

Kyrgyzia



Bulbs of the Celestial Mountains

A Greentours Tour Report

20th April – 2nd May 2026

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Serafimovka valley

As we didn't get to our hotel until the early hours, we had a leisurely breakfast before setting off for the day. We decided to visit the Serafimovka valley as it isn't that far out of Bishkek. Before that though we had barely moved a few hundred yards from the hotel when we stopped to admire the glorious Poppy – *Roemeria refracta* - that had appeared spontaneously in spoil amongst the pathing. After less than hour of driving through attractive but mainly featureless rolling steppe, we turned down a track that at first seemed to have little more to offer but gradually morphed into the very steep undulating hills and dunes of the Serafimovka valley. The cooler aspects have a very attractive small tree and shrub community with flowering *Crataegus songarica*, *Lonicera tatarica* and *Rosa playcantha* being particularly attractive at this time of year. The main reason for our visit though was to see the very narrow endemic Foxtail – *Eremurus zoeae* – a wonderful medium height soft-yellow



species. We were lucky enough to see thousands of them. The variety of slope angles and aspects created several different microhabitats - some areas dominated by the enormous leaves of *Crambe kotschyana* and *Couzinea umbrosa* while others had communities of the *Eremurus* with *Tulipa ostrowskiana*, *Tulipa greigii*, *Lappula macrocarpa*, *Haplophyllum latifolia*, *Scutellaria mesostegia* and *Glaucium fimbrilligerum*. There were also a lot of *Iris kuschakewiczii* in seed. Apparently this colony of Junos is well known for the unusual number of colour variants. We searched a particularly steep slope to see if there were any lingering *Iris kuschakewiczii* but sadly all were well and truly in seed. But in the process we did find the fascinating if not beautiful monotypic *Biebersteinia multifida* as well as another Foxtail - *Eremurus cristatus* - mixed with the *Eremurus zoae*, *Astragalus nitidina*, *Oxytropis ferganensis* and *Adonis parviflora*. There were lots of early season butterflies too including a Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon* ssp *orientale*) ovipositing on *Ferula penninermis*, Queen of Spain Fritillary, Greenish Black Tip and Eastern Bath White.

Issyl -Ata valley and Betcheke valley

After breakfast we were soon out of the city and into farmland, followed by vast areas of green undulating steppe with a backdrop of high snowy mountains. Showy *Astragalus sieversii* were abundant by the roadsides and fallow areas as well as scattered azure-blue *Ixiolirion tataricum*. Our first stop was intended to be a landscape photo opportunity but inevitably we got distracted by the flora particularly the showy Borage *Solenanthes circinnatus*. Corn Buntings jangled from seemingly everywhere and overhead Skylarks filled the air with their beautiful song. We then carried on along the Issyl-Ata valley for a little while. We were heading towards a valley we know for *Adonis chrysocyathus* but were stopped in our tracks when we saw some fine specimens by the main road that we hadn't seen in last year's very different season. This proved to be a real treasure trove as we also found *Tulipa dasystemon* and *Corydalis glaucescens* growing with the *Adonis* as well as *Primula kaufmanniana* in the cool shady parts at the base of *Lonicera tienshanica* shrubs. We then carried on our way, stopping briefly for a nice colony of *Glaucium elegans* in some roadside spoil. On the surrounding banks *Cerasus tienshanicus* and *Atraphaxis pyrifolia* were at their showy best. We then pushed on towards today's main event the Betcheke valley above the village of Borolday. Entering the valley, the lower slopes were covered in flowering wild fruit trees particularly the ancestor of the cultivated apple of commerce – *Malus sieversii*. We stopped for our picnic by a narrow fast flowing



river. Whilst enjoying our food we noticed a Mistle Thrush feeding young in its nest in the apple tree above us, completely unfazed by our presence. Contorting himself to get an angle Paul managed to get some nice shots. Butterflies were highly attracted to the abundant *Cerasus tienshanicus* on surrounding slopes, Eastern Clouded Yellow and Queen of Spain Fritillary being particularly numerous. After lunch we carried on up the valley that became abruptly narrow and steep sided. New plants were soon found, including *Parrya subsiliquosa* and *Rosularia latifolia*. Driving up the valley we began to notice *Tulipa tarda* growing out of cracks in the rocks and on precarious narrow ledges where enough soil had accumulated to sustain them. On damp overhangs above the river grew even better specimens of *Primula*

