



Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Crete
8 – 16 April 2026

Participants

Ron Fitton and Val Appleyard
Jill Jordan
Graham Harris
Ann Greenizan
Tessa Needham
David and Steph Bennett
Alison Ward

Tricia Williams
David Wilkins
Ellie Standen and Jo Parkin

Cathy and David Hartshorne joined the group on
15 April at Frangocastello.



Leaders

Chris Durdin and Rob Macklin

Report by Rob Macklin, plant list by Chris Durdin.
Additional invertebrate identifications from Ron Fitton and
Val Appleyard.

Photos by group members indicated by initials, mostly
David Bennett (DB), Other photos by Chris Durdin.

Cover: hoopoe by the war memorial at Moní Préveli,
cattle egret hitching a ride and Balkan green lizard (all
DB).

Left: group photo outside where we stayed, at the family-
run Hotel Sofia in Plakias, www.sofiahotelpiakias.com.

Below: Cretan mouse-ear *Cerastium scaposum*, Omalós.

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £40 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case raptor study and protection by the Hellenic Ornithological Society. HOS, BirdLife Greece, is based in Athens and its work covers the whole of Greece and its islands: on Crete, its work is in collaboration with the Natural History Museum of Crete. Honeyguide's donation to HOS this year was £890, made up of £40 per person, an additional donation of £200 and supplemented by gift aid through the Honeyguide Wildlife Charitable Trust. It takes our running total of donations to HOS since our first Crete group in 1995 to £18,045. The total for all conservation contributions through Honeyguide since 1991 is £167,097, to April 2026.

Roula Trigou, Head of Communications & Awareness for the Hellenic Ornithological Society, says: "Thanks so much for your ongoing support!" Roula passes on our key bird of prey records to colleagues involved in species monitoring.



DAILY DIARY

Wednesday 8 April – To Crete

A slight delay leaving Gatwick but we soon made up time and arrived ten minutes early at Chania. The snow-covered peaks of the White Mountains looked spectacular in the early afternoon sunshine. It took extra time to get into the airport with photographs and fingerprints for the European Entry-Exit System (EES) before we met up with David and Steph who had flown in from Manchester (and similarly slowed down on entry) before sorting out the minibuses and heading off to Plakias. We heard that Kourtaliótiko Gorge was closed due to rock falls so we diverted to come in via Kotsifou Gorge. The usual suspects were spotted along the way: hooded crow, yellow-legged gulls, swallows and two buzzards.

Crete's highest peak Mt. Ida was covered in snow with a covering of sand blown in from the Sahara Desert! The best bird of the day was a bright male marsh harrier moving up through the valley as we turned off to Kanevos. The beach area at Plakias was rather busy and bird life was restricted to a cormorant, moorhen, common sandpiper and two white wagtails. After settling in at Hotel Sofia we enjoyed our first taverna meal at Taverna Gorgona.

Thursday 9 April – Myrthios & Kanevos

Some members of the group took a pre-breakfast walk along the beach turning up three little ringed plovers and a common sandpiper. Chris and Rob took one of the minibuses up to Myrthios so we would have two ready for the onward journey later in the day. Over breakfast Chris asked for lemon slices in his tea and Vagelis's father Kostas picked a lemon from the tree in the courtyard.

After breakfast we made our way on foot out of Plakias on the quiet road to Myrthios, a local exploration. We soon encountered a host of plants including reversed clover on the seafront, large patches of honeywort, long-beaked storks-bill, pitch trefoil, salsify and branched broomrape parasitising the introduced Bermuda buttercup. Our first butterfly of the morning was the impressive Cretan festoon followed by lots of southern speckled woods, holly blues and a clouded yellow. More interesting finds came in the shape of dark-edged bee fly, a four-spotted moth and chocolate banded snail.

The first griffon vulture took to the skies at 10:20 soon to be joined by four more plus two ravens and four buzzards. Perhaps the highlight of the morning was a Balkan green lizard pouncing on an Egyptian locust before disappearing with it into thick vegetation! A hoopoe was briefly spotted in the olive groves and Val found three nose-y cone-headed grasshoppers in the scrub.

Further down the track we came across a glade full of field gladioli with shrubby St. John's-wort growing out of the rocks. Yet more Cretan festoons were on the wing and we spotted our first huge, mammoth wasp. Blue hound's-tongue was in flower on the track edge and Chris took great delight in identifying a flowering anemone as *Anemone hortensis* ssp. *heldreichii*! Several of the group opted to return to the hotel to take the minibus up to Myrthios but the remainder climbed the steep hill to the village encountering the first swallowtail butterfly, a paper wasp and six vagrant emperor dragonflies.



Cretan festoon by the roadside in Myrthios; Cretan cynamens.

Lunch was taken at Taverna Dionyssos with spectacular views across the bay. Before heading off to Kanevos, everyone had great views of three butterflies: swallowtail, Cretan festoon and wall brown. On our way to Kanevos we stopped briefly at Kotsifou Gorge where a minimum of seven griffon vultures were coming and going onto the cliff ledges.

We arrived at the woods dominated by Calabrian pines and downy oaks to be greeted by carpets of thousands of the endemic Cretan cyclamen – an amazing spectacle! After admiring this floral delight, we

walked up the road through the wood, where David W picked up a superb male collared flycatcher, soon to be joined by a male pied flycatcher, with blackcaps and blackbirds providing the musical backdrop.

Holly blues seemed to be everywhere, and many new plants included little robin, flowering almond-leaved wild pear trees and the splendidly named corky-fruited water dropwort. Many naked man orchids were in flower as well as a single loose-flowered orchid plus several splendid eastern sawfly orchids and *Gagea graeca* – a small star-of-Bethlehem.

Early in the evening there was a small influx of migrants through Plakias with at least 10 alpine swifts, two pallid swifts and 20 house martins. Our evening meal was at Taverna Muses where our host Takis was on great form as usual!

Friday 10 April – Phaestos, Kalamaki Pools and Timbaki Lagoons

A shorter than normal pre-breakfast walk took us down to the front to see if the immature Mediterranean shag, reported last night, was still on the rocks and luckily it was. A common sandpiper was still on the river and yellow-horned poppy was in flower above the beach.

On our way to Phaestos we stopped off at the now opened Kourtaliótiko Gorge where we had good views of two griffon vultures, a pair of nesting kestrels and a brief view of a male blue rock thrush. The highlight here was a superb male black-eared wheatear. On the way to Phaestos we passed carpets of spectacular turban buttercups on the roadsides.



“A superb male black-eared wheatear” (DB).

Our first birds at a sunny and warm Phaestos were a pair of kestrels, a buzzard and a very obliging chukar partridge. Time for coffee and ice cream at the café where we located a male pied flycatcher feeding in the scrub; amazingly it was joined by a male collared flycatcher leading to a dispute on feeding rights! Swallowtails and painted ladies were feeding on the abundant nectar sources.

Time to stroll down the quiet road towards Agia Triada where a lot of new plants included field eryngo, bean trefoil, mallow-leaved bindweed and a single specimen of spiked star-of-Bethlehem. Rather dingy Lulworth skippers were on the wing as were many stunning swallowtails, including two which had fallen prey to wasp spiders (*photo and ID on p14*). Graham spotted our first woodchat shrike on the ridge and Jo picked out two hoopoes, but only brief views of both species. At least four buzzards were flying back and forth over our heads and were briefly joined by a hobby as it passed over us! Probably the floral highlight was the amount of flowering Cretan ebony on the hillsides – a stunning sight!



Two interesting invertebrates at Kalamaki. Tamarisk peacock moth on the minibus, which was parked under tamarisk; Cretan jewel beetle *Julodis pubescens* ssp. *yveni*.

Our next stop was at the Kalamaki pools and things got off to a flying start with two bee-eaters on the wires at the entrance to the area. We had our picnic lunches under the tamarisk trees where we found an enormous beetle, Cretan jewel beetle. Purple viper's bugloss was in full flower, two crested larks were singing and a male wheatear perched up on the fenceline. Bee-eater numbers increased to seven birds and a woodchat shrike perched up for everyone to see well.

