

Crete's Autumn Flowers

Naturetrek Tour Report

14th – 21st October 2021



Samaria Gorge



Roman Theatre



Colchicum cretense



Cyclamen graecum

Tour report & images by David Tattersfield



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Day 1

Thursday 14th October

Our flight from Gatwick arrived in Hania in mid-afternoon and we met our driver, Aristos, for the short transfer to our hotel. After checking in and locating our rooms, we reassembled for the journey to the Theriso Gorge, a little way south of the city, in the foothills of the White Mountains. We made a stop in the narrow gorge for an introduction to its flora. Growing on the cliffs we identified the Joint-pine *Ephedra foeminea*, False Dittany *Ballota pseudodictamnus*, the aromatic Greek Sage *Salvia fruticosa*, the narrow-leaved, Shrubby Ptilostemon *Ptilostemon chamaepeuce*, leafless bushes of an endemic bedstraw *Galium fruticosum*, silver-leaved, Shrubby Sainfoin *Ebenus cretica* and several flowering specimens of Crete's most famous endemic, the Cretan Dittany *Origanum dictamnus*.

In Theriso village, we enjoyed a break for tea and coffee, some of the group sampling the local Mountain Tea, made from yet another endemic, *Sideritis syriaca*. A further stop in the gorge revealed more plants confined to Crete, including Shrubby Mullein *Verbascum arcturus*, the silver-grey knapweed *Centaurea argentea* subsp. *macrothysana*, the leathery-leaved thistle *Staebelina petiolata* and our first cyclamen, *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum*.

We were back in Hania around 7.00pm and went out for our evening meal to a taverna near the old Venetian harbour.

Day 2

Friday 15th October

After shopping for lunch, we travelled westwards, along the coast, and made our first stop at a sandy bay, backed by a small area of sand dunes. The dominant plant, with broad, grey strap-shaped leaves, was Sea Daffodil *Pancreatium maritimum*. Its large fruits were splitting to reveal numerous shiny-black seeds and just a few of its large sweetly-scented white flowers remained. Other notable plants included the red-flowered Narrow-leaved Bugloss *Echium angustifolium*, Rush Skeletonweed *Chondrilla juncea*, Sea Holly *Eryngium maritimum* and large hummocks of Spiny Knapweed *Centaurea spinosa*, which is confined to the north coast of Crete and a few localities on the southern coasts of mainland Greece. The latter was being rapidly invaded by vigorous trailing shoots of Yellow Hottentot-fig *Carpobrotus edulis*, a scourge of many Mediterranean and southern-British coasts. The main area of dunes is roped off to help protect the nests of Loggerhead Turtles *Caretta caretta*, which are severely threatened by mass tourism. Eggs are laid during the breeding season, from late May to September, and we were most surprised to find two newly hatched turtles. We gave them a helping hand to the water's edge and were happy to see them swim away. Archelon, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece is very proactive in monitoring the population of turtles and we found several marked nest sites, well above the tide-line.

Continuing westwards, we made our next stop in the hilltop village of Marathocephala, where the large bright yellow flowers of *Sternbergia lutea* erupted from the parched earth. In Crete, these large-flowered forms are frequently cultivated but are not currently known to occur in the wild. We explored the rocky hillsides, above the village, which were covered in plants, typical of phrygana (a term equivalent to garrigue, in other parts of the Mediterranean, and referring to the low, scrubby and often spiny vegetation.). The dominant evergreen shrubs included 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*.

Cyclamen graecum subsp. *graecum* was plentiful in open rocky areas. It is common on the Greek mainland and many other islands, but, in Crete, it is only found here and on the Rhodopou peninsula to the north. We made a search for other geophytes, but only noted the huge bulbs of Sea Squill *Drimia numidica* and the common, diminutive, Autumn Squill *Prospero autumnale*. Clearly, this year, the summer had been very dry, and the autumn flowering season was delayed.

After lunch, we continued westwards to Falasarna, on the coast, where we had planned to visit the archaeological site of Ancient Falasarna. It had been an important naval and trading port, in the Hellenistic period, from the 4th century BC, until it was destroyed by the Romans in 69 BC. We were disappointed to find the site closed and could only see a little of it, through the fencing. In 365 AD, a huge earthquake raised the west coast of Crete by nine meters and left the harbour high and dry. We saw dramatic evidence of this, as we returned along the shore, where a raised beach and fossil cliff showed clear evidence of the former sea level. We saw some interesting plants during the walk. On the cliff top, Sea Squill was still in full flower, and we admired the autumn-flowering Pine Thistle *Chamaeleon gummifer*, (yet another recent taxonomic change!). On the beach, along with more Sea Holly and a limited quantity of Sea Daffodil, we found Sea Rocket *Cakile maritima* and many plants of Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias*, some of which were playing host to the spectacular caterpillars of Spurge Hawk-moth. The cliffs had flowering plants of Golden Samphire *Limbarda crithmoides*, the Sea-lavender *Limonium graecum* and many silver clumps of *Inula candida* subsp. *candida*. A heavy rain shower was approaching from the sea, and we took shelter in one of the surprisingly roomy sea caves, that had been home to hippies, since the 1960's. We took advantage of a coffee break in Falasarna, before returning to Hania for our evening meal in a harbour-side taverna.

