

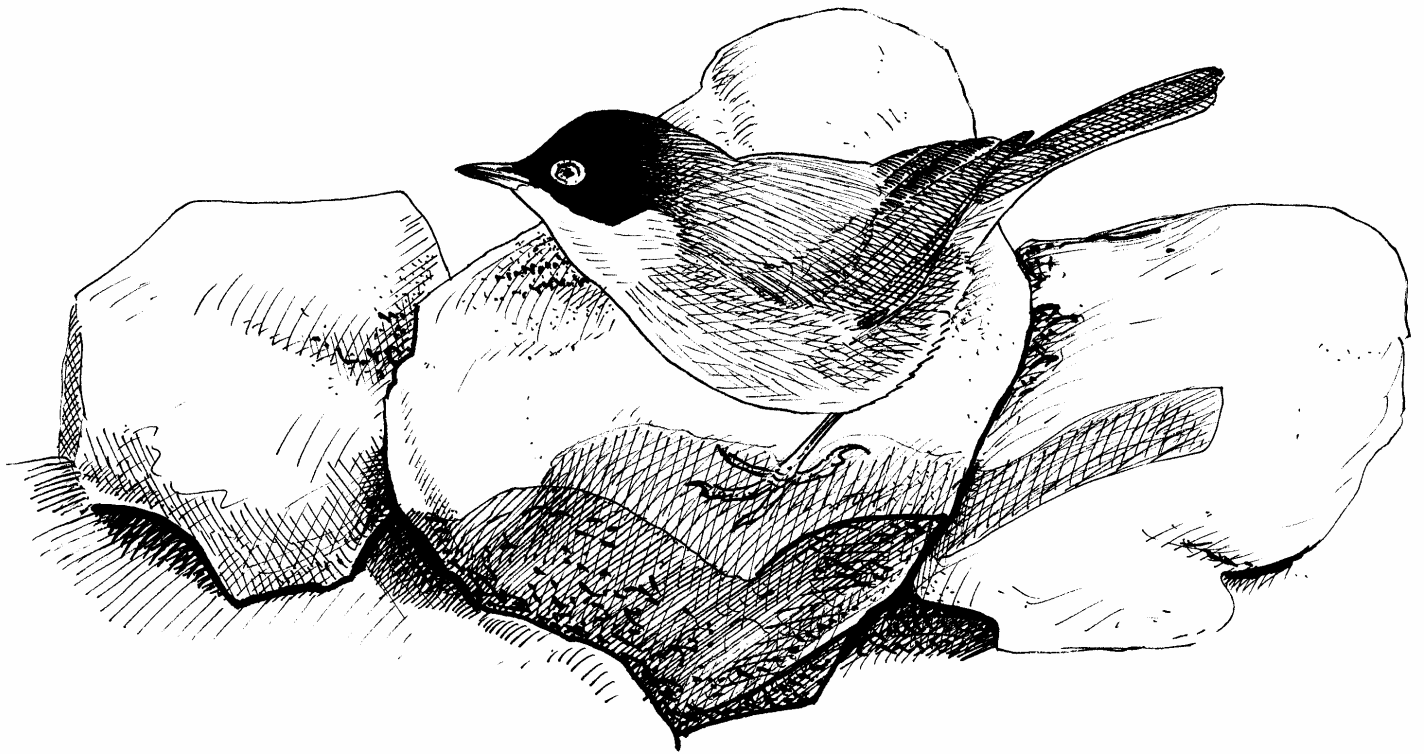
Honeyguide

WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS

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Crete
11-18 April 2000

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Holiday participants

Alan and Sandra Restall

Elizabeth Fish

Fergus and Liz Moynihan

Shineen Galloway

Jean Jackson

Brenda Cobb

Roger and Wendy Billington

Penny Watson-Farrar

Pat Rose

Leaders

Mick Rebane

Diana Mortimer

With commiserations to Anne and Colin Davies, who had to drop out shortly before departure.

Report written by Mick Rebane and Diana Mortimer

Illustrations by Rob Hume. Cover: Sardinian warbler

As with all Honeyguide holidays, £25 of the price of the holiday was put towards a conservation project, in this case for the Hellenic Ornithological Society (HOS), which is based in Athens but whose work covers the whole of Greece and its islands. £350 was sent this year - £25 per person. This brings Honeyguide's total contributions since the first Honeyguide holiday in Crete in 1995 to £2,045, and to conservation projects in Europe to more than £20,000. A thank-you letter from HOS appears at the end of this report (but not this web version).

CRETE
11-18 APRIL 2000

Tuesday April 11th 2000

Always a good start to any overseas holiday – a grey overcast morning at an English airport as you wait for your flight to a warm and sunny destination. On this occasion, Crete. After a slight delay at Gatwick our 4-hour flight passed pretty quickly arriving at a sun-drenched Heraklion airport on the north coast of this large and mountainous island. So far, so good, and followed by a very speedy exit through immigration. However we then experienced the Cretan phrase *sigá sigá* (slowly slowly). Individual attention is one thing, but I draw the line when one suitcase arrives onto the reclaim belt with a 10-minute wait before the next. After a brief flurry of activity there is another 15 minute wait while the luggage handlers try to find the plane again to take off three more bags, and the whole cycle starts again!

Anyway this is the start of the holiday so we are all still in good spirits, and eventually one by one we wander across to our driver, patiently waiting by his coach, and join the slowly increasing number of our party in the warm sunshine. Counting the party is something that comes as second nature during the week, checking to see if we've lost somebody having a nap in the olive groves, or when someone has decided that shopping is far more interesting. We are all getting close to the magic figure of 14, when suddenly someone disappears to the airport bar to get a drink, as waiting in the sun is thirsty business. Then almost back up to quota, when another disappears!

