechas*  
*Nepeta mellisifolia*  
*Origanum onites*  
*Phlomis cretica*  
*P. fruticosa*  
*P. lanata*  
*Rosmarinus officinalis*  
*Salvia fruticosa*  
*S. sclarea*  
*S. verbenacea*  
*Satureja spinosa*  
*S. thymbra*  
*Stachys cretica*  
*Teucrium microphylla*  
*Thymus capitatus*

#### **Mint Family**

French Lavender  
 Pot Marjoram  
 Jerusalem Sage  
 Rosemary  
 Three-leaved Sage  
 Clary  
 Wild Clary  
 Spiny Satureia  
 Satureia  
 Mediterranean Woundwort  
 Shrubby Thyme

#### **Linaceae**

*Linum bienne*  
*L. strictum spicatum*  
*L. trigynum*

#### **Flax Family**

Pale Flax  
 Upright Yellow Flax

#### **Lythraceae**

*Lythrum hyssopifolia*  
*L. junceum*

#### **Grass Poly Family**

Grass Poly

#### **Malvaceae**

*Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*  
*Lavatera arborea*  
*L. cretica*  
*Malva parviflora*  
*M. sylvestris*

#### **Mallow Family**

Hibiscus  
 Tree Mallow  
 Cretan Mallow  
 Least Mallow  
 Common Mallow

#### **Meliaceae**

*Melia azedarach*

#### **Meliaceae Family**

Indian Bead Tree/Persian Lilac

#### **Moraceae**

*Ficus carica*

#### **Mulberry Family**

Fig

<i>F. elastica</i>	Rubber Plant
<b>Nyctaginaceae</b> <i>Bougainvillea glabra</i>	<b>Bougainvillea Family</b> Bougainvillea
<b>Oleaceae</b> <i>Olea europaea</i>	<b>Ash Family</b> Olive
<b>Orobanchaceae</b> <i>Orobanche alba</i> <i>O. caryophyllacea</i> <i>O. crenata</i> <i>O. ramosa</i>	<b>Broomrape Family</b> Thyme Broomrape Clove-scented Broomrape  Branched Broomrape
<b>Oxalidaceae</b> <i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	<b>Wood Sorrel Family</b> Bermuda Buttercup
<b>Paeoniaceae</b> <i>Paeonia clusii</i>	<b>Peony Family</b> Clusius's Peony
<b>Papaveraceae</b> <i>Fumaria officinalis</i> <i>Glaucium flavum</i> <i>Papaver apulum</i> <i>P. argemone</i> <i>P. rhoeas</i>	<b>Poppy Family</b> Common Fumitory Yellow Horned-poppy  Common Poppy
<b>Pittosporaceae</b> <i>Pittosporum tobira</i>	<b>Pittosporum Family</b>
<b>Plantaginaceae</b> <i>Plantago albicans</i> <i>P. afra</i> <i>P. coronopus</i> <i>P. cretica</i>	<b>Plantain Family</b>  Buck's-horn Plantain Branched Plantain
<b>Platanaceae</b> <i>Platanus orientalis</i>	<b>Plane Tree Family</b> Oriental Plane
<b>Plumbaginaceae</b> <i>Limonium sinuatum</i>	<b>Thrift Family</b> Winged Sea-lavender
<b>Polygalaceae</b> <i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> <i>Polygala venulosa</i>	<b>Milk-wort Family</b>  Eastern Milkwort
<b>Polygonaceae</b> <i>Persicaria maculosa</i> <i>Rumex acetosa</i> <i>R. acetosella</i> <i>R. pulcher</i>	<b>Dock Family</b> Redshank Sorrel Sheep's Sorrel Fiddle Dock
<b>Primulaceae</b> <i>Anagallis arvensis</i> <i>A. foemina</i>	<b>Primrose Family</b> Scarlet Pimpernel

*Cyclamen creticum*  
*C. graecum*

Cretan Sowbread  
Greek Sowbread

#### **Ranunculaceae**

*Anemone coronaria*  
*A. hortensis* subsp. *heldreichii*  
*Clematis cirrhosa*  
*Ranunculus arvensis*  
*R. ficaria* subsp. *ficariiformis*  
*R. muricatus*