After lunch we strolled up to the pools and had hardly gone any distance when we spotted a movement in the bushes which revealed itself as a male subalpine warbler!



Blue-cheeked bee-eaters (DB).

We were hardly prepared for what occurred next as we spotted a very rare blue-cheeked bee-eater on the pools. We kept looking and numbers rose to an incredible twenty-one birds looking fantastic as their green sheen sparkled in the sunlight!

Birds just kept on coming as seven purple herons rose as one from the reedbed with a single black-crowned night heron, before nine more night herons rose from the edge of the pools creating a magical ariel spectacle! Four grey herons then alighted on the surrounding trees, two little egrets and a cattle egret were feeding in the shallows, and a marsh harrier quartered the reedbeds. With high water levels after recent heavy rains there were few waders, but we did pick out two wood sandpipers and two little ringed plovers while out on the beach hinterland there was a small flock of short-toed larks. With all this avian activity plants took something of a back seat but Chris did point out a flowering tree tobacco and there were carpets of yellow restharrow and Mediterranean catchfly.

Our final port of call was at Katyaki lagoons, near Timbaki, which had turned into a very full lake thanks to the aforementioned heavy rain. As we disembarked the lagoon side vegetation was full of teneral red-veined darters while sharp eyes picked out a few blue-tailed damselflies. Three male shovelers were on the lagoon, and the lake edges supported two common sandpipers and a wood sandpiper. Best of all was a squacco heron which Jo spotted in thick cover. At that moment 43 purple herons emerged from the nearby reedbed with a single night heron – an extraordinary spectacle over the lagoons! A large flock of sheep arrived in nearby fields with a cattle egret hitching a ride on their backs. A great day's birding on the south coast of Crete was brought to an end as we began the long drive back to Plakias. Dinner this evening was at Taverna Sirocco.



Purple herons (DB).

Saturday 11 April – Moní Préveli, Turkish Bridge and Honeyguide's Secret Valley

The pre-breakfast walk came up with the immature shag still on the rocks, a hunting sparrowhawk, a little ringed plover and a white wagtail. The first port of call was the monastery at Moní Préveli and where we explored the track leading down towards the sea. Our first bird was a stunningly bright woodchat shrike perched up in full view. Our first chough then flew over calling, a whinchat was spotted on the fenceline, two hoopoes put in a brief appearance and two male blue rock thrushes included one in prolonged song flight.

Further down the track we encountered our second subalpine warbler of the trip, flitting through the scrub. A huge downy oak tree here usually attracts migrants and we were not disappointed as the group enjoyed great views of up to five wood warblers as they fed avidly amongst the foliage. Two willow warblers were less showy, and another male pied flycatcher perched right out in the open. The hoopoe count increased to six birds including four flying together over the flower-filled slopes. Several butterflies were on the wing including red admiral and painted lady, and the botanists noted small-flowered catchfly and Roman nettle.



Birds on the fence at Moní Préveli: whinchat and pied flycatcher (DB).

Making our way back up the track most of the group went for a look around the monastery (plus they have good loos!) while the others searched the scrub further down the road. Several Sardinian warblers were in full song flight clearly showing their black heads, white throats and red eyes. More migrants were soon located including a singing nightingale in thick cover, two female pied flycatchers and a female redstart. Best of all was a male ortolan bunting in full song and flitting from rock to rock, occasionally being joined by a female. High overhead five alpine swifts passed over while a sparrowhawk was hunting along the ridge – quite a morning!

Just up the hill from Moní Préveli stands the monument to commonwealth soldiers and Cretan monks who fought against the Nazis in the second world war. We made a brief stop here and immediately saw another two hoopoes, another male collared flycatcher and redstart. We then spotted a very obliging Balkan green lizard sunning itself on a rock which allowed everyone to see the reptile well. Two choughs flew over, a tree pipit was foraging on the grassland within the monument's grounds while singing woodlarks and corn buntings provided the musical backdrop. Chris then spotted two mandrake plants in the car park!

We had our picnics at the Turkish bridge where the highlight was an electric blue male Cretan demoiselle; six griffon vultures drifted overhead and five more alpine swifts moved through on their migration north. A freshwater crab scuttled across the track and hid in leaf litter.

After lunch we headed north to Honeyguide's secret valley. We parked on the roadside and began looking for plants with lots of fresh naked man orchids on show and an impressive set of three large loose-flowered orchids. We then walked up a farm track encountering eight more orchid species including many fan-lipped (or hill) orchids, yellow bee orchids, milky orchids and a single pink butterfly orchid growing among a dump of old tyres. Other plants such as buckler mustard, yellow vetchling and blue hound's-tongue were in full flower. Moving further up into the valley we had a look over a disused quarry where a singing serin was in full view atop a large downy oak tree, to complete another excellent day! Dinner tonight was rather a hurried affair at Taverna Gio Ma as Easter Sunday approached!



Pink butterfly orchid: the black background is old tyres.

Sunday 12 April – Kourtaliótiko Gorge and Kedros Foothills (Spili Bumps)

Another glorious start to the day with very little wind, ideal conditions for our first stop at the Kourtaliótiko Gorge. We spilt into two groups with the plant hunters exploring the floral delights to the bottom of the gorge and four of us remaining at the top to search for birdlife.

Chris and the botanists took the steps down into the gorge, a slow descent as there are so many flowers to see. The most obvious endemic flower was ricotia, like a tiny honesty, in patches of pale purple. Cretan gorge comfrey or procopiana took a little more effort to find, despite being a medium size. We were delighted to find a couple of pale flowers of *Tulipa cretica* growing in rock hollows, an early-flowering species we haven't seen for several years, helped by this year's slightly later spring than average. There was another mandrake plant, Cretan cyclamens, Cretan bee orchid and sweetly-scented flowers of storax on the trees down at the bottom of the gorge. We even added a new bird for the week: grey wagtail.

As the morning began to warm up, griffon vultures appeared overhead, coming and going throughout the morning, with a final count of 27 of these majestic birds. A male kestrel flew back and forth along the cliffs protecting its nest site and pairs of ravens were on opposite sides of the gorge. Lower down, a singing male black-eared wheatear gave us good views with a supporting cast of a male blue rock thrush, several crag martins and a pair of stonechats.

Four choughs then appeared, coming very close to the group but the real star was an adult Bonelli's eagle soaring high above the griffons, its white belly gleaming in the sun. A little later the resident pair of eagles was being dive-bombed by one of the pair of ravens before moving away, then one of the birds flew low through the gorge giving us great views.

It was time to head off to Spili, taking the quiet back route. We pulled up on the side of the road looking back towards the gorge and began finding such botanical delights as forked catchfly, mallow-leaved storksbill and long-beaked storksbill. A new butterfly was added to the list with the discovery of a mallow skipper.

Moving on we parked up in the main car park at Spili where four red-rumped swallows were circling overhead. We had our picnics in the main square by the Venetian fountains and filled water bottles from the crystal-clear water. A red admiral was attracted to the nasturtiums.



Fountains at Spili; milky orchid, often a species that has finished flowering for our visits; few-flowered orchid.

The afternoon saw us arrive in good time at "Spili Bumps", a botanical haven. Our first find was Mediterranean red bartsia and then it was mostly about the orchids, with 14 species being recorded. Very fresh naked man orchids seemed to be everywhere and we also quickly spotted man orchids, early spider orchids, a few milky orchids and marengo orchid. The spectacular Cretan iris was in flower here and carpets of one-flowered clover were found on the hillsides. Other wildlife was not to be forgotten as we had great views of a singing woodlark on the wires, and an eastern dappled white butterfly perched on a buckler mustard showing its distinctive underside.



Woodlark on a wire; bumblebee *Ophrys*; eastern dappled white; *Ophrys heldreichii* (marengo orchid).

We negotiated our way around a flooded area of the main track to the 'bumps', and soon began finding such orchid delights as the yellow few-flowered orchid, four-spotted orchid, bumblebee orchid and the very special Cretan bee orchid. Ann then spotted a giant orchid in flower (usually well over by this time) followed by more four-spotted orchids and toothed orchids. There were also masses of crown anemones but relatively few of the famous red tulips *Tulipa doerfleri*. Carpets of barbary nut began to open up as the afternoon wore on and a few of the group scaled the hill finding bishop's ophrys and *Ophrys creberrima*, while on the flatter ground were carpets of naked man orchids and a single specimen of Cretan valerian.

