

Crete

Naturetrek Tour Report

11 - 18 April 2017



Little Crane by Mike Walker



Tulipa bakeri on the Omalos by John & Jenney Willsher



Top of Samaria Gorge by John & Jenny Willsher



Chukar by Mike Walker

Report compiled by Jenny & John Willsher
Images courtesy of Mike Walker & John & Jenny Willsher



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Summary

Crete is the largest of the many islands of the Aegean and has long been famous for its diverse and beautiful flora. Our week here did not disappoint with many flowers just reaching their peak. The abundant flora of Crete is particularly exciting with ten percent of the plants being endemic. The roadside flora was rich and colourful, with sweeps of yellow Crown Daisy, many pink and white cistus species, the lilac thistle Galactites and stately spikes of Giant Fennel. High on the Omalos plateau, where the winter had dropped three metres of snow, the small enclosed fields made for a patchwork of lilac/pink/blue Crown Anemones and drifts of *Tulipa bakeri*. The 'Orchid Hill' at Spili and the surrounding hills lived up to their reputation and we totalled 31 species of orchid, including drifts of Jersey Orchids and many tantalising *Ophrys* species. Many interesting bird species were seen, including some spring migrants on their way north. We started our week in the south of the island, based at Plakias, where we explored the local headlands, valleys and gorges. We travelled east to visit the archaeological site of Festos in its beautiful hilltop location, and then headed west to Chania for the last three nights of the tour. The enthusiasm and good humour of the group contributed enormously to the success of the week, and it proved to be a great week of good company, birds, flowers and food

Day 1

Tuesday 11th April

Arrive at Heraklion; transfer to hotel in Plakias

The flight made good time and luggage retrieval was speedy, so the group soon met up with Mike and Anne who were already in Crete, and Nicos from Lykno Tourism who had our minibuses ready for us. Once loaded into the minibuses we were on our way west, with the backdrop of snow-capped Mount Ida (Psiloritis) on our left. Our first stop was unscheduled to check out a raptor which was a Common Buzzard, but the botanists were soon exclaiming at the diversity of small plants at our feet including the unusual tongue orchids: *Serapias vomeracea* and *S. bergonii*. Between the flower spotting we noticed a distant Blue Rock Thrush which was singing from the top of the cliff above the road. We then made a brief stop at Gerapotomas Bridge where we found more orchids: one of the Cretan Bee Orchids, *Ophrys ariadne*, and some faded spikes of *O. cretensis*. Many Balkan Terrapins were sunning themselves at the edge of the small river and Cetti's and Great Reed Warblers made themselves known with their loud songs. A Kingfisher was spotted as it dived into the water from a perch in the Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) that bordered the river, and lower down a Green Sandpiper flew off. Continuing on, we travelled south at Rethymnon, towards our seaside hotel in the small resort of Plakias, on the south coast of the island.

First however, on the road south of the little town of Armeni, we stopped at a café overlooking a verdant valley with the southern mountains beyond. We enjoyed a drink but the cloudy cool conditions did not encourage any birds of prey to fly, so we were limited to the Italian Sparrows busy with their nests under the eaves of the café, and a Blackcap together with a fine male Sardinian Warbler in the trees below.

To reach the south coast we passed through the Kourtaliotiki Gorge, at first a narrow cleft in the mountains but opening out into a wide and dramatic rocky landscape. Here we stopped at a viewpoint and managed to see a few Griffon Vultures, but conditions were not good for flight and it was mainly Jackdaws circling the cliff edges. At our feet, amongst the gravel, were the tiny flowers of Burnt Candytuft (*Aetheonema saxatile*), bright pink *Silene colorata*, and tight buds of the endemic *Centaurea raphanina* subsp. *raphanina* while, amongst the rocks, were bright

green cushions of Greek Spiny Spurge (*Euphorbia acanthothamnus*). Leaving the gorge, it was a short distance to Plakias, along roadsides colourful with Giant Fennel, Crown Daisies and the lilac thistle, Galactites.

Plakias is a delightful small town on a beautiful curved bay with the dramatic backdrop of impressive mountains. Thankfully quiet at this time of the year, we could imagine it in high season thronging with tourists enjoying the beach and bars along the seafront. At our hotel we met up with Paul and Jill who had been in Plakias for a few days. After settling into our rooms with their lovely views across the bay, we walked the short distance to our seaside Gorgona restaurant, where Georgios was waiting to serve us the first of many delicious meals.

Day 2

Wednesday 12th April

Moni Preveli, Kourtaliotiko Gorge and Spili area

Some took an early morning walk along the shore road to the west where the wayside flowers included banks of the endemic Cretan Ebony (*Ebenus creticus*) with its soft grey-green foliage, clumps of the Yellow Horned Poppy (*Glaucium flavium*), the aromatic Three-leaved Sage (*Salvia fruticosa*) and a few of the many vetches we would see in the next few days. A Nightingale was heard, Sardinian Warblers were active in the scrub, we listened to the secretive Cetti's Warbler's explosively loud song and watched the 200 or so House Martins feeding along the cliffs above us.

After breakfast, which most of us enjoyed on the terrace, we set off, firstly stopping in Plakias for picnic supplies. This allowed some to check out the stream in the town centre where Wood and Common Sandpipers were feeding with Yellow and White Wagtails. Others found a large squid washed up on the beach.

Supplies on board, we set off to explore the area around Moni Preveli, to the east of Plakias. A winding road led us through olive groves, along a lush valley with riverside Plane trees (*Platanus orientalis*). During a short walk through olive orchards near the river, Grey and Purple Herons flew over us and later a Little Egret was seen flying down the valley.

We then drove up through a dry stony landscape to the monastery overlooking the sea. The atmospheric Moni Preveli, in its splendid isolation overlooking the Libyan Sea, played an important role both in the islanders rebellion against Turkish rule in the 1800's and in the evacuation of allied troops during the last war. Some took a look at its well-maintained complex, while others scanned the hillsides for birds and flowers. A Corn Bunting sang from the power lines and Stonechats were singing from their bush-top song posts. In a scrubby gully we heard a Nightingale and saw a couple of Collared Flycatchers and a Whitethroat. Up the rocky hillside, a Black-eared Wheatear and Ortolan Bunting were singing.

The hillsides were dotted with the shrubby yellow Jerusalem Sage (*Phlomis fruticosa*) and there were some good spikes of *Verbascum macrurum* along the roadside, with large leafy rosettes of *V. sinuatum* and the pink-flowered Mediterranean Woundwort (*Stachys cretica*) with its grey-woolly foliage. A cleared bank near the monastery car park was festooned with the invasive Hottentot Fig. Much of this habitat was still recovering from a fire a few years ago.

Heading north, we stopped in the Kortaliotiko gorge and saw a singing Blue Rock Thrush, Crag Martin, several Griffon Vultures and Ravens soaring above the mountain. We then headed into the hills behind the little town of

Spili. The focus here was on the botanical riches of this now partially protected area. Firstly we set up our picnic under some magnificent plane trees near a well. The damp ground in front of us was studded with tall dark pink spikes of Jersey Orchids (*Anacamptis/Orcbis laxiflora*) and that was just the start of quite a feast of orchids! After our picnic we walked the track that wound through this attractive hilly landscape of mostly scrubby *phrygana* dotted with small fields of arable crops. *Phrygana* is the Greek equivalent to the Western Mediterranean *garrigue* – the term for the low scrubby and very scratchy plants which orchids manage to grow through. *Phrygana* plants included *Cistus* species, Thorny Burnet (*Sarcopoterium spinosum*), Savoury (*Satureja spinosa*) and other aromatic plants.