kaufmanniana than we had unexpectedly seen earlier in the day. Though awkward to get at, we eagerly risked getting wet feet to get photographs. Driving up to the plateau above the valley we found increasing numbers of an orange/yellow Tulip – apparently a new species currently being described by the Kyrgyz botanist Georgi Laskov. It is clearly very very closely allied to *Tulipa ostrowskiana* but atypical for that species in having the habit of growing out of rock fissures. Arriving at the plateau we noticed a ridge covered in *Paeonia intermedia*. There were hundreds of plants in bud tantalisingly close to flowering. After quite a bit of searching we thought we would just have to be disappointed, but eventually a couple of their magnificent crimson blooms were found. The display would doubtlessly be spectacular in the coming days. Other plants of note were *Arnebia tschimganica* and *Pedicularis albertii* both in very good numbers. On the way back down we stopped a few times to look at more slopes festooned in *Tulipa tarda* often accidentally flushing some really smart male Ring-necked Pheasant (native here) that ran in front of the cars for quite some time and lots and lots of Chukar too. Retracing our steps for an hour we eventually turned up the Kapchagai valley towards our hotel but couldn't resist one last botanical foray. Our main focus was a fine stand of *Phlomoides sogdiana* but we also found *Astragalus karkarensis*, *Ephedra intermedia*, *Chorispora macropoda* and the almost black to the eye, purple flowered *Linaria transiliensis*. This part of Kyrgyzstan isn't really geared up for tourism and there isn't a lot of choice when it comes to accommodation so it was a very nice surprise to find that our hotel, though simple, was very comfortable and clean and the hosts very welcoming.

Kapchagai valley and Boom Gorge

After a nice, relaxed breakfast we made our way back down the Kapchagai valley, making a couple of



stops, firstly for *Scutellaria transiliensis*, and *Tragopogon rubrum* on a slope covered in large flowering specimen of *Crambe kotschyana* growing amongst very fresh leaved *Berberis sphaerocarpus*. A bit further along we stopped for another 'skullcap' – *Scutellaria mesostegia* - along with *Phlomoides sogdiana* and a few *Eremurus zoeae* that Sergei had never seen there before. We would have missed them last year as they weren't flowering and would have been pretty inconspicuous. We then drove into montane habitat and followed the Chu river along the Boom gorge that forms the boundary between the Alexander and Terskey ranges. We pulled up a side valley made of beautifully coloured rocks in various shades of gold, yellow and rust. Low scrub of spiteful spiny shrubs including *Halodendron halomodendron*, *Caragana kirgizorum* and *Zygophyllum kyrgensis* dominated the hillsides here for the most part, but on some banks were colonies of yellow *Tulipa kolpakowskiana* s.l. in places thousands strong. We

then crossed the Chu river where there were yet more of the same Tulip but this time growing with lots of *Geranium transversale*. Other plants of interest in the rocky terrain were *Arnebia guttata* and *Allium galanthum* - an onion valued highly by the locals for its flavour. We then had a late lunch in the welcome shade of some Hawthorns, it being now quite stiflingly hot before the last leg back to Bishkek. We made one last stop to admire a colony of *Eremurus cristatus*, a lot of which were 'just right' as they were mostly at the stage where flowers were perfect mid inflorescence with no seeds yet forming near the base. Other plants on the slope included *Phlomooides speciosa*, *Ixiolirion tataricum* and *Vicia subvillosa*.

Kashkar-suu

After a short drive we approached the very green lower foothills at Kashkar-suu – driving through *Picea* forest and onto mountain tracks. We had hoped to reach the high plateau but a recent landslide stopped us getting quite that far. We got as far as a side valley that we had planned to visit on the way down. Here were good numbers of *Pedicularis albertii*, plentiful *Viola suavis* and the occasional *Rhodiola linearifolia*. Searching through the labyrinth of *Berberis* scrub Paul was the first to find an early flower for the site of *Crocus alatavicus*, perhaps twenty or so in bloom but the area would have many many more in the coming days. Heading back down we watched a pair of Lammergier overhead before stopping at a steep slope covered in *Tulipa zenaidae* interspersed with *Tulipa dasystemon*, *Pedicularis semenovii* and *Oxytropis ferganensis*. Higher up the slope were lots of *Paeonia intermedia* close to flowering but we had better luck



with about a dozen clumps of *Iris loczyi* that were at their peak of perfection. A bit further down we had lunch in the shade of Junipers in a spot that just happened to be home to a large colony of *Corydalis glaucescens*. We spent quite a bit of time looking for

the best ones and found one or two *Primula algida* in the process. There would be countless thousands of these to come in the following weeks. Just before leaving the reserve we noticed yet another huge colony of *Tulipa zenaidae* but they were high above a sheer cliff and sadly completely inaccessible.

