

Crete's Autumn Flowers

Naturetrek Tour Report

16th – 23rd October 2025



Clematis cirrhosa



Sirikari Gorge



Sternbergia lutea



Pancratium maritimum

Tour report and photos by David Tattersfield



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Day 1

Thursday 16th October

On arrival in Hania, we were met by our driver, Alexandros, for the short journey to our hotel. After checking in to our rooms, we made an excursion to the Theriso Gorge, a little way south of the city, in the foothills of the White Mountains. Stopping in the narrowest part of the gorge, we found the endemic *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum*, growing from tight crevices in the limestone. Other Cretan endemics growing on the cliffs included Shrubby Sainfoin *Ebenus cretica*, the silver-leaved knapweed *Centaurea argentea*, Cretan Dittany *Origanum dictamnus*, Cretan Wall Lettuce *Petromarula pinnata*, Cretan Gorge Laurel *Staehelina petiolata* and Cretan Comfrey *Symphytum creticum*. Continuing up the gorge, we had a brief look around Theriso village, but as all the tavernas were closed, we returned to our hotel. Our evening meal was at a restaurant, conveniently close by.

Day 2

Friday 17th October

After shopping for lunch, we travelled westwards, making our first stop at Stalos, beside a small area of sand dunes. This fragile habitat is increasingly threatened by tourism and the dunes are roped off to help protect the nests of Loggerhead Turtles *Caretta caretta*. The most prominent plant was Sea Daffodil *Pancreatium maritimum*, with broad, strap-shaped leaves and large fruits, that were splitting to reveal shiny-black seeds and a few plants still had spectacular, scented white flowers. Other notable plants included Sea Holly *Eryngium maritimum*, Sea Medick *Medicago marina*, Sea Rocket *Cakile maritima*, Narrow-leaved Bugloss *Echium angustifolium* and large grey hummocks of Spiny Knapweed *Centaurea spinosa*, which is confined to the north coast of Crete and a few sites on the southern coasts of mainland Greece.

Further west, in the hilltop village of Marathocephala, we found glowing yellow patches of the large, cultivated form of *Sternbergia lutea*, erupting from the parched earth of an abandoned terrace. Above the village, typical plants of the phrygana (a term equivalent to the garrigue, of the western Mediterranean, and referring to the low, scrubby, and often spiny vegetation.) were represented by the red-berried Mastic Tree *Pistacia lentiscus*, Jerusalem Sage *Phlomis fruticosa*, the spiny brooms *Calicotome villosa* and *Genista acanthoclada*, Thorny Burnet *Sarcopoterium spinosum* and Mediterranean Thyme *Thymbra capitata*.

Further up the hill, we found large drifts of dark pink *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *graecum*, and we saw its deeply buried spherical tubers exposed in an eroded bank. It is common species on the Greek mainland and many other islands, but, in Crete, it is only found here and on the Rhodopou peninsula, to the north. Most plants were leafless, but in the damp shade of woodland, we found their exquisitely patterned and astonishingly variable leaves. In addition, there were a few pink flowers of the tiny *Colchicum pusillum*, Small Pheasant's-eye *Narcissus obsoletus*, and an autumn-flowering spurge *Euphorbia dimorphocaulon*, sprouting from a turnip-shaped, underground caudex.

After lunch, we drove north onto the peninsula, where we found more Cyclamen, and enjoyed a relaxing break in a delightful taverna in the village of Afrata, surrounded by a well-tended display of pot plants and brightly-coloured Bougainvilleas. We were back in Hania by 6.00pm and after running through our checklists, we walked down to the old Venetian harbour, for our evening meal.

Day 3

Saturday 18th October

On another perfect day, we drove south through the White Mountains and stopped to overlook the Askifou plateau, a broad, flat depression, surrounded by steep mountain slopes. Areas such as this are known as poljes, from the Yugoslav word for field, and are formed by the prolonged solution-weathering of the limestones. All the drainage reaching the plateau now disappears underground but would, originally, have carved out the Imbros and adjacent gorges before it was captured by a lowering of the land surface. A variety of new plants, beside the road, included Spiny Chicory *Cichorium spinosum*, Thyme-leaved Savory *Satureja thymbra*, Greek Spiny Spurge *Euphorbia acanthothamnus*, and the endemic Spiny Mullein *Verbascum spinosum*.

Before setting off on our walk, we enjoyed the local specialty of pancakes with cheese and honey, at the Imbros Taverna. There was much see, as we meandered slowly down the rocky bed of the gorge, which gradually deepened, beneath towering cliffs and became very narrow in places. Cretan Grayling was common in the upper section and the endemic flora, on the cliffs, was of particular interest. New species included Shrubby Mullein *Verbascum arcturus*, Shrubby Bedstraw *Galium fruticosum*, the large spurge *Euphorbia sultan-hassei*, Cretan Calamint *Clinopodium creticum* and the white-flowered Tunic Flower *Petrorhagia dianthoides*. Other notable flowers included Autumn Buttercup *Ranunculus bullatus*, the hooded flowers of Friar's Cowl *Arisarum vulgare*, and a small-flowered form of *Sternbergia lutea*. There were few birds, apart from Wren and Bluetit and the occasional Griffin Vulture, overhead.