So our orchid feast included Bory's and Fan-lipped Orchids, (*Anacamptis boryi*, *A. collina*), the stout Giant Orchid (*Himantoglossum robertianum*), the small-flowered Four-spotted Orchid (*Orcbis quadripunctata*), and the first of the masses of Naked Man Orchid (*Orcbis italica*) – which caused us amusement due to its name and virility! *Ophrys* species included Bumblebee, Bishop's, Rainbow, Lion Mane, White and Small Yellow Bee (*Ophrys bombiliflora*, *O. episcopalis*, *O. iricolor*, *O. leochroma*, *O. andica*, *O. sicula*). The fields were dotted with the red *Tulipa doefleri*, more Jersey Orchids and the dusky pink Milky Orchid (*Neotinea lactea*).

We drove further down the track and parked behind 'Spili Hill'. This unassuming hillock was rich in a variety of species growing on and amongst its many little rocky ledges. The many orchids included the bright yellow Sparse-flowered Orchid (*Orcbis pauciflora*), Man Orchid (*Orcbis anthropophora*), *Ophrys herae*, *O. cretica*, *O. creberimma* and *O. heldreichii*. We also found large leafy clumps of Cretan Iris, low cushions of the compact white *Trifolium uniflorum*, white Turban Buttercups and small drifts of pink *Tulipa bakeri*, sadly past their best. Birds here included Corn Bunting, Woodlark, Raven and Buzzard.

We then made our way down from the hills and returned to Plakias via the Kourtaliotiko Gorge, where we stopped for an obligatory vulture watch but again the poor weather meant only one was on the wing.

We met up later in the hotel to discuss our findings of the day. Jenny talked about the different groups of orchids that we had seen and then we walked to the restaurant where Georgios welcomed us and served us another very good meal.

Day 3

Thursday 13th April

Festos and Amari Valley

After breakfast, the usual shop for picnic supplies and a check of the beach where four Dunlin flew along the shore, we headed north through the Kortiliotiki Gorge. We then headed east through the busy little town of Spili. Some way further on we stopped to look at a particularly flowery roadside bank. Amongst the clumps of Wild Gladioli were some impressive spikes of the pyramidal shaped Pale Bugloss (*Echium italicum*), blood red Asparagus Pea (*Tetragonolobus purpureus*), Giant Orchid, Fan-lipped Orchid and Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis collina*, *A. pyramidalis*).

Before reaching the archaeological site of Festos we had to cross the fertile plain of Mesara, and through the busy town of Timbaki with its unattractive sprawl of plastic greenhouses. Festos is one of four palaces built around 1900 BC by the Minoan civilisation on Crete, and was the second largest and most important – the largest being Knossos. There has been no large scale reconstruction here, as there has been at Knossos. Until

180BC, Festos remained an independent city and minted its own coinage. Its commanding hilltop situation has wonderful views out across the plain to Mount Ida. After exploring the ruins, we gathered in the shade of the attendant cafe to appreciate the view and enjoyed some spectacularly close fly-pasts of Alpine Swifts that seemed to be relishing the windy weather.

By now it was approaching midday and the temperature was rising. We headed down to the coast north of Timbaki and had our picnic near the lagoons at the back of the beach, which proved very productive for birds. This is a rare habitat on Crete and yielded many new birds for our list: Squacco Heron, at least 20 Glossy Ibis, a fleeting glimpse of Water Rail, two Black-winged Stilts, Little Stint and Gull-billed Tern. As we were about to leave, more than 50 Ruff arrived to join the 20 or so Wood Sandpipers already feeding or resting in the shallow water. These were all birds pausing at this valuable wet habitat on their northward migration.

After a welcome coffee and comfort stop (and a paddle in the sea and a bit of beachcombing for some!) we spent the rest of the afternoon meandering through the Amari valley, between Mount Ida and the southern Mount Kedros, enjoying the ever-changing scenery of quiet rural life of inland Crete. There were many small villages set amongst olive groves and almond and cherry orchards, and the occasional Byzantine church. Also some very floristic patches which tempted us to explore! One bank was dotted with buds of Pink Butterfly Orchid and another with various Orchid and *Serapias* species – mostly *Serapias lingua* and *S. Bergonii*, but Eunah found a white spike which we named *Serapias serapia* -Serapia being one of her names! A stop at the little church of Agios Ioannis in the lush green valley below Kardhaki was enlivened by a distant Golden Eagle gliding along the flank of Mount Kedros to the south, finally settling on a rock.

We eventually reached the little town of Gerakari, famous for its cherries, before heading back to Plakias.

Day 4

Friday 14th April

Kotsiphos Gorge; Frangokastello; Imbros Gorge

A pre-breakfast walk, this time into Plakias to check out the stream and beach, produced a Little Ringed Plover, two Common Sandpipers, Wood Sandpiper and a Yellow Wagtail.

Today we set off westwards, for the twisting scenic road that follows the coast to Frangokastello, through the hillside villages of Selia, Rodakino and Skaloti. We stopped at various points to take photographs of Plakias Bay or for opportunistic stops for birds and flowers. The hillsides were dotted with elegant spikes of Common Asphodel. Stopping at the end of the Kotsiphos Gorge we saw Griffon Vultures, a Kestrel and then very high travelling across the gorge a Bearded Vulture (*Lammergeier*). Sadly it just flew straight on and was a distant binocular view. As we left the gorge a Hoopoe flew into a small conifer plantation then flew out of sight down into the gorge. Along the way there were Black-eared Wheatears, and as we headed back to the vehicle after a roadside flower/photo stop, an Eleanor's Falcon made an all too brief appearance above us. Another stop was again good for Griffon Vultures with a good view of two perched on a rock above us. There were more Black-eared Wheatears and some Crested Larks.

Several migrant Whinchats were perched on the fences as we approached Frangokastello and a Nightingale was spotted. The striking 14th century fortress overlooks a lovely sandy bay. It was built by the Venetians as a defence against pirates and the rebellious Sfakiots. In the 1800s a bloody battle was fought here between the

Cretans and the Turks. It is a shell of a building now, sometimes used for concerts. Some of the group were keen to have a good walk in the Imbros Gorge so John took them to the bottom end and the rest of the group enjoyed coffee and cold drinks at a seaside taverna and explored the local habitat while Jenny set up the picnic on the taverna tables. Ann slipped off for a swim in the shallow sandy bay in front of the castle. Two Purple Herons were seen; one probably just arrived, resting on rocks near the sea. There was also a small flock of migrant Yellow Wagtails. One of these had a very white head and appeared to resemble the White-headed Yellow Wagtail, *Motacilla flava leucocephala*, the most eastern sub-species of Yellow Wagtail normally breeding in Mongolia and China. Could this bird be so far from its normal range? It usually winters in India.

We then spent the afternoon exploring the lowest part of the Imbros Gorge, looking at the *chasmophytes*, the plants that thrive on gorge walls where they cannot be nibbled by the many goats that roam the island. Large clumps of Caper and Wall Lettuce hung off the cliffs. Amongst the bushes of Chaste Tree (*Vitex agnus-castus* – so called because in the past it was thought to be an anti-aphrodisiac which the Crusaders gave their wives before they went off!) were a few spikes of the dramatic Dragon Arum (*Dranunculus vulgaris*) with its huge purple red spathe. Other plants included Nettle-leaved Figwort, Fig, Carob, Cretan Gorge Comfrey (*Protopiana cretica*), Cretan Ebony, small clumps of the endemic *Campanula tubulosa*, the aromatic Savory and soft white spikes of *Scutellaria sieberi*. Above the gorge were more Griffon Vultures and a Bonelli's Eagle, and in the gorge Blue Rock Thrush, Jay and Wren.

Our return to Plakias included a stop in the attractive little village of Myrthios which has stunning views across Plakias Bay. While some of the group relaxed with drinks in the taverna, others were tempted into the gift shop for quality holiday gifts and souvenirs! Then back to the hotel for our last evening in Plakias.

