

Crete's Autumn Flowers

A Greentours Tour for the North American Rock Garden Society

Leaders Oron Peri (who kindly provided the images) and Todd Boland

24th – 31st October 2024

24th October Day 1 Arrival, transfer to our Hotels in Chania

Time permitting we will drive thirty minutes to the Akrotiri Peninsula, northeast of Chania. Stopping near Guoverneto Monastery we'll take a walk to the Monastery Katoliko, a beautiful old ruin of a monastery which is located at the entrance to a small gorge. It is a rocky area close to the sea where many plants grow in rock crevices. We might see 3 different species of autumnal flowering Alliums - *Allium tardans*, *Allium chamaespathuh* and *Allium callimischon ssp haemostictum*, and there's also *Cyclamen graecum* and maybe *Biarum spp.*

25th October Day 2 Anopolis, Imbros Gorge & the Niatos Plateau

After breakfast we will head toward the village of Anopolis situated in the southern part of the Island. We will have many stops for flowers along the way. Our aim is to find the showy *Colchicum macrophyllum*. This species starts flowering as early as September but there is still good chance to find some in flower in late October. We will make several stops near the Imbros Gorge, Aksifou, from there we will go up to Niatos plateau which is a good site for *Crocus pumillus*. On this they we will probably see *Sternbergia sicula*, *Crocus laevigatus*, *Cyclamen graecum ssp candidum*, *Colchicum cretense*, *Biarum davisii*, *Prospero minimum*, and *Narcissus deficiens*.

26th October Day 3 Kotsifou & Chania

We will drive east along the coast before turning south before Rethimno and heading to the Kotsifou Canyon. Here are wonderful areas with high cliffs on both sides of the road, home to Egyptian Vultures. We will stop to look at some endemic plants such as *Origanum dictamnus*, *Allium callimischon ssp. haemostichum*, *Colchicum pusillum* and other beauties. There will be an option of heading back earlier on this day so that you can have the afternoon free to explore the old town of Chania. Or you can continue botanizing the area.

27th October Day 4 Elaffonisi Island & Topolia

We will cross the mountains heading for the southwesternmost corner of Crete and Elaffonisi Island, a beautiful and interesting sandy area were many coastal species are growing. On the way we will stop at





a little Chapel near the village of Topolia where we will see the beautiful *Cyclamen confusum* and many *Narcissus deficiens*, *Drimia numidica* and in the sandy dunes we hope to still find *Pancratium maritimum* in bloom.

28th October Day 5 Mount Ida

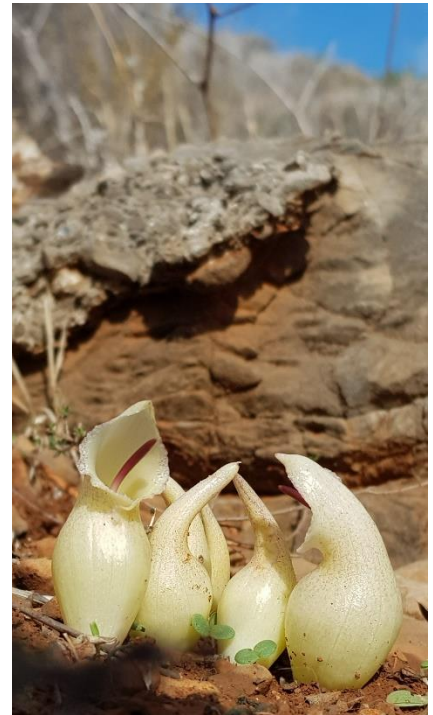
After breakfast we will checkout from our hotels and drive for a couple of hours towards the Observatory on Mount Ida which is part of the great Psiloritis Mountains. We will have few stops on the way wherever we see any flowers. This is a day with amazing views and much geological interest. Up on the mountain we will see the beautiful *Crocus oreocreticus* and a sea of *Colchicum cretense*. In the afternoon we will head

down to our Hotel in Iraklion.

29th October Day 6 Lasithi Plateau

This morning we will head up through Mochos to the Lasithi Plateau. On the way we should see *Crocus laevigatus*, *Sternbergia sicula*, *Euphorbia dimorphocaulon* and others. Up on the plateau we will find the autumnal flowering *Ranunculus bullatus*, *Sternbergia greuteriana*, *Sternbergia lutea* and hopefully little *Prospero battagliae*.

We will drive down from the plateau passing through Mesa Potami to Neapoli and Malia, again with stops on route for botanizing. Plants on the agenda this afternoon will hopefully include *Crocus tournefortii*, *Clematis cirrhosa* and various *Allium*, *Biarum* and *Cyclamen*.



30th October Day 7 The Southern Psiloritis Range

After breakfast we will head once more to the Psiloritis range, this time driving up into the mountains from their southern side. We will drive to the village of Gergeri from where we will take the dirt road all the way up passing through beautiful scenery. All the while there are tranquil rocky valleys and at every turn views of the sea. We'll pass through areas with ancient trees such as *Quercus coccifera*, *Acer sempervirens*, *Arbutus andrachne* and others. We will see more *Colchicum*, *Biarum tenuifolium idomenaeum*, *Drimia*, *Prospero* and a variety of different shrubs.