We finished in good time, and a few in the group went farther into the Kedros foothills. At our first stop we found Cretan fritillaries (the flower), though only in bud. At the second stop there were more orchids, though no new species for the holiday.

Throughout the afternoon alpine swifts were moving through the foothills with occasional birds swooping low over us with a final tally of 120 birds. A great day in the foothills was followed by dinner at Taverna Apanemo with lots of garlic bread and gargantuan main courses!

Monday 13 April – Agia Reservoir and Omalós Plateau

An early start for our longest excursion, to Chania area and the Omalós Plateau. Our first stop was at Agia Reservoir which was very full after recent storms. Birds were a little thin on the ground, but we did find an immature marsh harrier, grey heron, little egret and two little grebes, with many singing Cetti's warblers and blackcaps in the background. Both red-eared slider and Balkan terrapins were lurking on the water's edge. At a large, sheltered pool, as we walked around the right-hand side of the reservoir, we found blue-tailed damselflies and two dragonflies that, after checking photos, were southern darters. Both Cretan cistus and sage-leaved cistus were in flower on the edge of the dense scrubby areas. People and cars were packing into the café by the reservoir and its car park, and we were glad to squeeze through and get on the road.



Southern darter *Sympetrum meridionale*, Agia Reservoir. The lack of markings on the thorax separates it from common darter; pale shoulder stripes are another feature. *Tulipa bakeri* on Omalós plateau.

We began the long and winding road up to the Omalós plateau, noting both red-rumped swallow and woodchat shrike on the way, before stopping for coffee in the café with the stuffed bearded vulture. We had our picnic lunches on the roadside by superb display of pink tulips *Tulipa bakeri*; there must have been a couple of thousand flower spikes here, though here many were still in bud.

We drove on to the head of the Samaria Gorge where we saw chough and alpine swift while Chris pointed out a strange array of Cretan door snails on the rocks. New plants here were Cretan mouse-ear and wild aubretia, a true inhabitant of the mountain zone! Before we left 80 wood pigeons flew fast over the highest peaks and were almost certainly migrants heading back to northern Europe.

We paused again to enjoy the flowers where the tulips were further out, mixed with hundreds of crown anemones and many widow irises. Next came our final and rather exhilarating stop at a small, natural lake by a giant new reservoir. Climbing out of the buses we immediately saw wood warbler and a northern wheatear. Walking down to the water's edge we were delighted to find at least ten delicate tree frogs concealed in thick ground vegetation plus two much larger marsh frogs, all probably on their way to breed in the pond.

Then came the moment: several soaring raptors came into view and one was an immature bearded vulture (lammergeier), much to our delight, then then joined by a second bird, an adult, with both interacting with each other in the air before the adult broke away and came even closer to the group – what a moment! With them were other raptors, griffon vultures, apart from one smaller bird higher than the rest, a golden eagle!

What a way to end a fabulous afternoon on the Omalós plateau! After a long drive back to Plakias, with a break for a leg stretch for drivers and passengers, dinner was at Taverna Gorgona.

Tuesday 14 April – Damnoni, Souda and Kotsifou Gorge



A little ringed plover, with attitude, at Souda (DB).

the best sites for this near-endemic species. Many other plants were found here including spiny golden star, thorny broom and four more naked man orchids. David B spotted a male blue rock thrush, a kestrel was eating prey on the wing, but the real highlight was the spectacle of 70 odd griffon vultures soaring together over the nearby cliffs!

A generally cloudy day as we took our pre-breakfast walk up to the east end of town. Migrants were in short supply, but we did manage a little ringed plover on the beach and a woodchat shrike on a fenceline. The immature shag was still on the rocks.

After breakfast we headed off to the nearby bay of Damnoni. Birds were a little thin on the ground, but we did have good views of two male blue rock thrushes, then 13 little egrets swept through the bay on migration and three swallows came in off the sea. Plants were very much the order of the day and finding sea spurge completed sightings of all the spurges on our checklist. Cretan viper's-grass was in full flower all over the rocks, rabbit's foot-grass was a new species and yellow-horned poppy was in flower. Invertebrates were not to be left out and we spotted a spider-hunting wasp, Cretan bush-cricket and probable Roesel's bush-cricket on a wall. As we were about to leave Ann found a paper wasp's nest under the tailgate of one of the vans!

Our next stop was at Souda, just west of Plakias, where we admired some magnificent specimens of Cretan palm, at one of



Little egrets over the sea (DB).

After a break in the middle of the day, we reconvened in the car park and walked up the road to see the tiny, delicate, solenopsis on a roadside bank. Its flowers were only just opening but we also found lesser snapdragon, lots of Jersey toadflax and yellowwort. Our next stop was at Kotsifou gorge – after a detour up a windy road into Sellia due to traffic chaos in Plakias! As we passed through the village, a hoopoe flew across the road and we made a brief stop to search unsuccessfully for Ruppell's warbler.



Tree flax, Kotsifou Gorge.

We moved on the head of the gorge and immediately saw a Bonelli's eagle right over our heads! Chris, David W and Tricia fought their way through spiny scrub to discover five monkey orchids, the first of the trip. While this was going on we were treated to the sight of a pair of peregrines constantly mobbing and dive-bombing passing griffon vultures (*photo, p13*) who had ventured too close to the falcons' nest!

Several early spider orchids were growing out of the cliff and bright yellow tree flax also had a foothold here. The group then split into two with one group looking for plants along the rather busy road and the other heading for a welcome coffee break at Kanevos where we also admired a stunning patch of Cretan arum. On the way home a male blue rock thrush had a narrow escape on the road.

Those that walked down the road found everygreen maple coming into leaf (it had been leafless at Omalós, despite its name), close plants of tree flax, several Cretan valerians, more Cretan gorge comfrey and other endemics still in leaf.

Dinner tonight was back at Taverna Apanemo with Maria and 'big guy' Stelios, plenty of garlic bread and huge main courses!

Wednesday 15 April - Frangocastello

The last pre-breakfast walk of the trip was again rather quiet, but we did see a purple heron flying over the town, little ringed plover on the beach, two swifts and a raven overhead and the woodchat shrike still at the east end of town.

A warm day with temperatures in the mid-twenties for our last full day, a visit to Frangocastello, west along the south coast. A brief stop at Kotsifou gorge yielded just a male black-eared wheatear and two griffon vultures so we quickly moved on. We arrived at the Venetian fort mid-morning to be greeted by Kathy and David who had arranged to meet us for a day's birding.

The Venetian fort was built between 1371 and 1374 but its main claim to fame is the massacre of Cretan forces here by the Ottoman Empire on 17 May 1828. Many of the turks were killed by rebel ambushes launched from the local gorges. It remains a mystery as to why they occupied the fort instead of attacking Ottoman forces from the surrounding countryside! Tradition has it that those Cretan forces called *Drosoulites* are seen to march towards the fortress around dawn on the anniversary of the battle.



Black-winged stilt (DB): mandrake.

Our first bird was a distant woodchat shrike then the pools on the beach turned up a black-winged stilt and two dunlins, one of them extremely dark. Chris showed everyone a fresh mandrake complete with a fruit, before spotting a pod of bottlenose dolphins way offshore. A large flock of small, brown jobs turned out to be 40 Spanish sparrows and we were able to see their brown heads with distinctive heavy markings on the breast – quite a rare occurrence here, probably migrants. A hoopoe put in a brief appearance before a single purple heron spent several minutes circling the area before landing in full view in a dead tree.

Many species of butterflies were on the wing including a host of swallowtails plus wall browns and clouded yellows. We were still searching for new plants and found rayless chamomile, pale bugloss, flowering caper in the telescope and a super patch of love-in-a-mist as well as a single specimen of yellow pheasant's eye. With the day warming up, we stopped at a beachside taverna for coffees and fresh orange juice. Seven little egrets flew eastwards offshore and a splendid male white wagtail perched up in full view. We had our picnic lunches by the fort with two more purple herons going over; white henbane was in flower by the fort entrance.



