Crete in Autumn

Naturetrek Tour Report

17 - 24 October 2017





Crocus pumilus

Roman villa







Cyclamen graecum subsp. graecum

Report and images by David Tattersfield



Naturetrek Mingledown Barn

Wolf's Lane

Chawton

Alton

Hampshire

GU34 3HJ

UK

T: +44 (0)1962 733051

E: info@naturetrek.co.uk

W: www.naturetrek.co.uk

Tour Report Crete in Autumn

Tour participants: David Tattersfield (Tour leader) and 14 Naturetrek clients

Summary

Crete had experienced its usual hot dry summer, with little rain in the preceding weeks. Autumn flowers were slow to emerge from the parched ground but, nevertheless, we saw everything we expected, except in smaller quantities than we may have hoped for. We had a great week exploring the wilder parts of western Crete and many aspects of its fascinating geology, history and archaeology. Our success was due, in no small part, to the enthusiasm and good humour of the group, the interesting walks and good food.

Day 1

Tuesday 17th October

We arrived in Crete in mid-afternoon. The weather was sunny, settled and clear, with a temperature in the mid-twenties and it remained that way for the rest of the week. After checking into our hotel, we made the short journey to the Theriso Gorge, in the foothills of the White Mountains, a little way south of the city. We made a few brief stops in the narrow gorge, finding our first *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum*, wedged into tight crevices in the limestone. On the cliffs, we identified some of the commoner endemic plants, typical of Crete's interesting chasmophyte flora, many of which we would encounter during the rest of the week.

It was much cooler when we reached Theriso village, where we relaxed over drinks in the one taverna that remained open. We returned to Hania for around 6.30pm and enjoyed our evening meal on a waterfront restaurant, just around the corner.

Day 2

Wednesday 18th October

We travelled westwards, along the coast, shopping for lunch on the way, and made our first stop at Gerani, where a sandy bay is backed by a small area of sand dunes. The habitat here is a protected nesting site of the Loggerhead Turtle and has a well-preserved flora, typical of similar sites around the Aegean. Prominent plants included

Sea Daffodil *Pancratium maritimum*, mostly in fruit but still with a few spectacular sweetly-scented, white flowers, Sea Holly *Eryngium maritimum* and enormous spiny, grey hummocks of *Centaurea spinosa*, a summer-flowering Knapweed found only on Crete's north coast and a few localities in southern Greece.

We made an excursion inland to the hilltop village of Marathocephala, where glowing yellow patches of *Sternbergia lutea* erupted from the parched earth. On the nearby rocky hillsides *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *graecum* was plentiful, under the low spiny bushes of the phrygana. On Crete, it is only found here, and on the Rhodopou peninsula to the north. Along with it were a number of tiny daffodils *Narcissus obsoletus* and the diminutive *Colchicum pusillum*. Also noteworthy were the huge bulbs and tall flower spikes of Sea Squill, *Drimia maritima*, that were, in places, pushing through the tarmac.

After lunch, we continued westwards and descended steeply to the coast. Nowadays, the area is dominated by poly-tunnels for vegetable production, irrigated by artesian water. Ancient Falasarna 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. The site is still undergoing excavation and we marvelled at detail of the masonry and the harbour wall, its

most impressive feature, where the boat moorings can still be seen. Small flocks of birds were feeding around the site and included White Wagtails, Linnets and Goldfinch. A flurry of activity was caused, when a lone Peregrine Falcon dived among them. A single wader, feeding along the edge of a pond, caused much discussion and was later identified as a Temminck's Stint. Overhead we had the unusual sight of three migrating Black Storks and excellent views of an Eleonora's Falcon. In 365 AD, a huge earthquake raised the west coast of Crete by nine metres and left the harbour high and dry. We saw plenty of evidence of this event along the shore, where a raised beach and fossil cliff show, clearly, the former sea level. Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias* was common along the sandy beach, with several plants being grazed by the showy caterpillars of on the Spurge Hawk-moth. Most of the group took the opportunity for a swim or paddle, before we had to return to Hania for our evening meal, this time at a taverna in the old Venetian port.

Day 3

Thursday 19th October

Today, we drove south into the rocky landscape of the White Mountains. We stopped to view the wide fertile depression of the Askifou plateau, before making our way to the start of the Imbros Gorge. Before setting off on our walk, we enjoyed the local speciality of pancakes with cheese and honey at the Imbros Taverna.

At the start of the gorge, we noted one or two *Crocus pumilus* (formerly regarded as *Crocus laevigatus* but now recognised as a distinct taxon, endemic to Crete) and the endemic *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, with Cretan Grayling, Wall Brown and Clouded Yellow flitting alongside us. It was a very dry season, with little evidence of any rain, and apart from patches of the Autumn Buttercup *Ranunculus bullatus* there were few flowers. On the cliffs, we saw many examples of Crete's endemic chasmophytes, including Dittany, *Origanum dictamnus*, Cretan Sainfoin, *Ebenus cretica*, the striking shrubby thistle, *Staehelina petiolata* and the shrubby Bedstraw, *Galium fruticosum*. 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 had taken around three and a half hours, but a little longer for the less able in the party. We relaxed over drinks and light snacks, in the warm sunshine, at the Taverna Komitades, before heading down to Hora Sfakion. We had a brief exploration of the harbour, before our evening meal at one of the many tavernas.