#### **Buttercup Family**

Crown Anemone  
Peacock Anemone  
Virgin's Bower  
Corn Buttercup  
Lesser Celandine

#### **Resedaceae**

*Reseda alba*  
*R. lutea*  
*R. luteola*

#### **Mignonette Family**

White Mignonette  
Mignonette  
Weld

#### **Rosaceae**

*Crataegus monogyna* subsp. *azarella*  
*Eriobotrya japonica*  
*Prunus dulcis*  
*P. spinosa*  
*Pyrus amygdaliformis*  
*Rosa canina*  
*Rubus ulmifolius*  
*Sanguisorba minor*  
*Sarcopoterium spinosum*

#### **Rose Family**

Hawthorn  
Japanese Loquat  
Almond  
Blackthorn  
Almond-leaved Pear  
Dog Rose  
Bramble  
Salad Burnet  
Thorny Burnet

#### **Rubiaceae**

*Rubia peregrina*  
*Sherardia arvensis*

#### **Bedstraw Family**

Wild Madder  
Field Madder

#### **Rutaceae**

*Citrus limon*  
*C. sinensis*

#### **Rue Family**

Lemon  
Orange

#### **Salicaceae**

*Populus alba*

#### **Willow Family**

White Poplar

#### **Saxifragaceae**

*Saxifraga chrysosplenifolia*

#### **Saxifrage Family**

#### **Scrophulariaceae**

*Bellardia trixago*  
*Cymbalaria muralis*  
*Parentucellia latifolia*  
*P. viscosa*  
*Scrophularia peregrina*  
*Verbascum arcturus*  
*V. macurum*  
*V. sinuatum*

#### **Figwort Family**

Bellardia  
Ivy-leaved Toadflax  
Southern Bartsia  
Yellow Bartsia  
Nettle-leaved Figwort  
Shrubby Mullein

