

Crete

in Autumn

A Greentours Tour Report

14th – 20th October 2015

by Fiona Dunbar & Amanda Da Rocha

Day One 14th October Akrotiri Peninsula

Landing around lunch time, we collected our hire car and set off to explore the Akrotiri peninsula on which the tiny Hania airport is situated. Lunch was at a pleasant beach side taverna and then on to the 17th century Venetian monastery of Gourvernetou via a barren landscape of rock and wild olives. Following the path behind the monastery we had stunning views down a gorge to a glittering blue sea, and our first tiny *Narcissus serotinus* of the trip, amid numerous tiny Autumn Squills. Passing the stalagmite-filled cave where John the Baptist was said to have lived and died, we wound down the steep but well-made path to the impressive and very old Moni Katholikou set into and partly carved from the cliffs of the spectacular ravine. The endemic *Dianthus fruticosus* ssp *creticus* was flowering, and there were some splendid patches of Friar's Cowl as well as the large yellow flowers of *Ranunculus creticus*. The Cretan Wall Lettuce was also here but not in flower, and the cliff dwelling Mullein *Verbascum arcturus*. The path continued over a vast stone bridge towards the remains of the harbour in a tiny cove. This monastery was abandoned over 300 years ago after repeated raids by pirates. After ascending, we drove back through the old olive groves, stopping to photograph particularly fine flowering Sea Squills *Charibdis martitima*, and the areas of heath dominated by patches of purple Autumn Heather *Erica manipuliflora*, which was attracting Hummingbird Hawkmoths.

On to the beaches between Hania and Kolymbari. I had contacted Archelon, the Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece, who kindly told me the location of the last of the seasons' Loggerhead Sea Turtle nests on this stretch of beach. We walked the beach, and examined one of the nests. On the tour next year I hope to be able to excavate a finished nest, to record data on the number of empty shells and unfertilised eggs (100+ in total, the size of ping pong balls) left in the vase-shaped chamber dug by the mother. As it is 25 years since I worked for the society, it is possible some of these nests were made by *Caretta caretta* hatchlings leaving nests made in the years I was there! The beach flora included the domed plants of *Centaurea spinosa*, Sea Holly and the wonderful, scented *Pancratium maritimum* or Sea Daffodil, mostly fruiting, but still some in flower. The best patches of these were in fact right outside our hotel in Kolymbari. Other members of the dune flora were *Euphorbia peplis* or Purple Spurge. We walked out to one of the sea front tavernas a couple of hundred metres away in the small town of Kolymbari for an excellent evening meal.

Day Two 15th October Rhodopou Peninsula

After a good night's sleep we had an excellent buffet style breakfast with local fennel and 'cream cheese' pies, Greek yoghurt and honey as well as the more usual offerings. A scenic few minutes' drive took us on to the Rhodopou Peninsula, where almost immediately we were stopping for clumps of exquisite *Cyclamen graecum* by the road. In this area, exposed in the road cutting, were some large and well preserved fossil echinoids, probably a *Clypeaster* species.

Making our way down to an isolated taverna on the coast gave us magnificent views over the sea and coast. This is a very good taverna, peaceful and secluded with excellent local dishes. A male Blue Rock Thrush could be seen singing perched in a Tree euphorbia above us. In the shade behind the tavern were octopi pegged to a washing line, doused in herbs ready for cooking later. The bay here is excellent for swimming and snorkelling, with Rainbow Wrasse, Painted Comber, Black Chromis, Sea Hares, black sea urchins and Octopus; the latter two available at the taverna... In the afternoon we continued on a scenic circuit of small quiet roads on the peninsula through groves of old olive trees. The ground was often covered in magnificent displays of *Cyclamen graecum*, often mixed with scattered *Narcissus serotinus*. These emerged from stony ground and particularly from the rough stone walls of terraces. One had to be careful of the dried and golden architectural thistles such as Field Eryngo! Turpentine Tree, Fennel and Prickly Pear often edged the groves and tracks.

Day Three 16th October Around Marathocephala and Deliana Gorge

We started the day in the tiny village of Marathacephala. Parking by the church we walked up the road passing *Cyclamen graecum* ssp *graecum* by the road side and in amongst the olives. Verges near the villages in this area had lush patches of *Sternbergia lutea* flowering. A shady track took us into an area of pines. Cyclamen, Autumn Squill *Prospero autumnale*, *Ranunculus bullatus* and *Narcissus serotinus* blooms littered the path amongst the pine needles. A lovely walk in welcome shade. Here also was our first grouping of pale pink *Colchicum pusillum* and white globes of *Allium chaemaespathum*. A Sparrowhawk flew by and there were the bright European Speckled Woods too.