Day 3

Saturday 16th October

After an overcast start, the day improved and ended in sunshine. We drove south over the White Mountains and stopped to view the Askifou plateau. We overlooked a broad, flat, fertile 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. The Askifou plateau is one of the largest of such features in Crete and now funnels the drainage, from the surrounding mountains, underground. Originally, rivers would have drained south, carving the Imbros and adjacent gorges, before these were captured by a lowering of the land surface. A variety of new plants, on the roadside, included Spiny Chicory *Cichorium spinosum*, Thyme-leaved Savory *Satureja thymbra*, Greek Spiny Spurge *Euphorbia acanthothamnus*, Spiny Rest-harrow *Ononis spinosa* subsp. *diacantha* and the endemic Spiny Mullein *Verbascum spinosum*. We made our way to the Imbros Taverna and enjoyed the local speciality of pancakes with cheese and honey, before setting off down the gorge.

A little way down, we found *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum*, wedged into tight crevices in the boulders. We followed the bed of the gorge, as it dramatically deepened beneath towering cliffs, that were home to many more fine examples of Crete's endemic chasmophyte flora, that we had previously seen in the Theriso Gorge. There were several narrow sections of the gorge, where harder limestones have resisted erosion, but we eventually emerged into a broader section, as the cliffs receded. The walk took us around four hours and we were glad to relax over drinks and the best chips in Crete, at the Taverna Komitades. We had hoped to end the day with a meal in Hora Sfakion, on the coast, but new rules for coach-drivers meant that we had to return to Hania and eat, once again, by the harbour.

Day 4

Sunday 17th October

After an unpromising start, the day turned bright and sunny. As it was Sunday, most shops were closed, so we did what the locals do and visited a number of minimarkets, until we had all we needed for lunch. We drove out to the Monastery of Agia Triada, on the Akrotiri peninsula, where some of the group looked around inside, as a service was in progress in the church. We then drove onwards through a narrow dry gorge to the Gouverneto Monastery and walked down a paved path to the Cave of St. John. Some of us ventured further to the ruins of the Katholikou Monastery, in the bottom of a small gorge, where the cliffs and walls of the buildings support some interesting plants. These included Cretan Sneezewort *Achillea cretica*, the shrubby Pink *Dianthus fruticosus* subsp. *creticus*, still with a few late flowers, the silver-leaved *Helichrysum orientale* and Shrubby Mullein. After a hot climb back to the bus, we took the road, through Souda, to the hilltop archaeological sites of Aptera, where we ate our lunch. Particularly impressive were the immense vaulted cisterns, the ruins of a Roman villa and the recently excavated amphitheatre, the size of which testified to the importance of the site.

We had a relaxing coffee break in Megala Horifa, followed by a sobering visit to the Allied War Cemetery, at the head of the Souda Bay, on the way back to Hania.

Day 5

Monday 18th October

After heading west again, we turned south to the village of Topolia. On a rocky hillside, below a chapel, there were many plants of *Cyclamen confusum*, growing in lightly-shaded conditions under shrubs of *Calicotome villosa* and Mountain Sage *Salvia pomifera*. Superficially, this plant resembles the familiar *Cyclamen hederifolium* but has some consistent morphological differences and a hexaploid chromosome number. In a normal year we would have expected to find the sweetly-scented flowers of *Narcissus obsoletus*, but this year we only found a few plants, just emerging from the ground. Several plants of Turpentine Tree *Pistacia terebinthus* had large impressive galls on their leaves, caused by an infestation of the aphid *Baizongia pistaciae*. Splitting one open revealed many of the insects and their sticky secretions.

Higher up the Topolia Gorge, we stopped for drinks at the taverna, before climbing the steps to the impressive cave of Agia Sophia. A few more *Cyclamen confusum* were growing below the cliffs and we found a few plants of a small, narrow-leaved form of *Sternbergia lutea*, which unfortunately were still in bud. From our high vantage point, we had excellent views of Griffon Vultures, circling the cliffs.