Day 4

Friday 20th October

We drove out to the Monastery of Agia Triada, on the Akrotiri peninsula, where we visited the museum, wine cellars and its richly decorated 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. The tiny coiled leaves of the endemic onion Allium circinnatum subsp. circinnatum had just started to emerge from the stony ground. Some of us ventured further to the ruins of the Katholikou Monastery, in the bottom of a small gorge. The cliffs and walls of the building support some interesting plants, which included the shrubby Pink Dianthus fruticosus subsp. creticus, still with a few late flowers, the silver-leaved Helichrysum orientale and Inula candida. 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, here, were the ruins of a Roman villa and the recently excavated amphitheatre, the size of which testified to the importance of the site. After visiting the ruined Turkish fort, overlooking the entrance to Souda Bay, we had a break for cold beers and homemade baclava at a taverna in Megala Horifa.

We finished off the afternoon with a visit to the Allied War Cemetery, at the head of the Souda Bay, and were back at our hotel at 5.50pm. After catching up on our checklists, we walked the short distance to a restaurant at the end of the marina.

Day 5

Saturday 21st October

After following the New National Road westwards, 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 scrub. This plant resembles the familiar *Cyclamen hederifolium* but has some consistent morphological differences and a hexaploid chromosome number. Growing on the same site were numbers of sweetly-scented *Narcissus obsoletus* and the tiny pink *Colchicum pusillum*. Higher up the Topolia Gorge, we stopped for drinks at the taverna, before climbing the steps to the impressive cave of Agia Sophia. Several plants of *Sternbergia sicula* were found, as well as a number of the chasmophytes we had seen previously, in the Imbros Gorge. A short distance along the road, we stopped briefly to see a prolific population of *Cyclamen hederifolium* subsp. *hederifolium*, the typical diploid species, under the deep shade of woodland. A few pale-blue tubular flowers remained on *Campanula cretica*.

Continuing south, we passed through woodlands of Oriental Plane, *Platanus orientalis*, and Chestnut, *Castanea sativa*, and extensive areas of colourful maquis, with Strawberry Tree, *Arbutus unedo* and purple *Erica manipuliflora*. On reaching the coast at Stomio, we had lunch in the shade of Calabrian Pine *Pinus halepensis* subsp. *brutia*, near a very interesting beach made up of limestone breccias. The spiny phrygana here was dominated by Mediterranean Thyme *Thymbra capitata*, the strongly-aromatic Satureia *Satureja thymbra* and the endemic *Verbascum spinosum*, with the addition of many large Sea Squills.

Elaphonisi was still busy with tourists. We walked across to the island for a little exploration and a dip in the sea, for some of us. The prominent trees were the large-fruited *Juniperus oxycedrus* subsp. *macrocarpa*, sometimes known as the Sea Juniper, including some venerable specimens. There were many Sea Daffodils in the sand dunes, with quite a few still in flower. Sea Spurge and local rarities, such as the fleshy-leaved *Silene succulenta* and an endemic Sea-lavender *Limonium elaphonisicum* grew in the sand around sand-blasted limestone rocks. At the far end of the island, a low ridge is home to a rare winter-flowering Colchicum relative, *Androcymbium rechingeri* but only the remains of its dried inflorescences were visible. We were back in Hania for 6.30pm and ate in another taverna near the harbour.

Day 6

Sunday 22nd October

In the morning we spent some time hour at Agia Lake, where a natural freshwater spring has been dammed to create one of the finest wetland sites in Crete. The spring was reduced to a trickle after the dry summer. Grey Heron and Little Egret stood around the edges of the reeds, a Kingfisher flashed across the water, between its regular perches and a Marsh Harrier patrolled the reedbeds. Out on the water were Common Pochard, Ferruginous Duck and Little Grebe, along with the usual Mallard, Coot and Moorhen. The lakes more secretive residents were harder to spot. Cetti's Warbler called noisily from the Giant Reed, below the dam, but remained invisible. The trills of Sedge Warbler betrayed their presence, just metres away in the reeds and our patience was finally rewarded with good views of Little Crake.

We continued our journey up into the White Mountains, pausing to take in the views at Lakki. On the rocky hillsides, we found tiny plants of *Cyclamen graecum* subsp. *candicum* growing from impossibly small cracks in the hard limestone and, nearby, a few *Crocus pumilus*, *Colchicum pusillum* and to our complete surprise, a bright green Tree Frog. We stopped for coffee in Omalos village and had lunch in the warm sunshine. In the nearby meadows were masses of *Colchicum cretense*, in various shades of pink, endemic to the higher mountains of Crete, and patches of *Crocus pumilus*. Yet another Tree Frog was discovered, beautifully camouflaged among the leaves of a Mullein. 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. After drinks at the cafe, we drove around the perimeter of the plateau, where large flocks of Goldfinch were feeding on the thistles.

We couldn't resist another brief visit to Agia Lake, on the return journey, and were rewarded with the best view of a flying Great Bittern, that any of us could have hoped for, and a very rare record for Crete.