Walking into Deliana Gorge in the afternoon we were soon finding Rusty-back Fern *Ceterach officinarum* and Pallid Buckler Fern *Dryopteris pallida* ssp *pallida* under and around the *Platanus orientalis* lining the stream bed. There was a good mixture of deciduous trees, with Buckthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*, Bay, Fig and *Quercus coccifera* too. Shrubs included flowering Oleander, Phloem, Mountain Tea, and up on the cliffs Tree Euphorbia, *Petromarula pinnata*, Caper and Cottonweed. Griffons flew overhead and there was the first of the fresh, bright Common Swallowtails that we were to see many of over the next few days, often near their caterpillar food plant, Fennel. We were delighted to spot our first bright yellow Sternbergias growing on the cliffs and screes by the path, and purple-veined Mandrake and a delicate *Spiranthes spiralis* or Autumn Ladies Tresses growing by the path.

Day Four 17th October Elaphonisos Island via Topolia

Just outside the village we stopped and took a well-made path up to a church. The path side verges were thick with *Cyclamen confusum* and there were many fresh stands of *Narcissus serotinus*. We continued our drive through superb Oriental Plane woodland interspersed with areas of maquis coloured with large amounts of flowering *Erica manipuliflora* and the Strawberry Tree *Arbutus unedo*. The woodland changed to Calabrian Pine *Pinus halepensis* ssp *bruttii*, and then phrygana dominated by the endemic *Verbascum spinosum* and strongly scented purple flowers of shrubby *Coridothymus capitatus*. As we approached the coast through the village of Elaphonisos, we entered the land of the sun worshippers, complete with lines of beach umbrellas, bars and loud music. We crossed over the sand bar to Elaphonisos Island wondering what on earth we were doing there as we picked our way through well-oiled groups of lounging tourists. Once on the island, fortunately, sanity was regained and we entered the Natura 2000 protected area of peaceful sand dunes, rocky outcrops. Gnarled *Juniperus oxycedrus* ssp *macrocarpa*. *Pancreatium maritimum* was growing everywhere, many in fruit and the shiny black seeds formed drifts in places, but there were plenty enough still in full flower to scent the air around us. On the dunes grew Golden Samphire *Inula crithmoides*, Sea spurge, *Euphorbia paralias*, leaves of *Silene succulenta*, and leaves and dried flower heads of *Allium commutatum*. A Plain Tiger flew by at this point! Driving back we chose the scenic route, passing through some beautiful countryside and more of the mixed forests of Sweet Chestnut and Oriental Plane.

Day Five 18th October Siriraki Gorge

A short drive took us up to the village of Sirikari. Roadside plants included Yellow-horned Poppy, White Willow and Aspen. Parking up, we set off down the path into the gorge, after a local chap gently steered us round as we initially strode off in completely the wrong direction. Actually the path is clearly marked, though uphill for the first mile or so. There were a good selection of colourful Amanita, Boletus and *Hygrocybe* or Waxcaps. The trees were a glorious mix of *Crataegus monogyna*, Wild Pear, Almond-leaved Pear, Strawberry Tree, Plane Trees and *Quercus ilex*. Underneath grew Butchers Broom, Spiny Burnet. Some of the biggest and fattest looking Rusty-back Ferns I have come across. Pallid Buckler Fern and Maidenhair Fern grew round a lone stone house with various fruit trees dripping with fruit, orange, lemon, pomegranate, black fig, green fig and carob. Here was a traditional clay oven. There were *Arum creticum* leaves and the first clumps of *Cyclamen hederifolium*. As we followed on down the gorge, the views were splendid, and we dropped down to follow the dry stream lined with Oleander and Oriental Plane trees. The cyclamen were everywhere, clumps emerging from cracks in the limestone, edging the path, and most beautifully to me, emerging thickly from the sea of chestnut brown fallen plane leaves. We started to see many *Sternbergia sicula*, both close by and up on the cliff faces, along with flowering *Dictamnus creticus*. One particular boulder was thickly capped with *Sternbergia* and *Cyclamen* mixed.