To Talas via The Kara - Balta gorge, Chon-Ashuu pass, The Suusamyr valley and Otmok pass



A change of direction today and the relatively long transfer towards Talas and the Talas Alatau. Leaving the suburbs of Bishkek we stopped for a large colony of *Roemeria refracta* that were typically dominating the scene in fallow fields by the roadside. Carrying on for an hour or so we entered the Kara-Balta - a spectacular deep steep sided gorge. Gaining altitude we entered an area dominated by prostrate Junipers. We also got our first glimpse of scampering Red Marmots, a sight that would become very familiar in the coming week. We then pushed on to the Chon-Ashuu pass at 3150m – accessed via a slightly ominous and poorly ventilated ex-soviet tunnel, not a nice experience really but over soon enough. As soon as we were through we were amply rewarded on the edge of a hairpin bend where we could park and get an extraordinary view. Even better was the nearby flower-filled slope. *Tulipa dasystemon* were quite literally the star of the show on the slope behind us, growing with *Dracocephalum nutans* var *alpinum*, *Chorispora sibirica* and a lovely dark form of *Corydalis ledebouriana*. As we drove a bit further we saw vast numbers of *Colchicum kesselringii* which would set the scene for many more miles to come. Descending the other side of the pass, we dropped right down (or at least it felt like it!) to the very wide Suusamyr valley, but we were still at 2200m! Last year we saw thousands of *Tulipa tetraphylla* along this stretch but couldn't see any from the vehicle this time. Pulling over to investigate further we found some Tulip rosettes only just forming that would probably need another week to ten days to flower. It was a fortuitous stop though as we noticed a number of raptors circling above us on the thermals including at least four Pallid Harriers and several Himalayan Griffons. A mile or two further along we stopped for lunch at a really good restaurant that we discovered last year that was a real surprise considering just how 'in the middle of nowhere' we were. Moving on we searched several areas of low undulating hills for *Iridodictium kolpakowskianum*.



Last year we struggled to find many as the season was so early and they were mostly over, but this time we were pretty much bang on and several really nice specimens





were found showing endless variation and some stunning beauties amongst them. We would have loved to stay longer but we still had quite a way to go, so pushed on eventually going over the Otmok pass (3326m) where we could see the Talas range that we would be exploring in the coming days. On the other side we made one last stop at the type location for the newly described *Tulipa laskovii* known

only from here until we found a new site for it at Besh Tash last year. They were at their perfect best and restricted to a narrow band of rocky hillside perhaps the size of a football pitch.



Besh-Tash

An hour or so from the hotel we entered the Besh-Tash nature reserve – at first the habitat was mainly comprised of dry sandy hills. It was here that we found a large colony of the showy Spurge – *Euphorbia ferganica*. Following the river, the valley quickly became a very steep sided gorge. Before long we were finding *Iris albertii* and *Eremurus fuscus* on ledges above thickets of *Lonicera tienshanica*, *Berberis sphaerocarpa* and *Ephedra intermedia*. Gaining altitude, the broad-leaved trees gradually petered out giving way to grasslands and rocky bluffs. It was on one such bluff that we noticed a few *Iris orchoides* in perfect condition they were a bit awkward to get at but luckily we found a few more right by the roadside a bit further up. The track followed the course of a fast-flowing river. Occasionally the river broadened and it was here that we noticed some *Allium fedtschenkoanum* on one of the many small islands in mid-stream. The *Allium* showed a clear preference for the islands but there were one or two nice clumps that we could access on the bank nearest to us. Gradually getting higher we entered the beginnings of the Tien Shan Spruce zone (*Picea schrenkiana*). We had



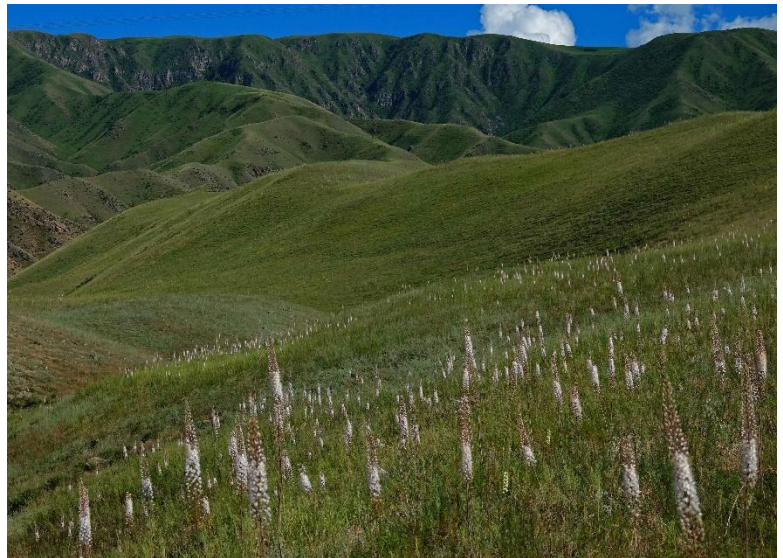
lunch in a meadow full of *Tulipa dasystemon*, *Gagea filiformis* and *Ranunculus albertii* with a few scattered *Primula algida*. There was a pair of Blue Whistling Thrush by the river and Anne spotted a Rufous-naped Tit. After our relaxed picnic lunch we moved higher still and noticed some *Tulipa dasystemonoides* growing in the compacted track in front of us. Further searching revealed quite a few more in the surrounding turf as well as lots of *Pulsatilla campanella* and the tiny *Gentiana karelini*, but we could find no sign of the *Tulipa*