Once we had all completed the eight-kilometre walk, we enjoyed a tasty meal at the Taverna Komitades, before returning to Hania.

Day 4

Sunday 19th October

We drove to Agia Lake, a large body of deep water, fed by a natural freshwater spring. Across the water, we recorded Eurasian Coot, Common Moorhen, Little Grebe, and Great Cormorant. A few Common House Martins and Barn Swallows flew around, an occasional Common Kingfisher flashed by, and Cetti's Warbler called loudly from the reeds.

Continuing our journey into the White Mountains, we found more *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum* on a rocky hillside along with *Colchicum pusillum* and the endemic, white-flowered, *Crocus pumilus*. At the top of the road, we looked across the Omalos Plateau, another extensive polje, surrounded by high mountains. Apples and pears are still cultivated, but much of the area consists of abandoned fields, which provide grazing for sheep and goats. We had lunch, in the warm sunshine, outside the taverna, before exploring the plateau.

In the fields we found more *Crocus pumilus*, this time in the company of a bright green Tree Frog and lots of pink and white *Colchicum cretense*, resembling *Colchicum pusillum*, but endemic to the high mountains of Crete. At the end of the road, we looked down into the depths of the Samaria Gorge, surrounded by ancient trees of *Cupressus sempervirens* forma. *horizontalis*. On the adjacent slopes, low growing plants included the familiar Aubretia *Aubrieta deltoidea*, Cretan Barberry *Berberis cretica*, the small-leaved *Origanum microphyllum* and Mountain Tea *Sideritis syriaca* subsp. *syriaca*, which is now cultivated on the plateau in considerable quantity for its herbal qualities. Some of us climbed a little higher on the E4 footpath, where we found a range of mountain plants such as the endemic spiny milk-vetch *Astragalus angustifolius* subsp. *echinoides*, Rock Cherry *Prunus prostrata* and the white-flowered *Bufonia stricta*.

After an extended coffee break at the café, we had a closer look at a grove of Cretan Zelkova *Zelkova abelicea*, a relative of the elm and Crete's only endemic tree, before completing a circuit of the plateau and retracing our route back to Hania for another meal beside the old harbour.

Day 5

Monday 20th October

We drove through Souda to visit the hill-top archaeological sites at Aptaera, one of the most significant of Crete's city-states. Its history spans the Minoan period, from 3500 BC to its eventual decline in 324 AD, during the Roman occupation. The most impressive features of the site include the recently excavated amphitheatre and the massive, vaulted cisterns that supplied water to the adjacent public baths. Nearby were the well-preserved remains of a Roman-style house with a peristyle courtyard and columns that were demolished by the massive earthquake in 365 AD. At the end of the hill, we paid a brief visit to the well-preserved Koules Fortress, built by the Ottomans in 1866. From here we had a commanding view of the slightly later Intzedin Fort, at the entrance of Souda Bay.

Notable botanical finds, across the hilltop included the pale-yellow evergreen *Clematis cirrhosa*, flowering specimens of *Asparagus aphyllus* subsp. *orientalis*, Sea Squill *Drimys numidica*, Tree Spurge *Euphorbia dendroidea*, Shrubby Wormwood *Artemisia arborescens*, Bean Trefoil *Anagyris foetida*, and *Withania somnifera*, a member of the Nightshade family, that was introduced in ancient times for its medicinal properties. Returning to the main site, we walked past the main entrance gate and necropolis and continued down the road for a tasty lunch at Taverna Aptaera, where we received the usual warm welcome.

After a stop at the Allied War Cemetery at the head of Souda Bay, we finished off the afternoon with a visit to the Agia Triada Monastery on the Akrotiri Peninsula.

Day 6

Tuesday 21st October

Driving west, again, we explored a rocky hillside near Topolia, with colourful displays of *Cyclamen confusum*, growing within dense scrub of thorny *Calicotome villosa*, aromatic Mountain Sage *Salvia pomifera*, and Turpentine Tree *Pistacia terebinthus*. Although superficially resembling the familiar *Cyclamen hederifolium*, it is tetraploid with thicker pedicels and glossy-green leaves. *Narcissus obsoletus* also put on a fine show. A little further on, we stopped for drinks at Agia Sophia, before climbing the steps to the impressive cave, where tiny plants of *Sternbergia lutea* were growing from crevices on the cliff. A short distance along the road, we noted a prolific population of *Cyclamen hederifolium* subsp. *hederifolium*, the typical diploid species, growing in the deep shade of a wooded ravine.

From here, we crossed over the mountains and drove down to Elaphonisi, at the south-western extremity of the island. After lunch, we walked down to the beach, which was very busy with tourists, enjoying the hot autumn sunshine. To reach the island, this year, it was necessary to wade a short distance across a shallow lagoon. Some of the group took the opportunity of a swim, while the rest of us explored the coastal vegetation. Plants of note included masses of Sea Daffodil, the sticky-leaved Succulent Catchfly *Silene succulenta* subsp. *succulenta*, a silver-leaved knapweed *Crocodilium pumilio*, an endemic Sea-lavender *Limonium elaphonesiacum*, venerable specimens of Sea Juniper *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *macrocarpa* and Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias*, the latter hosting colourful caterpillars of Spurge Hawkmoth.