As the gorge opened out, the turf became thickly dotted with the golden stars of *Ranunculus bullatus* and the large *Bellis sylvestris*. Overhead we were seeing good numbers of Griffon Vultures, which were flying in and landing on favoured ledges, as well as Ravens and Kestrels.

Cetti's Warblers were common. These more open grasslands were attracting butterflies – Common and Little Blue, European Speckled Wood, Large Grayling and Large Wall Brown, Painted Lady, Clouded Yellow and Swallowtail. As we neared the end of the walk, *Colchicum pusillum* and Friar's Cowl put in an appearance, before we came in sight of the ancient village of Polyrinia and followed a small road up to it through the olive groves. Originally an 8th century Dorian colony from the Peloponnese, Polyrinia (meaning many lambs) boasts a wealth of ancient Venetian and Roman remains including Roman cisterns, aqueducts, a Venetian defensive structure referred to as the Acropolis, a necropolis and remains of a Byzantine Fort. The church and other buildings incorporate all sorts of reused Roman and Greek Masonry.

Day Six 19th October Omalos Plateau

Today we were gaining altitude and driving up to the Omalos Plateau through woodlands of Plane and Chestnut trees, and the more open areas with Autumn Heather and Strawberry Tree. A roadside waterfall bedecked with several species of fern including Maidenhair and Royal was worthy of a break in the journey.

Approaching the plateau we pulled in to examine a likely looking spot to discover large numbers of scattered pink *Colchicum cretense*. The sound of birds echoed, Goldfinches, Stonechat and Whinchat, Blue Rock Thrush, and best of all, a fly by from a sunlit Lammergeier.

Once up on the plateau we drove slowly past fields familiar in spring time for their shows of *Tulipa bakeri* and Widow Iris. Now, as flocks of sheep were herded past us, and local women were chatting away as they dug up Spiny Chicory to make the traditional horta, the same fields and banks had patches of pink-striped *Crocus laevigatum* and again *Colchicum cretense*. There were numerous architectural flowering thistles such as Red, Yellow and Cretan Star Thistles. Cretan Barberry and the Spiny Restharrow were in flower. Stopping at a taverna over-looking the spectacular top of the Samaria Gorge we lunched on excellent local cheese pies and spinach pies. A tree of note here as well as the ancient gnarled *Cypressus sempivirens* was the endemic tree *Zelkova abelicea*. It was now time to make our way over towards Spili, taking in along the way the dramatic Kotsifou and Kourtalitos gorges. We found many more Sternbergia in flower by the roadside and on the cliffs, along with Tree Euphorbia, *Dittrichia viscosa*. And thankyou Rosemary, your site came up trumps with a dozen tiny, strange, dragon skinned *Biarum davisii*. Arriving in Spili, Heracles and Christina had prepared a barbeque for us, and a number of other long standing customers from various countries, so we chatted and drank on the balcony with the Scops Owls calling until late.

Day Seven 20th October Spili and the Gious Cambos

We were out on the plateau before breakfast as we had a lot of ground to cover, which is why I have photos of Autumn Ladies Tresses with the dawn behind! There were plenty of these delicacies, and the turf was scattered with the star like *Ranunculus bullatus* and budding *Colchicum pusillum*, we were possibly out too early in the day for these to be in full flower. There were

carpets of *Solenopsis minuata* flowering across the fields as well as *Knautia integrifolia*. There were flocks of Linnets and Goldfinches and a Kestrel. In a small gorge nearby we were circled by more Griffon Vultures, and there were good patches of furry *Origanum dictamnus* in flower with Sternbergias and Tree Euphorbia.

After an enormous breakfast with Heracles (Greek yoghurt and honey, bread, butter, home-made jams, freshly squeezed orange juice, buckets of coffee) we drove to the beautiful headland of Agios Pavlos. Here are high, steep sand dunes (covered with more of the beautiful *Pancratium maritimum*) sloping up from the beaches contained in a couple of small coves. The limestone rocks are folded into amazing shapes and the wide track allows easy access out onto the promontory, on which grew stunted *Juniperus oxycedrus* bushes, Sea Lavender and *Eryngium maritimum*.

After a much needed cold soda at Triopetra, we went to check out a monastery at the start of the E4 walking route which heads up and over Psiloritis. We were rather surprised to find land crabs *Potamon potamios* in damp areas amongst the heavily fruiting figs and pomegranates! Birds included a very obliging Whitethroat and a group of Chukar crossing the track.