Day 7

Monday 23rd 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. Strawberry Tree *Arbutus unedo* was in fruit, above our heads, and we found a beautiful Two-tailed Pasha, for which the Strawberry Tree is host to its caterpillars. *Cyclamen confusum* was very common as we descended to a dry riverbed, lined with Oleander and magnificent Oriental Plane trees. We took a break for bananas and chocolate in the shade. Here and there, *Sternbergia sicula* was flowering on the cliffs and boulders and small clumps of *Colchicum pusillum* grew in and alongside the rocky path. When we reached the road, we had a steep climb to Polyrinia and a late lunch.

Before returning to Hania, we had time to explore the interesting village, considered to be one of the longest inhabited settlements in Europe. We spent our time exploring its narrow streets and alleyways, the Roman cisterns and aqueducts and visiting the olive-wood shop and raki still, where products were sampled and souvenirs purchased. We were back in Hania for 6.00pm and walked down to our favourite restaurant for dinner.

Day 8

Tuesday 24th October

After a week of perfect weather, 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.

Receive our e-newsletter

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

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	
Asplenium ceterach	Rusty-back Fern	Common on rocks
Asplenium onopteris	Acute-leaved Spleenwort	Shaded cliffs
Asplenium trichomanes subsp. quadrivalens	Maidenhair Spleenwort	Rock crevices
Dennstaedtiaceae	Bracken Family	
Pteridium aquilinum	Bracken	Locally common
Dryopteridaceae	Buckler-fern Family	
Dryopteris pallida	Pale Buckler-fern	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Equisetaceae	Horsetail Family	
Equisetum ramosissimum	Branched Horsetail	Hedges. Agia Lake
Equisetum telmateia	Giant Horsetail	Ditches and lake margin. Agia
Polypodiaceae	Polypody Family	
Polypodium cambricum	Southern Polypody	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
Pteridaceae	Maidenhair Fern Family	
Adiantum capillus-veneris	Maidenhair Fern	Damp shaded cliffs
Cheilanthes acrosticha	Scented Cheilanthes	Rock crevices
Selaginellaceae	Lesser Clubmosss Family	
Selaginella denticulata	Mediterranean Selaginella	Damp shady places
Woodsiaceae	Lady-fern Family	
Athyrium filix-femina	Lady-fern	Shady cliffs. Imbros Gorge
GYMNOSPERMS	CONIFERS	
Araucariaceae	Monkey-puzzle Family	
Araucaria heterophylla‡	Norfolk Island Pine	Cultivated. Coastal
Cupressaceae	Juniper Family	
Cupressus sempervirens forma. horizontalis	Cypress	Common. Sea-level to treeline
Cupressus sempervirens forma. sempervirens‡	Funeral Cypress	Cultivated
Juniperus oxycedrus subsp. macrocarpa	Sea Juniper	Elaphonisi
Juniperus oxycedrus subsp. oxycedrus	Prickly Juniper	Frequent. Mountains
Juniperus phoenicea subsp. phoenicea	Phoenicean Juniper	Occasional. Lowland
Ephedraceae	Joint-pine Family	
Ephedra foeminea	A Joint-pine	Cliffs. Imbros Gorge

Latin Name Common Name Notes

Pinaceae Pine Family

Pinus halepensis subsp. brutia Calabrian Pine Frequent native tree
Pinus pinea‡ Stone Pine Cultivated near coasts

ANGIOSPERMS FLOWERING PLANTS

DICOTYLEDONS

Acanthaceae Bear's-breech Family

Acanthus spinosus Spiny Bear's-breech Frequent

Aizoaceae Dewplant Family

Carpobrotus edulis‡ Yellow Hottentot-fig Coastal alien

Amaranthaceae Goosefoot Family

Amaranthus retroflexus‡ Pigweed Weedy places
Salsola kali Prickly Saltwort Sandy beaches

Anacardiaceae Sumach Family

Pistacia lentiscus Mastic Tree Common in maquis

Pistacia terebinthus Turpentine Tree Frequent in maquis and gorges

Schinus molle‡ Californian Pepper Tree Cultivated

Apiaceae Carrot Family

Crithmum maritimumRock SamphireMaritime rocksDaucus carotaWild CarrotFrequentEryngium campestreField EryngoRocky fields

Eryngium creticum Cretan Eryngo Roadsides. Waste places

Eryngium maritimumSea HollySand dunesFerula communisGiant FennelCommonFoeniculum vulgare subsp. piperatumFennelCommonSmyrnium olusatrumAlexandersAptera

Apocyanaceae Periwinkle Family

Nerium oleander Oleander Riverbeds. Planted on roadsides

Plumeria rubra‡ Frangipani Cultivated

Araliaceae Ivy Family

Hedera helix Ivy Common

Asclepiadaceae Milkweed Family

Cionura erectaCionuraTheriso GorgeGomphocarpus physocarpus‡Balloon PlantPolyrinia

Asteraceae Daisy Family

Achillea creticaCretan SneezewortCliffs. KatholikouAchillea ligusticaSouthern YarrowCommonArtemisia arborescensShrubby WormwoodApteraBellis sylvestrisSouthern DaisyCommon

Calendula arvensisField MarigoldCommonCarlina corymbosa subsp. graecaA Flat-topped Carline ThistleRocky places

Carlina gummiferaPine ThistlePhrygana and fallow fieldsCentaurea argentea subsp. macrothysana•A KnapweedCliffs. Imbros Gorge

Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
Centaurea calcitrapa	Red Star-thistle	Occasional
Centaurea pumilio		Sand dunes. Falasarna and Elaphonisi
Centaurea raphanina subsp. raphanina•		Common on rocks
Centaurea redempta•		Imbros Gorge.Topolia Gorge
Centaurea solstitialis	Yellow Star-thistle	Occasional
Centaurea spinosa	Spiny Knapweed	North coast beaches
Chondrilla juncea	Rush Skeletonweed	Sandy and waste places
Cichorium intybus	Chicory	Roadsides
Cichorium spinosum	Spiny Chicory	Common
Crupina crupinastrum	Crupina	Widespread
Cynara cornigera	A wild Artichoke	Rocky places
Dittrichia graveolens	Aromatic Inula	Common
Dittrichia viscosa	Stink Aster	Common
Echinops spinosissimus	Spiniest Globe Thistle	Common
Eupatorium adenophorum‡	A shrubby Hemp-agrimony	Roadsides below Lakki
Galactites tomentosa	Galactites	Common
Helichrysum stoechas subsp. barrelieri	Golden Cassidony	Rocky places
Helichrysum microphyllum	A Curry Plant	Rocky places in mountains
Helichrysum orientale	Eastern Everlastingflower	Cliffs. Katholikou
Inula candida subsp. candida•		Coastal cliffs
Lactuca acanthifolia	Acanthus-leaved Lettuce	Katholikou Gorge. Aegean area endemic
Limbarda crithmoides	Golden Samphire	Coastal rocks
Onopordum bracteatum subsp. creticum•		Coastal sand and rocky places
Otanthus maritimus	Cottonweed	Sand dunes
Pallenis spinosa	Spiny Golden-star	Common
Phagnalon graecum	Shrubby Cudweed	Rocks, cliffs and walls
Picnomon acarna	Yellow-spine Thistle	Stony ground and roadsides
Ptilostemon chamaepeuce	Shrubby Ptilostemon	Cliffs and rocky banks
Staehelina petiolata•		Cliffs
Xanthium strumarium‡	Cocklebur	Alien weed
Berberidaceae	Barberry Family	
Berberis cretica	Cretan Barberry	Mountains
Bignoniaceae	Jacaranda Family	
Jacaranda ovalifolia‡	Jacaranda	Cultivated
Boraginaceae	Borage Family	
Echium angustifolium	Narrow-leaved Bugloss	Common near coast
Echium italicum subsp. biebersteinii	Pale Bugloss	Common
Heliotropium europaeum	Heliotrope	Common
Symphytum creticum	Cretan Comfrey	Shady cliffs
Brassicacae	Cabbage Family	
Aubrieta deltoidea	Aubretia	Omalos
Brassica cretica subsp. cretica•	Cretan Cabbage	Cliffs
Cakile maritima	Sea Rocket	Sand dunes
Erysimum candicum subsp. candicum•	A Treacle Mustard	Imbros Gorge
Erysimum raulinii•	A Treacle Mustard	Imbros Gorge
Cactaceae	Cactus family	
Opuntia ficus-indica‡	Prickly Pear	Cultivated
	•	

Latin Name Common Name Notes Bellflower Family Campanulaceae Petromarula pinnata. Petromarula Common Cannabaceae **Hackberry and Hemp Family** Celtis tournefortii Oriental Hackberry Imbros Gorge Capparaceae **Caper Family** Capparis spinosa Frequent on cliffs Caper Caprifoliaceae Honeysuckle Family Knautia integrifolia A Scabious Occasional in phrygana Lonicera etrusca Etruscan Honeysuckle Occasional Valeriana asarifolia• A Valerian Imbros Gorge **Pink Family** Caryophyllaceae Dianthus fruticosus subsp. creticus. A shrubby Pink Cliffs. Katholikou Petrorhagia dianthoides. A Tunic Flower Cliffs. Imbros Gorge Silene succulenta subsp. succulenta Elaphonisi Island Cistaceae **Rock-rose Family** Cistus creticus subsp. creticus Cretan Cistus Common Cistus salvifolius Sage-leaved Cistus Locally common Fumana arabica Mediterannean Rock-rose Common. Rocky places Convolvulaceae **Bindweed Family** Convolvulus althaeoides Mallow-leaved Bindweed Common Convolvulus oleifolius Olive-leaved Bindweed Dry rocky places Ipomoea indica‡ A Morning Glory Cultivated Crassulaceae **Stonecrop Family** Rosularia serrata Sedum amplexicaule subsp. tenuifolium Rocky places Cliffs Sedum creticum var. monocarpicum• Shaded cliffs Umbilicus horizontalis A Pennywort Cucurbitaceae **Cucumber Family** Bryonia cretica White Bryony Frequent Ecballium elaterium **Squirting Cucumber** Waste places **Ericaceae Heather Family** Arbutus unedo Strawberry Tree Locally common Erica arborea Tree Heather Locally common Erica manipuliflora Autumn Heather Locally common Euphorbiaceae **Spurge Family** Euphorbia acanthothamnos Greek Spiny Spurge Common Euphorbia chamaesyce Small Spurge Bare ground Euphorbia characias Large Mediterranean Spurge Common Euphorbia dendroides Maritime cliffs Tree Spurge Euphorbia maculata‡ Spotted Spurge Trackside, Akrotiri Euphorbia marginata‡ A variegated spurge Cultivated Euphorbia paralias Sea Spurge Sand dunes Cultivated Euphorbia pulcherrima‡ Poinsettia