A short distance along the road, we stopped briefly to see a prolific population of *Cyclamen hederifolium* subsp. *hederifolium*, the typical diploid species, under deep shade in a wooded ravine. Continuing south, we reached the coast, at Stomio, where we had lunch in the shade of Turkish Pine *Pinus brutia*, near an interesting beach made up of limestone breccias. The spiny phrygana here was dominated by Mediterranean Thyme, the strongly-aromatic Thyme-leaved Savory and Spiny Mullein.

Elaphonisi was very busy with tourists, no doubt reflecting the recent freedoms to travel. We crossed a sand bar to reach the island, where we had several options; some took the opportunity for a swim, others walked out to the island's high point and the rest made a shorter circuit. (Despite the immense pressures from tourism, the island and adjacent coast are protected as a Natura 2000 site.) Much of the island consists of a low raised beach of jagged eroded limestone and wind-blown sand. Sea Daffodil and Sea Spurge are especially common on the

deeper sand dunes and on the rocks are bushes of Mediterranean Thyme and fleshy-leaved forms of Caper *Capparis spinosa*. The shallower sands support some local rarities, such as the fleshy-leaved *Silene succulenta* and an endemic Sea-lavender *Limonium elaphoniticum*. Scattered across the area, there are prominent trees of large-fruited Sea Juniper *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *macrocarpa*, including some venerable specimens.

Our time at Elaphonisi came to an end, all too quickly, and we returned to Hania for our evening meal.

Day 6

Tuesday 19th October

In the morning, we visited Agia Lake, where a natural freshwater spring has been dammed to create one of the finest wetland sites in Crete. On the water were Coot, Moorhen, Little Grebe, and a couple of Common Pochard. Grey Heron, Little Egret and Great Cormorant could be seen on the far shore, Cetti's Warbler called loudly from the nearby Giant Reeds and Kingfishers flashed across the water, between their regular perches. Cretan Wall Lizards were sunning themselves and hunting for insects along the wall and a Balkan Terrapin was hauled out on the concrete of the dam. After a little patience, we eventually found one of the lake's more secretive residents, a Little Crake, feeding among the reeds, at the water's edge.

We continued our journey up into the White Mountains, pausing to take in the views at Lakki. A search of the rocky hillside revealed small plants of *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum*, a few tiny pink flowers of *Colchicum pusillum* and the endemic *Crocus pumilus*. It was cool and windy, when we reached Omalos, and we were fortunate to be able to prepare and eat our lunch in the Taverna. Afterwards, we explored a couple of nearby fields, where we found several nice examples of *Crocus pumilus* and patches of the mountain endemic *Colchicum cretense*, in various shades of pink and white.

At the end of the road, we gazed down into the depths of the Samaria Gorge, and climbed a little way up the E4 footpath, where additional plants of the mountain zone included Mountain Tea *Sideritis syriaca* subsp. *syriaca*, *Origanum microphyllum*, *Aubrieta deltoidea*, *Astragalus angustifolius* and Rock Cherry *Prunus spinosa*. Around the cafe and across the plateau were trees of the endemic Cretan Zelkova *Zelkova abelicea*. We drove around the perimeter of the plateau, before returning to Agia Lake, for a brief visit, on the way back to Hania.

Day 7

Wednesday 20th October

For our final day, we had another opportunity to stretch our legs and enjoy the magnificent scenery of another of Crete's gorges. We drove back to Topolia and followed a minor road to Sirikari, where the walk started with a steep descent through Oak woodland and abandoned terraces. *Cyclamen confusum* was very common as we descended to a dry riverbed, which was lined with Oleander and magnificent Oriental Plane trees. We stopped for a break and snacks by some picnic benches before finishing our walk. Along the way, found several flowers of *Narcissus obsoletus*, *Colchicum pusillum* and *Sternbergia lutea*. When we reached the end of the gorge, we were met by Aristos, who had brought the bus down to a church, which was an ideal spot for lunch and saved us the long climb to Polyria. As we finished eating, we noticed a number of GriffonVultures had appeared and eventually located around 20 birds feeding on a carcass on a nearby hillside.

We spent the remainder of the afternoon exploring the intriguing village of Polyrinia, with archaeology extending from pre-minoan times to the present day. In ancient times, it was one of the most important and powerful cities in Western Crete and later flourished during the Roman period.