laskovii that we had located in this spot last year. Moving on we found an area with huge swathes of *Tulipa dasystemon* which eventually morphed into millions of *Colchicum luteum* – a truly unforgettable sight. The track finally ran out when we reached the beautiful alpine lake that the valley is famous for. We enjoyed the spectacular views and took many photographs. Heading back down we added a few things to the mammal list noticing lots of Red Marmots scampering to get back to their burrows and a few Talas Hares. We made one last stop about halfway down for a herd of Wapiti (*Cervus canadensis ssp songoricus*) – a kind of Elk. They were surprisingly confiding and allowed us to get quite close with careful movements

Urmalar gorge

Our day began by driving through the wide low valley between the extremes of the Alexander and Karatau mountain ranges. After about an hour we followed a dusty track towards the tiny hamlet of Nyldy – huge areas of fallow fields were coloured lilac-blue with what surprisingly turned out to be The Common storksbill - *Erodium cicutarium*. Although a well-known opportunist, none of us had seen it do quite this before. Passing through the hamlet our lovely driver laughed in the face of quite a deep ford and confidently crossed it in our minibus flushing a Green Sandpiper in the process. We arrived in a steppic area with several ancient tumuli. We were close to the type locality for another recently described Tulip species – *Tulipa talassica*. We started our search on one the tumuli and found several Tulips but they were already in quite advanced fruit. There were also quite a few *Iris subdecolorata* in a similar state. Although it was a little disappointing to have missed the Tulips there was a fantastic colony of *Eremurus cristatus* in perfect condition stretching as far as the eye could see as well as scattered clumps of the glorious black-spotted yellow – *Arnebia guttata*. Short-toed Lark sang overhead and we noticed a number of Tawny Pipit too. We had another chance for the Tulip at the Urmalar gorge so moved on in that direction. Entering the gorge we noticed a bank with several clumps of the Rock-rose - *Helianthemum songaricum* as well as good numbers of *Phlomis speciosa* and *Phlomis sogdiana*. Next stop was at a slope with a small isolated colony of *Eremurus*



lactiflorus that we had found last year. It was the Foxtails that lured us out but there were lots of other ‘new’ things about too. Firstly quite a few of our desired *Tulipa talassica* followed by *Allium karataviense* on scree. There was a fantastic patch of *Hulthemia persica* (syn *Rosa persica*) with several tens of perfect flowers. This is a notoriously shy flowering species and you are usually very lucky to see more than one or two flowers amongst hundreds of plants. Moving higher up, the valley transformed into beautiful areas of scree and deep steep sided ravines. There were a lot of nice plants here including *Acantholimon alatavicum*, *Capparis herbacea*, *Euphorbia rapulum*, *Glaucium elegans*, *Polygala hybrida* and the really unusual little dark stemmed Soapwort - *Bulbosaponaria sewerzowii* – a really lovely thing. We had lunch in the shade of Poplars by the fast-flowing river.

Scanning the slopes on the opposite side of the river we could see a number of *Iris orchoides*. On our side we could see huge numbers of *Tulipa talassica* on steep slopes high above us. This proved irresistible to Kurt and Paul who scrambled up almost bursting lungs on the way to get some pictures as well as getting staggering views of the extraordinary surrounding landscape up there. After lunch we ventured as far as we could down the gorge mainly stopping for pictures of the extraordinary rock formations before trundling back to Talas.

Otmok pass Ala Bel pass Chychkan and Itagar valleys



Leaving Talas we once again went over the Otmok pass and its snowfields.

Having topped the pass we drove until we reached some habitat saturated by recent snowmelt. We were here to look for *Trollius komarovii* a delicate white flowered species that proved elusive at first but spreading out we began to find a few rather small but perfectly formed specimens. We then crossed over the magnificent Ala bel pass once more and stopped to witness one of the most

extraordinary botanical scenes. There is a very shallow gully that marks the extreme ranges of the two native Colchicums – *Colchicum luteum* and *Colchicum kesselringii*. They stop abruptly here with a distinct buffer zone of about 50 yards where there is a peppering of both species – countless millions of golden-



yellow luteum going up the Ala Bel and a similar scene with the white *C. kesselringii* stretching for miles from here and all along the Suu Samyr valley. While we were here we searched for the rare hybrid between the two - *C. x albertii* – a beautiful thing that is perfectly intermediate – the flowers have primrose yellow tepals inherited from luteum and the carmine candy stripes on the outsides of *kesselringii*. We didn't dare to hope that we would find one but eagle-eyed Sergey came up with the goods – a fabulous semi-double specimen. It kept the photographers busy for quite some time. Returning