Latin Name Common Name Notes Euphorbia sultan-hassei. A Tree Spurge Cliffs. Imbros Gorge Mercurialis annua **Annual Mercury** Common Ricinus communis‡ Castor-oil-plant Frequent naturalised weed **Fabaceae Pea Family** Acacia retinoides‡ Swamp Wattle Cultivated Anagyris foetida Bean Trefoil Scrub and waste areas Anthyllis hermanniae Herman's Kidney Vetch Occasional Anthyllis vulneraria subsp. rubriflora Common Kidney Vetch Common above Omalos Astragalus angustifolius A Milk Vetch Bituminaria bituminosa Pitch Trefoil Common Calycotome villosa Hairy Thorny Broom Common Ceratonia siliqua Carob Common Cercis siliquastrum‡ Judas Tree Cultivated Ebenus cretica• Shrubby Sainfoin Cliffs Genista acanthoclada Spiny Broom Common Lotus cytisoides Grey Bird's-foot Trefoil Coastal sand and rocks Medicago arborea‡ Tree Medick Cultivated and naturalised Medicago marina Sea Medick Sand dunes Spiny Rest-harrow Ononis spinosa subsp. diacantha Rocky places Robinia pseudoacacia‡ False Acacia Cultivated and naturalised Cliffs. Imbros Gorge Securigera globosa• A Crown Vetch Spartium junceum Spanish Broom Roadsides and maquis **Fagaceae Beech Family** Castanea sativa‡ **Sweet Chestnut** Cultivated and occasionally naturalised Quercus coccifera subsp. calliprinos Kermes Oak Common Quercus ilex Holm Oak Frequent Quercus ithaburensis subsp. Valonia Oak Cultivated macrolepis‡ Quercus pubescens Downy Oak Locally common Gentianaceae **Gentian Family** Blackstonia perfoliata Yellow-wort Occasional Hypericaceae St John's-wort Family Hypericum empetrifolium Crowberry-leaved St John's-wort Frequent Hypericum triquetrifolium Wavy-leaved St John's-wort Common Juglandaceae **Walnut Family** Walnut Cultivated Juglans regia‡ Lamiaceae **Dead-nettle Family** Ballota acetabulosa Garden Horehound Riverbeds near sea level Ballota nigra Black Horehound Waste places Ballota pseudodictamnus False Dittany Rocky phrygana Clinopodium creticum• Cretan Calamint Imbros Gorge Clinopodium nepeta Lesser Calamint Occasional Clinopodium vulgare Wild Basil Maquis and phrygana Lavandula stoechas French Lavender Local in maquis Marrubium vulgare White Horehound Waste places Micromeria juliana Micromeria Rocky places

© Naturetrek March 18 9

Rocky places

Micromeria nervosa

Latin Name	Common Name	Notes
Origanum dictamnus∙	Cretan Dittany	Cliffs
Origanum microphyllum∙	•	Omalos plateau
Phlomis cretica	Cretan Jerusalem Sage	Locally common
Phlomis fruticosa	Jerusalem Sage	Common
Prasium majus	Prasium	Common
Salvia fruticosa	Greek Sage	Common
Salvia pomifera	Mountain Sage	Frequent
Salvia verbenaca	Wild Clary	Common
Satureja thymbra	Satureia	Maquis and phrygana
Scutellaria sieberi•	A Skullcap	Cliffs and rocky banks
Sideritis syriaca subsp. syriaca•	Mountain Tea	Mountains
Teucrium alpestre∙		Cliffs and rocks
Teucrium capitatum	Felty Germander	Rocky places
Teucrium cuneifolium•		Rare. Imbros Gorge
Thymbra capitata	Mediterranean Thyme	Common
Vitex agnus-castus	Chaste Tree	Gorge and stream-beds
Linaceae	Flax Family	
Linum arboreum	Shrubby Flax	Cliffs in gorges
Malvaceae	Mallow Family	
Abelmoschus esculentus‡	Okra	Cultivated
Hibiscus rosa-sinensis‡	Hibiscus	Cultivated
Lavatera bryoniifolia	Bryony-leaved Mallow	Common
Malva arborea	Tree Mallow	Coast. Hania
Malva sylvestris	Common Mallow	Common
Meliaceae	Mahogany Family	
Melia azedarach‡	Persian lilac	Cultivated
Moraceae	Mulberry Family	
Ficus carica	Fig	Frequent
Morus alba‡	White Mulberry	Cultivated
Myrtaceae	Myrtle Family	
Myrtus communis	Common Myrtle	Occasional in maqiis
Nyctaginaceae	Bougainvillea Family	
Bougainvillea glabra‡	Bougainvillea	Cultivated
Oleaceae	Olive Family	
Olea europaea subsp. oleaster	Wild Olive	Occasional in phrygana
Phillyrea latifolia	Mock Privet	Occasional in maquis
Oxalidaceae	Wood-sorrel Family	
Oxalis pes-caprae‡	Bermuda Buttercup	Common
Papaveraceae	Poppy Family	
Glaucium flavum	Yellow Horned-poppy	Coast
Phytolaccaceae	Pokeweed Family	
Phytolacca americana‡	American Pokeweed	Naturalised