Day 8

Thursday 21st October

We enjoyed a leisurely morning in Hania, visiting the market and exploring the rich mixture of architecture and archaeology in the streets surrounding the harbour. We met back at the hotel for last minute packing and departed 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		
<i>Asplenium ceterach</i>	Spleenwort Family Rusty-back Fern	Common on rocks
<i>Asplenium onopteris</i>	Acute-leaved Spleenwort	Shaded cliffs
<i>Asplenium trichomanes</i> subsp. <i>quadrivalens</i>	Maidenhair Spleenwort	Rock crevices
Athyriaceae		
<i>Athyrium felix-femina</i>	Lady-fern Family Lady-fern	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Dennstaedtiaceae		
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken Family Bracken	Locally common
Dryopteridaceae		
<i>Dryopteris pallida</i>	Buckler-fern Family Pale Buckler-fern	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Equisetaceae		
<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>	Horsetail Family Branched Horsetail	Lake margin. Agia
<i>Equisetum telmateia</i>	Giant Horsetail	Ditches and lake margin. Agia
Polypodiaceae		
<i>Polypodium cambricum</i>	Polypody Family Southern Polypody	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Pteridaceae		
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair Fern Family Maidenhair Fern	Damp shaded cliffs
Selaginellaceae		
<i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	Lesser Clubmoss Family Mediterranean Selaginella	Damp shady places
GYMNOSPERMS		
CONIFERS		
Araucariaceae		
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i> ‡	Monkey-puzzle Family Norfolk Island Pine	Cultivated. Coastal
Cupressaceae		
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>horizontalis</i>	Juniper Family Cypress	Common. Sea-level to treeline
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> forma. <i>sempervirens</i> ‡	Funeral Cypress	Cultivated
<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i> subsp. <i>macrocarpa</i>	Sea Juniper	Elaphonisi
<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i> subsp. <i>oxycedrus</i>	Prickly Juniper	Frequent. Mountains
<i>Juniperus phoenicea</i> subsp. <i>phoenicea</i>	Phoenicean Juniper	Occasional. Lowland
Ephedraceae		
<i>Ephedra foeminea</i>	Joint-pine Family A Joint-pine	Cliffs
Pinaceae		
<i>Pinus brutia</i>	Pine Family Turkish Pine	Frequent native tree
<i>Pinus pinea</i> ‡	Stone Pine	Cultivated near coasts

Latin name	Common name	Notes
ANGIOSPERMS	FLOWERING PLANTS	
DICOTYLEDONS		
Aizoaceae	Dewplant Family	
<i>Carpobrotus edulis</i> ‡	Yellow Hottentot-fig	Coastal alien
Amaranthaceae	Goosefoot Family	
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i> ‡	Pigweed	Weedy places
<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly Saltwort	Sandy beaches
Anacardiaceae	Sumach Family	
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	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	Carrot Family	
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	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>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	Common
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Wild Fennel	Common
<i>Smyrniolum perfoliatum</i>	Perfoliate Alexanders	Locally common
Apocynaceae	Dogbane Family	
<i>Cionura erecta</i>	Cionura	Theriso Gorge
<i>Gomphocarpus physocarpus</i> ‡	Balloon Plant	Polyrinia
<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	Riverbeds. Planted on roadsides
<i>Plumeria rubra</i> ‡	Frangipani	Cultivated
Araliaceae	Ivy Family	
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	Common
Asteraceae	Daisy Family	
<i>Achillea cretica</i>	Cretan Sneezewort	Cliffs. Katholikou
<i>Achillea ligustica</i>	Southern Yarrow	Common
<i>Achillea maritima</i>	Cottonweed	Coastal sand. Elaphonisi
<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>	A Flat-topped Carlina Thistle	Rocky places
<i>Centaurea argentea</i> subsp. <i>macrothysana</i>	A Knapweed	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge
•	Red Star-thistle	Occasional
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>		Rock crevices in phrygana
<i>Centaurea idaea</i> •		Sand dunes. Falasarna and Elaphonisi
<i>Centaurea pumilio</i>		Common on rocks
<i>Centaurea raphanina</i> subsp. <i>raphanina</i> •	A Knapweed	Occasional
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	Yellow Star-thistle	North coast beaches
<i>Centaurea spinosa</i>	Spiny Knapweed	Phrygana and fallow fields
<i>Chamaeleon gummifer</i>	Pine Thistle	Sandy and waste places
<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>	Rush Skeletonweed	