Day 5

Saturday 15th April

Armani, Georgiopolis and Chania

After breakfast we had a final walk out towards the headland at the east end of Plakias Bay, primarily for some special plants and the spectacular view across the bay. We did see a Red-billed Chough flying over and found Kestrel, Blue Rock Thrush and a very secretive Nightingale in a Euphorbia bush. The predominant plant here was Tree Euphorbia, but on the rock walls and amongst the phrygana plants we found the strange *Aristolochia cretica*, many orchid species including Pyramidal Orchid and Kandy's Ophrys (*O. candida*), the rare Cretan Rock Tulip, buds of the endemic *Campanula saxatilis* and Cretan Vipers Grass (*Scorzonera cretica*). The dramatic cliff walls were dotted with clumps of Shrubby Mullein (*Verbascum arcturus*) and the sand dunes below held typical seaside plants such as Sea Spurge (*E. peplus*), Sea Medick (*Medicago marina*), Sea Stock (*Mathiola sinuata*) and Sea rocket (*Cakile maritima*).

Sadly we then had to leave the now picture postcard blue sea and attractive little town of Plakias. At the southern side of the Kotsiphos gorge we stopped for a last look, but no return of the Bearded Vulture today.

We turned off the main road south of Armani, taking the back road to Fotinos. The fairly recently concreted road had partly destroyed a bank that had been good for various orchids in the past, but fortunately now allowed access to even better sites further up the valley. We passed a planted crop of prickly pear, but the once flowery meadow which had been a new and very productive site last year had been ploughed and reseeded with a cereal crop!

So we retraced our steps back to the main road and headed for our next stop; north of Armeni at the Late Minoan cemetery site. This peaceful site was canopied by Valonia Oak (*Quercus macrolepis*), with its large shaggy acorn cups. The galls from the trees were once an important export for the tanning industry. The vegetation around the intriguing grave sites was lush with flowers including many vetches, Common Asphodel (*Asphodelus aestivus*), *Ornithogalum narbonense*, Barbary Nut (*Moraea sisyrinchium*) and a few orchids including good spikes of Giant Orchid, Bishop's and Heldreich's Ophrys, drifts of Naked Man Orchid, *Serepias lingua* and *S. bergonii*. Chaffinches and tits were busy in the oaks, and a Wryneck and Pied Flycatcher were seen.

As our usual friendly taverna was closed, we continued north to Rethymnon and then west, turning off at the small beach at Gerani where a covered well provided a good place to set out the picnic. Jenny W. and Ann had a quick swim in the crystal clear sea before we off moved again, continuing west and stopping briefly for a comfort stop before we reached the reservoir at Georgiopolis. Here there were Coot, Moorhen, Little Grebe, Little Egret, two Little Bitterns, a pair of Garganey and a Pygmy Cormorant, plus Common and Wood Sandpipers. Around the shore, basking in the sunshine, were several Balkan (Striped-necked) Terrapins.

It was then on to Chania. We stopped for a short walk through the quiet and peaceful Souda Bay War Cemetery, the burial site for 1500 Allied soldiers who died in the 1941 Battle of Crete – a significant event in Crete's recent history. We then headed for our comfortable hotel which was once the British Consulate, with its imposing colonnaded façade. After discussing the day's sightings with a drink in the hotel garden, we walked into the old city of Chania, skirting the bustling harbour with its many busy bars and restaurants, before reaching the Semiramis restaurant. The open air location meant we could enjoy the spectacle of swifts screaming overhead while we made our choices from a comprehensive menu of traditional dishes.

Day 6

Sunday 16th April

Agia Reservoir; Omalos Plateau

After a very comprehensive and satisfying breakfast, we headed southwest, out of Chania, firstly stopping at Agia Reservoir. There were huge stands of Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*) and the water was edged with Common Reed. Here we watched Squacco Herons near the dam, Sedge Warblers were singing from the reeds and Cetti's Warblers uttered their loud songs. A Little Bittern disappeared into the reeds and on the far side a Purple Heron perched. On the water there were numerous Coots and Moorhens. We spent a long time trying to get good views of several Little Crakes that were creeping through the vegetation at the water's edge then rapidly running across openings in the vegetation, making themselves very hard to see and photograph. As we left a Marsh Harrier was spotted as it flew towards the lake.

We then made our way up to the Omalos Plateau. We stopped for a welcome coffee and comfort stop at the tiny village of Omalos. The friendly taverna owner reported that the snow this winter had been particularly deep and indeed, the White Mountains were living up to their name. One of the botanical highlights of the stark beauty of the Omalos in early spring is the pink *Tulipa bakeri* and we were soon exclaiming at drifts of this lovely flower, mostly thriving in areas fenced off from the grazing goats and sheep. There were also wonderful carpets of the colourful *Anemone coronaria*, in various shades of blue and pink, and occasionally red. Jenny C. was seen kneeling reverently in an area of short turf which was studded with the tiny purple *Romulea bulbicodium*, and many of us had to also get down for a photograph. The very spiny lemon yellow Cretan Barberry (*Berberis cretica*) was thriving,

obviously too prickly even for the goats! We picnicked amongst this floral carpet with the background of snowy slopes and singing Woodlarks.

Then we moved on to the head of the Samaria Gorge. We sat on the terrace of the cafe enjoying stunning views of the top of the gorge and finding many *Cupressus sempervirens* var. *horizontalis* in view. There we searched, unfortunately unsuccessfully, for any Kri Kri, the Cretan Wild Goat, on the vast cliffs opposite. The area is a UNESCO Biosphere reserve for this elusive, long-time descendent from ancient Minoan feral goats. There were a few intrepid walkers on the still part snow covered slopes.

We then moved on around the plateau, stopping for more patches of tulips and anemones. One area had lush clumps of the bright yellow lily *Gagea chrysantha* and small groups of the unusual green and brown Widow Iris (*Iris tuberosus*). Unfortunately the pretty Zelkova trees (*Zelkova abelicea*) were not yet in leaf. This attractive small-leaved endemic tree is only found in the mountains of Crete and is the only representative in Europe of an Asiatic genus. It was traditionally used to make shepherd's crooks. Cretan Maple (*Acer sempervirens*) was just in leaf.

We continued anti-clockwise around the plateau seeing Woodchat Shrike, Northern Wheatear and a group of migrant Whinchats. At the edge of a pond was a lone Black-winged Stilt. Later, in the gorge leading down from the plateau, the scenery is quite dramatic – pale grey limestone rocks studded with Cypress trees.

Retracing our steps, we headed back to Chania. After discussing the day over drinks in the hotel garden we walked back into town for another excellent meal at the Semiramis. The local musicians were in action and Diana in particular enjoyed their renditions of some familiar favourites.

Day 7

Monday 17th April

Akrotiri Peninsula

It was our last full day in Crete and today we headed for the Akrotiri peninsula. We took the airport road out of Chania and then the 'Monastery route'. The first of this trio of monasteries is the handsome 17th century Moni Agias Triadas, still an active monastery producing many local products such as oil, wine and raki. It is surrounded by orange and olive groves and a vineyard which can be good for birdwatching for those who prefer not to visit the buildings. Firstly we foraged in some waste ground near the orchards where we found many spikes of *Serapias lingua*, Spotted Rockrose, some stout spikes of Bean Broomrape (*Orobanch crenata*), Naples Garlic, Tassel Hyacinth and *Ophrys cretica*. Here a Honey Buzzard soared overhead and then drifted off to the north. At the monastery several Lesser Kestrels were perching on the vineyard posts and a Marsh Harrier was identified. Later a Cuckoo flew from the vineyard towards the monastery gardens. Numerous noisy Italian Sparrows were nesting in the roof of the building.

Driving on towards Moni Agia Triada through the old olive orchards, two Woodchat Shrikes were seen plus an obliging Chukar and a fleeting glimpse of a Golden Oriole. The second monastery was the 16th century Moni Gouvernetou, which was not such an appealing building but its enclosed garden can be very productive for birds. Not so many were seen on the way out, but on the return there were Whinchats and flycatchers: a Spotted Flycatcher plus a male Semi-collared Flycatcher and then a female Collared Flycatcher.