Latin Name Common Name Notes Pittosporaceae Pittosporum Family Pittosporum tobira‡ Cultivated **Plantaginaceae** Plantain and Speedwell Family Cymbalaria microcalyx Rocks. Falasarna Cymbalaria muralis‡ Ivy-leaved Toadflax Walls. Hania **Platanaceae Plane Family** Platanus orientalis Oriental Plane River valleys Plumbagiaceae **Thrift Family** Limonium elaphonisicum• A Sea-lavender West coast Limonium frederici A Sea-lavender Falasarna. Southern Aegean endemic Polygalaceae Milkwort Family Myrtle-leaved Milkwort Polygala myrtifolia‡ Cultivated Polygonaceae **Dock Family** Persicaria salicifolia Willow-leaved Persicaria Agia Lake Polygomum equisetiforme Horsetail Knotgrass Waste areas Polygonum maritimum Sea Knotgrass Coastal sands **Bull's Head Dock** Rumex bucephalophorus Common **Portulacaceae Purslane Family** Portulaca oleracea‡ Purslane Waste places Primulaceae **Primrose Family** Cyclamen confusum• Topolia and Sirikari Cyclamen graecum subsp. graecum **Greek Sowbread** Spilia and Rodopos Cyclamen graecum subsp. candicum• Imbros and White Mountains Cyclamen hederifolium subsp. hederifolium Ivy-leaved Sowbread South and west of Topolia Samolus valerandi **Brookweed** Wet cliff. Falasarna **Punicaceae Pomegranate Family** Cultivated Punica granatum ‡ Pomegranate Ranunculaceae **Buttercup Family** Clematis cirrhosa Virgin's Bower Frequent Delphinium staphisagria Lice Bane Theriso Gorge. Imbros Gorge Ranunculus bullatus Autumn Buttercup Locally common Rhamnaceae **Buckthorn Family** Rhamnus lycioides subsp. oleoides A Buckthorn Frequent in phrygana **Rose Family** Rosaceae Crataegus monogyna Hawthorn Frequent Japanese Loquat Eriobotrya japonica‡ Cultivated Poterium sanguisorba subsp. verrucosa Salad Burnet Frequent Prunus dulcis‡ Almond Cultivated Prunus prostrata Rock Cherry **Omalos** Pyracantha coccinea‡ Firethorn Cultivated Pyrus spinosa Wild Pear Common Rubus sanctus A Bramble Common

Latin Name Common Name Notes Common Sarcopoterium spinosum Thorny Burnet Rubiaceae **Bedstraw Family** A shrubby Bedstraw Cliffs Galium fruticosum• Rubia peregrina Wild Madder Common Rutaceae **Rue Family** Citrus limon‡ Lemon Cultivated Citrus sinensis‡ Cultivated Orange Ruta chalepensis subsp. chalepensis Fringed Rue Occasional Salicaceae Willow Family Populus alba‡ White Poplar Common Salix alba‡ White Willow Soapberry Family Sapindacaeae Acer sempervirens Cretan Maple Common. Mountains Cardiospermum halicacabum‡ Lesser Balloon Vine Cultivated Santalaceae **Bastard-toadflax Family** Osyris alba Osyris Frequent **Figwort Family** Scrophulariaceae Scrophularia heterophylla Falasarna headland Scrophularia lucida Shining Figwort Frequent Scrophularia peregrina Nettle-leaved Figwort Common. Imbros Gorge Verbascum arcturus • Shrubby Mullein Cliffs and walls Verbascum macrurum Common Verbascum sinuatum Wavy-leaved Mullein Common Verbascum spinosum• Spiny Mullein Common Simaroubaceae Tree-of-heaven Family Ailanthus altissima‡ Tree-of-heaven Naturalised Solanaceae **Nightshade Family** Datura stramonium‡ Thornapple Naturalised Weedy places and walls. Hania Hyoscyamus albus Henbane Mandragora autumnalis Mandrake Frequent Nicotiana glauca‡ Shrubby Tobacco Naturalised Solanum nigrum Black Nightshade Weedy places Solanum villosum Hairy Nightshade Damp places Withania somnifera‡ Withania Aptera Styracaceae **Storax Family** Styrax officinalis Sirikari Gorge Storax **Tamarisk Family Tamaricaceae** Tamarix parviflora A Tamarisk Coasts

12 © Naturetrek March 18

Locally common in mountains

Mezereon Family

A Daphne

Thymelaeaceae

Daphne sericea

Latin Name Common Name Notes

Ulmaceae Elm Family

Zelkova abelicea• Cretan Zelkova Omalos plateau

Urticaceae Nettle Family

Parietaria judaica Pellitory-of-the-wall Rocks and walls

Verbenaceae Vervain Family

Lantana camara‡ Lantana Cultivated

Phyla nodiflora Damp coastal meadow. Souda

Verbena officinalis Vervain Frequent. Waste areas

Vitaceae Vine Family

Vitis vinifera subsp. sylvestris Wild Vine Occasional

Zygophyllaceae Caltrop Family

Tribulus terrestris Maltese Cross Waste places

MONOCOTYLEDONS

Amaryllidaceae Daffodil Family

Allium ampeloprasum Wild Leek Occasional

Allium callimischon subsp.
haemostictum
Imbros Gorge and Omalos

Allium chamaespathumOccasionalAllium circinnatum subsp. circinnatum•AkrotiriAllium suhirsutumFrequentAllium tardans•Frequent