Latin name	Common name	Notes
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory	Roadsides
<i>Cichorium spinosum</i>	Spiny Chicory	Common
<i>Cynara cornigera</i>	A wild Artichoke	Rocky places
<i>Dittrichia graveolens</i>	Aromatic Inula	Common
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Stink Aster	Common
<i>Echinops spinosissimus</i>	Spiniest Globe Thistle	Common
<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	Galactites	Common
<i>Helichrysum stoechas</i> subsp. <i>barrelieri</i>	Golden Cassidony	Rocky places
<i>Helichrysum microphyllum</i>	A Curry Plant	Rocky places in mountains
<i>Helichrysum orientale</i>	Eastern Everlastingflower	Cliffs. Katholikou
<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
<i>Onopordum bracteatum</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i> •		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>Rhagadiolus stellatus</i>	Star Hawkbit	Common
<i>Santolina chameacyparissus</i> ‡	Santolina	Planted. Askifou
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	Common. Waste areas
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sow-thistle	Waste areas
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	Waste areas
<i>Staelhelina petiolata</i> •		Cliffs
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i> ‡	Spiny Cocklebur	Alien weed
<i>Xanthium strumarium</i> ‡	Cocklebur	Alien weed
Berberidaceae	Barberry Family	
<i>Berberis cretica</i>	Cretan Barberry	Mountains
Bignoniaceae	Jacaranda Family	
<i>Jacaranda mimosifolia</i> ‡	Jacaranda	Cultivated
Boraginaceae	Borage Family	
<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Bugloss	Common near coast
<i>Echium italicum</i> subsp. <i>biebersteinii</i>	Pale Bugloss	Common
<i>Heliotropium europaeum</i>	Heliotrope	Common
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family	
<i>Aethionema saxatile</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i>	Burnt Candytuft	Dry rocky places
<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 candicum</i> subsp. <i>candicum</i> •	A Treacle Mustard	Imbros Gorge
<i>Lunaria annua</i> subsp. <i>pachyrhiza</i>	Honesty	Occasional
Cactaceae	Cactus Family	
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> ‡	Prickly Pear	Cultivated
<i>Opuntia microdasys</i>		Garden escape
Campanulaceae	Bellflower Family	
<i>Petromarula pinnata</i> •	Petromarula	Common
<i>Campanula cretica</i> •		Imbros Gorge and Topolia
<i>Campanula tubulosa</i> •		Katholikou Monastery

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Cannabaceae <i>Celtis tournefortii</i>	Hackberry and Hemp Family Oriental Hackberry	Imbros Gorge
Capparaceae <i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper Family Caper	Frequent on cliffs
Caprifoliaceae <i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Honeysuckle Family Etruscan Honeysuckle	Occasional
Caryophyllaceae <i>Dianthus fruticosus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i> • <i>Petrorhagia dianthoides</i> • <i>Silene succulenta</i> subsp. <i>succulenta</i>	Pink Family A shrubby Pink A Tunic Flower	Cliffs. Katholikou Cliffs. Imbros Gorge Elaphonisi Island
Cistaceae <i>Cistus creticus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i> <i>Cistus monspeliensis</i> <i>Cistus salvifolius</i> <i>Fumana arabica</i> <i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	Rock-rose Family Cretan Cistus Narrow-leaved Cistus Sage-leaved Cistus Mediterranean Rock-rose Thyme-leaved Rock-rose	Common Frequent in maqius Locally common Common. Rocky places Common. Rocky places
Convolvulaceae <i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i> <i>Cuscuta epithymum</i> <i>Ipomoea indica</i> ‡	Bindweed Family Mallow-leaved Bindweed Common Dodder A Morning Glory	Common Frequent parasite Cultivated
Crassulaceae <i>Rosularia serrata</i> <i>Petrosedum sediforme</i> <i>Sedum amplexicaule</i> subsp. <i>tenuifolium</i> <i>Sedum creticum</i> var. <i>monocarpicum</i> • <i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	Stonecrop Family Pale Stonecrop A Pennywort	 Rocky places Rocky places Cliffs Shaded cliffs
Cucurbitaceae <i>Bryonia cretica</i> <i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Cucumber Family White Bryony Squirting Cucumber	Frequent Waste places
Dipsacaceae <i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	Teasel Family A Scabious	Occasional in phrygana
Ericaceae <i>Arbutus unedo</i> <i>Erica arborea</i> <i>Erica manipuliflora</i>	Heather Family Strawberry Tree Tree Heather Autumn Heather	Locally common Locally common Locally common
Euphorbiaceae <i>Euphorbia acanthothamnos</i> <i>Euphorbia chamaesyce</i> <i>Euphorbia characias</i> <i>Euphorbia dendroides</i> <i>Euphorbia paralias</i> <i>Euphorbia pepelis</i> <i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i> ‡	Spurge Family Greek Spiny Spurge Small Spurge Large Mediterranean Spurge Tree Spurge Sea Spurge Petty Spurge Poinsettia	Common Bare ground Common Maritime cliffs Sand dunes Sandy beaches Cultivated