Day 7

Wednesday 22nd October

For our final day, we had another opportunity to stretch our legs and enjoy the magnificent scenery of another of Crete's wild gorges. West of Topolia, we followed a minor road into the hills to the remote village of Sirikari. Our walk started with a steep descent through oak woodland, passing flowering Strawberry Trees *Arbutus unedo*, and abandoned terraces, with abundant *Cyclamen confusum*. We followed a narrow path down to a dry riverbed, lined with Oleander *Nerium oleander* and magnificent trees of Oriental Plane *Platanus orientalis*. After a break for snacks, we followed a rocky trail to the foot of the gorge, where we found our coach waiting beside a little chapel, an ideal spot for our final picnic lunch.

We spent the remainder of the afternoon in the ancient walled city of Polyrinia, exploring its narrow streets and alleyways, the Roman cisterns and aqueducts, and visiting an olive-wood shop, with tempting souvenirs. There were impressive displays of *Sternbergia lutea*, in the village, and on the hilltop, we found the rare *Dianthus xylorrhizus*. Returning to Hania, we finished our checklists before our last evening meal at the nearby restaurant.

Day 8

Thursday 23rd October

After breakfast and packing, we had time for a leisurely stroll around Hania or a visit to the archaeological museum before leaving for the airport, around midday.

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Species lists

Plants

• = endemic or near endemic to Crete, ‡ = cultivated or naturalised

Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
PTERIDOPHYTA	FERNS AND FERN ALLIES	
Aspleniaceae	Spleenwort Family	
<i>Asplenium ceterach</i>	Rusty-back Fern	Common on rocks
<i>Asplenium onopteris</i>	Acute-leaved Spleenwort	Shaded cliffs
Dennstaedtiaceae	Bracken Family	
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken	Locally common
Dryopteridaceae	Buckler-fern Family	
<i>Dryopteris pallida</i>	Pale Buckler-fern	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Equisetaceae	Horsetail Family	
<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>	Branched Horsetail	Hedges. Agia Lake
<i>Equisetum telmateia</i>	Great Horsetail	Ditches. Agia
Polypodiaceae	Polypody Family	
<i>Polypodium cambricum</i>	Southern Polypody	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Pteridaceae	Maidenhair Fern Family	
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair Fern	Damp shaded cliffs
<i>Hemionitis acrosticha</i>	Scented Cheilanthes	Rock crevices
Selaginellaceae	Lesser Clubmosss Family	
<i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	Mediterranean Selaginella	Damp shady places
GYMNOSPERMS	CONIFERS	
Araucariaceae	Monkey-puzzle Family	
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> ‡	Norfolk Island Pine	Cultivated. Coastal
Cupressaceae	Juniper Family	
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>horizontalis</i>	Cypress	Common. Sea-level to treeline
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>sempervirens</i> ‡	Funeral Cypress	Cultivated
<i>Juniperus deltoides</i>	Prickly Juniper	Frequent. Mountains
<i>Juniperus macrocarpa</i>	Sea Juniper	Elaphonisi
Cycadaceae	Cycad Family	
<i>Cycas revoluta</i> ‡	Sago Palm	Cultivated
Ephedraceae	Joint-pine Family	
<i>Ephedra foeminea</i>	A Joint-pine	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge

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Pinaceae		
<i>Pinus brutia</i>	Turkish Pine	Common native tree
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> ‡	Aleppo Pine	Planted
<i>Pinus pinea</i> ‡	Stone Pine	Cultivated near coasts
ANGIOSPERMS		
DICOTYLEDONS		
Acanthaceae		
<i>Acanthus mollis</i>	Bear's-breech Family Bear's-breeches	Cultivated
<i>Acanthus spinosus</i>	Spiny Bear's-breeches	Occasional in phrygana
Aizoaceae		
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i> ‡	Dewplant Family Yellow Hottentot-fig	Coastal alien
Amaranthaceae		
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i> ‡	Goosefoot Family Pigweed	Weedy places
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly Saltwort	Sandy beaches
Anacardiaceae		
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Sumach Family Mastic Tree	Common in maquis
<i>Pistacia terebinthus</i>	Turpentine Tree	Frequent in maquis and gorges
<i>Schinus molle</i> ‡	Californian Pepper Tree	Cultivated
Apiaceae		
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Carrot Family Rock Samphire	Maritime rocks
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot	Frequent
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	Rocky fields
<i>Eryngium creticum</i>	Cretan Eryngo	Roadsides. Waste places
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea Holly	Sand dunes
<i>Eryngium ternatum</i> •	An Eryngo	Imbros Gorge
<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	Common
<i>Ferula glauca</i>	Glaucous Giant Fennel	Polyrinia
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Wild Fennel	Common
<i>Smyrniolum olusatrum</i>	Alexanders	Aptera
<i>Smyrniolum perfoliatum</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	Locally common
Apocynaceae		
<i>Carissa macrocarpa</i> ‡	Dogbane Family Natal Plum	Cultivated
<i>Cionura erecta</i>	Cionura	Theriso Gorge
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Riverbeds and cultivated
<i>Plumeria rubra</i> ‡	Frangipani	Cultivated
<i>Vinca major</i> ‡	Greater Periwinkle	Aptera
Araliaceae		
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy Family Ivy	Common