For the energetic there was a rocky and sometimes steep track down to the third building – the ruins of Moni Katholikou at the northern tip of the peninsular. The track can be rich in plant life and many of the group enjoyed this exploration amongst the phrygana bushes of Greek Spiny Spurge, the white flowered Prasiu and the fragrant Hairy Thorny Broom (*Calicotome villosa*). We found many tiny plants including the delicate *Vicia cretica* scrambling up through the scrub, the curled leaves of *Moraea tripetala* (formerly *Gynadiris monophyllus*), *Allium circinnatum* with its corkscrew leaves, *Ophrys sicula*, Cretan Mallow, the tiny umbellifer Fluffy Thimbleweed (*Lagoecia cuminooides*), Dwarf Spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*), Small Restharrow (*Ononis reclinata*), and as usual, many other vetches. Later we had our picnic amongst the ancient olive groves and handsome Carob trees where another Spotted Flycatcher, Crested Larks and more Woodchat Shrikes were seen.

We then returned early to the hotel so that we could explore part of the ancient city of Chania, before meeting at the restaurant. Chania (Hania) is an atmospheric ancient city with remnants of Venetian walls and townhouses now tastefully turned into hotels or open-air restaurants. The town has a tradition of artisanship which fills the old city with a bewildering choice of craft shops. The prominent former mosque on the harbour-front is evidence of past Turkish rule.

We enjoyed our last evening in Chania in the Semiramis to the accompaniment of the local musicians. We hoped they might strike up a Nana Mouskouri song so that we could sing along, but they were not to be moved from their traditional repertoire!

Day 8

Tuesday 18th April

Flight home

Today we left our hotel in Chania and headed for Knossos, and then Iraklion airport and our flight home. It was a beautiful sunny day and the scenic views of the coast, mountains and hills were lovely.

Knossos was once the Minoan capital of Crete and is now the island's major tourist attraction. The ruins were uncovered in 1900 by the British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans. His 'realistic' restoration of the site continues to be controversial. But it is an attractive site, shaded by pine trees. After our cultural interlude we headed for the airport and prepared to leave the lovely friendly island of Crete.

Once back in the UK, another Naturetrek adventure came to an end

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Species Lists

Plants (• = endemic or near endemic to Crete, ‡ = cultivated or naturalised)

Plant classification largely follows the familiar 'old' system, likely to be encountered in current floras of the region.

Recent taxonomic changes have been incorporated, where relevant

For ease of reference, families genera and species are presented in alphabetic order

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
LYCOPODIOPSIDA		
CLUBMOSES		
Selaginellaceae	Lesser Clubmoss Family	
<i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	Mediterranean Clubmoss	Spili and Imbros
EQUISETOPSIDA		
HORSETAILS		
Equisetaceae	Horsetail Family	
<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>	Branched Horsetail	Spili
<i>Equisetum telmateia</i>	Giant Horsetail	Agia
PTEROPSIDA		
FERNS		
Aspleniaceae	Spleenwort Family	
<i>Asplenium ceterach</i>	Rustyback	Akrotiri
Dennstaedtiaceae	Bracken Family	
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	Armeni
PINOPSIDA		
CONIFERS		
Araucariaceae	Monkey-puzzle Family	
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> ‡	Norfolk Island Pine	Planted
Cupressaceae	Juniper Family	
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>horizontalis</i>	Cypress	Omalos
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>sempervirens</i> ‡	Italian Cypress	"
<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i> subsp. <i>oxycedrus</i>	Prickly Juniper	Nr Moni Preveli
<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i> subsp. <i>phoenicea</i>	Phoenicean Juniper	"
Pinaceae	Pine Family	
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> subsp. <i>brutia</i>	Calabrian Pine	
<i>Pinus pinea</i> ‡	Stone Pine	
MAGNOLIOPSIDA		
FLOWERING PLANTS		
MAGNOLIIDAE		
DICOTYLEDONS		
Acanthaceae	Bear's-breech Family	
<i>Acanthus spinosus</i>	Spiny Bear's-breech	Roadsides
Aceraceae	Maple Family	
<i>Acer sempervirens</i>	Cretan Maple	Omalos

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
Aizoaceae	Dewplant Family	
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i> var. <i>edulis</i> ‡	Yellow Hottentot-flg	Planted near buildings and beaches
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i> var. <i>rubescens</i> ‡		"
<i>Mesembryanthemum crystallinum</i>	Ice Plant	"
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i>		"
Amaranthaceae	Amaranth Family	
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i> ‡	Pigweed	
Anacardiaceae	Sumach Family	
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Mastic Tree	Seen widely
<i>Pistacia terebinthus</i>	Turpentine Tree	"
<i>Schinus molle</i> ‡	Californian Pepper Tree	Agia
Apiaceae	Carrot Family	
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Rock Samphire	Gerani
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot	Roadsides
<i>Daucus guttatus</i>	A Wild Carrot	"
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	"
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea Holly	Gerani, Frangocastello
<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	Roadsides
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> subsp. <i>piperatum</i>	Fennel	Seen occasionally
<i>Lagoecia cuminoides</i>	Fluffy Thimbleweed	Akrotiri
<i>Pseudorhiza pumila</i>	Dune Carrot	Plakias
<i>Scaligeria napiformis</i>	Scaligeria	
<i>Scandix australis</i>	Southern Shepherd's-needle	
<i>Scandix pecten-veneris</i>	Shepherd's-needle	
<i>Smyrniolus olusatrum</i>	Alexanders	Seen regularly
<i>Smyrniolus perfoliatum</i> subsp. <i>perfoliatum</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	Seen widely
<i>Smyrniolus perfoliatum</i> subsp. <i>rotundifolium</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	"
Apocynaceae	Periwinkle Family	
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Seen widely – planted
<i>Vinca major</i> ‡	Greater Periwinkle	"
Araliaceae	Ivy Family	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	Seen regularly
Aristolochiaceae	Birthwort Family	
<i>Aristolochia cretica</i> •	Cretan Birthwort	Plakias headland
<i>Aristolochia sempervirens</i>	Evergreen Birthwort	Agia
Asteraceae	Daisy Family	
<i>Achillea cretica</i>	Cretan Sneezewort	Akrotiri
<i>Anthemis arvensis</i>	Corn Chamomile	Seen regularly
<i>Anthemis chia</i>	Greek Chamomile	"
<i>Anthemis rigida</i>	Rayless Chamomile	"
<i>Atractylis cancellata</i>	Bird-Cage Thistle	Akrotiri
<i>Bellis annua</i>	Annual Daisy	Seen regularly
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy	"
<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	"
<i>Bellium minus</i>		"