Latin name	Common name	Notes
<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	Pea Family	
<i>Acacia saligna</i> ‡	Blue-leaved Wattle	Cultivated
<i>Anthyllis hermanniae</i>	Herman's Kidney Vetch	Occasional
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i> subsp. <i>rubriflora</i>	Kidney Vetch	Common
<i>Astragalus angustifolius</i>	A 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 disciformis</i>	Disc Medick	Ruderal
<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 and occasionally naturalised
<i>Quercus coccifera</i> subsp. <i>calliprinos</i>	Kermes Oak	Common
<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm Oak	Frequent
<i>Quercus ithaburensis</i> subsp. <i>macrolepis</i> ‡	Valonia Oak	Cultivated
<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy Oak	Locally common
Hypericaceae	St John's-wort Family	
<i>Hypericum empetrifolium</i>	Crowberry-leaved St John's-wort	Frequent
<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 acetabulosa</i>	Garden Horehound	Riverbeds near sea level
<i>Ballota pseudodictamnus</i>	False Dittany	Rocky phrygana
<i>Clinopodium alpinum</i> subsp. <i>alpinum</i>	Alpine Basil Thyme	Rocky places
<i>Clinopodium creticum</i> •	Cretan Calamint	Imbros Gorge
<i>Clinopodium nepeta</i>	Lesser Calamint	Occasional
<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>	Micromeria	Rocky places
<i>Micromeria nervosa</i>		Rocky places
<i>Origanum dictamnus</i> •	Cretan Dittany	Cliffs
<i>Origanum microphyllum</i> •		Omalos plateau
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem Sage	Common

Latin name	Common name	Notes
<i>Prasium majus</i>	Prasium	Common
<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	Omalos
<i>Teucrium capitatum</i>	Felty Germander	Rocky places
<i>Thymbra capitata</i>	Mediterranean Thyme	Common
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste Tree	Gorge and stream-beds
Linaceae	Flax Family	
<i>Linum arboreum</i>	Shrubby Flax	Cliffs in gorges
Malvaceae	Mallow Family	
<i>Abelmoschus esculentus</i> ‡	Okra	Cultivated
<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> ‡	Hibiscus	Cultivated
<i>Lavatera bryoniifolia</i>	Bryony-leaved Mallow	Common
<i>Malva arborea</i>	Tree Mallow	Coast. Hania
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	Common
Meliaceae	Mahogany Family	
<i>Melia azedarach</i> ‡	Persian lilac	Cultivated
Moraceae	Mulberry Family	
<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Frequent
<i>Morus alba</i> ‡	White Mulberry	Cultivated
Myrtaceae	Myrtle Family	
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Common Myrtle	Occasional in maquis
Nyctaginaceae	Bougainvillea Family	
<i>Bougainvillea xbuttiana</i> ‡	Bougainvillea	Cultivated
Oleaceae	Olive Family	
<i>Olea europaea</i> subsp. <i>oleaster</i>	Wild Olive	Occasional in phrygana
<i>Phillyrea latifolia</i>	Mock Privet	Occasional in maquis
Orobanchaceae	Broomrape Family	
<i>Orobanche</i> sp.	A Broomrape	Occasional
Oxalidaceae	Wood-sorrel Family	
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i> ‡	Bermuda Buttercup	Common
Papaveraceae	Poppy Family	
<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow Horned-poppy	Coast
Phytolaccaceae	Pokeweed Family	
<i>Phytolacca americana</i> ‡	American Pokeweed	Naturalised
Pittosporaceae	Pittosporum Family	
<i>Pittosporum tobira</i> ‡		Cultivated

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Plantaginaceae <i>Plantago squarrosa</i> <i>Plantago weldenii</i>	Plantain Family A Plantain Welden's Plantain	Maritime sands. Elaphonisi Occasional
Platanaceae <i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Plane Family Oriental Plane	River valleys
Plumbagiaceae <i>Limonium elaphonisticum</i> • <i>Limonium graecum</i>	Thrift Family A Sea-lavender A Sea-lavender	Elaphonisi Island Falasarna
Polygalaceae <i>Polygala myrtifolia</i> ‡	Milkwort Family Myrtle-leaved Milkwort	Cultivated
Polygonaceae <i>Persicaria maculosa</i> <i>Polygonum equisetiforme</i>	Dock Family Willow-leaved Persicaria Horsetail Knotgrass	Agia Lake Waste areas
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 Gorges and White Mountains South and west of Topolia
Punicaceae <i>Punica granatum</i> ‡	Pomegranate Family Pomegranate	Cultivated
Ranunculaceae <i>Clematis cirrhosa</i>	Buttercup Family Virgin's Bower	Frequent
Rhamnaceae <i>Rhamnus lycioides</i> subsp. <i>oleoides</i>	Buckthorn Family A Buckthorn	Frequent in phrygana
Rosaceae <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Eriobotrya japonica</i> ‡ <i>Poterium sanguisorba</i> subsp. <i>verrucosa</i> <i>Prunus dulcis</i> ‡ <i>Prunus prostrata</i> <i>Pyracantha coccinea</i> ‡ <i>Pyrus spinosa</i> <i>Rosa sempervirens</i> <i>Rubus sanctus</i> <i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>	Rose Family Hawthorn Japanese Loquat Salad Burnet Almond Rock Cherry Firethorn Wild Pear Evergreen Rose A Bramble Thorny Burnet	Frequent Cultivated Frequent Cultivated Omalos Cultivated Common Frequent Common Common
Rubiaceae <i>Galium fruticosum</i> • <i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Bedstraw Family A shrubby Bedstraw Wild Madder	Cliffs Common