Eventually we persuade everyone that there is much more to Crete than standing on tarmac in front of a coach at Heraklion airport. Thirsts quenched we spread ourselves out in the luxury of the coach, tapping toes to Cretan music on the radio as we motor our way along the coast road that hugs the northern seacliffs and the deep blue Mediterranean sea of Crete. We are soon in green and colourful mountain scenery, still lush and verdant at this time of year before the heat of the summer scorches the fields.

Passing the many roadside orange sellers, oleander bushes, and the bright yellow mass of broom, we head south towards our destination of Plakias. The sun is now low in the sky and trying its best to shine through a heat haze clothing the south coast. We soon find ourselves in the spectacular Kourtaliotiko gorge and then round a hairpin bend with Plakias and the coast bathed in an ethereal evening glow.

The overpowering scent of orange blossom follows us during the short walk to our hotel, the Sophia, from the main square where the coach parks up. A welcoming cup of tea is provided by our host for the week George who shows us to our rooms. The delay to our transfer means we have just enough time to unpack and wash before our rendezvous at the Sophia Taverna on the harbour front. For reasons unknown the table is gender split – the men at one end, the women at the other. Delicious plates of tasty food are delivered by the waiters along with many kilos (wine is ordered by weight not volume in Crete) of red, white and resinated wine (retsina). The serious wine tasters were in general agreement that the red wine was superior to the white; however nothing compares to retsina, the favoured drink of the leaders. The end of the meal proved to be the first of many rakis during the week. Whether it was the warmth of the raki or the April evening, some of the party decided that a little promenading was required before hitting the pillow.

Wednesday 12th April

We must be on holiday – the sun is still shining when we awake, on our first morning on Crete. Breakfast is taken in the courtyard down a couple of steps through a golden-beaded curtain. This curtain proves to be the first test of day, providing a dramatic and potentially disastrous start to the day. A considerable amount of skill is required to negotiate steps and dangling beads, without losing the contents of your breakfast tray – orange juice, hard boiled eggs, strong coffee and mountains of freshly-baked bread.

A relaxed start to our first day, as we begin our morning walk through the hills behind Plakias to our lunchtime destination of Myrthios. This being our first day, every flower and every bird warrants close inspection, even when the first stopping point is a rough car park/rubbish tip! Given the

inauspiciousness of the rough ground there is lots to see and a good introduction to the colourful flowers of Crete. Before too long though we have left the village behind us and making good progress through the olive groves. Alan and Sandra quickly show us their turn of speed and a clean pair of heels – only to return with some excitement with the discovery of a ‘turtle’ – a stripe-necked terrapin – in the small stream at the edge of the olive grove.

The next surprising find was by Penny discovering a land crab side-stepping its way purposefully up the hill – probably also trying to get to Mirthios like us for lunch! Our hero Fergus carefully picks up ‘Crabby’ for closer inspection and to allow others to take photographs. Handing the crab over to Roger our land-loving crustacean takes advantage of the situation by seizing Roger’s finger who bravely hangs on – Roger that is. A few minutes later the crab is happily carrying on his journey – Roger less so, putting on a brave face as he waves the first-aid kit aside.

Cetti’s warblers follow us up the valley, their loud and piercing song giving away their presence in the giant reed along the stream-side – but being skulking birds, they are rarely seen. The fields and banksides are full of wonderful flowers: tongue orchids; toadflaxes; thorny salad burnet; three-lobed sage and Jerusalem sage. Soon we are distracted by three raptors circling high in the sky above the cliff line. Two are griffon vultures, exciting enough but what of the third. Huge and a completely different shape with narrower wings and a longer diamond-shaped tail – a lammergeier – and we all have time to notice the differences before it disappears over the mountain and into the cloud. Sadly our only views during the week.



We emerge from the olive groves onto an old bridge below the crumbling chimney mill behind – sadly now very derelict. At one time water funnelled down the chimney onto a wheel for grinding corn. A hidden chapel in the rock face provides some interest to the group especially as it is home to our first Cretan wall lettuce and hanging mullein plants – both endemics, found only in Crete and nowhere else in the world.

On our continuing ascent we are rewarded with superb views of blue rock thrush and the village of Plakias below us in the distance. Alan and Sandra have by now completely disappeared as we reach the flat and we make the final surge for beer and food. In typical Cretan fashion a new path has been created (ie bulldozed) and we briefly lose our way – but all paths lead to Mirthios. We soon reach familiar surroundings and pass the old ‘open-air laundry’, arriving at the taverna via a sleepy spotted toad (known as green toad) in the irrigation channel alongside the path. Alan and Sandra appear on cue at the taverna, on the latter stages of a Cretan pub crawl, and we all gaze down the beautiful valley to the deep blue bay at Plakias, while tucking into a leisurely and well-earned lunch.

Reluctantly we leave the taverna and view behind and make our way back down the hill, stopping from time to time to admire stands of wild gladioli and take photographs. The stragglers arrive at the bridge at the edge of the village, still in time to get excellent views of a bobbing wood sandpiper resting and feeding on the stream edge.

Taverna Christos is the choice tonight run by the excellent Manolis and his colourful and occasionally raucous scarlet macaw, Laura. Brilliant food and a good choice, as half way through the meal the lights of Plakias go out for around an hour. Fortunately for us the taverna’s generator kicks in!