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Aristolochiaceae		
<i>Aristolochia sempervirens</i>	Birthwort Family Evergreen Birthwort	Frequent
Asteraceae		
<i>Achillea maritima</i>	Daisy Family Cottonweed	Sand dunes. Elaphonisi
<i>Ageratina adenophora</i> ‡	Mexican Devil	Damp habitats. Agia Lake
<i>Artemisia arborescens</i>	Shrubby Wormwood	Aptera
<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	Common
<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	Field Marigold	Common
<i>Carlina graeca</i>	Greek Carline Thistle	Rocky places
<i>Centaurea argentea</i> subsp. <i>macrothysana</i> •	A Knapweed	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	Red Star-thistle	Omalos
<i>Centaurea raphanina</i> subsp. <i>raphanina</i> •	A Knapweed	Common on rocks
<i>Centaurea spinosa</i>	Spiny Knapweed	North coast beaches
<i>Chamaeleon gummifer</i>	Pine Thistle	Phrygana and fallow fields
<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>	Rush Skeletonweed	Sandy and waste places
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory	Roadsides
<i>Cichorium spinosum</i>	Spiny Chicory	Common
<i>Crocodilium pumilio</i>	A Knapweed	Sand dunes. Elaphonisi
<i>Dittrichia graveolens</i>	Aromatic Inula	Common
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Stink Aster	Common
<i>Echinops spinosissimus</i>	Spiniest Globe Thistle	Common
<i>Galactites tomentosus</i>	Mediterranean Thistle	Common
<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i> subsp. <i>barrelieri</i>	Golden Cassidony	Rocky places
<i>Helichrysum italicum</i> subsp. <i>microphyllum</i>	Curry Plant	Rocky places in mountains
<i>Inula candida</i> subsp. <i>candida</i> •		Coastal cliffs
<i>Lactuca acanthifolia</i>	Acanthus-leaved Lettuce	Gorges. Aegean area endemic
<i>Limbarda crithmoides</i>	Golden-samphire	Coastal rocks. Elaphonisi
<i>Onopordum bracteatum</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i> •	Branched Cotton Thistle	Coastal sand and rocky places
<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Spiny Golden Star	Common
<i>Phagnalon graecum</i>	Shrubby Cudweed	Rocks, cliffs and walls
<i>Picnomon acarna</i>	Yellow-spine Thistle	Stony ground and roadsides
<i>Ptilostemon chamaepeuce</i>	Shrubby Ptilostemon	Cliffs and rocky banks
<i>Scolymus hispanicus</i>	Spanish Oyster Plant	Waste areas
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	Common. Waste areas
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sowthistle	Waste areas
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sowthistle	Waste areas
<i>Staelhelina petiolata</i> •	Cretan Gorge Laurel	Cliffs
<i>Xanthium orientale</i> ‡	Cocklebur	Alien weed
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i> ‡	Spiny Cocklebur	Alien weed
Berberidaceae		
<i>Berberis cretica</i>	Barberry Family Cretan Barberry	Mountains
Bignoniaceae		
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i> ‡	Jacaranda Family Jacaranda	Cultivated

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Boraginaceae		
Borage Family		
<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Viper's-bugloss	Common near coast
<i>Echium italicum</i> subsp. <i>biebersteinii</i>	Pale Viper's-bugloss	Common
<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple Viper's-bugloss	Roadsides
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	Heliotrope	Common
<i>Onosma erecta</i>	A Golden Drops	Omalos. Cliffs and scree
<i>Onosma graeca</i>	A Golden Drops	Occasional
<i>Symphytum creticum</i>	Cretan Comfrey	Shady cliffs
Brassicaceae		
Cabbage Family		
<i>Aethionema saxatile</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i>	Burnt Candytuft	Dry rocky places. Omalos
<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i>	Aubretia	Omalos
<i>Brassica cretica</i> subsp. <i>cretica</i> •	Cretan Cabbage	Cliffs
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket	Sand dunes
<i>Erysimum raulinii</i> •	A Treacle Mustard	Imbros Gorge
<i>Lunaria annua</i> subsp. <i>pachyrhiza</i>	Honesty	Occasional
<i>Sinapsis alba</i> ‡	White Mustard	Occasional weed
<i>Sinapsis arvensis</i> ‡	Charlock	Occasional weed
Cactaceae		
Cactus Family		
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> ‡	Prickly Pear	Cultivated
Campanulaceae		
Bellflower Family		
<i>Petromarula pinnata</i> •	Petromarula	Common
<i>Campanula tubulosa</i> •	Tubular Bellflower	Imbros Gorge
Cannabaceae		
Hackberry and Hemp Family		
<i>Celtis tournefortii</i>	Oriental Hackberry	Imbros Gorge
Capparaceae		
Caper Family		
<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper	Common on rocky banks
Caprifoliaceae		
Honeysuckle Family		
<i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	A Scabious	Occasional in phrygana
<i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Etruscan Honeysuckle	Occasional
<i>Valeriana asarifolia</i>	A Valerian	Imbros Gorge
Caryophyllaceae		
Pink Family		
<i>Bufonia stricta</i> subsp. <i>stricta</i>		Omalos
<i>Dianthus xylorrhizus</i> •		Rocks. Polyrinia
<i>Petrorhagia dianthoides</i> •	A Tunic Flower	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge
<i>Silene succulenta</i> subsp. <i>succulenta</i>	Succulent Catchfly	Elaphonisi Island
Cistaceae		
Rock-rose Family		
<i>Cistus creticus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i>	Pink Cistus	Common
<i>Cistus monspeliensis</i>	Narrow-leaved Cistus	Frequent in maqius