#### **Simaroubaceae**

*Ailanthus altissima*

#### **Tree of Heaven Family**

Tree of Heaven

#### **Tamaricaceae**

#### **Tamarisk Family**

*Tamarix parviflora*

Small-flowered Tamarisk

### Thymelaeaceae

*Daphne sericea*

*Thymelaea hirsuta*

### Daphne Family

### Ulmaceae

*Zelkova abelicea*

### Elm Family

Zelkova

### Urticaceae

*Parietaria cretica*

*P. judaica*

*Urtica pilulifera*

### Nettle Family

Cretan Pellitory

Pellitory-of-the-wall

Roman Nettle

### Valerianaceae

*Valeriana asarifolia*

### Valerian Family

Cretan Valerian

### Verbenaceae

*Verbena officinalis*

*Vitex agnus-castus*

### Verbena Family

Vervain

Chaste Tree

### Vitaceae

*Vitis vinifera*

### Vine Family

Vine

## MONOCOTYLEDONS

## MONOCOTYLEDONS

### Agavaceae

*Agave americana*

### Agave Family

Century Plant

### Amaryllidaceae

*Pancratium maritimum*

### Daffodil Family

Sea Daffodil

### Araceae

*Arisarum vulgare*

*Arum concinatum*

*A. creticum*

*A. idaeum*

*Dracunculus vulgaris*

### Arum Family

Friar's Cow

Cretan Arum

Mountain Arum

Dragon Arum

### Arecaceae (Palmae)

*Phoenix theophrasti*

### Palm Family

Cretan Palm

### Dioscoridaceae

*Tamus communis*

### Yam Family

Black Bryony

### Iridaceae

*Gladiolus italicus*

*Gynandriris sisyrrinchium*

*Iris germanica*

*I. pseudacorus*

### Iris Family

Wild Gladiolus

Barbary Nut

German Iris

Yellow Flag

### Liliaceae

*Allium ameloprasum*

*A. neopolitanum*

*A. nigrum*

### Lily Family

Wild Leek

Neopolitan Garlic



<i>A. roseum</i>	Rosy Garlic
<i>A. subhirsutum</i>	Hairy Garlic
<i>Asparagus officianalis</i>	Wild Asparagus
<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>	Yellow Asphodel
<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	Common Asphodel
<i>Bellevalia dubia</i>	Bellevalia
<i>Fritillaria messanensis</i>	
<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth
<i>M. neglectum</i>	
<i>Ornithogalum dictaeum</i> subsp. <i>dictaeum</i>	Star of Bethlehem
<i>O. narbonense</i>	
<i>O. nutans</i>	Drooping Star of Bethlehem
<i>O. umbellatum</i>	
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax
<i>Tulipa bakeri</i>	
<i>T. doefleri</i>	
<i>Urginea maritima</i>	Sea Squill
<b>Musaceae</b>	<b>Banana Family</b>
<i>Musa cavendishii</i>	Banana
<b>Orchidaceae</b>	<b>Orchid Family</b>
<i>Aceras anthropophorum</i>	Man Orchid
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid
<i>Barlia robertiana</i>	Giant Orchid
<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Bee Orchid
<i>O. bombyliflora</i>	Bumblebee Orchid
<i>O. candica</i>	White Ophrys
<i>O. cinereophilla</i>	Small Brown Orchid
<i>O. cretica</i> subsp. <i>ariadnae</i>	Ariadne's Bee Orchid
<i>O. cretica</i> subsp. <i>cretica</i>	Cretan Bee Orchid
<i>O. episcopalis</i>	Large-flowered bee Orchid
<i>O. fusca</i>	Dull Orchid
<i>O. fusca</i> subsp. <i>creberrima</i>	Creberrima Ophrys
<i>O. heldreichii</i>	
<i>O. iricolor</i>	Rainbow Ophrys
<i>O. lutea</i>	Yellow Ophrys
<i>O. sicula</i>	Small Yellow Ophrys
<i>Orchis boryi</i>	Bory's Orchid
<i>O. coriophora</i>	Bug Orchid
<i>O. fragrans</i>	Bug Orchid
<i>O. italica</i>	Naked Man Orchid
<i>O. laxiflora</i>	Lax-flowered Orchid
<i>O. pauciflora</i>	Sparse-flowered Orchid
<i>O. quadripunctata</i>	Four-spotted Orchid
<i>O. sitiaca</i>	
<i>O. tridendata</i>	Toothed Orchid
<i>Serapias bergonii</i>	Bergoni's Tongue Orchid
<i>S. lingua</i>	Tongue Orchid
<i>S. orientalis</i> subsp. <i>orientalis</i>	Eastern Ploughshare Orchid
<i>S. parviflora</i>	Small-flowered Tongue Orchid
<b>Poaceae (Graminae)</b>	<b>Grass Family</b>
<i>Aegilops geniculata</i>	

<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed
<i>Anisantha diandra</i>	Great Brome
<i>Avena barbata</i>	
<i>Briza maxima</i>	Large Quaking Grass
<i>Catopodium rigidum</i>	Common Fern Grass
<i>Cynosurus echinatus</i>	Rough Dog's-tail
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall Barley
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's Tail
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Reed
<i>Stipa capensis</i>	Mediterranean Needle-grass

## Birds

Little Grebe	Common at Aghia Lake
Little Bittern	Aghia Lake, incredibly confiding
Squacco Heron	Widespread
Little Egret	Very common
Grey Heron	Several seen from vans. One at Aghia Lake
Purple Heron	One at Aghia Lake
Garganey	Pair at Aghia Lake
Ferruginous Duck	One at Geropotomous Bridge
Black Kite	One seen from vans
Lammergeier	One, Samaria Gorge
Griffon Vulture	Widespread
Montagu's Harrier	One male, Akrotiri peninsula, Chania
Marsh Harrier	One female, Aghia Lake
Buzzard	Extremely common
Golden Eagle	Common in White Mountain, also seen elsewhere
Booted Eagle	One over at Knossos (dark), and one at Aghia Lake (light)
Bonelli's Eagle	Pair in Kourtaliotiko Gorge
Red-footed Falcon	Several groups seen well, west of island
Kestrel	Extremely common
Hobby	Two, Aghia Lake
Eleonora's Falcon	One seen well, Selena Gorge
Chukar Partridge	Two, Phaistos
Spotted Crake	One, Creta Sun Pools
Moorhen	Common, Aghia Lake
Coot	Common, Aghia Lake
Little Ringed Plover	Common
Little Stint	Creta Sun Pools
Temminck's Stint	One, Creta Sun Pools, One Aghia Lake
Ruff	Creta Sun Pools and Aghia Lakes, common
Greenshank	Two seen at Creta Sun Pools
Wood Sandpiper	One on river at Turkish Bridge, one at Aghia Lake
Common Sandpiper	Common
Snipe	One, Creta Sun Pools
Yellow-legged Gull	Very common
Wood Pigeon	Widespread, but uncommon
Feral Pigeon/Rock Dove	Very common
Collared Dove	Extremely common in villages
Turtle Dove	Only one heard
Cuckoo	Only two heard
Long-eared Owl	Three very young, Knossos. Important breeding record
Alpine Swift	Widespread
Swift	Very common
Hoopoe	Only two heard
Woodlark	Very common in phrygana and on hillsides
Crested Lark	Very common in lowlands
Short-toed Lark	A few seen at start of week. One singing by hotel, Analipsi
Crag Martin	Very common in mountains
Sand Martin	Extremely common near water
Red-rumped Swallow	One or two seen, eg. at Creta Sun Pools