Thursday April 13th

After we all successfully negotiate the bead curtain we explore the fields at the eastern end of Plakias with first close views of crested larks, stonechats and migrating tree pipits. More exciting though was a

sighting of a single Eleonora's falcon flying in off the sea – an early record, as most do not arrive until the last week of April. While the beach, sun and blue sea were very enticing especially for Wendy and a few others who were desperate for a swim, we drag ourselves back into the mini-buses for the short journey to our next stop – the Kourtaliotko gorge, a deep fissure high above Plakias.

With cliffs towering above us we made our way down the steps to the stream at the bottom of the gorge where there is a white chapel. The path down is a slow journey, not just because of the numerous steps, but because of the wonderful natural rock gardens flanking the path which grab our attentions. Cretan cyclamen, turban buttercups and Cretan tulips flower in the spring sunshine. Vying for attention were crag martins, blue rock thrush and at the bottom of the gorge both white and grey wagtail – some of the party also had the luck to get views of a Cetti's warbler! The return journey was slightly delayed when Fergus discovered a mammoth orchid – which attracts quite a bit of attention from the male members of the group. Only fair when yesterday the finding of Italian man orchid brought sighs and gasps from the ladies present.

With stomachs rumbling, the attraction of the tavernas of Spili makes the ascent to the minibuses pass speedily. Buzzards temporarily distract us over the spectacular drive through the village of Frati, and drop down into the next valley through some surprisingly English-like scenery of oak trees, fruit blossom and elderflower. Mick and Diana instruct the group of the delights of eating gyros – a Greek fast food treat of a soft pitta bread encasing pork, chips, onion, yogurt and topped with a sprinkling of paprika. The first time the shop has had to serve around 16 English people! The lion fountains in the centre of the village provide an ideal spot to picnic and reflect on the day and life in general, apart from Diana who is lost in her thoughts – 'shall I have another gyros'?

It is difficult to adequately describe the avian and botanical delights of the afternoon in the Kedros mountains on the 'Spili bumps'. The gallant gentlemen in the group – well only Alan actually – escorts the ladies (and a few of the men) across the stream, and then the orchids, anemones, irises and tulips take over – too, too many to list and over 15 species of orchid alone. If that is not enough then further exploration in the surrounding fields produces a hot spot for birds, singing woodlarks and some stunning views of a small group of ortolan buntings especially when the sun catches them. The next field has more interest with a well-placed earth bank providing the ideal spot to sit and get to terms with the flock of birds feeding in the fields. There seems to be so much activity and interest that a few of us get so excited that we fall backwards off the bank helped by the weight of our rucksacks. Apart from the ortolan buntings the interest focuses on a mixed flock of yellow wagtails including the black-headed race (*feldegg*) which are feeding amongst the clods of earth. It is very similar to sea watching with a heavy swell – first you see a bird then it disappears behind a wave of soil. Very frustrating especially when everyone shouts out – 'look at that bird on the clod over there' – 'which clod'?

Dusty bottoms depart and more excitement on our walk back to the buses with three Montagu's harriers delaying our departure – but who cares, we're on holiday.

No time for relaxing on this holiday. After a refreshing shower and a quick change back at the hotel we are soon on our way out again – a new day, a new taverna – to the taverna Glaros (The Seagull) where the genial and charming host Nikos oversees the evening. After a full and tiring day in the mountain air (or is it the wine?) a contented glow develops on everyone's face. Elizabeth makes to leave the table for an early night but is soon tempted to stay by an amazing ice-cream sculpture ablaze with sparklers! As well as ice cream, Nikos makes an extremely good raki in his home village outside of Plakias and it is custom to offer a 'raki on the house' at the end of the evening for the men, while the women are offered brilliantly coloured (some might call it lurid) liqueur. Surviving the raki and banana liqueur we wend our short way homewards. Diana and Mick have to stay to settle up with Nikos, and of course have another raki – it would be churlish not to accept the offer, indeed rude. As they reach the Sophia Hotel, ten or so minutes later they discover two dodgy characters shiftily hanging outside the front door. Alan and Sandra had forgotten their keys and were plotting an interesting and unusual entry into the building.

Friday April 14th

Fairly quiet on the beach this morning, although Fergus and Diana study what they believe to be two red-throated pipits. A long drive today to Phaestos, one of four Minoan palaces on Crete – therefore it was a little annoying to discover a deflated tyre on the *Bimbo Bus*. So named after its 'Bimbo on

Bordo' sticker on the back window and not after Diana, Shineen, Wendy, Liz, Roger or Fergus. The occupants of the other well-behaved bus couldn't possibly comment!

Direct action is called for so we stop at the nearby garage to sort out the problem. Unfortunately we can not find the spare, the garage can not find the spare – which is eventually tracked down underneath the driver's seat! As usual when your back is turned some people disappear, but we did not have to look far on this occasion as they were settling into a mid-morning coffee at the next door café. As an added bonus Fergus has sighted an interesting sparrow nesting in the sign above the petrol station, closer examination revealing a house sparrow – not an Italian job (boom boom!) – which are uncommon on Crete.

The tyre now replaced we follow the same route as yesterday to Spili, but then onto new territory past roadsides drenched in displays of giant fennel, lupins and gladioli set against the stunning backdrop of snow-covered mountains. A quick photo-opportunity is rewarded with a fly past of alpine swifts showing off their aeronautical skills. Friday is market day in Timbaki, a bustling agricultural town on the Messara plain. The buses are soon brought to a walking pace as we negotiate the narrow street lined with dozens and dozens of market stalls selling everything from plastic table cloths to cow bells and local cheeses to rotavators.