Finally before returning we took a walk locally from Spili. Amongst the sage was a lovely show of *Cyclamen graecum* thousands of Autumn Squill, and *Ranunculus bullatus*. We finished the tour with an excellent Cretan meal at the Panorama Taverna above Plakias.

Systematic List - Plants

Ferns & Fern Allies

Selaginellaceae (Lesser Clubmoss)

Selaginella denticulata Mediterranean Clubmoss damp shady places

Aspleniaceae (Spleenwort)

Asplenium ceterach Rusty-back Fern common in rocky crevices

Dennstaedtiaceae (Bracken)

Pteridium aquilinum Bracken scattered near acid soils

Osmundaceae

Osmunda regalis Royal Fern wet areas, road towards Omalos

Polypodiaceae (Polypody)

Polypodium cambricum Southern Polypody shady rocks, gorges

Pteridaceae (Maidenhair Fern)

Adiantum capillus-veneris Maidenhair Fern damp shaded cliffs

Woodsiaceae (Lady-fern)

Cystopteris fragilis Brittle Bladder-fern crevices, gorges

CONIFERS

Ephedraceae (Joint Pine)

Ephedra foeminea (a joint pine) on cliffs, Triopetra road

Araucariaceae (Monkey Puzzle)

Araucaria heterophylla Norfolk Island Pine common around urban areas

Cupressaceae (Juniper)

Cupressus sempervirens var. *horizontalis* Cypress common, scattered

Cupressus sempervirens var. *sempervirens* Funeral Cypress common around urban areas

Juniperus oxycedrus subsp. *macrocarpa* Sea Juniper Elafonisi & Agios Plavos

Juniperus oxycedrus subsp. *oxycedrus* Prickly Juniper Omalos plateau

Juniperus phoenicea Phoenician Juniper phrygana, Spili

Pinaceae (Pine)

Pinus halepensis subsp. *brutia* Calabrian Pine common pine

Pinus pinea Umbrella pine planted around coastal areas

DICOTYLEDONS

Acanthaceae (Acanthus)

Acanthus spinosus Spiny Bear's Breech dead heads along the roadside

Aceraceae (Maple)

Acer sempervirens Cretan Maple Omalos plateau

Aizoaceae (Dew Plant)

Carprobrotus edulis Hottentot Fig coastal areas

Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum Ice Plant coastal areas

Amaranthaceae (Pigweed)

<i>Amaranthus albus</i>	Prostrate Pigweed	roadside verges, arable fields
<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i>	Redroot Pigweed	arable weed
<i>Atriplex halimus</i>	Sea Orache	Elafonisi

Anacardiaceae (Sumach)

<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Mastic Tree	common across the trip
<i>Pistacia terebinthus</i>	Turpentine Tree	common across the trip

Apiaceae (Carrot)

<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Rock Samphire	Elafonisi & Agios Plavos
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot	dead heads common
<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field Eryngo	Rocky fields
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea Holly	Sand dunes
<i>Ferula communis</i>	Giant Fennel	Spili environs
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> subsp. <i>piperatum</i>	Fennel	west side of the island

Apocyanaceae (Periwinkle)

<i>Nerium oleander</i>	Oleander	common along roadsides
<i>Plumeria rubra</i>	Frangipani	common around urban areas

Araliaceae (Ivy)

<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	common, some amazing displays in fruit & alive with noise from the various feeding insects
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Asteraceae (Daisy)

<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Southern Daisy	scattered
<i>Carlina gummifera</i>	Pine Thistle	phrygana & fallow fields
<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	Red Star Thistle	Occasional
<i>Centaurea idaea</i>	Cretan Star Thistle	frequent around phrygana
<i>Centaurea raphanina</i> subsp. <i>raphanina</i>	Stemless Knapweed (a yellow star-thistle)	cliffs & rocky phrygana dry areas & roadsides
<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	Spiny Knapweed	sandy areas Phalasarna
<i>Chondrilla juncea</i>	Rush Skeleton weed	Omalos Plateau
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory	roadsides
<i>Cichorium spinosum</i>	Spiny Chicory	scattered, women were harvesting them on the Omalos Plateau
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Stink Aster	very common
<i>Echinops spinosissimus</i>	Spiny Globe Thistle	Triopetra area
<i>Helichrysum heldreichii</i>	(an everlasting)	Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Helichrysum orientale</i>		cliffs
<i>Inula crithmoides</i>	Golden Samphire	Elafonisi & Agios Plavos
<i>Onopordon bracteatum</i> subsp. <i>creticum</i>		coastal headlands
<i>Otanthus maritimus</i>	Cottonweed	Elafonisi
<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk Thistle	scattered leaves
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Prickly Sow Thistle	waste & disturbed areas
<i>Stachelina petiolata</i>		cliffs around Spili gorge
<i>Xanthium spinosum</i>	Spiny Cocklebur	roadsides, introduced
<i>Xanthium strumarium</i>	Cocklebur	introduced along roadsides & gardens