to the minibus Paul found another plant with 'normal' tepals but not quite open. We resolved to return on the way back to Bishkek in a few days to see it fully open. We carried on for an hour or so before heading down towards the Chychkan valley. We stopped for a while on a boulder strewn slope. Some of the individual boulders were huge and appeared to be part of some ancient quarrying activity. This had resulted in number of different growing conditions. In grassy areas there were lots of *Corydalis ledebouriana* in various shades with a smattering of *Primula algida* still getting into their stride. We sat for a few moments on some boulders and while staring at the ground right in front of him Paul noticed some Moonwort - *Botrychium lunaria*. As usual highly cryptic until you 'get your eye in', we found quite a lot in the following minutes. One boulder had quite a lot of stabilised soil on it and was hosting *Dracocephalon nutans ssp alpinus* and *Astragalus alatavicus* a really nice yellow species with unmistakable leaves which is very helpful with this genus! We had lunch by a little bridge over the

Chychkan river. Enormous drifts of *Chorispora sibirica* and various *Gagea* covered the flat areas and disturbed ground by the roadside. We had a really nice time with birds especially the stunning yellow male Citrine Wagtails that were very active - these were a particular thrill for Rachel who hadn't seen one for 50 years! We also enjoyed watching Brown Dippers flying backwards and forwards non-stop. It soon became apparent that they were feeding young and in fact had a nest under the bridge next to us. Half an hour or so up the road we began to descend the Chychkan valley and stopped to admire a hillside covered in the pink blossom of the scarce *Aflatunia ulmiflora* (a monotypic species close to *Prunus*). A bit further along we



made another whistle stop for a small colony of *Iris zenaidae* at the base of some crumbly cliffs. Our last stop of the day was in the Itigar valley in an area dominated by *Picea schrenkiana* and *Abies semenovii*. The object of our desire was *Fritillaria ferganensis*. We searched an area where we had found them last year. There were plenty but sadly all in tight bud. We weren't too disheartened however as we had another chance tomorrow in a site that is usually a bit earlier for the species. One last bonus before leaving for the hotel was a rather confiding White-winged Grosbeak that dropped in for a drink in the nearby stream.

Road to Karagul

Today was our transfer from Toktogul to Kara kol. Approaching the Naryn reservoir a lot of the landscape was blue with massed *Ixiolirion tataricum*. Of course we couldn't just pass without taking photographs. A



few other treasures were found as we walked amongst them including the oddly named *Arnenbia coerulea* given that it is yellow, spotted black and quite similar to *A. guttata*. Also there were *Allium anisopetalum*, *Schrenkia pulverulenta*, *Papaver pavonina* and *Gentiana olivieri*. After about another hour we turned into the Tarkart valley. There were lots of *Eremurus fuscus* on the rocky roadside habitat and *Rosa ecae* too. When we stopped to get a better look we noticed Egyptian Vulture and Long-legged Buzzards circling overhead. Driving on we found a hillock with lots of *Ulugbeckia* (syn *Arnebia*) *chimganica*.

This was followed shortly after by steep hillsides covered in statuesque *Ferula kuhistanica*, equally impressive specimens of *Crambe kotschyana* and *Haplophyllum latifolium*. While we were enjoying the scene

some friendly horsemen came along driving mares and foals to graze amongst our admired plants. Further along we encountered huge colonies of *Allium aflatuense* which at first seemed to be mostly in bud but in one favoured area we found lots of their purple drumsticks in nice condition. This just happened to be on a slope overlooking a pool where we accidentally flushed a pair of Green Sandpipers. They obviously didn't mind too much and soon returned to give us good views. We could hear Hoopoes calling too. We eventually reached the not particularly high pass and noticed lots of



yellow Tulips. Fortuitously these were *Tulipa teraphylla* – the species we had missed in the Suusamyr valley. Although a lot of them were beginning to go over we found cooler aspects with many perfect specimens. We had a late lunch before pressing on towards Kara kol before making one last stop near the town for a crag with dozens of *Allium dodecadontum*.

Karagul valley

We started our day just down the road from our hotel. We stopped by a slope where we had seen a large colony of the showy woody bindweed – *Convolvulus tragacanthoides* - on the way last night and thought it well worthwhile taking a closer look. They were indeed splendid plants but of course there were other things of interest that would keep us absorbed for the best part of an hour – amongst them the very attractive shrub *Zygophyllum atriplicoides* with its curious winged fruits. Lots of *Korolkowia sewerzowii* again with very interesting fruits. The unusual Foxtail *Eremurus czatkalicus* was abundant as were two little onions, white - *Allium erioprasum* - and sky-blue *Allium anisopetalum*. One really nice plant had Kurt scratching his head – a labiate with very Salvia-like white flowers but clearly *Phlomis* leaves – this would later prove to be *Phlomis integior*. We continued just a bit further up the road before turning into the Karagul valley. The main reason was to try again for *Fritillaria ferganensis* but this is a very beautiful valley even by Kyrgyz standards and many more treasures are to be found here too. Following