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	Field Marigold	"
<i>Carlina corymbosa</i> subsp. <i>graeca</i>	A Flat-topped Carlina Thistle	
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	Red Star-thistle	
<i>Centaurea raphanina</i> subsp. <i>raphanina</i> •		Kortiliotiki Gorge
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory	
<i>Cichorium spinosum</i>	Spiny Chicory	
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	
<i>Crupina crupinastrum</i>	Crupina	Thin stemmed small thistle
<i>Cynara cornigera</i>	Wild Artichoke	
<i>Cynara scolymus</i> ‡	Globe Artichoke	Planted
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Stink Aster	Leaves only, very pungent
<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	Galactites	Lilac, 'soft' thistle
<i>Geropogon glaber</i>	Slender Salsify	
<i>Glebionis coronaria</i> var. <i>coronaria</i>	Crown Daisy	Roadsides
<i>Glebionis coronaria</i> var. <i>discolor</i>	Crown Daisy	"
<i>Glebionis segetum</i>	Corn Marigold	"
<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	Bristly Oxtongue	
<i>Hypochaeris achyrophorus</i>	Mediterranean Cat's-ear	
<i>Hypochaeris glabra</i>	Smooth Cat's-ear	
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Common Cat's-ear	
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	Prickly Lettuce	
<i>Matricaria recutita</i>	Scented Mayweed	
<i>Notobasis syriaca</i>	Syrian Thistle	Elegant thistle with pink bracts
<i>Otanthus maritimus</i>	Cottonweed	
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Spiny Golden-star	Spiny bracts, yellow flower
<i>Phagnalon graecum</i>	Shrubby Cudweed	
<i>Picnoman acarna</i>	Yellow-spine Thistle	Leaves and spines only
<i>Ptilostemon chamaepeuce</i>	Shrubby Ptilostemon	Just coming into flower
<i>Rhagadiolus stellatus</i>	Star Hawkbit	
<i>Scolymus hispanicus</i>	Spanish Oyster Plant	Leaves only,
<i>Scorzonera cretica</i> •	Cretan Viper's-grass	Plakias headland
<i>Senecio rupestris</i>	Rock Groundsel	
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	Groundsel	
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	Leaves only,
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sow-thistle	
<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i> ‡	Feverfew	
<i>Tolpis barbata</i>	Tolpis	
<i>Tragopogon porrifolius</i>	Salsify	
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i> ‡	Spiny Cocklebur	
Berberidaceae	Barberry Family	
<i>Berberis cretica</i>	Cretan Barberry	Omalos
Bignoniaceae	Jacaranda Family	
<i>Jacaranda ovalifolia</i> ‡	Jacaranda	Planted
Boraginaceae	Borage Family	
<i>Anchusa hybrida</i>	Wavy-leaved Anchusa	
<i>Anchusa aegyptiaca</i>	Eastern Alkanet	Small plant, white flowers
<i>Anchusa italica</i>	Large Blue Alkanet	Roadsides, tall
<i>Anchusa variegata</i>	Variiegated Anchusa	Small plant, pale flowers with purple marks
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Borage	Seen regularly

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Cerintho major</i>	Honeywort	"
<i>Cynoglossum columnae</i>	A Hound's-tongue	"
<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>	Blue Hound's-tongue	"
<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Bugloss	Seen near Festos, pink flowers
<i>Echium arenarium</i>	Sand Bugloss	Sand dunes, Plakias
<i>Echium italicum</i> subsp. <i>biebersteinii</i>	Pale Bugloss	Roadsides
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple Viper's Bugloss	Seen widely
<i>Myosotis incassata</i>	A Forget-me-not	
<i>Neatostema apulum</i>	Yellow Gromwell	
<i>Onosma graecum</i>	A Golden-drops	Late Minoan Cemetery
<i>Symphytum creticum</i>	Cretan Comfrey	Imbros Gorge
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family	
<i>Aethionema saxatile</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i>	Burnt Candytuft	Kortilioiki Gorge
<i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i>	Thale Cress	
<i>Arabis verna</i>	Spring Rock-cress	
<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i>	Aubretia	Omalos
<i>Aurinaria saxatilis</i>	Yellow Alyssum	
<i>Biscutella didyma</i>	Buckler Mustard	
<i>Brassica cretica</i>	Cretan Cabbage	
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket	Frangocastello
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's-purse	
<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	Hairy Bitter-cress	
<i>Cheiranthus cheiri</i> ‡	Wallflower	
<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Garden Rocket	
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary Cress	
<i>Lunaria annua</i> subsp. <i>pachyrhiza</i>	Honesty	
<i>Malcolmia chia</i>	A Malcolmia	
<i>Matthiola sinuata</i>	Sea Stock	Frangocastello
<i>Matthiola tricuspidata</i>	Three-horned Stock	
<i>Nasturtium officinale</i>	Water-cress	
Cactaceae	Cactus Family	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> ‡	Prickly Pear	Planted widely
Campanulaceae	Bellflower Family	
<i>Campanula erinus</i>	Annual Bellflower	Tiny flowers
<i>Campanula tubulosa</i> •		Imbros, Plakias headland
<i>Legousia hybrida</i>		
<i>Petromarula pinnata</i> •	Petromarula	Seen occasionally
Capparaceae	Caper Family	
<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper	Imbros Gorge
Caprifoliaceae	Honeysuckle Family	
<i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Etruscan Honeysuckle	
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	Dwarf Elder	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> ‡	Elder	
Caryophyllaceae	Pink Family	
<i>Cerastium scaposum</i> •	Cretan Mouse-ear	Omalos
<i>Dianthus fruticosus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i> •	A Shrubby Pink	
<i>Moenchia graeca</i>	An Upright Chickweed	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Paronychia macrosepala</i>	A Paronychia	
<i>Petrorhagia velutina</i>	Kohlrauschia	A tiny pink
<i>Silene colorata</i>	Mediterranean Catchfly	Striped calyx
<i>Silene gallica</i>	Small-flowered Catchfly	One-sided flower spike
<i>Silene sedoides</i>	Hairy Catchfly	
<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder Campion	
<i>Spergula arvensis</i>	Corn Spurrey	
<i>Spergularia bocconeii</i>	A Sea Spurrey	
<i>Stellaria cupaniana</i>	A Chickweed	
<i>Stellaria media</i>	Common Chickweed	
Chenopodiaceae	Goosefoot Family	
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> subsp. <i>maritima</i>	Sea Beet	
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Fat-hen	
<i>Chenopodium murale</i>	Nettle-leaved Goosefoot	
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly Saltwort	
<i>Suaeda vera</i>	Shrubby Sea-blite	
Cistaceae	Rock-rose Family	
<i>Cistus creticus</i>	Pink Cistus	Large pink flowers
<i>Cistus parviflorus</i>	Small-flowered Cistus	Small pink flowers, greyish foliage
<i>Cistus salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus	White flowers
<i>Fumana arabica</i>	Arabian Fumana	Warm yellow flowers, Akrotiri
<i>Tuberaria guttata</i>	Spotted Rock-rose	Akrotiri
Convolvulaceae	Bindweed Family	
<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	Mallow-leaved Bindweed	Roadsides
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed	"
<i>Convolvulus elegantissimus</i>	Elegant Bindweed	"
<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Common Dodder	"
<i>Ipomea indica</i> †	A Morning Glory	Timbaki town
Crassulaceae	Stonecrop Family	
<i>Sedum acre</i>	Biting Stonecrop	
<i>Sedum litoreum</i>	Coastal Stonecrop	
<i>Sedum rubens</i>	Red Stonecrop	
<i>Sedum sediforme</i>	Mediterranean Stonecrop	
<i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	A Pennywort	
<i>Umbilicus parviflorus</i>	Yellow Pennywort	
Cucurbitaceae	Cucumber Family	
<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony	
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber	
Dipsacaceae	Teasel Family	
<i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	A Scabious	Seen regularly
<i>Lomelosia brachiata</i>	Tremastelma	Plakias headland
Ericaceae	Heather Family	
<i>Arbutus andrachne</i>	Eastern Strawberry Tree	
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree	
<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heather	Road to Omalos