Roller and male Spanish sparrow at Frangocastello; male Italian sparrow, Souda, for comparison (DB).

After lunch we walked down to the beach where the black-winged stilt remained on the lagoon and Chris took great delight in explaining about 'nun's farts', basically matted Neptune grass pellets! A little ringed plover was on the beach with one of the earlier dunlins and several tiger beetles were running over the sand. What came next was a massive surprise as Dave W yelled out "Roller", and there it was, perching up in full

view right in front of us. Rollers have never been seen by a Honeyguide group in Crete, so a very special and magnificent bird! A flock of 12 purple herons then drifted over the beach and a dead hedgehog was found on the roadside – the latter all too familiar!

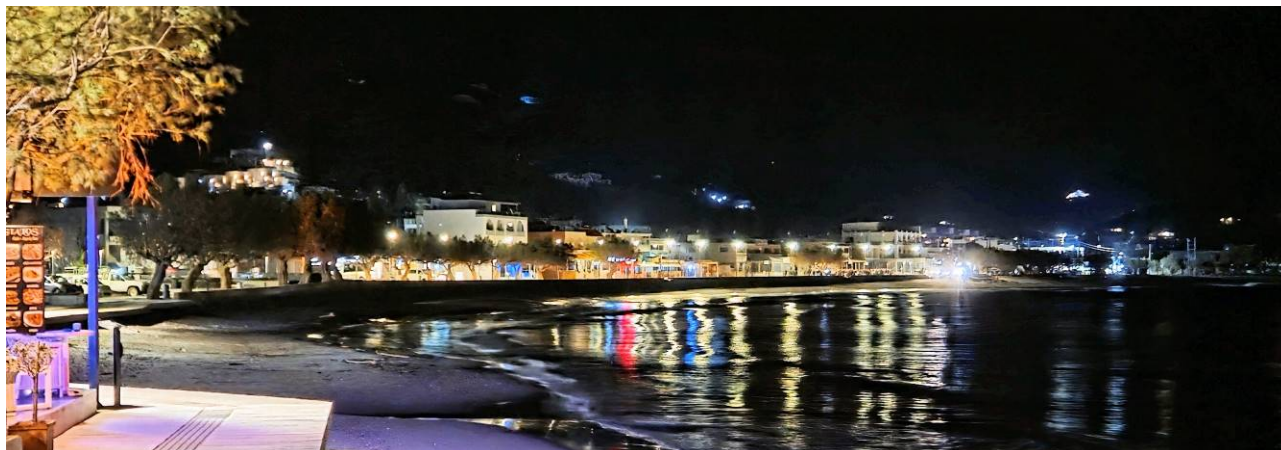
Two more brief stops, the first at a site between Rodakino and Sellia where we saw a buzzard, a male black-eared wheatear and another male blue rock thrush. A last stop at the gorge turned up our final griffon vultures, another male black-eared wheatear and a northern wheatear. Our last taverna meal was at Muses where Takis celebrated our Crete trip with us.

Thursday 16 April – Armeni and home

No pre-breakfast walk this morning but David W took a final look at the east end of Plakias and came up with a new species in the shape of two yellow wagtails. Before we bade our farewells to the staff at Hotel Sofia we assembled for a group photo on the hotel steps. We left David and Steph, who were getting a taxi to Heraklion Airport.

The return flight from Chania was rather late in the afternoon so we had an hour to explore the late Minoan cemetery at Armeni, set in a splendid setting of valonia oak woodland. Wrens were plentiful among the trees, and we were delighted to hear a golden oriole singing from the depths of the wood – alas not seen! Ringing calls turned out to be two wrynecks calling at each other, a hoopoe flew swiftly across open ground and a girl bunting was heard in song.

Some orchids had gone over but we still found giant orchid, naked man orchids, marengo orchid and two species of tongue orchid. Tassel hyacinth and Mediterranean kidney vetch were in flower and there was a scattering of white Cretan cyclamens. We arrived at Chania in very good time for our flight home, in case of delays from the EES system again, to find that the pragmatic Greek authorities had abandoned it. So we had extra time to reflect on a superb week in Crete with an excellent group and friendly weather.




Plakias at night (DB).

Holiday highlights

Ann	Swallowtail, paperwasp nests, views.
Alison	Both bee-eater species; purple herons; tulps and crown anemones at Omalós; green tree frog & freshwater crab and their camouflage.
Ellie	Chris making it possible for me to come; tree frog; blue-cheeked bee-eaters.
Jo	Diversity of endemic plants; crown anemones; blue-cheeked bee-eaters; tree frog; pied flycatcher very close.
Graham	Bearded vultures; blue-cheeked bee-eaters; wood warblers.
Tessa	Geranium bronze; swallowtail being eaten by a wasp spider; frogs; vista of crown daisies.
Steph	Profusion of flowers; flyby of purple herons; bee-eaters; cattle egret standing on a sheep.
David B	Being enabled to take photos of blue-cheeked bee-eaters, purple herons and roller.
Jill	Blue-cheeked bee-eaters; tree frogs; all the flowers especially fields of tulips, anemones and widow iris.
Val	Wasp spider catching swallowtail; peregrines attacking vultures; Cretan marsh frogs; Balkan green lizard.
Ron	Blue-cheeked bee-eaters; Cretan marsh frog; peregrines attacking vultures.
Dave W	Blue-cheeked bee-eaters; orchids at Spili Bumps; roller.
Tricia	Lammergeier; profusion of flowers especially crown daisies and salsify; roller; Cretan wall lizard.
Rob	Blue-cheeked bee-eaters; lammergeiers; roller.
Chris	Blue-cheeked bee-eaters; Spili bumps as always; Balkan green lizard catching and eating Egyptian grasshopper.

WILDLIFE LISTS

BIRDS

Little grebe	heard at Kalamaki pools 10/04 & two at Agia Reservoir 13/04.	
Cormorant	one at Plakias 08/04 & Agia Reservoir 13/04.	
Shag ¹	immature at Plakias from 09/04 to 14/04.	
Night heron	10 at Kalamaki Pools & one at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Squacco heron	one at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Little egret	two at Kalamaki Pools 10/04, one at Agia Reservoir 13/04, 13 at Damnoni 14/04 and seven at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Grey heron	four at Kalamaki Pools 10/04 & one at Agia Reservoir 13/04.	
Purple heron	7 at Kalamaki Pools & 43 at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04; one over Plakias 13/04 & 14 at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Mallard	pair at Agia Reservoir 13/04.	
Shoveler	three males at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Bearded vulture	two at Omalós Plateau 13/04.	
Griffon vulture	seen daily, max.count 70 at Souda 14/04.	
Marsh harrier	single birds near Kanevos 08/04, Kalamaki Pools 10/04 & Agia Reservoir 13/03.	
Sparrowhawk	single birds at Plakias & Moní Préveli 11/04 & Chania 16/04.	
Common buzzard	seen daily in small numbers.	
Golden eagle	one at Omalós 13/04.	
Bonelli's eagle	two at Kourtaliótiko Gorge 12/04 & one at Kotsiphou Gorge 14/04.	
Kestrel	seen daily in small numbers; breeding at Kourtaliótiko & Kotsiphou Gorges.	
Peregrine	pair at Kotsiphou Gorge 14/04.	
Hobby	one at Phaestos 10/04.	
Chukar	four at Phaestos 10/04, one at Moní Préveli 11/04 & heard Spili Bumps 12/04.	
Moorhen	noted at Plakias, Timbaki Lagoon & Agia Reservoir.	
Coot	noted at Kalamaki Pools, Timbaki Lagoon & Agia Reservoir.	
Black-winged stilt	one at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Little ringed plover	daily at Plakias max.3 on 09/04, two at Kalamaki Pools 10/04 & one at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Dunlin	two on beach at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Wood sandpiper	two at Kalamaki Pools & one at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Common sandpiper	single birds at Plakias on 08,09 & 10/04 plus two at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Yellow-legged gull	widespread and common even as high as the Omalós Plateau.	
Feral pigeon	common in the gorges and also seen at Damnoni.	
Woodpigeon	Seen daily in low numbers but 80 over Samaria Gorge 13/04.	
Collared dove	widespread and common esp.in towns and villages.	
Turtle dove	heard at Kanevos 09/04 & one at Omalós 13/04.	
Swift	four at Plakias 09/04, four at Agia Reservoir 13/04 & three at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Pallid swift	two at Plakias 09/04.	
Alpine swift	Noted most days max.130 at Spili Bumps 12/04.	
Bee-eater	11 at Kanevos 09/04 & seven at Kalamaki Pools 10/04.	
Blue-cheeked bee-eater	21 at Kalamaki Pools 10/04.	
Hoopoe	one at Plakias 09/04, two at Phaestos 10/04, eight at Moní Préveli 11/04, one at Sellia 14/04 & one at Armeni 16/04.	
Roller	one at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Wryneck	two calling at Armeni 16/04.	
Short-toed lark	17 on the dunes at Kalamaki Pools 10/04 & one at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Crested lark	Noted at Chania, Kalamaki Pools & Frangocastello.	
Woodlark	two at Moní Préveli 11/04, two Spili Bumps 12/04 & two at Omalós 13/04.	
Sand martin	four at Timbaki Lagoon 10/04.	
Crag martin	common in the gorges.	
Swallow	widespread and common.	
Red-rumped swallow	one at Kanevos 08/04, four at Spili 12/04 & one on way to Omalós 13/04.	
House martin	30 at Kanevos 09/04 & one at Kourtaliótiko Gorge 12/04..	
Tree pipit	one at Moní Préveli 11/04.	
Yellow wagtail	two at Plakias 16/04.	
White wagtail	two at Plakias 08/04, one at Moní Préveli 11/04 & one at Frangocastello 15/04.	
Grey wagtail	Kourtaliótiko Gorge 10/04	
Wren	heard on several occasions but several in woods at Armeni 16/04.	
Nightingale	singing male at Moní Préveli 11/04.	
Whinchat	one at Moní Préveli 11/04.	
Stonechat	recorded in small numbers throughout the week.	
Northern wheatear	three at Kalamaki Pools 10/04 and single birds at Spili Bumps 12/04, Omalós 13/04 & Frangocastello 15/04.	
Black-eared wheatear	male at Kourtaliótiko Gorge 10/04 & 12/04, male at Moní Préveli 11/04, male at Kotsiphou Gorge & male between Rodakino and Sellia 15/04.	