Narcissus obsoletus

Late Daffodil

Locally common

Pancratium maritimum

Sea Daffodil

Sand dunes

Sternbergia lutea

Common Sternbergia

Cultivated

Sternbergia sicula

Slender Sternbergia

Locally common

Araceae Arum Family

Arisarum vulgare Friar's Cowl Common
Arum concinnatum Common

Asparagaceae Asparagus Family

Agave americana‡ Centuryplant Cultivated and naturalised

Asparagus aphyllus subsp. orientalisLeafless AsparagusCommonDrimia maritimaSea SquillCommonLeopoldia comosaTassel HyacinthImbros GorgeOrnithogalum narbonenseSouthern Star-of-BethlehemTopoliaProspero autumnaleAutumn SquillCommon

Ruscus aculeatus Butcher's-broom Frequent in shade

Colchicaceae Meadow Saffron Family

Androcymbium rechingeri• Elaphonisi
Colchicum cretense• Omalos

Colchicum pusillum Frequent at low elevations

Cyperaceae Sedge Family

Cladium mariscusGreat Fen-sedgeAgia LakeCyperus capitatusSand GalingaleSand dunes

Latin Name Common Name Notes

Dioscoreaceae Yam Family

Tamus communis Black Bryony Woodland and scrub

Iridaceae Iris Family

Crocus pumilus• Imbros and Omalos

Juncaceae Rush Family

Juncus acutusSharp RushWet placesJuncus littoralisShore RushElaphonisi

Orchidaceae Orchid Family

Spiranthes spiralis Autumn Lady's-tresses Local. Phrygana

Poaceae Grass Family

Common Arundo donax‡ Giant Reed Ammophila arenaria Marram Grass Sand dunes Briza minor Lesser Quaking-grass Frequent Catapodium rigidum Fern Grass Frequent Elytrigia juncea Sand Couch Sand dunes Hare's-tail Grass Lagurus ovatus Common Melica ciliata Hairy Melick Imbros Gorge

Phragmites australisCommon ReedMarshes and riverbanksPiptatherum miliaceumRice-grassWidespread. Roadsides

Posidoniaceae Neptune-grass Family

Posidonia oceanica Neptune-grass Marine

Smilacaceae Smilax Family

Smilax aspera Smilax Common

Typhaceae Reedmace Family

Typha domingensis Southern Reedmace Agia Lake

Xanthorrhoeaceae Asphodel Family

Asphodeline luteaYellow AsphodelCommonAsphodelus ramosusBranched AsphodelCommon

Zosteraceae Eelgrass Family

Zostera marina Eelgrass Marine

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

						Oct	ober			
	Common name	Latin name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1	Mute Swan	Cygnus olor						✓		
2	Mallard	Anas platyrhynchos						✓		
3	Common Pochard	Aythya ferina						✓		
4	Ferruginous Duck	Aythya nyroca						✓		
5	Great Cormorant	Phalacrocorax carbo						✓	✓	
6	Little Grebe	Tachybaptus ruficollis						✓		
7	Great Bittern	Botaurus stellaris						✓		
8	Little Egret	Egretta garzetta			✓			✓		
9	Grey Heron	Ardea cinerea		✓				✓		

				October 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 Image: color of the color o								
	Common name	Latin name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
10	Black Stork	Ciconia nigra		✓								
11	Griffon Vulture	Gyps fulvus			✓		✓	✓	✓			
12	Western Marsh Harrier	Circus aeruginosus						✓				
13	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	Accipiter nisus		✓					✓			
14	Common Buzzard	Buteo buteo	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
15	Long-legged Buzzard	Buteo rufinus										
16	Golden Eagle	Aquila chrysaetos		✓					✓			
17	Common Kestrel	Falco tinnunculus		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			
18	Eleonora's Falcon	Falco eleonorae		✓								
19	Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	✓	✓								
20	Little Crake	Porzana parva						✓				
21	Common Moorhen	Gallinula chloropus						✓				
22	Eurasian Coot	Fulica atra						✓				
23	Temminck's Stint	Calidris temminckii		✓								
24	Yellow-legged Gull	Larus michahellis		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
25	Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	Columba livia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
26	Common Wood Pigeon	Columba palumbus		✓								
27	Eurasian Collared Dove	Streptopelia decaocto	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
28	Common Kingfisher	Alcedo atthis						✓				
29	Hooded Crow	Corvus cornix	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
30	Northern Raven	Corvus corax	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
31	Coal Tit	Periparus ater										
32	Great Tit	Parus major		✓	✓		✓	✓				
33	Eurasian Blue Tit	Cyanistes caeruleus							✓			
34	Crested Lark	Galerida cristata		✓								
35	Eurasian Crag Martin	Ptyonoprogne rupestris			✓		✓	✓	✓			
36	Eurasian Blackcap	Sylvia atricapilla						✓				
37	Sardinian Warbler	Sylvia melanocephala	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
38	Sedge Warbler	Acrocephalus schoenobaenus						✓				
39	Eurasian Wren	Troglodytes troglodytes	✓		✓		✓	✓				
40	Common Starling	Sturnus vulgaris		✓		✓		✓				
41	Common Blackbird	Turdus merula		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
42	European Robin	Erithacus rubecula				✓						
43	Common Redstart	Phoenicurus phoenicurus							✓			
44	Black Redstart	Phoenicurus ochruros		✓								
45	Northern Wheatear	Oenanthe oenanthe		✓								
46	Black-eared Wheatear	Oenanthe hispanica		✓								
47	European Stonechat	Saxicola rubicola				✓		✓				
48	Blue Rock Thrush	Monticola solitarius						✓				
49	Spotted Flycatcher	Muscicapa striata		✓		✓						
50	Italian Sparrow	Passer italiae	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
51	Grey Wagtail	Motacilla cinerea						✓				
52	White Wagtail	Motacilla alba		✓		✓	✓	✓				
53	Common Chaffinch	Fringilla coelebs				✓						
54	European Serin	Serinus serinus						✓	✓			
55	European Goldfinch	Carduelis carduelis		✓				✓				
56	Common Linnet	Linaria cannabina		✓	✓		✓	✓				