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
Euphorbiaceae		
<i>Euphorbia acanthothamnos</i>	Greek Spiny Spurge	Bright green 'cushions'
<i>Euphorbia characias</i> subsp. <i>characias</i>	Large Mediterranean Spurge	Seen regularly
<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	Tree Spurge	"
<i>Euphorbia exigua</i>	Dwarf Spurge	Akrotiri
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge	Seen regularly
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge	Plakias sand dunes
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Annual Mercury	
<i>Ricinus communis</i> ‡	Castor-oil-plant	
Fabaceae		
Pea Family		
<i>Anagyris foetida</i>	Bean Trefoil	
<i>Anthyllis tetraphylla</i>	Bladder Vetch	
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> subsp. <i>rubriflora</i>	A Kidney Vetch	
<i>Astragalus angustifolius</i>	A Milk-vetch	
<i>Bituminaria bituminosa</i>	Pitch Trefoil	Blue flowers
<i>Calicotome villosa</i>	Hairy Thorny Broom	
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob	Tree with large glossy leaves
<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i> ‡	Judas Tree	Pink flowers on the branches
<i>Coronilla scorpioides</i>	Annual Scorpion Vetch	
<i>Ebenus cretica</i> •	Shrubby Sainfoin	Masses at Plakias
<i>Genista acanthoclada</i>	Spiny Broom	
<i>Hymenocarpus circinnatus</i>	Disc Trefoil	
<i>Lathyrus annuus</i>	Annual Vetchling	
<i>Lathyrus aphaca</i>	Yellow Vetchling	
<i>Lathyrus clymenum</i>	Crimson Pea	
<i>Lathyrus ochrus</i>	Winged Vetchling	
<i>Lathyrus setifolius</i>	Red Vetchling	
<i>Lotus conimbricensis</i>	A Bird's-foot Trefoil	
<i>Lotus ornithopodioides</i>	Clustered Bird's-foot Trefoil	
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil	
<i>Lotus peregrinus</i>	A Bird's-foot Trefoil	
<i>Lupinus angustifolius</i>	Narrow-leaved Lupin	
<i>Lupinus micranthus</i>	A Hairy Lupin	
<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Spotted Medick	
<i>Medicago arborea</i>	Tree Medick	Orange flowers
<i>Medicago disciformis</i>	Disc Medick	
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick	
<i>Medicago marina</i>	Sea Medick	Plakias sand dunes
<i>Medicago murex</i>	A Bur Medick	
<i>Medicago orbicularis</i>	Disc Medick	
<i>Medicago polymorpha</i>	Toothed Medick	
<i>Onobrychis caput-galli</i>	Cock's-comb Sainfoin	
<i>Ononis reclinata</i>	Small Restharrow	Akrotiri
<i>Ononis spinosa</i> subsp. <i>diacantha</i>	Spiny Restharrow	
<i>Ornithopus compressus</i>	Compressed Bird's-foot	
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> ‡	False Acacia	Roadsides, planted
<i>Scorpiurus muricatus</i>	Scorpion Vetch	
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	Roadsides, planted
<i>Tetragonolobus purpureus</i>	Asparagus Pea	Blood red flowers
<i>Trifolium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Clover	
<i>Trifolium arvense</i>	Hare's-foot Clover	
<i>Trifolium campestre</i>	Hop Trefoil	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Trifolium fragiferum</i>	Strawberry Clover	
<i>Trifolium nigrescens</i>	Annual White Clover	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	
<i>Trifolium resupinatum</i>	Reversed Clover	
<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	Starry Clover	
<i>Trifolium uniflorum</i>	One-flowered Clover	Low, compact cushions
<i>Vicia cretica</i>	Cretan Vetch	Delicate plant, Akrotiri
<i>Vicia hybrida</i>	Hairy Yellow Vetchling	
<i>Vicia sativa</i> subsp. <i>sativa</i> ‡	Common Vetch	
<i>Wisteria sinensis</i> ‡	Wisteria	Planted widely
Fagaceae	Beech Family	
<i>Castanea sativa</i> ‡	Sweet Chestnut	
<i>Quercus coccifera</i> subsp. <i>calliprinos</i>	Kermes Oak	
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak	
<i>Quercus ithaburensis</i> subsp. <i>macrolepis</i>	Valonia Oak	Late Minoan Cemetery
Gentianaceae	Gentian Family	
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i> subsp. <i>intermedia</i>	Yellow-wort	Plakias Headland
<i>Centaureum erythraea</i>	Common Centaury	"
Geraniaceae	Crane's-bill Family	
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common Stork's-bill	Seen regularly
<i>Erodium gruinum</i>	Long-beaked Stork's-bill	"
<i>Erodium malacoides</i>	Mallow-leaved Stork's-bill	"
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill	"
<i>Geranium lucidum</i>	Shining Crane's-bill	"
<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	"
<i>Geranium purpureum</i>	Little Robin	"
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert	"
<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	Round-leaved Crane's-bill	"
Juglandaceae	Walnut Family	
<i>Juglans regia</i> ‡	Walnut	
Lamiaceae	Dead-nettle Family	
<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Henbit Dead-nettle	Seen regularly
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French Lavender	"
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	White Horehound	"
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> subsp. <i>hirtum</i>	Marjoram	"
<i>Phlomis cretica</i>	Cretan Jerusalem Sage	Seen widely
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem Sage	"
<i>Phlomis lanata</i> •	Wooly Sage	Roadsides near Iraklion
<i>Prasium majus</i>	Prasium	Seen widely
<i>Prunella lacinata</i>	Cut-leaved Self-heal	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self-heal	
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	Seen widely
<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>	Three-lobed Sage	Seen widely, pink flowers
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild Clary	
<i>Salvia viridis</i>	Red-topped Sage	
<i>Satureja thymbra</i>	Satureia/ Summer Savoury	Seen widely, very aromatic
<i>Scutellaria sieberi</i> •	A Skullcap	Imbros Gorge

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Stachys cretica</i> subsp. <i>cretica</i>	Mediterranean Woundwort	Leaves only, very woolly
<i>Teucrium microphyllum</i>	Small-leaved Germander	
<i>Thymbra capitata</i>	Mediterranean Thyme	
Lauraceae	Laurel Family	
<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay	
Linaceae	Flax Family	
<i>Linum arboreum</i>	Shrubby Flax	Kotsiphos Gorge, yellow flowers
<i>Linum bienne</i>	Biennial Flax	Small flowers
<i>Linum pubescens</i>	Hairy Flax	
<i>Linum strictum</i>	Upright Yellow Flax	
Malvaceae	Mallow Family	
<i>Lavatera arborea</i>	Tree Mallow	Seen regularly
<i>Lavatera cretica</i>	Cretan Hollyhock	"
<i>Malva cretica</i>	Cretan Mallow	"
<i>Malva parviflora</i>	Least Mallow	"
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	"
Meliaceae	Mahogany Family	
<i>Melia azedarach</i> ‡	Persian Lilac	Planted
Moraceae	Mulberry Family	
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Planted
<i>Ficus elastica</i> ‡	Rubber Plant	"
<i>Morus alba</i> ‡	White Mulberry	
Myoporaceae	Myoporum Family	
<i>Myoporum laetum</i> ‡	Ngaio	Planted
Myrtaceae	Myrtle Family	
<i>Callistemon viminalis</i> ‡	Bottlebrush	Planted
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> ‡	River Red Gum	"
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Common Myrtle	"
Nyctaginaceae	Bougainvillea Family	
<i>Bougainvillea glabra</i> ‡	Bougainvillea	Planted
Oleaceae	Olive Family	
<i>Olea europaea</i> subsp. <i>oleaster</i>	Wild Olive	Seen regularly
Orobanchaceae	Broomrape Family	
<i>Orobanche crenata</i>	Bean Broomrape	Akrotiri
<i>Orobanche pubescens</i>	Downy Broomrape	Seen occasionally
<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>	Branched Broomrape	Lilac flowers, short spike
<i>Orobanche schultzei</i>	Purple Broomrape	Nr Moni Prevelli
Oxalidaceae	Wood-sorrel Family	
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i> ‡	Bermuda Buttercup	Invasive, pernicious weed!!
Papaveraceae	Poppy Family	
<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow Horned Poppy	Seen widely