Taking an early lunch at Phaestos before the arrival of more tourist coaches, another exciting bird for Crete is identified – woodpigeon. With woodpigeon and house sparrow already, today promises to be one of the ornithological highs of the trip. Suitably refreshed after lunch we leave the crowds behind as we begin our walk towards Agia Triada, the summer palace of Phaestos. Although the walk is along a road, it is little used and the flowers, particularly the pale pinks of the mallow-leaved bindweed and shrubby sainfoin (another endemic) carpet the road verges and banks.

Penny discovers our first dragon arum of the holiday, its distinctive aroma giving the game away as much as its stature of around 3ft, and spectacular crimson flower head. Our interest is suddenly distracted by a large bird on the horizon, which when subjected to closer examination in the telescope turns out to be a crested lark – oh well!

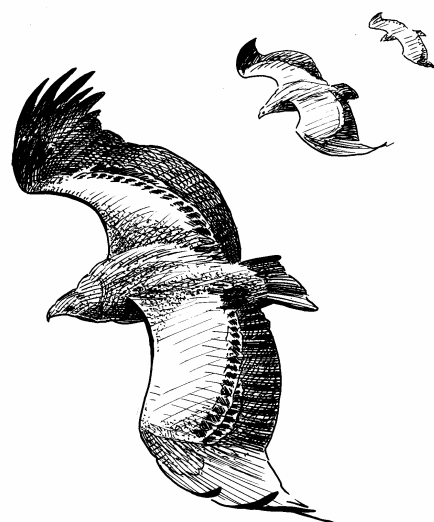
Those most in need of ice creams at the end of the walk are whisked back to Phaestos in shuttle bus 1, while the cultural element explores the remains of Ayai Triada before shuttle 2 arrives. The short stroll back to the buses is not a barren one – a hoopoe flies from one end of the fields below us. For such a brightly coloured bird it soon disappears out of view, only to appear in a completely different part of the field. It is Alan's bogey bird and despite much stalking for the 15 or so minutes remains so. The excitement and fresh air is all too much for everyone, and most (excluding drivers, that is) snooze on the journey back home.

As we walk the short distance from our hotel to the Christos taverna, which is found right on the harbour, 17 little egrets circle around the bay searching for a safe roosting place to spend the evening and night. They eventually alight on ledges on the far promontory across the bay. The warm day is still with us so we eat outside again feasting on locally grown artichokes and beans.

Saturday April 15th

The Kotsiphou gorge, although smaller than its sister, the Kourtaliotiko, it is just as spectacular. We stop at the far end of the gorge and disembark to scan the skies in search of another lammergeier or two, and the rock faces for some unusual Cretan cliff-hanging plants. Although lammergeiers are a little elusive our stop is very rewarding – griffon vultures float by in search of an early breakfast, and a blue rock thrush sings from one of the highest cliff faces in the gorge, with Cretan arum and the delicate pale yellow tree flax hanging precariously off the gorge face.

Back onto the buses we soon arrive on the north coast and the deep blue sea, immortalised by Homer. A little farther west we



turn inland to arrive at the only natural freshwater lake on Crete - Lake Kournas. Lake Kournas is a traditional wintering site for black-necked grebe, but despite much searching only one little grebe can be found. However the leaders feel that only a half-hearted attempt has been made as the interest of the group has swiftly turned to yoghurt and honey. Huge platefuls soon arrive and to Sandra's amazement Alan eats yoghurt for the first time in his life – and enjoys it. Sandra will make a new man of him yet!

Another lake is next on the itinerary, Ayia Reservoir –12 km to the west of Hania, and one of the best wetlands in Europe for getting close views of crakes. Set in the heart of the orange growing area of Crete, the air is filled with the sweet scent of orange blossom on the short walk up to the lake. The old wheels of the pumping station provide good rests for binoculars when scanning the reservoir but beware the oil and grease! We were not to be disappointed at the reservoir with good close sightings of little crake feeding on the margins of the reservoir very close to the pumping station. It proves to be very productive hour or two with glossy ibis, squacco heron, marsh harrier, black-winged stilt, nightingale and great reed warbler all vying for our attention.

Now all stomachs were starting to rumble so noisily that even the crakes take refuge in the reeds. We make our way east again to the small fishing village of Almerida for a late Cretan lunch. Once Stella had reorganised her taverna to feed us, we were soon tucking in to a wonderful meal – everyone except Roger, that is. His sardines were last to arrive and were devoured by the rest of us, so he ordered another plate which met the same fate. Roger remembered visiting the Taverna Dimitris some 12 years ago – and Stella recognised him and had distinct memories of him as a troublemaker.

After lunch we rejoined the main northern coast road via a scenic detour and a visit to a local women's co-operative shop at Gavalohori.

Despite the late lunch everyone had mysteriously acquired an appetite again by the evening, and taking the long route to the Glaros Taverna via the seafront rather than over the hill proved worthwhile. The number of little egrets had now reached 45; additional birds had obviously reached the Cretan shore from Africa to swell last night's numbers. Tonight's meal was rounded off by a rare sweet Cretan pancake found only on the south-west coast of Crete – known as Sfakiapitta, named after the Sfakia region of Crete, where the men have the largest moustaches in Crete.

Sunday April 16th

Although we have no late morning lie-ins on a Sunday, we do have an afternoon off – but first we have much to do and see. Before heading east along the coast for a short way to Moni Preveli, we make our usual first stop along Plakias beach to see if any migrants have turned up overnight and are resting or feeding on the beach or in the fields. It turns out to be quite quiet this morning but the little egrets that were spotted last night are still with us, as are a pair of little ringed plovers scurrying across the beach.