Berberidaceae (Barberry)

<i>Berberis cretica</i>	Cretan Barberry	Omalos Plateau
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Boraginaceae (Borage)

<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved Bugloss	Triopetra environs
<i>Echium italicum</i>		
subsp. <i>biebersteinii</i>	Pale Bugloss	scattered dead stems
<i>Symphytum creticum</i>	Cretan Comfrey	leaves, Kotsifou Gorge

Cactaceae (Cactus)

<i>Opuntia ficus-barbarica</i>	Prickly Pear	common, everywhere
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Campanulaceae (Bellflower)

<i>Petromarula pinnata</i>	Cretan Wall Lettuce	Akrotiri Peninsula & Kotsifou Gorge
<i>Solenopsis minuta</i>		rocky areas, Spili environs

Capparaceae (Caper)

<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper	cliffs, Deliana Gorge in flower
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Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle)

<i>Lonicera etrusca</i>	Etruscan Honeysuckle	Phalasarna headland
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Caryophyllaceae (Pink)

<i>Dianthus fruticosus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i>		Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Dianthus xylorrhizus</i>	(a pink)	Triopetra environs along the road side
<i>Silene succulenta</i>		
subsp. <i>succulenta</i>		Elafonisi Island
<i>Spergularia rubra</i>	Red Sand Spurry	coastal areas

Chenopodiaceae (Goosefoot)

<i>Salsola kali</i>	Prickly Saltwort	coastal beaches
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Cistaceae (Rock-rose)

<i>Cistus creticus</i> subsp. <i>creticus</i>	Cretan Cistus	leaves, rocky areas & phrygana
<i>Cistus salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved Cistus	Spili environs
<i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	Thyme Rock-rose	rocky areas

Convolvulaceae (Bindweed)

<i>Ipomoea imperati</i>		thick leaves in rocky boulders, Elafonisi
<i>Ipomoea indica</i>	(a morning glory)	urban areas

Crassulaceae (Stonecrop)

<i>Rosularia serrata</i>		leaves rocky crevices
<i>Sedum sediforme</i>	Mediterranean Stonecrop	rocky crevices & gorge scree
<i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	(a pennywort)	crevices & walls

Cucurbitaceae (Cucumber)

<i>Bryonia cretica</i>	White Bryony	frequent
<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting Cucumber	waste areas

Dipsacaceae (Teasel)

<i>Knautia integrifolia</i>	(a scabious)	waste areas & roadsides
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Ericaceae (Heather)

<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry Tree	common in gullies
<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree Heather	cliffs & gorges
<i>Erica manipuliflora</i>	Autumn Heather	frequent throughout the trip

Euphorbiaceae (Spurge)

<i>Euphorbia acanthothamnus</i>	Greek Spiny Spurge	common
<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Large Mediterranean Spurge	common
<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	Tree Spurge	maritime cliffs
<i>Euphorbia dimorphocaulon</i>		small, cliffs with tuber roots
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge	coastal areas

<i>Euphorbia peplis</i>	Petty Spurge	sandy & dry areas
<i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i>	Poinsettia	urban areas
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Annual Mercury	shady areas
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor Oil Plant	Frequent naturalised weed

Fabaceae (Pea)

<i>Anthyllis hermanniae</i>	Herman's Kidney Vetch	coastal headland
<i>Bituminaria bituminosa</i>	Pitch Trefoil	common along roadsides
<i>Calycotome villosa</i>	Hairy Thorny Broom	rocky & phrygana areas
<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob	common
<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	Judas Tree	Myrthios road
<i>Ebenus cretica</i>	Shrubby Sainfoin	cliffs
<i>Genista acanthoclada</i>	Spiny Broom	phrygana areas
<i>Medicago marina</i>	Sea Medick	coastal areas
<i>Ononis spinosa</i>		
subsp. <i>diacantha</i>	Spiny Rest-harrow	rocky & phrygana areas
<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False Acacia	introduced
<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish Broom	maquis & cliff areas