Latin name	Common name	Notes
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	Occasional
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Populus alba</i> ‡	White Poplar	Common
<i>Salix alba</i> ‡	White Willow	
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
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort Family	
<i>Scrophularia heterophylla</i>		Falasarna headland
<i>Scrophularia lucida</i>	Shining Figwort	Frequent
<i>Scrophularia peregrina</i>	Nettle-leaved Figwort	Common. Imbros Gorge
<i>Verbascum arcturus</i> •	Shrubby Mullein	Cliffs and walls
<i>Verbascum macrurum</i>		Common
<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>Datura stramonium</i> ‡	Thornapple	Naturalised
<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	Henbane	Weedy places and walls. Hania
<i>Nicotiana glauca</i> ‡	Shrubby Tobacco	Naturalised
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black Nightshade	Weedy places
Styracaceae	Storax Family	
<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Storax	Sirikari Gorge
Tamaricaceae	Tamarisk Family	
<i>Tamarix parviflora</i>	A Tamarisk	Coasts
Thymelaeaceae	Mezereon Family	
<i>Daphne sericea</i>	A Daphne	Locally common in mountains
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>Verbena officinalis</i>	Vervain	Frequent. Waste areas

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Veronicaceae		
Speedwell Family		
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i> ‡ <i>Kickxia elatine</i> subsp. <i>sieberi</i>	Ivy-leaved Toadflax Sharp-leaved Fluellen	Walls. Hania Agia Lake
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> <i>Allium callimischon</i> subsp. <i>haemostictum</i> <i>Allium chamaespathum</i> <i>Narcissus obsoletus</i> <i>Pancratium maritimum</i> <i>Sternbergia lutea</i>	Broad-leaved Wild Leek Late Daffodil Sea Daffodil Sternbergia	Occasional Imbros Gorge and Omalos Occasional Local Sand dunes Local and cultivated
Araceae		
Arum Family		
<i>Arisarum vulgare</i> <i>Arum concinatum</i>	Friar's Cowl	Common Common
Asparagaceae		
Asparagus Family		
<i>Agave americana</i> ‡ <i>Asparagus aphyllus</i> subsp. <i>orientalis</i> <i>Drimia numidica</i> <i>Leopoldia comosa</i> <i>Muscari parviflorum</i> <i>Ornithogalum narbonense</i> <i>Prospero autumnale</i> <i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Centuryplant Leafless Asparagus Sea Squill Tassel Hyacinth Autumn Grape Hyacinth Southern Star-of-Bethlehem Autumn Squill Butcher's-broom	Cultivated and naturalised Common Common Imbros Gorge Polyrinia. Probably planted Topolia Common Frequent in shade
Asphodelaceae		
Asphodel Family		
<i>Asphodeline lutea</i> <i>Asphodelus ramosus</i>	Yellow Asphodel Branched Asphodel	Common Common
Colchicaceae		
Meadow Saffron Family		
<i>Colchicum cretense</i> • <i>Colchicum pusillum</i>		Omalos Frequent at low elevations
Cyperaceae		
Sedge Family		
<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	Great Fen-sedge	Agia Lake
Dioscoreaceae		
Yam Family		
<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black Bryony	Woodland and scrub
Iridaceae		
Iris Family		
<i>Crocus pumilus</i> •		Omalos

Latin name	Common name	Notes
Poaceae	Grass Family	
<i>Achnatherum miliaceum</i>	Smilo Grass	Widespread. Roadsides
<i>Arundo donax</i> ‡	Giant Reed	Common
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	Marram Grass	Sand dunes
<i>Briza minor</i>	Lesser Quaking-grass	Frequent
<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Fern Grass	Frequent
<i>Elytrigia juncea</i>	Sand Couch	Sand dunes
<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's-tail Grass	Common
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	Marshes and riverbanks
Posidoniaceae	Neptune-grass Family	
<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune-grass	Marine
Smilacaceae	Smilax Family	
<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax	Common
Typhaceae	Reedmace Family	
<i>Typha domingensis</i>	Southern Reedmace	Agia Lake

Molecular studies, largely based on DNA, have modified our views on plant classification. The checklist follows a conservative view of these changes and is adapted from Stace C. A. (2019) *New Flora of the British Isles* 4th Edition. Orchid taxonomy follows Kühn, Pedersen and Cribb (2019) *Field Guide to the Orchids of Europe and the Mediterranean*. For ease of reference, taxa are presented in alphabetic order.