the course of the eponymous river we soon came to an abrupt halt for a rather early flowering spike of *Eremurus robustus*. It was much admired and photographed. We had a look around nearby and it proved to be a very productive spot. On the shady parts of a nearby rocky bluff



were lots of ferns to keep Paul happy, *Pseudosedum longidentatum*, *Arum korolkowii* and a really nice clump of *Allium litwinovii* with beautiful azure-blue flowers. Above us on an inaccessible ledge was a colony of *Polygonatum sewerzowii* and just around the corner two yellow Roses – *Rosa ecae* with small but super-abundant flowers and a single specimen of *Rosa kokanica* with much larger blooms. This was as perfect as can be with very photogenic arching stems. Moving on for half a mile or so we found ourselves amongst the Fritillary's at last! Several flowering plants could be seen on a cool bank some twenty feet above us. It was a bit of a scramble to get to them but those who wanted to get near them managed without too much trouble. As is usual for this species there was much colour variation in their tessellated bells. People who hadn't seen them before were fascinated to see their tendrils clinging opportunistically to surrounding vegetation even if it was to their own kind. On the opposite side of the same bluff were several spikes of *Dictamnus angustifolius*. Further up the valley we came across a large stony slope hosting a stunning display of *Eremurus fuscus* made even more special as they were growing amongst hundreds of *Rosa ecae*. Lunch was taken in a clearing amongst dense *Spirea* scrub. While the



food was being prepared we spread out soon finding lots of *Iris albertii* and a new Allium – *Allium pseudowinkleri*. Nearby Kurt found a huge colony of *Eremurus robustus* tantalisingly “au point” making him yearn to come back in a week or so’s time as if any reason was needed! While things were being put away some of us decided to walk back down the valley before being picked up again. Lots of blue butterflies were puddling on the damper parts of the track and we saw a few Nettle-tree butterflies. Just before leaving the valley we stopped to admire a fine group of *Lonicera tatarica* in fine flower and had great views of a Turkestan Shrike.

Return to Bishkek

Although today was mainly about the transfer back to Bishkek we had time for a few stops. As we had promised ourselves we returned to the Ala bel once again to see if the *Colchicum x albertii* that Paul had found was any more advanced. Sadly it was still to unfurl properly and even the old inverted plastic bottle top trick had no effect. We also returned to the main *Iridodictium* site which proved to be much more



worthwhile. Hundreds more of the beautiful ‘retics’ were flowering including a breathtaking clump of nine flowers showing wonderful variation. A lot of really unusual spectacular variants were found elsewhere too. Paul and Kurt were kept busy trying to photograph a pair of Isabelline Wheatear collecting food for their young and a number of Citrine Wagtails, the males in their nonpareil breeding finery. Our last proper stop was for a colony of *Chorispora bungeana* thriving in the unstable road grit by the highway. When we



had had finished having a good look at them, we realised that the steppe stretching out in front of us was not only full of *Colchicum kesselringii* as far as we could see into the distance but also hundreds if not thousands of *Iridodictium kolpakowskiana* too! With time against us we then had to make the last leg back to our hotel in Bishkek before an early flight in the morning.

Systematic List Number 1 Flora

Ferns

Ophioglossaceae

Botrychium lunaria – Chychkan

Aspleniaceae

Asplenium ceterach – Karagul

Asplenium ruta-murale -Karagul

Cysopteridaceae

Cystopteris fragilis – Kashkar-Suu, Karagul

Pteridaceae

Cheilanthes persica s.l – Karagul

Conifers

Abies semenovii – Large stands in The Chychkan valley – Scattered elsewhere

Picea schrenkiana – Widespread at altitude

Juniperus seravschanica - Widespread

Juniperus sabina – Kashkar-Suu

Juniperus turkestanica – Most areas at high altitude –

Flowering plants

Alismataceae

Alisma plantago-aquatica – Chychkan valley

Amaryllidaceae

Allium aflatuense- Huge colonies – Tarkart valley

Allium anisopetalum – Near Toktogul

Allium chychkanensis – Chychkan valley - endemic

Allium dodecadonteum – Karagul valley

Allium erioprasum – Near Karakol

Allium fedtschenkoanum – Besh Tash , Ala-Bel

Allium karataviense - Widespread in suitable scree habitat

Allium litwinowii – Karagul valley

Allium pseudowinkleri -Karagul valley

Apiaceae

Ferula kokanica - Widespread

Ferula kuhistanica - Widespread

Ferula penninervis - Widespread

Prangos pabularia - Scattered
Scandix pecten-veneris - Widespread
Scandix stellata – Widespread
Schrenkia pulverulenta – S of Toktogul