It is not far to the monastery today, a journey that takes us along the scenic Geropotamus valley and stop to view the old monastery of Preveli, now deserted. There are many hirundines this morning, funnelling up this valley from the coast on their migration. The new monastery a few kilometres around the corner is no less stunning than the old – although new, it does have a few centuries under its belt.

The exploration of the monastery comes later as we negotiate the track down the hillside towards the sea, discovering another endemic in the process, a grape hyacinth *Muscari spritzenhoferi*. There is plenty of bird activity in the scrubby hillsides but all we see are the ubiquitous but nonetheless charming Sardinian warbler. There are caves and a chapel at the end of the track, and rather than fighting our way through some thick and thorny scrub we wend our way back to the monastery via some northern wheatears, stonechats and our first sound of some chukar partridge on the opposite hill.

While the rest of us are tucking into our ice creams, Diana is still busy at work searching for birds. A blue tit disappears into a tree above the monastery wall, but Diana latches onto something much more interesting species – a female subalpine warbler. The male turns up a few minutes later, but unfortunately not many get much more than a glimpse of the birds. All of us then take a tour of the monastery to round the morning off before heading back to Plakias for lunch and a 'free' afternoon. Everyone takes advantage of a lift with the leaders down to the eastern end of the Plakias beach. Here a taverna sits opposite the beach along with some fine examples of Cretan palms. As it is Sunday

many local people have made the journey to the taverna and the taverna is doing very good business. We discover that this is the first day of opening for the taverna and they weren't expecting such a rush! All the family is drafted in as waiters and waitresses while trying to deal with the backlog of orders.

The idea for the afternoon was that Diana and Mick would take everyone to the taverna and then all could gradually walk slowly back to the Hotel along the coast. That idea went by the board with most of the group taking a lift back before opting for 40 winks!

Our walk to the taverna that evening confirms that the heron and egret migration has set in now with more little egrets (up to 55 now) seen, along with eight squacco herons and nine grey herons.

The excitement of the day is not yet over as towards the end of the evening at the Christos Taverna, Manolis and his staff disappear outside to a pick-up truck where they struggle in with a huge (270kg) tuna which they had difficulty lifting onto the table.

Monday April 16th

Our last full day and one that promises much with Eleonora's falcon and peregrine providing some early excitement above the beach at Plakias, and Jean discovering the elusive kingfisher at the village. It's a bird that the rest of us missed in the week.

A different route out of the village that takes us up to Mirthios, onto the Kotsiphou gorge but then eastwards towards the village of Sella and the Frankocastello plain. As we begin to rise up above the coast our buses stop to get a view of Plakias and some photos for the scrapbook. We were fortunate to do so for as soon as we get out of the buses the scratching sound of a scrub warbler was heard, and lo and behold, one of the Cretan specialities appeared, Ruppell's warbler, which was obliging enough to give everyone good views. The day had only just begun and although we would have liked to wait and watch a little more, time was passing quickly. The scenery is spectacular along this section of coast and it was tempting to stop around each corner to explore and admire. At the village of Rodakina we made a brief detour down to the beach where we acquired a local lad out for a ride on his motorbike – he said very little but became very fascinated by us and our antics. The area was quiet, but the eagle eyes of Pat and Brenda picked out a crake weaving its way in and out of the giant reed. No amount of searching could re-find the bird, but from descriptions is likely to have been a spotted crake. Motoring out of the village we stop by general demand for a photo-stop next to a field of blue lupins and quickly discover our Cretan scooter friend again.

As we approach Frankocastello, Alan at last sees his bogey bird – the hoopoe – and we all get good glimpses of the strange looking bird at various times during our visit. Another early lunch at a secret taverna off the beaten track in a stunning setting on the beach. Several of the party stripped off (not completely we hasten to add) for a swim in the clear sea while waiting for lunch, while Diana searched for shells. Liz had the marine find of the day though coming across a sea cucumber, while Shineen quickly gained our attention pointing at a purple heron dropping into some nearby reeds.



On settling up with the owners, Mick asks who plays the lyra, lying on the table nearby. His young son opens the case, and with a little encouragement begins to play one of the exotic Cretan folk tunes. With only 6 months playing experience he seems a natural, and looks as if he could have a great future as a musician.

The afternoon is spent exploring the castle itself and a walk along the cliff top with another 12 squacco herons in attendance. Life on Crete is punctuated by stops at tavernas, and while eating the 20th ice cream of the holiday, 33 night herons suddenly arrive from Africa and all land in one tree 200 metres along the cliff!

In the final search for more herons, the Bimbo Bus gets diverted from the real target and becomes unnaturally interested in a rusting Cretan Bus that has seen better days! Our coastal return drive has to

contend with Cretan shepherds and large numbers of sheep and goats, while the Bimbo Bus arrives later in Mirthios having avoided a collision with a rufous phase cuckoo travelling north at around 200mph.

The craft shop at Mirthios does some brisk business before we arrive back at the hotel, for Roger to be presented with his lost spectacles. However they turn out to be someone else's, but as he is pretty desperate to see some herons and what he is eating tonight. Actually they aren't too bad, quite close to his prescription, they fit OK, and they make him look quite suave and sophisticated (for Crete that is!).

For our last supper we plump for the Glaros where Nikos has done us proud over the week, and tonight is no exception with some 'sparkling' lobster. Wine, raki and liqueurs flow and by the end of the evening no-one wants to leave the taverna or Crete – especially Penny who has taken a great liking to one of the rooms in the taverna and won't come out. Diana eventually uses all her powers of persuasion to guide Penny home at 2am!