Fagaceae (Beech)

<i>Castanea sativa</i>	Sweet Chestnut	scattered woodland patches
<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>	White Oak	scattered

Hypericaceae (St John's-Wort)

<i>Hypericum empetrifolium</i>	(a St John's-Wort)	frequent
<i>Hypericum triquetrifolium</i>	A St John's-wort	Common

Juglandaceae (Walnut)

<i>Juglans regia</i>	Walnut	Cultivated
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Lamiaceae (Dead-nettle)

<i>Ballota acetabulosa</i>	Garden Horehound	wet areas
<i>Ballota pseudodictamnus</i>	False Dittany	rocky phrygana
<i>Origanum dictamnus</i>	Cretan Dittany	cliffs
<i>Origanum microphyllum</i>		Omalos plateau
<i>Phlomis cretica</i>	Cretan Jerusalem Sage	Spili environs
<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem Sage	common
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary	roadside verges first day
<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>	(a sage)	leaves shrubby areas
<i>Satureja thymbra</i>	Satureia	Spili environs
<i>Sideritis syriaca</i> subsp. <i>syriaca</i>	Mountain Tea	common rocky areas
<i>Teucrium capitatum</i>	Felty Germander	rocky areas
<i>Thymus capitatus</i>	Shrubby Thyme	heaths, rocky areas

Malvaceae (Mallow)

<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i>	Hibiscus	Cultivated
<i>Lavatera arborea</i>	Tree Mallow	scattered
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common Mallow	Common

Moraceae (Mulberry)

<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig	Frequent
<i>Morus alba</i>	White Mulberry	Cultivated

Myrtaceae (Myrtle)

<i>Myrtus communis</i>	Common Myrtle	phrygana
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Nyctaginaceae (Bougainvillea)

<i>Bougainvillea glabra</i>	Bougainvillea	urban areas
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Oleaceae (Olive)

<i>Olea europaea</i> subsp. <i>oleaster</i>	Wild Olive	scattered in phrygana
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Oxalidaceae (Wood Sorrel)

<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda Buttercup	common
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Papaveraceae (Poppy)

<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow Horned-poppy	coastal areas & sandy waste ground
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Phytolaccaceae (Pokeweed)

<i>Phytolacca americana</i>	American Pokeweed	western side amongst Olive groves
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Plantaginaceae

<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	(a snap dragon)	crevices around village walls
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	coastal areas

Platanaceae (Plane)

<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Oriental Plane	wonderful woodland displays
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Plumbagiaceae (Thrift)

<i>Limonium elaphoniscum</i>	(a sea-lavender)	Elafonisi
<i>Limonium graecum</i>	(a sea-lavender)	Agios Plavos headland

Polygonaceae (Dock)

<i>Polygonum maritimum</i>	Sea Knotgrass	coastal areas
<i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>	Bull's Head Dock	waste & roadside areas

Primulaceae (Primrose)

<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel	Spili environs
<i>Cyclamen confusum</i>		Topolia environs
<i>Cyclamen graecum</i> subsp. <i>graecum</i>	Greek Sowbread	common
<i>Cyclamen graecum</i> subsp. <i>candicum</i>		scattered high altitudes
<i>Cyclamen hederifolium</i> subsp. <i>hederifolium</i>		Sirikari Gorge

Punicaceae (Pomegranate)

<i>Punica granatum</i>	Pomegranate	cultivated
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Ranunculaceae (Buttercup)

<i>Clematis cirrhosa</i>	Virgin's Bower	Spili village
<i>Delphinium staphisagria</i>		leaves, Sirikari Gorge
<i>Ranunculus bullatus</i>		common
<i>Ranunculus creticus</i>	Cretan Buttercup	Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Ranunculus cytheraeus</i>		rocky areas

Rosaceae (Rose)

<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	scattered
<i>Rubus sanctus</i>	(a bramble)	Common