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus	Locally common
<i>Fumana arabica</i>	Mediterranean Rock-rose	Common. Rocky places
<i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved Rock-rose	Common. Rocky places
Convolvulaceae		
<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i> subsp. <i>althaeoides</i>	Mallow-leaved Bindweed	Occasional on roadsides
<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i> subsp. <i>tenuissimus</i>	Elegant Bindweed	Near Afrata
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field Bindweed	Occasional on disturbed ground
<i>Convolvulus oleifolius</i>	Olive-leaved Bindweed	Dry rocky places. Akrotiri
<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i> ‡	Morning Glory	Cultivated
Crassulaceae		
<i>Petrosedum sediforme</i>	Pale Stonecrop	Rocky places
<i>Petrosedum tenuifolium</i>	Slender-leaved Stonecrop	Rocky places
<i>Rosularia serrata</i>	Saw-leaved Rosularia	Cliffs
<i>Sedum creticum</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i> •	Cretan Stonecrop	Cliffs
<i>Sedum rubens</i>	Reddish Stonecrop	Rocky places
<i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	A Pennywort	Shaded cliffs
Cucurbitaceae		
<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony	Frequent
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber	Waste places
Ericaceae		
<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree	Locally common
<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heather	Locally common
<i>Erica manipuliflora</i>	Autumn Heather	Locally common
Euphorbiaceae		
<i>Euphorbia acanthothamnos</i>	Greek Spiny Spurge	Common
<i>Euphorbia chamaesyce</i>	Small Spurge	Bare ground
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Large Mediterranean Spurge	Common
<i>Euphorbia dimorphocaulon</i>	A Spurge	Frequent
<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	Tree Spurge	Cliffs and rocky hillsides
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge	Waste places
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge	Sand dunes
<i>Euphorbia peplis</i>	Purple Spurge	Sandy beaches
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	Petty Spurge	Waste places
<i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i> ‡	Poinsettia	Cultivated
<i>Euphorbia sultan-hassei</i> •	A Tree Spurge	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Annual Mercury	Common
<i>Ricinus communis</i> ‡	Castor-oil-plant	Frequent naturalised weed
Fabaceae		
<i>Acacia retinodes</i> ‡	Swamp Wattle	Cultivated
<i>Acacia saligna</i> ‡	Blue-leaved Wattle	Cultivated
<i>Anagyris foetida</i>	Bean Trefoil	Scrub and waste areas

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Anthyllis hermanniae</i>	Herman's Kidney Vetch	Common. Elaphonisi
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> subsp. <i>rubriflora</i>	Kidney Vetch	Common
<i>Astragalus angustifolius</i> subsp. <i>echinoides</i> •	Narrow-leaved Milk-vetch	Common above Omalos
<i>Bituminaria bituminosa</i>	Pitch Trefoil	Common
<i>Calicotome villosa</i>	Hairy Thorny Broom	Common
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob	Common
<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	Judas Tree	Cultivated
<i>Ebenus cretica</i> •	Shrubby Sainfoin	Cliffs
<i>Genista acanthoclada</i>	Spiny Broom	Common
<i>Lotus cytisoides</i>	Grey Bird's-foot Trefoil	Coastal sand and rocks
<i>Medicago arborea</i>	Tree Medick	Cultivated and naturalised
<i>Medicago marina</i>	Sea Medick	Sand dunes
<i>Ononis spinosa</i> subsp. <i>diacantha</i>	Spiny Rest-harrow	Rocky places
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> ‡	False Acacia	Cultivated and naturalised
<i>Securigera globosa</i> •	A Crown Vetch	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	Roadsides and maquis
Fagaceae		
Beech Family		
<i>Castanea sativa</i> ‡	Sweet Chestnut	Cultivated
<i>Quercus coccifera</i> subsp. <i>calliprinos</i>	Kermes Oak	Common
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak	Occasional
<i>Quercus ithaburensis</i> subsp. <i>macrolepis</i> ‡	Valonia Oak	Cultivated
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	Locally common
Gentianaceae		
Gentian Family		
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Yellow-wort	Occasional
Hypericaceae		
St John's-wort Family		
<i>Hypericum empetrifolium</i>	Crowberry-leaved St John's-wort	Frequent
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Perforate St John's-wort	Rocky places
<i>Hypericum triquetrifolium</i>	Wavy-leaved St John's-wort	Common
Juglandaceae		
Walnut Family		
<i>Juglans regia</i> ‡	Walnut	Cultivated
Lamiaceae		
Dead-nettle Family		
<i>Ballota nigra</i>	Black Horehound	Waste places
<i>Clinopodium creticum</i> •	Cretan Calamint	Imbros Gorge
<i>Clinopodium nepeta</i>	Lesser Calamint	Frequent
<i>Clinopodium vulgare</i>	Wild Basil	Maquis and phrygana
<i>Lavandula stoechas</i>	French Lavender	Local in maquis
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	White Horehound	Waste places
<i>Micromeria juliana</i>	Julian Savory	Rocky places
<i>Micromeria nervosa</i>	Veined Savory	Rocky places
<i>Ocimum basilicum</i> ‡	Sweet Basil	Cultivated
<i>Origanum dictamnus</i> •	Cretan Dittany	Cliffs
<i>Origanum microphyllum</i> •	Small-leaved Oregano	Omalos plateau