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Papaver argemone</i> subsp. <i>nigrotinctum</i>	Prickly Poppy	
<i>Papaver dubium</i> subsp. <i>dubium</i>	Long-headed Poppy	
<i>Papaver hybridum</i>	Rough Poppy	
<i>Papaver purpleomarginatum</i>		Small delicate, orange flowers
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Poppy	
Pittosporaceae	Pittosporum Family	
<i>Pittosporum tobira</i> ‡	A Pittosporum	Halepo Hotel garden
Plantaginaceae	Plantain Family	
<i>Plantago afra</i>	Glandular Plantain	Seen regularly
<i>Plantago bellardii</i>	Hairy Plantain	"
<i>Plantago cretica</i>	A Plantain	"
<i>Plantago lagopus</i>	Hare's-foot Plantain	"
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	"
<i>Plantago major</i>	Greater Plantain	"
<i>Plantago weldenii</i>	A Buck's-horn Plantain	"
Platanaceae	Plane Family	
<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Oriental Plane	Seen widely
Polygalaceae	Milk-wort Family	
<i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> ‡	Myrtle-leaved Milkwort	Planted, Agia
Primulaceae	Primrose Family	
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> var. <i>arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel	
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> subsp. <i>foemina</i>	Blue Pimpernel	
<i>Anagallis foemina</i>	A Pimpernel	
<i>Cyclamen creticum</i> •	Cretan Sowbread	See near Gerakari
Punicaceae	Pomegranate Family	
<i>Punica granatum</i> ‡	Pomegranate	Planted
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family	
<i>Anemone coronaria</i>	Crown Anemone	Masses on Omalos
<i>Anemone hortensis</i> subsp. <i>heldreichii</i>	Heldreich's Anemone	Spili
<i>Ranunculus arvensis</i>	Corn Buttercup	
<i>Ranunculus asiaticus</i>	Turban Buttercup	Seen widely -mostly white
<i>Ranunculus creticus</i> •	Cretan Buttercup	Spili – large leaves
<i>Ranunculus peltatus</i> subsp. <i>fucoides</i>	Pond Water-crowfoot	
Resedaceae	Mignonette Family	
<i>Reseda alba</i>	White Mignonette	
<i>Reseda lutea</i>	Mignonette	
Rosaceae	Rose Family	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	Seen widely
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i> ‡	Japanese Loquat	Planted
<i>Poterium sanguisorba</i> subsp. <i>verrucosa</i>	Salad Burnet	
<i>Prunus dulcis</i> ‡	Almond	
<i>Prunus persica</i> ‡	Peach	
<i>Pyrus spinosa</i>	Almond-leaved Pear	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Rosa canina</i>	Dog-rose	
<i>Rubus sanctus</i>	A Bramble	
<i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>	Thorny Burnet	Chicken wire plant
Rubiaceae	Bedstraw Family	
<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers	
<i>Rubia peregriana</i>	Wild Madder	
<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>	Field Madder	Tiny plant – lilac flowers
Rutaceae	Rue Family	
<i>Citrus limon</i> ‡	Lemon	
<i>Citrus sinensis</i> ‡	Orange	
<i>Ruta chalepensis</i> subsp. <i>chalepensis</i>	Fringed Rue	
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Populus alba</i> ‡	White Poplar	
<i>Salix alba</i> ‡	White Willow	
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort Family	
<i>Bellardia trixago</i>	Bellardia	Seen regularly – pink and white flowers
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> ‡	Ivy-leaved Toadflax	
<i>Linaria pelisseriana</i>	Jersey Toadflax	Tiny purple flowers
<i>Misopates orontium</i>	Weasel's-snout	Small pink flowers
<i>Parentucellia latifolia</i>	Southern Red Bartsia	Small plant – red flowers
<i>Parentucellia viscosa</i>	Yellow Bartsia	
<i>Scrophularia lucida</i>	Shining Figwort	
<i>Scrophularia peregrina</i>	Nettle-leaved Figwort	Imbros Gorge
<i>Verbascum arcturus</i> •	Shrubby Mullein	Plakias, Imbros
<i>Verbascum macrurum</i>	A Mullein	Tall plant
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	Wavy-leaved Mullien	Leaves only,
<i>Veronica cymbalaria</i>	Cymbalaria-leaved Speedwell	
<i>Veronica persica</i> ‡	Common Field Speedwell	
Simaroubaceae	Tree-of-heaven Family	
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i> ‡	Tree-of-heaven	Prolific at Knossos
Solanaceae	Nightshade Family	
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	White Henbane	Akrotiri
<i>Mandragora autumnalis</i>	Mandrake	Leaves only,
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i> ‡	Shrub Tobacco	Planted – roadsides
Styracaceae	Storax Family	
<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Mediterranean Storax	Georgeopolis
Tamaricaceae	Tamarisk Family	
<i>Tamarix parviflora</i>	Small-flowered Tamarisk	
<i>Tamarix smyrnensis</i> ‡	A Tamarisk	
Ulmaceae	Elm Family	
<i>Zelkova abelicea</i> •	Cretan Zelkova	Not in leaf – Omalos
Urticaceae	Nettle Family	
<i>Parietaria cretica</i>	Cretan Pellitory	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory-of-the-Wall	
<i>Urtica membranacea</i>	Membranous Nettle	
<i>Urtica pilulifera</i>	Roman Nettle	
Valerianaceae	Valerian Family	
<i>Centranthus calcitrapa</i>	Annual Valerian	
<i>Centranthus ruber</i> ‡	Red Valerian	
<i>Valeriana asarifolia</i> •	Cretan Valerian	
<i>Valerianella coronata</i>	A Corn Salad	
Verbenaceae	Vervain Family	
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste Tree	Imbros Gorge – in leaf only
Vitaceae	Vine Family	
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> subsp. <i>sylvestris</i>	Wild Vine	
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> subsp. <i>vinifera</i> ‡	Grape Vine	
LILIIDAE	MONOCOTYLEDONS	
Amaryllidaceae	Daffodil Family	
<i>Allium circinnatum</i> subsp. <i>circinnatum</i> •		Akrotiri – tiny plant with corkscrew leaves
<i>Allium neapolitanum</i>	Naples Garlic	Late Minoan Cemetery
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Sea Daffodil	Leaves only – Plakias
Araceae	Arum Family	
<i>Arisarum vulgare</i>	Friar's Cowl	Spili
<i>Arum concinnatum</i>	An Arum	Seen regularly
<i>Arum creticum</i>	Cretan Arum	Kotsiphos Gorge, yellow flowers
<i>Dracunculus vulgaris</i>	Dragon Arum	Akrotiri
Asparagaceae	Asparagus Family	
<i>Agave americana</i> ‡	Centuryplant	Roadsides – planted
<i>Drimia maritima</i>	Sea Squill	Bulbs only
<i>Leopoldia comosa</i>	Tassel Hyacinth	Seen regularly
<i>Muscari spreitzenhoferi</i> •	A Tassel Hyacinth	Plakias
<i>Ornithogalum creticum</i> •	A Star-of-Bethlehem	“
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's-broom	
Dioscoreaceae	Yam Family	
<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black Bryony	
Iridaceae	Iris Family	
<i>Crocus sieberi</i> subsp. <i>sieberi</i> •	A Crocus	Spili, Omalos
<i>Gladiolus italicus</i>	Field Gladiolus	Seen widely
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	Yellow Flag	
<i>Iris tuberosa</i>	Snake's-head Iris	Spili, Omalos
<i>Iris unguicularis</i> subsp. <i>cretensis</i> •	Cretan Iris	Spili
<i>Moraea mediterranea</i>	One-leaved Barbary Nut	Akrotiri
<i>Moraea sisyrrinchium</i>	Barbary Nut	Spili
<i>Romulea bulbocodium</i>	A Sand-crocus	Omalos
<i>Romulea linaresii</i> subsp. <i>graeca</i>	A Sand-crocus	“