Apocyanaceae

Vincetoxicum sp -Chong-Kemin

Araceae

Arum korolkowii – Karagul valley

Asparagaceae

Asparagus neglectus – Serafimovka valley
Polygonatum sewerzowii – Karagul valley

Asteraceae

Ligularia alpigena – Widespread
Ligularia macrophylla – Boroldai
Scorzonera circumflexa. – Boom gorge
Taraxacum obovatum – Boom gorge
Tragopogon rubrum – Widespread

Balsamaceae

Impatiens parviflora – Karagul valley

Berberidaceae

Berberis sphaerocarpa - Widespread
Bongardia chrysogonum – Widespread
Gymnospermium albertii – Widespread
Leontice ewersmanni – Scattered – in seed vast colonies S of Toktogul

Betulaceae

Betula tienshanica – Besh Tash – noted here particularly but widespread

Biebersteiniaceae

Biebersteinia multifida – Serafimovka valley

Boraginaceae

Anchusa azurea.- Widespread
Arnebia coerulea – Naryn reservoir area – despite the epithet this is another yellow species with blackish dots
Arnebia guttata - Nyldy
Arnebia tschimganica – Tarkart valley, Betcheke valley

Lappula squarrosa - widespread
Nonea capsica- Scattered
Solenanthus circinnatus, Widespread

Brassicaceae

Alliaria petiolata – Scattered
Capsella bursa-pastoris – Widespread
Cardaria draba – Widespread
Chorispora bungeana
Chorispora macropoda – Kapchagai valley
Chorispora sibirica – abundant at altitude – Alabel – Suu- samyr
Conringia persica – Serafimovka valley
Crambe kotschyana – Widespread
Descorania sophia – Common ruderal weed
Parrya subsiliquosa - Boroldai
Strigosella africanum – Widespread

Cannabaceae

Celtis australis ssp caucasica – Karagul, Chychkan

Capparaceae

Capparis herbacea – Urmural gorge , Karagul

Caprifoliaceae

Lonicera tatarica – Karagul, Serafimovka valley – Boom gorge
Lonicera tienshanica – Karagul – Itigar valley – Chu valley
Valeriana ficarifolia – Widespread

Caryophyllaceae

Bolbosaponaria sewerzowii syn *Saponaria sewerzowii* – Urmural gorge
Silene aff conica – Scattered

Celastraceae

Euonymus semenovii- Chong Kemin

Cistaceae

Helianthemum songaricum -Urmural gorge – Besh tash

Colchicaceae

Colchicum luteum – Millions of this and *kesselringii* at altitude especially at the Suu-Samyr valley and Besh tash
Colchicum kesselringii
Colchicum x albertii Ala-Bel pass-2 fine specimens of the rare hybrid between *luteum* and *kesselringii*