Shag at Plakias

¹ European Shag (Mediterranean subspecies) *Gulosus aristotelis desmarestii* is scarce, at around 10,000 pairs.

Blue rock thrush	heard at Kotsiphou Gorge 09/04, male at Kourtaliótiko Gorge 10/04 & two on 12/04, four at Moní Préveli 11/04, two at Damnoni, one at Souda & one at Kanevos 14/04.
Blackbird *	widespread and common.
Cetti's warbler	recorded daily, most often heard and not seen.
Subalpine warbler	males at Kalamaki Pools 10/04 and at Moní Préveli 11/04.
Sardinian warbler	widespread and common.
Blackcap	noted daily but especially abundant at Kanevos & Agia Reservoir.
Wood warbler	five in downy oaks at Moní Préveli 11/04 & one at Omalós 13/04.
Willow warbler	two at Moní Préveli 11/04.
Collared flycatcher	male at Kanevos 09/04, male at Phaestos 10/04 and male at Moní Préveli 11/04.
Pied flycatcher	male at Kanevos 09/04, male at Phaestos 10/04 & two at Moní Préveli 11/04.
Blue tit	widespread and common.
Great tit *	widespread and common.
Golden oriole	singing male at Armeni 16/04.
Woodchat shrike	single birds noted on three days but three at Phaestos & Kalamaki Pools 10/04 and two at Plakias and Frangocastello 15/04.
Chough	three at Moní Préveli 11/04, four at Kourtaliótiko Gorge 12/04 & one at Omalós 13/04.
Jackdaw	peak of 40+ around Kotsiphou Gorge 14/04.
Hooded crow	widespread and common.
Raven	seen daily max.10 on 12/04.
Italian sparrow	widespread and common.
Spanish sparrow	40 at Frangocastello 15/04.
Chaffinch	widespread and common.
Serín	one at Honeyguide's Secret Valley 11/04.
Greenfinch	widespread and common, many in song at Phaestos.
Goldfinch	widespread and common.
Linnet	widespread in small numbers.
Ortolan bunting	pair at Moní Préveli 11/04.
Corn bunting	widespread and common particularly at Spili Bumps.

Blackbird, great tit and jay are endemic subspecies



Chukar; a griffon vulture is mobbed by two peregrines (DB).

AMPHIBIANS, REPTILES, FISH		
Balkan green lizard	Balkan (stripe-necked) terrapin	Red-eared slider
Cretan wall lizard	Tree frog	Cretan marsh frog
		Grey mullet
MAMMALS		
Bottlenose dolphin	Badger RK	Beech (stone) marten RK
Eastern hedgehog RK		RK = roadkill
BUTTERFLIES		
Swallowtail	Clouded yellow	Geranium bronze
Cretan festoon	Painted lady	Holly blue
Large white	Red admiral	Common blue
Small white	Meadow brown	Mallow skipper
Bath white	Southern speckled wood	Lulworth skipper
Eastern dappled white	Wall brown	
MOTHS		
Tamarisk peacock	<i>Adela paludicolella</i>	Four-spotted moth
Pine processionary (tents)	Grass egg moth: <i>Lasiocampa trifoli</i> (larva only)	

BEES, WASPS, FLIES etc	
<i>Xylocopa violacea</i> violet carpenter bee	<i>Megascolia maculata</i> a mammoth wasp
<i>Polistes dominula</i> a paper wasp	Marmalade hoverfly <i>Episyrphus balteatus</i>
Honey bee: <i>Apis mellifera</i>	Bee fly <i>Bombylius fimbriatus</i>
Buff-tailed bumble bee <i>Bombus terrestris</i>	<i>Panorpa</i> sp. a scorpionfly
Mining bee <i>Andrena thoracica</i>	Soldier fly <i>Hermetia illucens</i>
BUGS	
<i>Spilostethus (Lygaeus) pandurus</i> a black & red ground bug	<i>Pyrrhocoris apterus</i> fire bug
Box bug <i>Gonocerus acuteangulatus</i>	Seed bug: <i>Melanocoryphus albomaculatus</i>
Shieldbug <i>Graphosoma italicum</i>	Squash bug: <i>Plinactus imitator</i>
Seed bug: <i>Lygaeus equestris</i>	Mirid bug <i>Dionconotus neglectus</i>
BEETLES	
<i>Tropinota hirta</i> a hairy chafer	<i>Calomera (Cicindela) littoralis</i> littoral tiger beetle
<i>Oxythyrea cinctella</i> a black-and-white flower chafer	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i> seven-spotted ladybird
Malachite beetle <i>Malachius bipustulatus</i>	<i>Ampedus elongantulus</i>
Cretan jewel beetle <i>Julodis pubescens</i> ssp. <i>yveni</i>	<i>Clytra laeviuscula</i>
<i>Rhagonycha fulva</i> common red soldier beetle	Weevil: <i>Lixus pulverulentus</i>
ORTHOPTERA	
Speckled bush cricket <i>Leptophyes punctatissima</i> (early instar)	Roesel's bush cricket <i>Roeseliana roeselii</i> (again an early instar) ²
Nosey cone-headed grasshopper <i>Truxalis nasuta</i>	<i>Anacridium aegyptium</i> Egyptian grasshopper/locust
	<i>Oecanthus pellucens</i> Tree cricket
ODONATA	
Black-tailed Skimmer <i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>	Blue-tailed Damselfly <i>Ischnura elegans</i>
Red-veined Darter <i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	Southern Darter <i>Sympetrum meridionale</i>
Banded Demoiselle (Crete subspecies)	Vagrant Emperor <i>Anax phippiger</i>
<i>Caleopteryx splendens</i> ssp. <i>cretensis</i>	
SPIDERS	
Banded argiope <i>Argiope trifasciata</i> ³	Crab spider: <i>Thomisus onustus</i>
Green huntsman spider <i>Micrommata ligurina</i>	Red jumping spider <i>Philaeus chrysope</i>
European harvestman: <i>Phalangium opilio</i>	
OTHER INVERTEBRATES	
Freshwater crab <i>Potamon potamios</i>	Cretan door snail <i>Albinaria (corrugata) inflata</i>
Mantis egg case, species not identified	Chocolate banded snail <i>Eobania vermiculata</i>
Millipede <i>Pachyiulus flavipes asiaeminoris</i>	



Swallowtail trapped by banded argiope, a wasp spider.