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Origanum onites</i>	White Marjoram	Occasional
<i>Phlomis cretica</i>	Cretan Jerusalem Sage	Locally common
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem Sage	Common
<i>Prasium majus</i>	White Hedge-nettle	Common
<i>Pseudodictamnus acetabulosus</i>	Greek Horehound	Riverbeds near sea level
<i>Pseudodictamnus mediterraneus</i>	False Dittany	Rocky phrygana
<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>	Greek Sage	Common
<i>Salvia pomifera</i>	Mountain Sage	Frequent
<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild Clary	Common
<i>Satureja thymbra</i>	Thyme-leaved Savory	Maquis and phrygana
<i>Scutellaria sieberi</i> •	A Skullcap	Cliffs and rocky banks
<i>Sideritis syriaca</i> subsp. <i>syriaca</i> •	Mountain Tea	Mountains
<i>Teucrium alpestre</i> •	Upland Germander	Cliffs and rocks
<i>Teucrium cuneifolium</i> •	Wedge-leaved Germander	Rare. Imbros Gorge
<i>Teucrium divaricatum</i> subsp. <i>divaricatum</i>	Spreading Germander	Rocky places
<i>Thymbra capitata</i>	Mediterranean Thyme	Common
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste Tree	Gorge and stream-beds
Linaceae		
<i>Linum arboreum</i>	Shrubby Flax	Cliffs in gorges
Lythraceae		
<i>Punica granatum</i> ‡	Pomegranate	Cultivated
Malvaceae		
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> ‡	Hibiscus	Cultivated
<i>Malva arborea</i>	Tree-mallow	Coast. Hania
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	Common
<i>Malva unguiculata</i>	Bryony-leaved Tree-mallow	Common
Meliaceae		
<i>Melia azedarach</i> ‡	Persian Lilac	Cultivated
Moraceae		
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Frequent
<i>Morus alba</i> ‡	White Mulberry	Cultivated
Myrtaceae		
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Common Myrtle	Occasional in maqiiis
Nyctaginaceae		
<i>Bougainvillea ×buttiana</i> ‡	Bougainvillea	Cultivated
Oleaceae		
<i>Olea europaea</i> subsp. <i>oleaster</i>	Wild Olive	Occasional in phrygana
<i>Phillyrea latifolia</i>	Mock Privet	Occasional in maquis

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
Onagraceae <i>Oenothera speciosa</i> ‡	Willowherb Family Pink Evening Primrose	Cultivated
Oxalidaceae <i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i> ‡	Wood-sorrel Family Bermuda Buttercup	Common
Papaveraceae <i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Poppy Family Yellow Horned-poppy	Coast
Phytolaccaceae <i>Phytolacca americana</i> ‡	Pokeweed Family American Pokeweed	Naturalised
Pittosporaceae <i>Pittosporum tobira</i> ‡	Pittosporum Family Japanese Mock Orange	Cultivated
Plantaginaceae <i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> ‡ <i>Kickxia elatine</i> subsp. <i>sieberi</i> <i>Plantago lagopus</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Plantago major</i> <i>Plantago squarrosa</i>	Plantain Family Ivy-leaved Toadflax Sharp-leaved Fluellen Hare's-foot Plantain Ribwort Plantain Greater Plantain A Plantain	Walls. Hania Agia Lake Common Common Occasional weed Maritime sands. Elaphonisi
Platanaceae <i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Plane Family Oriental Plane	River valleys
Plumbagiaceae <i>Limonium elaphonisticum</i> •	Thrift Family A Sea-lavender	Elaphonisi Island
Polygalaceae <i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> ‡	Milkwort Family Myrtle-leaved Milkwort	Cultivated
Polygonaceae <i>Persicaria maculosa</i> <i>Polygonum equisetiforme</i> <i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>	Dock Family Willow-leaved Persicaria Horsetail Knotgrass Horned Dock	Agia Lake Waste areas Common
Portulacaceae <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> ‡	Purslane Family Purslane	Waste places
Primulaceae <i>Cyclamen confusum</i> • <i>Cyclamen graecum</i> subsp. <i>graecum</i> <i>Cyclamen graecum</i> subsp. <i>candicum</i> • <i>Cyclamen hederifolium</i> subsp. <i>hederifolium</i>	Primrose Family Greek Sowbread Ivy-leaved Sowbread	Topolia and Sirikari Marathocephala and Rodopos Imbros and White Mountains South of Agia Sophia
Ranunculaceae	Buttercup Family	