Tuesday 18th April

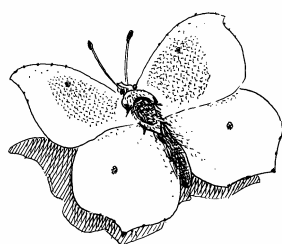
A late afternoon flight allows us a leisurely morning and time for some last minute shopping and recovery from the previous evening. The weather had been kind to us all week with much sun and warmth, but change was on its way and cloud had started to build. By the time we were ready to leave rain had arrived.

A last minute hitch with the transport arrangements emerges when all our suitcases are ready for loading. The coach company has been a little optimistic with the size of the coach for the return journey, so instead of us all squeezing into the small coach, Mick and Diana load much of the luggage into the minibus and escort the group to the airport.

Fond farewells are said to Anne-Marie our friendly and helpful hostess for the week and we sadly leave Plakias and head for the airport, while Mick stays behind at Heraklion for a second week on Crete.

BUTTERFLY and INSECT LIST

Bath White
Cleopatra
Clouded Yellow
Dappled White
Eastern Festoon
Holly Blue
Large White
Painted Lady
Red Admiral
Small Copper
Small White
Speckled Wood
Scarce Swallowtail
Swallowtail



Egyptian Locust
Hummingbird Hawk-moth
Praying Mantis

REPTILE AND MAMMAL LIST

Reptiles

Balkan Green Lizard
Common Tree Frog
Erhard's Wall Lizard
Marsh Frog
Stripe-necked Terrapin
Green Toad

Mammals

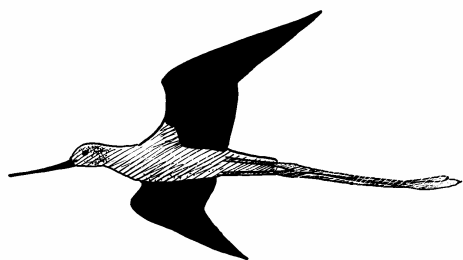
Badger
Beech Marten
Eastern Hedgehog
Rat
Shrew

Other

Sea Cucumber
Land Crab

BIRD LIST

Little grebe
Night heron
Squacco heron
Little egret
Grey heron
Purple heron
Glossy ibis
Mallard
Lammergeier
Griffon vulture
Marsh harrier
Montagu's harrier
Buzzard
Kestrel
Eleonora's falcon
Peregrine
Chukar
Quail
Unidentified crane (possibly spotted crane)
Little crane
Moorhen
Coot
Black-winged stilt



Little ringed plover
Wood sandpiper
Common sandpiper
Yellow-legged gull
Rock dove
Woodpigeon
Collared dove
Cuckoo (dark phase)
Swift
Alpine swift
Kingfisher
Hoopoe
Crested lark

Woodlark
Skylark
Sand martin
Crag martin
Swallow
House martin
Tree pipit
Red-throated pipit
Yellow wagtail (*Montilla flava flava*)
Yellow wagtail (*Montilla flava cinereocapilla*)
Yellow wagtail (*Montilla flava feldegg*)
Grey wagtail
White wagtail
Wren
Nightingale
Whinchat
Stonechat
Wheatear
Black-eared wheatear
Blue rock thrush
Blackbird
Cetti's warbler
Fan-tailed warbler
Sedge warbler
Reed warbler
Great reed warbler
Sardinian warbler
Subalpine warbler
Ruppell's warbler
Blackcap
Blue tit
Great tit
Woodchat shrike
Red-billed chough
Jackdaw
Hooded crow
Raven
House sparrow
Italian sparrow
Chaffinch
Serin
Greenfinch
Goldfinch
Linnet
Cirl bunting
Ortolan bunting
Corn bunting

**HONEYGUIDE WILDLIFE HOLIDAYS
CRETE 11-18 APRIL 2000
PLANT LIST**

The following list comprises the more obvious plants seen and identified during the week.

Key and nomenclature: Latin names of plants follows those used in *Flora of the Cretan Area* (Turland et al 1993), any alternative names as used in *Mediterranean Wild Flowers* (Blamey & Grey-Wilson 1993) follow in brackets.

* Endemic to Crete

Introduced and not native to Crete and cultivated or planted species

1 SPERMATOPHYTES

i) Gymnosperms

Cupressaceae - Cypress Family

Cupressus sempervirens forma. *horizontalis* Cypress

C. sempervirens forma. *sempervirens* Funeral Cypress

ii) Angiosperms

a) Dicotyledons

Aizoaceae - Aizoon Family

Carpobrotus edulis var. *rubescens* Hottentot Fig

Anacardiaceae - Pistacio Family

Pistacia lentiscus Mastic Tree

Apocynaceae - Oleander Family

Nerium oleander subsp. *oleander* Oleander

Boraginaceae - Borage Family

Anchusa italica (*A. azurea*) Large Blue Alkanet

Borago officinalis Borage

Cynoglossum creticum Blue Hound's Tongue

Echium angustifolium subsp. *angustifolium* Narrow-Leaved Bugloss

Echium italicum subsp. *biebersteinii* Pale Bugloss

Echium plantagineum Purple Viper's Bugloss

Onosma erecta Golden Drops

Symphytum creticum (*Procopiana cretica*) Procopiana

Cactaceae - Cactus Family

Opuntia ficus-barbarica (*O. ficus-indica*) Prickly Pear

Campanulaceae - Bellflower Family

* *Petromarula pinnata* Cretan Wall Lettuce

Caprifoliaceae - Honeysuckle Family

Sambucus nigra Elderflower

Caryophyllaceae - Pink Family

Petrorhagia velutina (*Kohlrauschia velutina*)