<i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>	Thorny Burnet	Common
Rubiaceae (Bedstraw)		
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Wild Madder	Common
Rutaceae (Rue)		
<i>Citrus limon</i>	Lemon	cultivated
<i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Orange	cultivated
Salicaceae (Willow)		
<i>Populus alba</i>	White Poplar	common along road verges
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	scattered
Sapindaceae (Sapinda)		
<i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i>	Balloon Vine	Cultivated
Saxifragaceae (Saxifrage)		
<i>Saxifraga chrysosplenifolia</i>	(a saxifrage)	leaves, Akrotiri Peninsula
Scrophulariaceae (Figwort)		
<i>Verbascum arcturus</i>	Shrubby Mullein	cliffs & gorges
<i>Verbascum macrurum</i>		Common
<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	Wavy-leaved Mullein	scattered road verges
<i>Verbascum spinosum</i>	Spiny Mullein	scattered
Simaroubaceae (Tree of Heaven)		
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	scattered mainly around urban areas
Solanaceae (Nightshade)		
<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Thornapple	Spili environs
<i>Mandragora autumnalis</i>	Mandrake leaves	unfortunately no flowers but very attractive
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black Nightshade	cliff edges & path verges
Styracaceae (Storax)		
<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Storax	common around gorges, not in flower but some were bearing the unusual white fruit capsules
Tamaricaceae (Tamarisk)		
<i>Tamarix parviflora</i>	(a tamarisk)	Coasts
Thymelaeaceae (Mezereon)		
<i>Thymelaea hirsuta</i>	Hairy Thymelaea	coastal areas
Ulmaceae (Elm)		
<i>Zelkova abelicea</i>	A Zelkova	Omalos plateau
Verbenaceae (Vervain)		
<i>Lantana camara</i>	Lantana	urban areas
<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Vervain	urban areas & villages
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste Tree	cliffs & stream-beds south coast

MONOCOTYLEDONS - Liliidae

Amaryllidaceae (Daffodil)

<i>Allium chamaespathum</i>		occasional
<i>Narcissus serotinus</i>	Late Daffodil	common in rocky areas
<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Sea Daffodil	coastal areas
<i>Sternbergia greuteriana</i>		rocky areas, screes & gorges
<i>Sternbergia lutea</i>	Common Sternbergia	cultivated
<i>Sternbergia sicula</i>	Slender Sternbergia	rocky areas, screes & gorges

Araceae (Arum)

<i>Arisarum vulgare</i>	Friar's Cowl	frequent, a fine display on the Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Arum concinatum</i>		scattered leaves in gorges
<i>Biarum davisii</i> subsp. <i>davisii</i>	(Brian Davis)	red soil areas

Asparagaceae (Asparagus)

<i>Agave americana</i>	Century Plant	naturalised
<i>Asparagus aphyllus</i> subsp. <i>orientalis</i>	Leafless Asparagus	scattered
<i>Charybdis maritima</i>	Sea Squill	very common
<i>Prospero autumnale</i>	Autumn Squill	common
<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's Broom	frequent in wooded areas

Colchicaceae (Meadow Saffron)

<i>Colchicum cretense</i>		Omalos plateau
<i>Colchicum pusillum</i>		common around rocky terraces

Dioscoreaceae (Yam)

<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black Bryony	Woodland & scrub
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Iridaceae (Iris)

<i>Crocus laevigatus</i>		Omalos Plateau
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Juncaceae (Rush)

<i>Juncus littoralis</i>	Shore Rush	Elafonisi
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Orchidaceae (Orchid)

<i>Spiranthes spiralis</i>	Autumn Lady's Tresses	Deliana Gorge, Spili environs
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Poaceae (Grass)

<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant Reed	common across the trip
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	Marram Grass	Sand dunes
<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Fern Grass	Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common Reed	wet areas
<i>Sesleria doerfleri</i>		Agios Plavos

Posidoniaceae (Neptune Grass)

<i>Posidonia oceanica</i>	Neptune Grass	coastal beaches
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Smilacaceae (Smilax)

<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Smilax	very common
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Xanthorrhoeaceae (Asphodel)

<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>	Yellow Asphodel	dead stems around Akrotiri Peninsula
<i>Asphodelus ramosus</i>	Branched Asphodel	scattered leaves of this species

Zosteraceae (Eelgrass)

<i>Zostera marina</i>	Eelgrass Marine	common along coastal beaches
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Systematic List – Birds

The taxonomic nomenclature & systematic order follows both that of Collins: *Bird Guide 2nd edition*.