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Clematis cirrhosa</i>	Virgin's Bower	Frequent
<i>Ranunculus bullatus</i>	Autumn Buttercup	Locally common
<i>Staphisagria macrosperma</i>	Lice Bane	Theriso Gorge. Imbros Gorge
Rhamnaceae	Buckthorn Family	
<i>Rhamnus prunifolia</i>	Plum-leaved Buckthorn	Mountain rocks
Rosaceae	Rose Family	
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	Frequent
<i>Eriobotrya japonica</i> ‡	Japanese Loquat	Cultivated
<i>Prunus dulcis</i> ‡	Almond	Cultivated
<i>Prunus prostrata</i>	Rock Cherry	Omalos
<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i> ‡	Firethorn	Cultivated
<i>Pyrus spinosa</i>	Wild Pear	Common
<i>Rubus sanctus</i>	A Bramble	Common
<i>Sanguisorba verrucosa</i>	Mediterranean Salad Burnet	Frequent
<i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>	Thorny Burnet	Common
Rubiaceae	Bedstraw Family	
<i>Galium fruticosum</i> •	Shrubby Bedstraw	Cliffs
<i>Galium graecum</i>	Greek Bedstraw	Cliffs
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Wild Madder	Common
Rutaceae	Rue Family	
<i>Citrus limon</i> ‡	Lemon	Cultivated
<i>Citrus sinensis</i> ‡	Orange	Cultivated
<i>Ruta chalepensis</i> subsp. <i>chalepensis</i>	Fringed Rue	Imbros Gorge
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Populus alba</i> ‡	White Poplar	Common
<i>Salix kaptarae</i> •		Agia Lake
Sapindaceae	Soapberry Family	
<i>Acer sempervirens</i>	Cretan Maple	Common. Mountains
<i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i> ‡	Lesser Balloon Vine	Cultivated
Santalaceae	Bastard-toadflax Family	
<i>Osyris alba</i>	Osyris	Frequent
Saxifragaceae	Saxifrage Family	
<i>Saxifraga rotundifolia</i> subsp. <i>chrysospleniiifolia</i>	Chrysosplenium-leaved Saxifrage	Locally common
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort Family	
<i>Scrophularia lucida</i>	Shining Figwort	Frequent
<i>Scrophularia peregrina</i>	Nettle-leaved Figwort	Widespread
<i>Verbascum arcturus</i> •	Shrubby Mullein	Cliffs and walls
<i>Verbascum macrurum</i>	Eastern Mediterranean Mullein	Common

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<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	Wavy-leaved Mullein	Common
<i>Verbascum spinosum</i> •	Spiny Mullein	Common
Simaroubaceae	Tree-of-heaven Family	
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i> ‡	Tree-of-heaven	Naturalised
Solanaceae	Nightshade Family	
<i>Cestrum nocturnum</i> ‡	Night-blooming Jasmine	Cultivated. Hania
<i>Datura stramonium</i> ‡	Thornapple	Naturalised
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	Henbane	Weedy places and walls
<i>Mandragora autumnalis</i>	Mandrake	Frequent
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i> ‡	Shrubby Tobacco	Naturalised
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black Nightshade	Weedy places
<i>Withania somnifera</i> ‡	Withania	Aptera
Styracaceae	Storax Family	
<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Storax	Sirikari Gorge
Tamaricaceae	Tamarisk Family	
<i>Tamarix parviflora</i>	A Tamarisk	Coasts
<i>Tamarix smyrnensis</i> ‡	Smyrna Tamarisk	Coasts
Thymelaeaceae	Mezereon Family	
<i>Daphne sericea</i>	A Daphne	Locally common in mountains
<i>Thymelaea hirsuta</i>	Hairy Thymelaea	Rocky places near the sea
Ulmaceae	Elm Family	
<i>Zelkova abelicea</i> •	Cretan Zelkova	Omalos plateau
Urticaceae	Nettle Family	
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory-of-the-wall	Rocks and walls
Verbenaceae	Vervain Family	
<i>Lantana camara</i> ‡	Lantana	Cultivated
<i>Phyla nodiflora</i> ‡	Frog Fruit	Damp meadow. Souda
<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Vervain	Frequent. Waste areas
Vitaceae	Vine Family	
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> subsp. <i>sylvestris</i>	Wild Vine	Occasional
Zygophyllaceae	Caltrop Family	
<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Maltese Cross	Waste places
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Amaryllidaceae	Daffodil Family	
<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i>	Broad-leaved Wild Leek	Occasional