Swallow	Very common, nesting
House Martin	Flocks seen moving through
Red-throated Pipit	Small numbers, Creta Sun Pools and Malia headland
Tawny Pipit	A small number, Malia headland
White Wagtail	Occasional
Yellow Wagtail	Frequently heard flying over, several also seen, various races
Wren	Often heard, not so often seen!
Whinchat	Only one seen
Stonechat	Extremely common
Northern Wheatear	One seen, Malia headland
Black-eared Wheatear	Very common in rocky areas
Blue Rock Thrush	Common denizen of mountainous areas
Blackbird	Very common
Cetti's Warbler	Found everywhere Reed or Giant Reed found
Sedge Warbler	Seen and heard at Aghia Lake
Reed Warbler	Seen at Aghia Lake
Blackcap	Only two heard
Sardinian Warbler	Extremely common
Wood Warbler	One, Ayia Triada monastery
Pied Flycatcher	One, Turkish Bridge
Spotted Flycatcher	One, Turkish Bridge
Blue Tit	Common
Great Tit	Common
Red-backed Shrike	One seen from van
Woodchat Shrike	Two seen, one on Omalos, one on Akrotiri
Golden Oriole	Seen and heard
Jay	Very scarce, seen at Samaria Gorge
Alpine Chough	A small number seen at head of Samaria Gorge
Chough	A flock of 15 on Lassithi plateau
Jackdaw	Common
Raven	Very common
Hooded Crow	Extremely common
Tree Sparrow	One, grounds of hotel, Analipsi
Italian (House) Sparrow	Extremely common
Spanish Sparrow	One, grounds of hotel, Analipsi
Chaffinch	Very common
Serin	Very common
Greenfinch	Very common
Goldfinch	Extremely common
Linnet	Common
Corn Bunting	Common in cultivated areas
Cirl Bunting	Common in wooded areas

### Mammals

Beech Marten	At least 7 dead on roads
Badger	2 dead on roads
Kri-Kri (Cretan Wild Goat)	2 seen well at head of Samaria Gorge

### Amphibian & reptiles

Erhard's Wall Lizard <i>Podarcis erhardii</i>	Balkan Green Lizard <i>Lacerta trilineata</i>
Green Toad <i>Bufo viridis</i>	Dice Snake <i>Natrix tessellata</i>
Striped Tree Frog <i>Hyla arborea</i>	Marsh Frog (tadpoles) <i>Rana ridibunda</i>
Stripe-necked Terrapin <i>Mauremys caspica</i>	

### Butterflies & moths

Painted Lady	Swallowtail
Small Blue	Clouded Yellow
Large White	Small White
Eastern Festoon	Red Admiral
Meadow Brown	Wall Brown
Small Tortoiseshell	

### Other invertebrates

Mantis <i>Mantodea</i>	Giant Hornet <i>Scolia flavifrons</i>
Violet Carder Bee <i>Xylcopa violacea</i>	Egyptian Grasshopper/Locust <i>Anacridium aegyptium</i>
Giant Bush Cricket <i>Sago pedo</i>	Scarlet Darter <i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>