Chukar	<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	small group flushed near Agios Antonios
Lammergeier	<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>	an individual at Omalos
Griffon Vulture	<i>Gypus fulvus</i>	common seen every day often in large numbers
Booted Eagle	<i>Aquila pennata</i>	an individual was being mobbed en-route to airport
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	common & widespread seen everyday
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	regularly encountered
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	common seen most days
Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	large group seen from the car near the pools at Georgiopolis
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	coastal areas
Rock Dove/Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i>	common & widespread
Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	common around urban areas
Scops Owl	<i>Otus scops</i>	heard in the evening apart from the coastal areas
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>	common around dry rocky areas
Crag Martin	<i>Hirundo ruestris</i>	regularly recorded around cliff crags & rocky outcrops
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	a few individuals on migration at Omalos
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>	a few individuals on migration at Omalos
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	around agricultural areas
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	recorded around wooded gorges
White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	small groups around Olive groves
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	recorded around wet areas
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	the odd individual around scrubby areas
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	common across wooded habitats
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	scattered sightings, rocky outcrops
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	common around dry rocky areas
Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	common around agricultural fields
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	only heard at Sirikari Gorge
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	a common species recorded everyday
Blue Rock Thrush	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	regularly recorded around rocky outcrops
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	Fi had an individual at Agios Antonios
Sardinian Warbler	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	common species recorded everyday
Cetti's Warbler	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	only recorded by riparian vegetation
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	mainly recorded in shrub around coastal areas
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	frequently heard or seen around thickets
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	scattered sightings over the first two days
Red-breasted Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula semitorquata</i>	subadult in pine woodlands, Moni Gouvernetou

Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	frequently recorded most habitats, everyday
Blue Tit	<i>Parus caeruleus</i>	recorded everyday
Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	only on the first two days around open fields
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	only recorded at Omalos
Alpine Chough	<i>Pyrrhocorax graculus</i>	a small group circling around the mountains at Omalos
Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornis</i>	recorded every day in various habitats
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	frequently encountered around rocky areas of the trip
Italian Sparrow	<i>Passer italiae</i>	a common species recorded everyday
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	only recorded on the last two days
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	small flocks around Spili area
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	small flocks around Spili area
Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	recorded at Omalos plateau
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	large flocks around Spili

Systematic List - Butterflies

The taxonomic nomenclature & systematic order follows both that of *Collins: Butterflies of Europe, Tolman & Lewington*.

Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	fresh individuals regularly encountered across the trip
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	occasionally over the first few days
Small White	<i>Artogeia rapae</i>	mainly recorded around the coastal areas
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>	frequently encountered across various habitats
Little Blue	<i>Cupido carswelli</i>	Sirikari Gorge
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	Sirikari Gorge
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	only a couple of sightings across the week
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>	only the once around Phalasarina
Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i>	regularly around the gorges & cliffs
Cretan Grayling	<i>Hipparchia cretica</i>	common seen every day around dry rocky areas
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	rocky areas across the first two days
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	frequently recorded around wooded & shady areas, all individuals were of the European colour morph
Plain Tiger	<i>Danaus chrysippus</i>	an individual around Elafonisi
Mediterranean Skipper	<i>Gegenes nostradamus</i>	sandy areas, coastal areas

Systematic List – other fauna

Mammals

Eastern Hedgehog *Erinaceus concolor* one on the road to Myrthios

Dragonflies

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii* common around coastal areas

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* scattered sightings

Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa* a male near a small stream Agios Antonios

Reptiles & Amphibians

Balkan Green Lizard *Lacerta trilineata* common around scrubby areas

Erhard's Wall Lizard *Podarcis erhardii* common around rocky areas, gorges

Cretan Wall Lizard *Podarcis cretensis* scattered sightings around rocky areas

Sea Turtle *Caretta caretta* three caged nests were found, but all hatchlings were gone

Freshwater Crab *Potamon potamios* next to the small stream at Agios Antonios

Invertebrates

Blue-winged Grasshopper *Oedipoda coerulescens* common on dry rocky area

Red-winged Grasshopper *Oedipoda germanica* common around dry rocky area

Egyptian Locust *Anacridium aegyptium* scattered sightings around dry areas

Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa violacea* coastal area at Agia Pavlos feeding on chaste plant

Praying Mantis *Mantis religiosa* mainly around dry areas around Triopetra

European Dwarf Mantis *Ameles spallanzania* dry grass areas, Astratigos

Cicada *Tibicen plebejus* Olive grove, Agios Antonios

Hummingbird Hawk-moth *Macroglossum stellatarum* mainly around coastal sites