² We saw the distinctive 'tick' mark of Roesel's bush cricket, though the map in Brock shows this species is absent from Crete.

³ See honeyguidewildlife.blogspot.com/2026/05/banded-argiope-spider-argiope.html – our first record for Crete.

CRETE PLANT LIST 2026

The main references for identification and names of plants are Mediterranean Wild Flowers (Blamey & Grey-Wilson 1993), *Wild Flowers of Crete* by Vangelis Papiomitoglou, *Flowers of Crete* by J Fielding & N Turland and www.cretanflora.com

* =Endemic to Crete P = Planted NiF = not in flower
= Introduced and not native to Crete, and cultivated or planted species

FERNS AND ALLIES		
	<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair fern
	<i>Asplenium onopteris</i>	similar to black spleenwort
	<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rustyback fern
	<i>Equisetum ramosissimum</i>	Great horsetail
	<i>Polypodium cambricum</i> ssp. <i>australe</i>	Southern polypody
	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	Bracken
	<i>Selaginella denticulata</i>	Mediterranean club-moss
CONIFERS etc		
Cupressaceae Cypress Family	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Cypress
	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i> var. <i>pyramidalis</i>	Funeral cypress
	<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i> ssp. <i>macrocarpa</i>	Prickly juniper
Cycadaceae Cycads	# <i>Cycas revoluta</i>	Sago cycad
Ephedraceae Joint pines	<i>Ephedra distachya</i>	Joint pine
Pinaceae Pine Family	# <i>Araucaria araucana</i>	Norfolk Island pine
	<i>Pinus brutia</i>	Calabrian pine
	# <i>Pinus pinea</i>	Stone or umbrella pine
FLOWERING PLANTS Dicotyledons		
Aceraceae Maple Family	<i>Acer sempervirens</i>	
Aizoaceae Aizoon Family	# <i>Carpobrotus edulis</i>	Hottentot fig
Anacardiaceae Pistacio Family	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Mastic tree or lentisc
	# <i>Schinus molle</i>	Peruvian peppertree
Apiaceae (=Umbelliferae)	* <i>Chaerophyllum creticum</i>	(Omalós, yellow, but NiF)
Carrot Family	<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Rock samphire NiF (Damnoni)
	<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild carrot
	<i>Eryngium campestre</i>	Field eryngo
	<i>Ferula communis</i> ssp. <i>communis</i>	Giant fennel
	* <i>Ferulago thyrsoiflora</i>	(in Kotsiphou gorge, NiF)
	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Fennel NiF
	<i>Oenanthe pimpinelloides</i>	Corky-fruited water dropwort
	<i>Scandix pecten-veneris</i>	Shepherd's needle
	<i>Smyrniolum olusatrum</i>	Alexanders
	<i>Smyrniolum perfoliatum</i> ssp. <i>rotundifolium</i>	Perfoliate alexanders
	<i>Tordylium apulum</i> (fruit 5-8mm)	Mediterranean hartwort
Apocynaceae Oleander Family	# <i>Nerium oleander</i> ssp. <i>oleander</i>	Oleander
Asteraceae (Compositae)	<i>Anthemis chia</i>	Mayweed
Daisy Family	<i>Anthemis rigida</i>	Rayless chamomile
	<i>Bellis annua</i>	Annual daisy
	<i>Bellis longifolia</i>	
	<i>Calendula arvensis</i>	Field marigold
	<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i>	Crown daisy
	var. <i>coronarium</i> (<i>Glebionis coronaria</i>)	
	<i>Chrysanthemum coronarium</i> var. <i>discolor</i>	Crown daisy
	<i>Chrysanthemum segetum</i>	Corn marigold
	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	Chicory
	<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	Aromatic inula NiF
	<i>Filago</i> (<i>Evax</i>) <i>pygmaea</i>	Evax
	<i>Galactites tomentosa</i>	Mediterranean thistle
	<i>Helichrysum</i> (<i>stoechas</i> ssp.) <i>barrelieri</i>	Curry-plant
	<i>Notobasis syriaca</i>	Syrian thistle
	<i>Pallenis</i> (<i>Asteriscus</i>) <i>spinosus</i>	Spiny golden star
	<i>Phagnalon graecum</i>	Shrubby cudweed
	<i>Ptilostemon chamaepeuce</i>	NiF
	<i>Scorzonera cretica</i>	Cretan viper's-grass
	<i>Silybum marianum</i>	Milk thistle
	* <i>Staezelina arborea</i>	NiF
	<i>Tragopogon sinuatus</i> (<i>porrifolius</i>)	Salsify
Berberidaceae Barberry Family	<i>Berberis cretica</i>	
Boraginaceae Borage Family	<i>Anchusa azurea</i> (= <i>A. italica</i>)	Large blue alkanet
	<i>Borago officinalis</i>	Borage
	<i>Cerithe major</i>	Honeywort

	<i>Cynoglossum creticum</i>	Blue hound's-tongue
	<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	Narrow-leaved bugloss
	<i>Echium italicum</i>	Pale bugloss
	<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Purple viper's-bugloss
	<i>Symphytum creticum</i> (<i>Procopiana cretica</i>)	Procopiana or Cretan gorge comfrey
Cactaceae Cactus Family	# <i>Opuntia ficus-barbarica</i> (<i>O. ficus-indica</i>)	Prickly pear
Campanulaceae Bellflower Family	<i>Campanula erinus</i>	
	* <i>Campanula tubulosa</i>	
	* <i>Petromarula pinnata</i>	Cretan wall lettuce
	* <i>Solenopsis minuta</i> ssp. <i>annua</i> (<i>Laurentia gasparrinii</i>)	
Capparaceae Caper Family	<i>Capparis spinosa</i>	Caper
Family	# <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
Caryophyllaceae Pink Family	* <i>Cerastium scaposum</i>	Cretan mouse-ear
	<i>Minuartia hybrida</i>	Fine-leaved sandwort
	<i>Petrorhagia</i> (or <i>Kohlruschia</i>) <i>velutina</i>	Kohlruschia
	<i>Silene colorata</i>	Mediterranean catchfly
	<i>Silene dichotoma</i>	Forked catchfly
	<i>Silene gallica</i>	Small-flowered catchfly
	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	Bladder campion
	<i>Spergularia</i> sp. probably <i>bocconeii</i>	Greek sea-spurrey
Chenopodiaceae Goosefoot Family	<i>Arthrocnemum macrostachyum</i> (=A. <i>fruticosum</i>)	Glaucous glasswort
Cistaceae Rockrose Family	<i>Cistus creticus</i>	Cretan cistus
	<i>Cistus salvifolius</i>	Sage-leaved cistus
	<i>Fumana arabica</i>	
	<i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved fumana
Clusiaceae St John's-wort Family	<i>Hypericum empetrifolium</i> ssp. <i>empetrifolium</i>	Shrubby St. John's-wort
Convolvulaceae Bindweed Family	<i>Convolvulus althaeoides</i>	Mallow-leaved Bindweed
	<i>Convolvulus</i> (<i>althaeoides</i>) <i>elegantissimus</i>	Elegant bindweed
	<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Dodder
Crassulaceae Stonecrop Family	<i>Umbilicus horizontalis</i>	Navelwort / wall pennywort
Cruciferae (=Brassicaceae) Cabbage Family	<i>Arabis verna</i>	Spring rock-cress
	<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i>	Aubrieta
	<i>Biscutella didyma</i>	Buckler mustard
	<i>Brassica nigra</i>	Black mustard
	<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea-rocket
	<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's-purse
	<i>Erophila verna</i>	Whitlow-grass
	<i>Matthiola tricuspidata</i>	Three-horned stock
	<i>Nasturtium officinale</i>	Watercress
	<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i>	Wild radish
	* <i>Ricotia cretica</i>	Ricotia
Cucurbitaceae Cucumber Family	<i>Ecballium elaterium</i>	Squirting cucumber
	<i>Bryonia cretica</i> ssp. <i>cretica</i>	Cretan white bryony
Dipsacaceae Scabious Family	<i>Scabiosa maritima</i>	Mournful widow
Dioscoraceae Yam Family	<i>Tamus communis</i>	Black bryony
Ericaceae Heather Family	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Strawberry-tree
	<i>Erica arborea</i>	Tree-heath
Euphorbiaceae Spurge Family	<i>Euphorbia acanthothamnos</i>	Greek spiny spurge
	<i>Euphorbia characias</i>	Mediterranean spurge
	<i>Euphorbia dendroides</i>	Tree spurge
	<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun spurge
	<i>Euphorbia hirsuta</i>	
	<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea spurge
	# <i>Ricinus communis</i>	Castor oil plant
	<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Annual mercury
Fabaceae (=Leguminosa) Pea Family	# <i>Acacia cyanophylla</i>	Mimosa / blue-leaved wattle
	<i>Anagyris foetida</i>	Bean trefoil NiF
	<i>Anthyllus hermanniae</i>	(spiny broom-like bush) NiF
	<i>Anthyllus vulneraria</i> ssp. <i>praepropera</i> (= <i>rubriflora</i>)	Red (Mediterranean) kidney vetch
	<i>Bituminaria</i> (<i>Psoralea</i>) <i>bituminosa</i>	Pitch trefoil
	<i>Calicotome villosa</i>	Hairy thorny broom
	# <i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	Judas tree
	<i>Ceratonia siliqua</i>	Carob tree