Convolvulaceae

Convolvulus tragacanthoides – Karagul valley – Kara-Suu valley

Crassulaceae

Hylotelephium ewersii – Kapchagai valley

Pseudosedum longidentatum – Karagul valley

Rhodiola linearifolia – Kashkar-Suu

Rosularia turkestanica. Boom valley

Eleagnaceae

Eleagnus angustifolius – Widespread

Ephedraceae

Ephedra intermedia – Widespread

Euphorbiaceae

Euphorbia ferganensis – Besh Tash

Euphorbia helioscopia - Widespread

Euphorbia rapulum – Urmural gorge

Fabaceae

Astragalus alatavicus – Chychkan valley

Astragalus karkarensis – Kapchagai valley

Astragalus nitidima – Kapchagai valley

Astragalus sieversianus, Widespread

Astragalus schrenkianus – Kashkar-Suu

Caragana aurantica – Suu-Samyr valley

Caragana camilae-schneideri - Widespread

Caragana kirghizorum – Boom gorge

Chesneya ferganensis- Roadside by Kara-Suu river

Chesneya ternata – Besh Tash

Halimodendron halodendron – Boom gorge

Lathyrus aphaca – Scattered

Oxytropis ferganensis – Kashkar-Suu

Sophora alopecuroides - Widespread

Vicia subvillosa subspecies? – Various localities on way to Boom gorge



Gentianaceae

Gentiana karelinii – Besh tash

Gentiana olivieri – S of Toktogul

Geraniaceae

Erodium cicutarium – Widespread

Geranium molle – Widespread

Geranium transversale - Widespread

Iridaceae

Crocus alatavicus – Kashkar-Suu

Iridodictyum kolpakowskiana – Suu-Samyr -

Iris albertii – Karagul and valleys around Toktogul

Iris kuschakewiczii – Serafimovka valley in seed

Iris loczyi – Kashkar-Suu – Besh tash

Iris orchioides – Besh Tash

Iris subdecolorata – Nyldy – In seed on the tumulus

Iris zenaidae – Chychkan valley

Ixioliriaceae

Ixilirion tataricum – Widespread – Vast numbers S of Toktogul

Juglanaceae

Juglans regia – Widespread

Lamiaceae

Dracocephalum nutans var *alpinum* – On most of the high passes

Lagochilus platycalyx - Karagul

Phlomoides integior - Karagul

Phlomoides Sogdiana – Kapchagai valley, Nyldy

Phlomoides speciosa – Widespread

Lamium amplexicaule – Widespread

Scutellaria lanipes - Urmural gorge – In bud - flowers in 25

Scutellaria mesostegia – Kapchagai valley and scattered elsewhere

Scutellaria trasiliensis – Kapchagai valley

Liliaceae

Fritillaria ferganensis – Karagul valley

Gagea filiformis – Widespread

Gagea gageoides – Widespread

Gagea liotardii – Widespread at altitude

Gagea ova – Widespread

Korolkowia sewerzowii – Widespread in seed

Tulipa dasystemon – Widespread and often super abundant at altitude

Tulipa dasystemonoides – Besh Tash

Tulipa ferganica – Karagul in seed

Tulipa ostrowskiana – Serafimovka valley – Scattered elsewhere

Tulipa kolpakowskiana s.l. - Boom gorge area
Tulipa laskovii - Otmok pass
Tulipa talassica – Nyldy ,Urmural gorge
Tulipa tarda – Beisheke gorge
Tulipa tetraphylla- Tarkart valley, in bud in the Suu-Samyr
Tulipa zenaidae - Kaskar-Suu, Scattered between Biskek and Chu-Ili area
Tulipa sp nova - Beisheke gorge – Somewhere in the ostrowskiana/kolpakowskiana complex

Orobanchaceae

Pedicularis albertii – Kashkar- Suu, Boroldai
Pedicularis dolichorriza – Karagul area , Ala-Bel pass
Pedicularis olgae – Kashkar-Suu
Pedicularis semenovii – Kashkar suu

Paeoniaceae

Paeonia intermedia – Kashkar-Suu , Betsheke valley

Papaveraceae

Corydalis glaucescens – Kashkar-Suu Chychkan valley
Corydalis ledebouriana – Widespread
Glaucium elegans – Scattered in ruderal habitats
Glaucium fimbrilligerum – Scattered
Glaucium squamigerum – Kapchagai valley
Papaver litwinovii - Scattered
Papaver pavonina – Near Toktogul – Naryn reservoir
Roemeria refracta – Widespread

Plantaginaceae

Linaria transiliensis – Kapchagai valley

Plumbaginaceae

Acantholinum alatavicum – Urmural gorge

Polygalaceae

Polygala hybrida – Widespread at medium elevations

Polygonaceae

Atraphaxis pyrifolia – Widespread
Rheum cordatum – Serafimovka valley
Rheum tataricum – Nyldy
Rheum tanguticum – Ala- Bel, Chon-Ashuu
Rheum wittrockii – Boroldai

Primulaceae

- Anagallis arvensis* – Widespread
Androsace fedtschenkoae – Widespread in suitable habitats
Androsace sericea – Besh tash
Primula algida – Widespread at altitude
Primula kaufmanniana – Boroldai, Kashkar-Suu

Ranunculaceae

- Adonis chrysocyathus*
Adonis parviflora – Widespread
Eranthis longistipitata – Boroldai
Pulsatilla campanella - Abundant in Besh tash
Ranunculus albertii – Widespread at altitude
Thalictrum isopyroides – Karagul valley
Trollius komarovii – Otmok pass

Rosaceae

- Aflatunia ulmifolia*- Chychkan valley above Itigar valley
Cerasus tienshanica - Widespread
Cretagaegus songorica – Serafimovka valley
Potentilla hololeuca – Widespread mid to high altitudes
Prunus mahaleb – Widespread
Rosa ecae – Karagul valley , Kok Bel pass and around valleys around Toktogul
Rosa kokanica – Karagul -
Rosa persica syn *Hulthemia persica* – Urmural gorge, Nyldy
Rosa platycantha - Widespread
Spirea hypericifolia – Widespread

Rutaceae

- Dictamnus angustifolia* – Karagul, Urmural gorge
Haplophyllum latifolium – Widespread

Salicaceae

- Populus talassica* – Besh tash and around Talas

Sapindaceae

- Acer tatarica* ssp *semenovii* – Widespread

Simaroubaceae

- Ailanthus altissimum* – Widespread

Solanaceae

- Hyocyamus niger* – Widespread

Violaceae

Viola acutiflorus – Kashkar-Suu

Viola rupestris – Ala-Bel

Viola suavis – Kaskkar-Suu

Xanthorrhoeaceae

Eremurus cristatus -Widespread

Eremurus czatkalicus – Karagul area

Eremurus lactiflorus – Urmural gorge – widespread but only seen in flower at this location this year

Eremurus robustus – Karagul in flower – widespread in bud

Eremurus zoeae – Serafimovka valley

Zygophyllaceae

Peganum harmala – Scattered

Zygophyllum atriplicoides - Locally abundant between karakul and Toktogul