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
<i>Allium callimischon</i> subsp. <i>haemostictum</i>		Imbros Gorge and Omalos
<i>Allium chamaespathum</i>		Occasional
<i>Allium circinnatum</i> subsp. <i>circinnatum</i> •		Akrotiri
<i>Allium suhirsutum</i>	Hairy Garlic	Frequent
<i>Narcissus obsoletus</i>	Small Pheasant's-eye	Locally common
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Sea Daffodil	Sand dunes
<i>Sternbergia lutea</i>	Sternbergia	Local and cultivated
Araceae		
<i>Arisarum vulgare</i>	Arum Family	
<i>Arum concinatum</i>	Friar's Cowl	Common
		Common
Arecaceae		
<i>Phoenix canariensis</i> ‡	Palm Family	
<i>Washingtonia filifera</i> ‡	Canary Palm	Cultivated
	California Fan-palm	Cultivated
Asparagaceae		
<i>Agave americana</i> ‡	Asparagus Family	
<i>Asparagus aphyllus</i> subsp. <i>orientalis</i>	Centuryplant	Cultivated and naturalised
<i>Drimys numidica</i>	Leafless Asparagus	Common
<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Sea Squill	Common
<i>Muscari parviflorum</i>	Tassel Hyacinth	Imbros Gorge
<i>Prospero autumnale</i>	Autumn Grape Hyacinth	Polyrinia
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Autumn Squill	Common
	Butcher's-broom	Frequent in shade
Asphodelaceae		
<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>	Asphodel Family	
<i>Asphodelus ramosus</i>	Yellow Asphodel	Common
	Branched Asphodel	Common
Colchicaceae		
<i>Colchicum cretense</i> •	Meadow Saffron Family	
<i>Colchicum pusillum</i>		Omalos
		Frequent at low elevations
Cyperaceae		
<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	Sedge Family	
<i>Scirpoides holoschoenus</i>	Great Fen-sedge	Agia Lake
	Round-headed Club-rush	Agia Lake
Dioscoreaceae		
<i>Dioscorea communis</i>	Yam Family	
	Black Bryony	Woodland and scrub
Iridaceae		
<i>Crocus pumilus</i> •	Iris Family	
		Omalos
Juncaceae		
<i>Juncus acutus</i>	Rush Family	
<i>Juncus littoralis</i>	Sharp Rush	Wet places
	Shore Rush	Elaphonisi

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Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
Orchidaceae		
<i>Spiranthes spiralis</i>	Autumn Lady's-tresses	Local. Phrygana
Poaceae		
<i>Arundo donax</i> ‡	Giant Reed	Common
<i>Briza minor</i>	Lesser Quaking-grass	Frequent
<i>Calamagrostis arenaria</i> subsp. <i>australis</i>	Marram	Sand dunes
<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Fern Grass	Frequent
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermuda Grass	Frequent
<i>Hyparrhenia hirta</i>	Common Thatching Grass	Frequent
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's-tail Grass	Common
<i>Melica ciliata</i>	Hairy Melick	Imbros Gorge
<i>Oloptum miliaceum</i>	Smilo Grass	Widespread. Roadsides
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	Marshes and riverbanks
Posidoniaceae		
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune-grass Family Neptune-grass	Marine
Smilacaceae		
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax Family Smilax	Common
Typhaceae		
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	Reedmace Family Southern Reedmace	Agia Lake
Zosteraceae		
<i>Zostera marina</i>	Eelgrass Family Eelgrass	Marine

Birds (H = Heard only)

Common name	Latin name	October 2025							
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>				✓				
Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>				✓				
Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>				✓				
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>				✓				
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓				✓	✓	✓	
Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>				✓				
Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>			✓	✓		✓	✓	
Eurasian Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>			✓					
Red-billed Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax</i>			✓					
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			✓	✓	✓		✓	
Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>		✓						

Common name	Latin name	October 2025							
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>				✓				
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>				✓				
Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>	✓						✓	
Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>			✓	✓				
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>				✓				
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>		H	✓	✓	H	✓	✓	
Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			✓					
Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>			✓			✓		
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>				✓		✓		
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>			✓					
European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>					✓			
Italian Sparrow	<i>Passer italiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>			✓		✓			
Eurasian Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>			✓	✓		✓		
European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>				✓		✓		

Other vertebrates

Common name	Latin name	October 2025							
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Reptiles									
Cretan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis cretensis</i>				✓		✓		
Balkan Terrapin	<i>Mauremys rivulata</i>				✓				
Amphibians									
Tree Frog	<i>Hyla arborea</i>				✓				

Invertebrates

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Common name	Latin name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Butterflies									
Papilionidae									
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>		✓			✓			
Pieridae									
Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>			✓					
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>		✓	✓			✓	✓	
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓		
Nymphalidae									
Cardinal	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>						✓		
Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>							✓	
Southern Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria aegeria</i>			✓	✓				
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>					✓			
Cretan Grayling •	<i>Hipparchia cretica</i>			✓				✓	
Moths									
Hummingbird Hawkmoth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>							✓	
Spurge Hawkmoth (larva)	<i>Hyles euphorbiae</i>						✓		
Dragonflies									
Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>		✓				✓		

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Common name	Latin name	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Scarlet Darter	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>						✓		
Other Insects									
Paper Wasp	<i>Polistes gallicus</i>		✓						
Oriental Hornet	<i>Vespa orientalis</i>						✓		
Praying Mantis	<i>Mantis religiosa</i>		✓		✓				
Nosed Grasshopper	<i>Acrida ungarica</i>		✓						
Blue-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda caerulescens</i>				✓			✓	
Red-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda germanica</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Pistacia gall aphid	<i>Baizongia pistaciae</i>						✓		
Molluscs									
Cretan Door Snail •	<i>Albinaria corrugata</i> subsp. <i>inflata</i>	✓		✓	✓			✓	