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
Liliaceae		
Lily Family		
<i>Gagea chrysantha</i>	A Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem	Omalos
<i>Gagea graeca</i>	Greek Lloydia	Seen widely – tiny plant
<i>Tulipa bakeri</i> •	Baker's Tulip	Omalos
<i>Tulipa doerfleri</i> •	Doerfler's Tulip	Spili
<i>Tulipa saxatilis</i>	Rock Tulip	Plakias headland
Orchidaceae		
Orchid Family		
<i>Anacamptis boryi</i>	Bory's Orchid	Spili
<i>Anacamptis collina</i>	Fan-lipped Orchid	"
<i>Anacamptis laxiflora</i>	Jersey Orchid	Spili – picnic site
<i>Anacamptis papilionacea</i> subsp. <i>alibertis</i> •	Alibertis' Pink Butterfly-orchid	Amari Valley
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid	Plakias Headland
<i>Himantoglossum robertianum</i>	Giant Orchid	Seen regularly
<i>Neotinea lactea</i>	Milky Orchid	Spili
<i>Neotinea maculata</i>	Dense-flowered Orchid	"
<i>Ophrys ariadnae</i>	Ariadne's Orchid	Seen regularly
<i>Ophrys bombyliflora</i>	Bumblebee Orchid	Spili
<i>Ophrys candica</i>	Candia Orchid	"
<i>Ophrys creberrima</i>	Creberrima Orchid	"
<i>Ophrys cretensis</i>	Cretan Early Spider-orchid	Seen occasionally
<i>Ophrys cretica</i>	Common Cretan Bee Orchid	"
<i>Ophrys cretica</i> •	Creticola Orchid	Spili
<i>Ophrys episcopalis</i>	Large-flowered (Bishops)Bee Orchid	Seen widely
<i>Ophrys gortynia</i>	Gortys Orchid	
<i>Ophrys heldreichii</i>	Heldreich's Orchid	Seen widely
<i>Ophrys herae</i>	Hera's Orchid	
<i>Ophrys iricolor</i>	Rainbow Orchid	Spili
<i>Ophrys leochroma</i>	Lion Mane Orchid	"
<i>Ophrys phryganae</i>	Phrygana Orchid	Seen regularly
<i>Ophrys sicula</i>	Small Yellow Bee Orchid	Spili
<i>Ophrys spruneri</i>	Spruner's Orchid	
<i>Ophrys villosa</i>	Hairy Orchid	Spili
<i>Orchis anthropophora</i>	Man Orchid	Spili
<i>Orchis italica</i>	Naked Man Orchid	Seen widely
<i>Orchis pauciflora</i>	Sparse-flowered Orchid	Spili
<i>Orchis quadripunctata</i>	Four-spotted Orchid	Spili
<i>Serapias bergonii</i>	Bergoni's Tongue-orchid	Seen regularly
<i>Serapias lingua</i>	Tongue-orchid	"
<i>Serapias parviflora</i>	Small-flowered Tongue-orchid	Late Minoan Cemetery
<i>Serapias vomeracea</i>	Ploughshare Tongue-orchid	Roadside nr Bali
Posidoniaceae		
Neptune-grass Family		
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune-grass	
Smilacaceae		
Smilax Family		
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Common Smilax	
Typhaceae		
Reedmace Family		
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	Southern Reedmace	

Scientific name	Common name	Notes
Xanthorrhoeaceae	Asphodel Family	
<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>	Yellow Asphodel	Seen widely
<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>	Common Asphodel	"
<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>	Hollow-stemmed Asphodel	Roadsides
Zosteraceae	Eelgrass Family	
<i>Zostera marina</i>	Eelgrass	
<i>Zostera noltii</i>	Dwarf Eelgrass	

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Latin name	April								
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	✓						4		
2	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>							2		
3	Garganey	<i>Anas querquedula</i>				2					
4	Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>								3	
5	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>						✓	✓		
6	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	2								
7	Pygmy Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax pygmeus</i>						1			
8	Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus minutus</i>						2	1		
9	Squacco Heron	<i>Aedeola ralloides</i>			2				3		
10	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		1	1			✓	✓		
11	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>		2	1				1		
12	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>		1		2			1		
13	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>		20							
14	Bearded Vulture	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>				1					
15	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
16	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>			1		1				
17	Bonelli's Eagle	<i>Aquila fasciata</i>				1					
18	Western Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>						1	1		
19	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
20	Honey Buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>								1	
21	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>							1		
22	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>		2	2	✓	✓				
23	Lesser Kestrel	<i>Falco naumanni</i>								5	
24	Eleonora's Falcon	<i>Falco eleonorae</i>				1					
25	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>			1						
26	Little Crake	<i>Porzana parva</i>							5		
27	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	✓		✓			✓	✓		
28	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>			1			✓	✓		
29	Black-winged Stilt	<i>Himantopus himantopus</i>			2				1		
30	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>				1					
31	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>			4						
32	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>			1						
33	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		1	20	1	1				
34	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	1								
35	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		1	1	✓	✓				
36	Common Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>			1						
37	Ruff	<i>Philomachus pugnax</i>			50+						
38	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
39	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>			1						

	Common name	Latin name	April							
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
40	Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
41	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓				
42	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
43	European Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>			2					
44	Common Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>								1
45	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>					✓	✓	✓	
46	Alpine Swift	<i>Apus melba</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	
47	Eurasian Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>				1				
48	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	1							
49	Eurasian Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>					1			
50	Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>		H	2	✓	✓			2
51	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>		3				✓		
52	Common Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>			1	1				
53	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>		✓			✓	1		
54	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
55	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	✓	250	✓	✓				✓
56	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>				1				1
57	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>		1	1			✓		1
58a	Blue-headed Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>		1		✓	✓	✓		
	Black-headed Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava feldegg</i>			✓	✓	✓			
59	Common Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>		H		1	1			
60	Northern Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>		1				✓		
61	Black-eared Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe hispanica</i>		2		✓		1	1	
62	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetta</i>				✓		✓	✓	
63	Common Stonechat	<i>Saxicola torquata</i>		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
64	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>					H			
65	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	✓	✓	□	✓	✓	✓		1
66	Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	1	2		✓	✓			
67	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	1	✓	H		H	1		
68	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>		2	✓					
69	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		H
70	Subalpine Warbler	<i>Sylvia cantillans</i>								H
71	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>					✓			
72	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	H	H	H	H	H	H		
73	Great Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus arundinaceus</i>	H							
74	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>						1		
75	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>			1					
76	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>		H		H				
77	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>			1					2
78	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>					1			
79	Collared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula albicollis</i>		1	2					1
80	Semi-collared Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>								1
81	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
82	European Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
83	Woodchat Shrike	<i>Lanius senator</i>		2				1	5	
84	Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>				2				
85	Western Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
86	Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>					1	✓		
87	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
88	Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
89	Eurasian Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>								1

	Common name	Latin name	April							
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
90	Italian Sparrow	<i>Passer italiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
91	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
92	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓				✓		
93	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis cardulis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
94	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
95	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>					✓		H	
96	Ortolan Bunting	<i>Emberiza hortulana</i>		2						
97	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>						✓		
98	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>		✓		✓				

Mammals

1	Eastern Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus concolor</i>					D			D
2	Beech Marten	<i>Martes foina bunites</i>	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
3	Cretan Badger	<i>Meles meles arkalus</i>					D			

Reptiles

1	Balkan Green Lizard	<i>Lacerta trilineata</i>					1			
2	Cretan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis cretensis</i>				✓		✓		
3	Balkan Terrapin	<i>Mauremys rivulata</i>	✓					✓	✓	

Amphibians

1	Green Toad	<i>Bufo viridis</i>		E						
2	Cretan Water Frog	<i>Pelophylax cretensis</i>					✓			

Butterflies

1	Cretan Festoon	<i>Zerynthia cretica</i>					2			
2	Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirus</i>			✓			✓		
3	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>							1	
4	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>			✓	✓				
5	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>			✓					
6	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		✓	✓			✓		
7	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>				✓	✓	✓		
8	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>		✓						
9	Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>							1	

Dragonflies

1	Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>						✓		
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Other Insects

1	Violet Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>			1			✓		
2	Beefly sp.				1					

Molluscs

1	Cretan Door Snail	<i>Albinaria inflata</i>				✓				
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