Silene bellidifolia

Silene colorata subsp. *colorata*

Silene conica Sand Catchfly

Silene vulgaris Bladder Campion

Cistaceae - Rockrose Family

Cistus creticus Cretan Cistus
Cistus salvifolius Sage-Leaved Cistus

Compositae - Daisy Family

Anthemis rigida subsp. *rigida* Rayless Chamomile
Asteriscus spinosa (*Pallensis spinosa*)
Calendula arvensis Field Marigold
Chrysanthemum coronarium var. *coronarium* Crown Daisy
C. coronarium var. *discolor* Crown Daisy
Crupina crupinostrum Crupina
Dittrichia viscosa subsp. *viscosa* Stink Aster
Galactites tomentosa Mediterranean Thistle
Helichrysum barrelieri (*H. conglobatum*) Golden Cassidony
Phagnalon graecum (*P. rupestre*) Shrubby Cudweed
Ptilostemon chamaepeuce Shrubby Knapweed
Tragopogon sinuatus (*T. porrifolius*) Wild Salsify

Convolvulaceae - Bindweed Family

Convolvulus althaeoides Mallow-leaved Bindweed
Cuscuta epithimum Dodder

Crassulaceae - Stonecrop Family

Umbilicus parviflorus Small-Flowered Navelwort

Cruciferaeae - Cress Family

Biscutella didyma Buckler Mustard
Cakile maritima Sea Rocket
Eruca sativa Eruca
Matthiola tricuspidata Three-Horned Stock
**Ricotia cretica* Ricotia

Dioscoraceae - Yam Family

Tamus communis Black Bryony

Dipsacaceae - Teasel Family

Knautia integrifolia subsp. *mimica* A Scabious

Euphorbiaceae - Spurge Family

Euphorbia acanthothamnus Greek Spiny Spurge
Euphorbia characias Mediterranean Spurge
Euphorbia dendroides Tree Spurge
Euphorbia helioscopia Sun Spurge
Euphorbia paralias Sea Spurge
Ricinus communis Castor Oil Plant

Fagaceae - Oak Family

Quercus pubescens Downy Oak
Quercus macrolepis Valonian Oak

Geraniaceae - Geranium Family

Erodium gruinum Long-beaked Stork's Bill
Geranium columbinum Long-stalked Crane's-Bill
Geranium dissectum Cut-leaved Crane's-Bill
Geranium rotundifolium Round-leaved Crane's-Bill

Guttiferae - Hypericum Family

Hypericum empetrifolium subsp. *empetrifolium* Shrubby St. John's Wort

Labiatae - Mint Family

Coriodithymus capitatus (*Thymus capitatus*) Shrubby Thyme
Origanum vulgare subsp hirtum Marjoram
Phlomis fruticosa Jerusalem Sage
Phlomis lanata
Prasium majus Spanish Hedge-nettle
Salvia fruticosa Three-Leaved Sage
Salvia viridis Red-Topped Sage
Satureja nervosa
Satureja thymbra Savory
* *Scutellaria sieberi* A Skullcap

Leguminosae - Pea Family

Acacia spp Mimosa
Anagyris foetida Bean Trefoil
Anthyllus vulneraria ssp.praepropera Red (Mediterranean) Kidney Vetch
Bituminaria bituminosa (*Psoralea bituminosa*) Pitch Trefoil
Calicotome villosa Hairy Thorny Broom
Ceratonia siliqua Carob Tree
* *Ebenus creticus* Shrubby Sainfoin
Lupinus micranthus Hairy Lupin
Medicago arabica Spotted Medick
Medicago marina Sea Medick
Medicago orbicularis Large Disk Medick
Spartium junceum Spanish Broom
Tetragonolobus purpureus Asparagus Pea
Trifolium stellatum Star Clover
Trifolium tomentosum Woolly Trefoil
Trifolium uniflorum One-Flowered Clover
Tripodion tetraphyllum (*Anthyllis tetraphyllum*) Bladder Vetch
Vicia sativa Fodder Vetch

Linacea - Flax Family

Linum arboreum Tree Flax
Linum bienne Pale Flax

Lythraceae - Loosestrife Family

Lythrum junceum Creeping Loosestrife

Malvaceae - Mallow Family

Lavatera cretica Lesser Tree Mallow
Malva sylvestris Common Mallow

Moraceae - Fig Family

Ficus carica Fig
Morus alba White Mulberry

Myrtaceae - Myrtle Family

Myrtus communis subsp communis Common Myrtle

Oleaceae - Olive Family

Olea europaea subsp. europaea Olive

Orobanchaceae - Broomrape Family

Orobanche ramosa Branched Broomrape
Orobanche crenata

Oxalidaceae - Sorrel Family

Oxalis pes-caprae Bermuda Buttercup

Papaveraceae - Poppy Family

Glaucium flavum Yellow-Horned Poppy

Papaver rhoeas Common Poppy

Plantaginacea - Plantain Family

Plantago afra

Platanaceae - Plane Tree Family

Platanus orientalis Oriental Plane

Polygalaceae - Milkwort Family

Polygala venulosa Eastern Milkwort

Primulaceae - Primrose Family

Anagallis arvensis Scarlet Pimpernel (Scarlet and blue forms)