We will go down on the road that passes through Krousonas back to Heraklion, again with stops for plants.

31st October Day 8 Departure



Included in the price:

All meals and transport from airport to hotel on Oct. 24 and return to airport on Oct 31. Services of your leaders. Please note: Drinks, tips, and items of a personal nature such as travel insurance, are not included. Please note that if you arrive earlier than the 24th or stay later than the 31st, airport transfer is on your own.

Walking is generally easy but on some days a moderate walk will be required. Sturdy footwear is suggested. The weather should be sunny and warm but showers and cloud are a possibility. It should be noted that the itinerary focuses on the fall bulbs of western Crete but additional autumn-blooming plants will also be seen.

Gratuities: Gratuities are included for meals but tips for bus driver and the guides are at your own discretion. It is suggested you tip \$2-3 Euro per day per person for the bus driver.

Information Related Registration, Payments, and Cancellation

You must be a NARGS member to register. If you need to renew your membership or to join the society, please do so via the NARGS website (www.nargs.org).

The cost for the tour is **\$2585 USD per person based on double occupancy; single occupancy \$3160 USD.**

Registration will be on a first come, first serve basis. Space on this tour is limited to 17 guests. Your space is not guaranteed until a deposit is paid. **The deposit is \$750 USD.**

Before submitting your deposit, use the **Contact Us** form on the website to confirm space availability. You will receive an email confirming space availability and a link to the Google Registration Form. Guests traveling together must EACH fill in a Google Registration Form.



Deposit Payment

To pay the deposit for the tour, use the PayPal link on the NARGS website (www.nargs.org). After logging onto the website, click on the “Donate” button at the top of the homepage. Then type Fall Crete Tour in the “Purpose of Donation” box, select Educational trips from the “Program” picklist, select Other for the “Amount” list, then fill in the \$750 USD deposit amount, and then click the “Add to Cart” button. On the next page, check that the amount is correct and then click the “Checkout” button. On the next page, select “Secure checkout” with Credit Card or with PayPal account as the “Payment method” and confirm your address. You will then be routed to the PayPal website where you can pay via either a PayPal account (if you have one) or select Pay with Debit or Credit Card.

Final Payment

NARGS will email a reminder regarding final payment information in June 2024. Final payment is due by July 1, 2024. The preferred method for final payment is by check from a U.S. bank denominated in USD. The check should be payable to NARGS, note Newfoundland Tour on the memo line of the check, and be mailed to NARGS, POB 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604. Payment can be made via credit card, PayPal, postal or bank money order, or a check from a non-U.S. bank but must be denominated in USD and must include a 5% surcharge to cover banking fees. Failure to make final payment by March 1, 2024 will result in reservation cancellation and full loss of the deposit.

Cancellation

Cancellation requests must be submitted in writing to NARGS by the person making the reservation. Cancellations after deposit is paid but prior to the final payment due date will forfeit 50% of deposit. Failure to submit final payment by due date will result in forfeiting 100% of deposit. Cancellations after

final payment is made but more than 30 days before start of the tour will forfeit 50% of tour cost. No reimbursements or credits will be given for cancellations within 30 days of start of tour unless another person can be found to fill the space. Each registrant is urged to obtain private trip insurance to cover any exigencies requiring cancellation. If the tour is cancelled by NARGS for any reason, all payments minus banking fees and incurred expenses will be refunded to registered participants. If the tour is cancelled by NARGS, any person who had previously cancelled will not be entitled to this refund.

Information Related to Insurance, Waivers, and Public Health Requirements

Insurance

The tour price does not include insurance to cover costs associated with medical treatment, repatriation, flight cancellations, baggage loss, travel interruptions, cancellation fees, or other expenses. Each registrant is urged to assess their personal situation and to obtain private insurance to cover these costs if needed.

Waiver of Liability and Use of Photos

By submitting a tour deposit, you are acknowledging that you are aware of the risks associated with travel and that you will not hold NARGS or others associated with the tour responsible for any delays; changes in itinerary, staffing, or accommodations; injuries, illnesses, or deaths; or any circumstances beyond the control of NARGS. At the time of final payment, you will be required to sign a waiver releasing NARGS and others associated with the tour, from any losses, liability, or claims associated with your participation in the tour and allowing use of any photos taken during the tour.

Public Health Requirements

All participants must comply with public health requirements for international travel in their country of residence and in the tour host country. During the tour, participants may be in close contact with other participants and the general public. To the extent possible, participants should comply with U.S. and local public health guidelines, and must comply with all local public health requirements. If you do not feel well during the tour, let the tour guide know. The guide will assist in locating medical services, but these services may be distant and less extensive than those available at home. Each participant will be individually responsible for paying the cost for these services and associated transportation.

QUESTIONS?

Send an email to [Contact Us - Tours](#).