Mammals (D = dead; C=Captive; E=Evidence of)

1	Kri-kri	Capra hircus subsp. cretensis				С	
2	2 Eastern Hedgehog	Erinaceus concolor			D		

				October						
	Common name	Latin name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
3	Cretan Badger	Meles meles subsp. arcalus							Е	
4	Cretan Beech Marten	Martes foina subsp. bunites		Е	D			D	Е	
5	Cretan Spiny Mouse	Acomys minous						✓		

Reptiles (‡= introduced)

1	Balkan Green Lizard	Lacerta trilineata	✓					
2	Cretan Wall Lizard	Podarcis cretensis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	Balkan Terrapin	Mauremys rivulata				✓		
4	Red-eared Terrapin‡	Trachemys scripta subsp. elegans				✓		

Amphibians

1	Tree Frog	Hyla arborea			✓	
2	American Bullfrog‡	Rana catesbeiana			Н	
3	Green Toad	Bufo viridis	D			

Butterflies

1	Swallowtail	Papilio machaon	✓		✓	✓		✓
2	Large White	Pieris brassicae	✓	✓	✓			
3	Small White	Pierios rapae	✓			✓	✓	✓
4	Eastern Bath White	Pontia edusa					✓	✓
5	Clouded Yellow	Colias crocea	✓		✓		✓	
6	Cleopatra	Gonepteryx cleopatra	✓			✓	✓	✓
7	Small Copper	Lycaena phlaeas		✓	✓		✓	
8	Eastern Baton Blue	Pseudophilotes vicrama						✓
9	Lang's Short-tailed Blue	Leptotes pirithous	✓					✓
10	African Grass Blue	Zizeeria knysna	✓					
11	Common Blue	Polyommatus icarus		✓				
12	Brown Argus	Aricia agestis		✓				
13	Two-tailed Pasha	Charaxes jasius						✓
14	Red Admiral	Vanessa atalanta	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Painted Lady	Vanessa cardui	✓	✓	✓	✓		
16	Southern Comma	Polygonia egea		✓				
17	Cardinal	Argynnis pandora				✓		✓
18	Cretan Grayling	Hipparchia cretica	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19	Southern Speckled Wood	Pararge aegeria aegeria			✓		✓	✓
20	Wall Brown	Lasiommata megera	✓	✓	✓	✓		
21	Pygmy Skipper	Gegenes papilio	✓					

Moths

1	Humming-bird Hawk-moth	Macroglossum stellatarum	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2	Spurge Hawk-moth (larva)	Hyles euphorbiae		✓		✓		
3	Pine Processionary Moth	Thaumetopoea pityocampa				✓	✓	

Dragonflies

1	Red-veined Darter	Sympetrum fonscolombei	✓		✓		
2	Common Darter	Sympetrum striolatum	✓		✓	✓	
3	Blue Emperor	Anax imperator	✓		✓		
4	Lesser Emperor	Anax pathenope			✓		
5	Scarlet Darter	Crocothemis erythraea			✓		

				October							
	Common name	Latin name	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
6	Blue-tailed Damselfly	Ischnura elegans						✓			

Other Insects

1	Violet Carpenter Bee	Xylocopa violacea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2	Buff-tailed Bumble Bee	Bombus terrestris					✓	✓	
3	Oriental Hornet	Vespa orientalis	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
4	Praying Mantis	Mantis religiosa	✓						
5	European Dwarf Mantis	Ameles spallanzania		✓					
6	Egyptian Grasshopper	Anacridium aegyptium			✓	✓		✓	
7	Nosed Grasshopper	Acrida ungarica	✓		✓	✓			
8	Blue-winged Grasshopper	Oedipoda caerulescens	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
9	Red-winged Grasshopper	Oedipoda germanica	✓		✓	✓		✓	
10	Cicada	Tibicen plebejus				D			
11	Bee Fly	Bombylius major						✓	

Molluscs

1	Cretan Door Snail	Albinaria inflata	✓	✓	✓		✓	

Naturetrek Facebook

We are delighted to launch the Naturetrek Facebook page so that participants of Naturetrek tours can remain in touch after the holiday and share photos, comments and future travel plans.

Setting up a personal profile at www.facebook.com is quick, free and easy. The Naturetrek Facebook page is now live; do please pay us a visit!