**Cyclamen creticum* Cretan Cyclamen

Ranunculaceae - Buttercup Family

Adonis microcarpa subsp cretica Yellow Pheasant's-Eye

Anemone coronaria Crown Anemone

Anemone hortensis ssp. heldreichii

Delphinium staphisagria Larkspur

Nigella damascena Love-in-a-Mist

Ranunculus asiaticus Turban Buttercup

Resedaceae - Mignonette Family

Reseda lutea Wild Mignonette

Rosaceae - Rose Family

Prunus dulcis - Almond

Rubus sanctus Bramble

Sanguisorba minor subsp. verrucosa Mediterranean Salad Burnet

Sarcopterium spinosum Thorny Burnet

Rubiaceae - Bedstraw Family

Rubia peregrina Wild Madder

Rutaceae - Rue Family

Citrus limon Lemon

Citrus sinensis Orange

Ruta chalepensis subsp chalepensis Fringed Rue

Santalaceae - Sandalwood Family

Osyris alba Osyris

Scrophulariaceae - Figwort Family

Bellardia trixago Bellardia

Linaria chalapensis

Linaria pelisseriana Jersey Toadflax

Misopates orontium Lesser Snapdragon

Parentucellia viscosa Yellow Bartsia

Scrophularia lucida Shining Figwort

Scrophularia peregrinum Nettle-leaved Figwort

* *Verbascum arcturus* Hanging Mullein

Verbascum sinuatum

Solanaceae - Potato Family

Hyoscyamus albus White Henbane

Mandragora autumnalis Mandrake

Styracaceae - Storax Family

Styrax officinalis Storax

Tamaricaceae - Tamarix Family

Tamarix smyrnensis Tamarisk

Thymelaeaceae - Daphne Family

Daphne sericea

Thymelaea hirsuta Thymelea

Umbelliferae - Carrot Family

Apium nodiflorum Fools Water-cress

Bupleurum gracile A Thorow Wax

Daucus carota Wild Carrot

Eryngium maritimum Sea Holly

Ferula communis subsp. *communis* Giant Fennel

Foeniculum vulgare Fennel

Oenanthe pimpinelloides Corky-Fruited Water Dropwort

Tordylium apulum Mediterranean Hartwort

Torylis arvensis Spreading Hedge-parsley

Urticaceae - Nettle Family

Parietaria judaica Pellitory of the Wall

Urtica membranacea Membranous Nettle

Urtica pilulifera Roman Nettle

Valerianaceae - Valerian Family

**Valeriana asarifolia* Cretan Valerian

Valerianella discoidea A Corn Salad

Verbenaceae - Verbena Family

Vitex agnus-castus Chaste Tree

Vitaceae - Vine Family

Vitis vinifera subsp. *vinifera* Grape Vine

b) Monocotyledons

Agavaceae - Agave Family

Agave americana Century Plant

Amaryllidaceae - Daffodil Family

Narcissus tazetta Rose of Sharon (in fruit only)

Pancratium maritimum Sea Daffodil (leaves only)

Araceae - Arum Family

Arisarum vulgare Friars Cowl

Arum creticum Cretan Arum

Dranunculus vulgaris Common Dragon Arum

Graminaceae - Grass Family

Arundo donax Giant Reed

Briza maxima Giant Quaking Grass

Dasyryum villosum

Lagurus ovatus Hare's-tail

Iridaceae - Iris Family

Gladiolus italicus Field Gladiolus

Gynandriris sisyrinchium Barbary Nut
Hermodactylus tuberosus Widow Iris
Iris albicans White Flag Iris
Iris pseudocorus Yellow Flag
* *Iris unguicularis ssp. cretensis* Cretan Iris

Liliaceae - Lily Family

Allium commutatum Wild Leek
Asphodeline lutea Yellow Asphodel
Asphodelus aestivus Common Asphodel
Drimia maritima (Urginea maritima) Sea Squill
Gagea graeca
Muscari comosum Tassle Hyacinth
* *Muscari spritzenhoferi*
Ornithogalum exscapum A Star of Bethlehem
Ornithogalum narbonense A Star of Bethlehem
* *Tulipa cretica* Cretan Tulip
* *Tulipa doerfleri (T. orphanidea)* Orange Wild Tulip
Tulipa sylvestris Wild Tulip

Orchidaceae - Orchid Family

Aceras anthropophorum Man Orchid
Anacamptis pyramidalis Pyramidal Orchid
Barlia robertiana Giant Orchid
Ophrys bilunulata Double Moon Orchid
Ophrys bombyliflora Bumble Bee Orchid
Ophrys doerfleri (O. cretica) Cretan Bee Orchid
Ophrys fuciflora Late Spider Orchid
Ophrys fusca Sombre Bee Orchid
Ophrys heldreichii (O. scolopax ssp. heldreichii) Marengo Orchid
Ophrys iricolor Rainbow Orchid
Ophrys phrygana Phrygana Orchid
Ophrys sicula Sicilian Orchid (a Yellow Bee Orchid)
Ophrys mammosa (O. sphegodes ssp. mammosa) Mammose Orchid
Ophrys tentredinifera Sawfly Orchid
Orchis boryi
Orchis collina (O. saccata) Fan-Lipped Orchid
Orchis italica Italian Man Orchid
Orchis lactea Milky Orchid
Orchis papilionacea Pink Butterfly Orchid
Orchis pauciflora (O. provincialis subsp. pauciflora) Few-flowered Orchid
Orchis quadripunctata Four-Spotted Orchid
Serapia bergonii (S.vomeracea ssp. laxiflora) Bergon's Tongue Orchid
Serapia orientalis ssp. orientalis Eastern Tongue Orchid

Palmae - Palm Family

Phoenix theophrasti Cretan Palm

Typhaceae - Reedmace Family

Typha domingensis A reedmace