	<i>Coronilla (= Securigera) parviflora</i>	yellow or pink flowers
	<i>Coronilla scorpioides</i> (see also <i>Securigera</i> ssp.)	Scorpion-vetch
	* <i>Ebenus cretica</i>	Shrubby sainfoin (Cretan ebony)
	<i>Genista acanthoclada</i>	
	<i>Lathyrus annuus</i>	yellow flowers, often red-veined
	<i>Lathyrus aphaca</i>	Yellow vetchling (tendrils)
	<i>Lotus cytisoides</i>	Grey birdsfoot trefoil
	<i>Lotus ornithopoides</i>	Southern birdsfoot trefoil
	<i>Lupinus pilosus</i>	A blue lupin
	<i>Medicago arborea</i>	Tree medick
	<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Spotted medick
	<i>Medicago marina</i>	Sea medick
	<i>Medicago sativa</i>	Lucerne NIF
	<i>Melilotus sulcatus</i>	Small melilot
	<i>Onobrychis caput-galli</i>	Cock's-comb sainfoin
	<i>Ononis (natrix) hispanica</i>	Large yellow restharrow
	<i>Ononis reclinata</i>	Small restharrow
	# <i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	False acacia
	<i>Scorpiurus muricatus</i>	Scorpiurus
	<i>Securigera securidaca</i>	a yellow crown vetch with flattened pods
	<i>Spartium junceum</i>	Spanish broom
	<i>Tetragonolobus purpureus</i>	Asparagus pea
	<i>Trifolium angustifolium</i>	
	<i>Trifolium campestre</i>	Hop trefoil
	<i>Trifolium nigrescens</i>	a common annual white clover
	<i>Trifolium resupinatum</i>	Reversed clover
	<i>Trifolium stellatum</i>	Starry clover
	<i>Trifolium tomentosum</i>	Woolly trefoil
	<i>Trifolium uniflorum</i>	One-flowered clover
	<i>Tripodion (Anthyllis) tetraphyllum</i>	Bladder vetch
	<i>Vicia</i> sp	a tare, unidentified
	<i>Vicia bithynica</i>	Bithynian vetch (two-tone purple & white)
	<i>Vicia lutea</i>	Yellow vetch
	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common vetch
Fagaceae Oak Family	<i>Quercus coccifera</i>	Kermes or prickly oak
	<i>Quercus ilex</i>	Holm or evergreen oak
<i>Deciduous oaks on Crete,</i>	<i>Quercus pubescens</i>	Downy oak
<i>both doubtfully native</i>	<i>Quercus ithaburensis</i> ssp. <i>macrolepis</i>	Valonia oak; acorn cups with scales
Fumariaceae Fumitory Family	<i>Fumaria macrocarpa</i>	A fumitory
Gentianaceae Gentian Family	<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Yellow-wort
Geraniaceae Geranium Family	<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common storksbill
	<i>Erodium gruinum</i>	Long-beaked storksbill
	<i>Erodium malacoides</i>	Mallow-leaved storksbill
	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved cranesbill
	<i>Geranium molle</i>	Dovesfoot cranesbill
	<i>Geranium purpureum</i>	Little robin
	<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>	Round-leaved cranesbill
Lamiaceae (=Labiatae)	<i>Ballota pseudodictamnus</i>	
Mint Family	<i>Coridothymus (Thymus) capitatus</i>	Shrubby thyme
	<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>	Henbit dead-nettle
	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	Red dead-nettle
	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	White horehound NIF
	<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	Jerusalem sage
	<i>Prasium majus</i>	Spanish hedge-nettle
	<i>Salvia arvensis</i>	Field woundwort
	<i>Salvia verbenaca</i>	Wild clary
	<i>Satureja (Micromeria) thymbra</i>	Savory
	<i>Stachys cretica</i>	Mediterranean woundwort
	<i>Teucrium alpestre</i>	
Linaceae Flax Family	<i>Linum arboreum</i>	Tree flax
	<i>Linum bienne</i>	Pale flax
Malvaceae Mallow Family	<i>Lavatera cretica</i>	Lesser tree mallow
	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	Common mallow
Meliaceae Persian Lilac Family	# <i>Melia azedarach</i>	Indian bead tree or Persian lilac
Moraceae Fig Family	<i>Ficus carica</i>	Fig
	# <i>Morus alba</i>	White mulberry
Myoporaceae Myoporum Family	# <i>Myoporum laetum</i> P	Ngaio (from New Zealand)
Oleaceae Olive Family	<i>Olea europaea</i>	Olive