Birds (H = Heard only)

	Common name	Latin name	October 2021							
			14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		✓	✓					
2	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>						✓		
3	Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>						✓		
4	Rock Dove / Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Eurasian Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6	Little Crake	<i>Porzana parva</i>						✓		
7	Common Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>						✓		
8	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>						✓		
9	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>						✓		
10	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>		✓			✓			
11	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>						✓		
12	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>						✓		
13	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>						✓		
14	Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>			✓		✓	✓	✓	
15	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>			✓					
16	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
17	Common Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>						✓	✓	
18	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
19	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>			✓	✓	✓	✓		
21	Eurasian Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>							✓	
22	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>			✓		✓	✓		

			October 2021							
	Common name	Latin name	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
23	Eurasian Crag Martin	<i>Ptyonoprogne rupestris</i>			✓				✓	
24	Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>						✓		
25	Sardinian Warbler	<i>Curruca melanocephala</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
26	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>			✓		✓	✓		
27	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		✓		✓		✓		
28	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
29	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>				✓				
30	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>				✓		✓		
31	Italian Sparrow	<i>Passer italiae</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
32	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>						✓		
33	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>				✓	✓			
34	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓		
35	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		✓		✓				
36	European Serin	<i>Serinus serinus</i>								✓

Other vertebrates

			October 2021							
	Common name	Latin name	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Mammals										
1	Eastern Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus concolor</i>					D			
2	Cretan Badger	<i>Meles meles</i> subsp. <i>arcalus</i>			E				E	
3	Cretan Beech Marten	<i>Martes foina</i> subsp. <i>bunites</i>		D	D			D		
Reptiles										
1	Cretan Wall Lizard	<i>Podarcis cretensis</i>		✓		✓		✓	✓	
2	Balkan Terrapin	<i>Mauremys rivulata</i>						✓		
3	Loggerhead Turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>		✓						
	D = dead									
	E = evidence									

Invertebrates

			October 2021							
	Common name	Latin name	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Butterflies										
Papilionidae										
1	Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>					✓			
Pieridae										
2	Cleopatra	<i>Gonepteryx cleopatra</i>						✓	✓	
3	Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>		✓						
4	Eastern Bath White	<i>Pontia edusa</i>						✓		
5	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>			✓				✓	
6	Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>					✓	✓		
Lycaenidae										
7	Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>			✓					
8	Lang's Short-tailed Blue	<i>Leptotes pirithous</i>		✓						
Nymphalidae										
9	Painted Lady	<i>Vanessa cardui</i>			✓	✓				

			October 2021							
	Common name	Latin name	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
10	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓		
11	Southern Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria aegeria</i>							✓	
12	Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>		✓	✓					
13	Cretan Grayling	<i>Hipparchia cretica</i>			✓	✓			✓	
Moths										
1	Spurge Hawk-moth (larva)	<i>Hyles euphorbiae</i>		✓						
2	Pine Processionary Moth	<i>Thaumetopoea pityocampa</i>					E	E		
Dragonflies										
1	Vagrant Emperor	<i>Anax parthenope</i>						✓		
2	Blue Emperor	<i>Anax imperator</i>						✓		
3	Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombei</i>						✓		
4	Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>						✓	✓	
5	Scarlet Darter	<i>Crocothemis erythraea</i>						✓		
Other Insects										
1	Violet Carpenter Bee	<i>Xylocopa violacea</i>			✓		✓	✓		
2	Oriental Hornet	<i>Vespa orientalis</i>		✓		✓	✓		✓	
3	Egyptian Grasshopper	<i>Anacridium aegyptium</i>				✓	✓			
4	Nosed Grasshopper	<i>Acrida ungarica</i>					✓			
5	Blue-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda caerulea</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
6	Red-winged Grasshopper	<i>Oedipoda germanica</i>					✓	✓		
7	Pistacia Gall Aphid	<i>Baizongia pistaciae</i>					✓			
Molluscs										
1	Cretan Door Snail	<i>Albinaria inflata</i>	✓	✓	✓					
E = evidence										