Orobanchaceae Broomrapes	<i>Orobanche pubescens</i>	Hairy bromrape
	<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>	Branched broomrape
Oxalidaceae Sorrel Family	# <i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	Bermuda buttercup
Papaveraceae Poppy Family	<i>Glaucium flavum</i>	Yellow horned-poppy
	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common poppy
Pittosporaceae Pittosporum Family	# <i>Pittosporum tobira</i>	Pittosporum
Plantaginaceae Plantain Family	<i>Plantago afra</i> (branched)	Glandular plantain
	<i>Plantago coronopus</i>	Buckshorn plantain
	<i>Plantago lagopus</i>	Haresfoot plantain
	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain
Platanaceae Plane Tree Family	<i>Platanus orientalis</i>	Oriental plane
Polygalaceae Milkwort Family	<i>Polygala venulosa</i>	Eastern milkwort
	# <i>Polygala x dalmaisiana</i>	Sweet pea shrub
Polygonaceae Dock Family	<i>Persicaria senegalensis</i>	Naturalised, from Africa
	<i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>	Horned dock
Primulaceae Primrose Family	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Pimpernel (scarlet and blue forms)
	* <i>Cyclamen creticum</i>	Cretan cyclamen
Punicaceae Pomegranate Family	<i>Punica granatum</i>	Pomegranate
Ranunculaceae Buttercup Family	<i>Adonis microcarpa</i>	Yellow pheasant's-eye
	<i>Anemone coronaria</i>	Crown anemone
	<i>Anemone hortensis</i> ssp. <i>heldreichii</i>	
	<i>Nigella damascena</i>	Love-in-a-mist
	<i>Ranunculus asiaticus</i>	Turban buttercup
	<i>Ranunculus neapolitanus</i>	Naples buttercup (reflexed sepals)
	<i>Ranunculus ophioglossifolius</i>	(fen at Frangocastello)
Resedaceae Mignonette Family	<i>Reseda alba</i>	White mignonette
Rosaceae Rose Family	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i> ssp. <i>azarella</i>	Hawthorn
	# <i>Eriobotrya japonica</i>	Loquat
	<i>Pyrus spinosa</i>	Almond-leaved or wild pear
	<i>Rubus sanctus</i>	Bramble
	<i>Sanguisorba minor</i> ssp. <i>verrucosa</i>	Mediterranean salad burnet
	<i>Sarcopterium spinosum</i>	Thorny burnet
Rubiaceae Bedstraw Family	<i>Valantia hispida</i>	
Rutaceae Rue Family	# <i>Citrus limon</i>	Lemon
	# <i>Citrus sinensis</i>	Orange
	<i>Ruta chalepensis</i>	Rue
Santalaceae Sandalwood Family	<i>Osyris alba</i>	Osyris
Saxifragaceae Saxifrage Family	<i>Saxifraga (rotundifolia) chrysosplenifolia</i>	
Scrophulariaceae Figwort Family	<i>Bellardia trixago</i>	Bellardia
	<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	Ivy-leaved toadflax
	<i>Linaria pelisseriana</i>	Jersey toadflax
	<i>Misopates orontium</i>	Lesser snapdragon (weasel's snout)
	<i>Parentucellia latifolia</i>	Southern red bartisia
	<i>Parentucellia viscosa</i>	Yellow bartisia
	<i>Scrophularia lucida</i>	Shining figwort
	<i>Scrophularia peregrina</i>	Nettle-leaved figwort
	<i>Verbascum macrurum</i>	
	<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>	NiF
	<i>Veronica cymbalaria</i>	
Solanaceae Nightshade Family	<i>Hyoscyamus albus</i>	White henbane
	<i>Mandragora autumnalis</i>	Mandrake
	# <i>Nicotiana glauca</i>	Tree tobacco
	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black nightshade
Styracaceae Storax Family	<i>Styrax officinalis</i>	Storax
Tamaricaceae Tamarix Family	# <i>Tamarix smymensis</i>	Tamarisk
Thymelaeaceae Daphne Family	<i>Daphne sericea</i>	(pink, Omalós & Spili)
	<i>Thymelaea hirsuta</i>	Thymelea
Urticaceae Nettle Family	<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory of the wall
	<i>Urtica pilulifera</i>	Roman nettle
Valerianaceae Valerian Family	<i>Centranthus calcitrapae</i>	Small valerian
	* <i>Valeriana asarifolia</i>	Cretan valerian
Verbenaceae Verbena Family	# <i>Lantana camara</i>	Lantana
	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Vervain
	<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste tree
Vitaceae Vine Family	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>	Grape vine
Monocotyledons		
Agavaceae Agave Family	# <i>Agave americana</i>	Century plant
Amaryllidaceae Daffodil Family	<i>Pancratium maritimum</i> NiF	Sea daffodil (leaves only)

Araceae Arum Family	<i>Arisarum vulgare</i>	Friar's cowl
	<i>Arum concinatum</i>	NiF
	<i>Arum creticum</i>	Cretan arum
	<i>Dracunculus vulgaris</i>	Dragon arum
Areaceae Palm Family	<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>	Canary date palm
	<i>Phoenix theophrasti</i>	Cretan palm
	# <i>Washingtonia filifera</i>	Washingtonia
Cyperaceae Sedge Family	<i>Carex flacca</i> ssp. <i>serrulata</i>	Blue sedge or carnation-grass
Iridaceae Iris Family	<i>Crocus sieberi</i> ssp. <i>sieberi</i>	
	<i>Gladiolus italicus</i>	Field gladiolus
	<i>Gynandrysis sisyrrinchium</i>	Barbary nut
	<i>Iris</i> (was <i>Hermodactylus</i>) <i>tuberosus</i>	Widow iris
	# <i>Iris albicans</i>	
	* <i>Iris (unguicularis) cretensis</i>	Cretan iris

Liliaceae,	<i>Asphodeline lutea</i>	Yellow asphodel
Lily Family	<i>Asphodelus ramosus (aestivus)</i>	Common asphodel
	<i>Charybdis (Drimia, Urginea) maritima</i>	Sea squill NiF
	<i>Fritillaria messanensis</i> ssp. <i>sphaciatica</i>	Cretan fritillary
	<i>Gagea graeca</i>	
	<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Tassel hyacinth
	<i>Ornithogalum exscapum</i>	
	<i>Ornithogalum narbonense</i>	A spiked star-of-Bethlehem
	<i>Ruscus aculeatus</i>	Butcher's broom
	* <i>Tulipa (saxatilis) bakeri</i>	(pink, Omalós)
	* <i>Tulipa cretica</i>	Cretan tulip (whitish, at Kourtaliótiko)
	* <i>Tulipa doerfleri</i>	(red, Spiili)

Orchidaceae Orchid Family		
	<i>Aceras anthropophorum</i>	Man orchid
	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal orchid
	<i>Barlia robertiana</i>	Giant orchid
	<i>Ophrys bombyliflora</i>	Bumblebee orchid
	* <i>Ophrys (fusca) creberrima</i>	
	<i>Ophrys cretica</i>	Cretan bee orchid
	<i>Ophrys (scolopax) heldreichii</i>	Marengo orchid
	<i>Ophrys episcopalis/holoserica</i>	Bishop's ophrys
	<i>Ophrys (lutea) phryganae</i>	Phrygana orchid – a yellow bee orchid
	<i>Ophrys sphegodes</i> ssp. <i>cretensis</i>	Early spider orchid
	<i>Ophrys (tenthredinifera) villosa</i>	Eastern sawfly orchid
	<i>Orchis boryi</i>	
	<i>Orchis collina</i>	Fan-lipped or hill orchid
	<i>Orchis italica</i>	Italian man orchid
	<i>Orchis lactea</i>	Milky orchid
	<i>Orchis laxiflora</i>	Loose-flowered orchid
	<i>Orchis (provincialis) pauciflora</i>	Few-flowered orchid
	<i>Orchis quadripunctata</i>	Four-spotted orchid
	<i>Orchis papilionacea</i> ssp. <i>alibertis</i>	Albertis's (pink) butterfly orchid
	<i>Orchis simia</i>	Monkey orchid
	<i>Orchis tridentata</i>	Toothed orchid
	<i>Serapias lingua</i>	Tongue orchid
	<i>Serapias bergonii</i>	Bergon's or small-lipped tongue orchid

Poaceae Grass Family	<i>Arundo donax</i>	Giant reed
	<i>Avena</i> sp	wild oats
	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	Wall barley
	<i>Hyparrhenia hirta</i>	Thatching grass
	<i>Lagurus ovatus</i>	Hare's-tail
	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Common reed
	<i>Polyopogon monspeliensis</i>	Rabbitsfoot or annual beard-grass
Posidoniaceae Sea-grass Family	<i>Posidonia aceanica</i>	Neptune-weed
Smilacaceae Smilax Family	<i>Smilax aspera</i>	Common smilax or sarsaparilla
Typhaceae Reedmace Family	<i>Typha domingensis</i>	

Fungus	<i>Inonotus tamaricis</i>	Tamarisk bracket fungus
Galls	an epiphyte pathogen (bacterium) <i>Pseudomonas savastanoi</i>	Olive knot
	Bacterium <i>Pseudomonas syringae</i>	Oleander knot
	<i>Andricus infectorius</i> gall wasp	Dyer's gall, on downy oak
	<i>Cynips quercusfolii</i> gall wasp	Cherry gall, on downy oak
	<i>Neuropterus quercusbaccarum</i> gall wasp	Common spangle gall, on holm

Rust fungus/gall	Unknown rust fungus on <i>Ferulago thyriflora</i> in Kotsifou Gorge	oak Similar to Alexanders Rust <i>Puccinia smyrnii</i>
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Crocus sieberi; four-spotted orchid *Orchis quadripunctata*; small-flowered catchfly; giant orchid at Spili Bumps.



Freshwater crab, also known as land crab, *Potamon potamios*, Turkish Bridge near Moní Préveli, 11 April.