

## Kackars, Turkey

Holiday Report 12-21 July 2019

led by

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Orange Hermit (Harry Faull)

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## Introduction

This was the third Greenwings trip to see the wide range of butterflies and plants in the Kaçkar mountains of north-east Turkey. These rugged mountains rise steeply from Turkey's Black Sea coast and are part of the Caucasus mountains that are recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot. The Kaçkars are an extremely rich area for butterflies with over 200 resident species.

The River Çoruh and its tributary, the Barhal (Altıparmak) river, lie at the heart of the Kaçkars and the centre of the trip explored their upper reaches at altitudes of 1,300—2,300m. The area consists of steep-sided valleys with dry Mediterranean vegetation, typically with dense woodland and trees in the valley bottoms interspersed with small hay-meadows. In the upper reaches these merge into alpine meadows with wet flushes and few trees. The highest mountain in the range is Kaçkar Dağı with an elevation of 3,937 metres.

The tour was centred around the charming little villages of Barhal and Olgunlar, the latter being at the furthest end of the valley that you can reach by car. The area is very remote and only accessed by a narrow road that winds its way up the valley providing dramatic views that change with every turn. The tour started and ended at the city of Erzurum, located at 1,900m and surrounded by a flat plain before the high mountains start. Due to last minute changes in flight times by Turkish airlines, we amended the itinerary, going straight into the mountains on Day 1 and visiting the Gungormez valley on the last day instead of the first. Twelve guests joined our three guides and we again had the excellent services of Refik as driver.

Butterfly names are in English after Ahmet Baytas (2007) Field Guide to Butterflies of Turkey. A full checklist of localities sightings with scientific names is given at the end.



**The Hastaf Valley above Olgunlar, with the high peak of Kackar Dagi beyond (Tony Hoare)**

## Day 1: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2019

After a hot night in the bustling city of Erzurum, we made an early start into the mountains north of the city. Our first stop was a track by the road that ran alongside the Tortum River. Here, a narrow strip of woodland was interspersed with patches of dry grassland and a few small allotments. Almost immediately we saw a Southern White Admiral flit past together with a few graceful Swallowtails and Scarce Swallowtails. Golden Orioles piped loudly above the sound of the river. We saw several whites, which turned out to be mainly Southern Small White and the occasional Mountain Small White. Soon a cry went up of "Orange Hermit" and we gathered round to see this spectacular butterfly nectaring on various vetches and Viper's Bugloss. We had our first views of several Fritillaries, including Spotted, Silver-washed, Dark Green and Niobe. Most spectacular of all was the Cardinal, one of Europe's largest butterflies. Amongst the browns were Balkan Marbled White, Eastern Rock Grayling, Great Banded Grayling and Amasian Satyr. We spotted a few Brown Argus as well as some *Agrodiaetus* Blues, most of which have a characteristic white stripe on the under hindwing. They are notoriously difficult to identify, with over 30 species found in Turkey, but we were certain of *Iphigeneia* Blue and Poseidon Blue.

Our second stop was by the old road to Uzundere where we had been tipped off that there were a good array of coppers. Sure enough, by a small stream we were thrilled to see the stunning Fiery Copper, with its brilliant orange wings quite unlike other coppers. We also had good views of Lesser Fiery Copper, Sooty Copper, Purple-shot Copper and Small Copper, the latter in the dark form found in Turkey. A few Brimstones were found nectaring, among them some Powdered Brimstones, distinguished by the whitish uppersides to their antennae and more crinkly hindwing. We also saw our first Meleager's Blue and False Chalk-hill Blue, the latter looking like a more vibrant version of our own Chalk-hill. A few lucky people had our first sighting of Ionian Emperor, which we fortunately saw again several times on the trip.

We then continued to follow the road alongside the Tortum River until it merged with the Çoruh, which leads into the town of Yusefeli. We were once again amazed that this town of 20,000 people is due to be flooded by a controversial dam and hydroelectric scheme. Our third stop was the track down from the village of Dereici above where a new road is being bored through the mountains to replace the road due to be flooded in the valley bottom. It was by now late in the day and a few clouds meant that butterflies were becoming less active. We saw a several Short-tailed Blues and a single Little Tiger Blue. After a short stop, we travelled on to the small village of Barhal where our Pension nestled on a steep hill amongst lush woodlands. Our cases were carried up by an electric pulley-system that proved simple but effective!

Plants seen included Stop 1: *Peganum harmala*, *Echium vulgare*, *Xeranthemum annuum*, *Consolida so.* *Colutea cilicica*, *Cotynus corrygia*. Stop 2: *Ajuga chamaepitys*, *Cenopodium botrys*, *Tribulus terrestris*. Stop 3: *Adiantum capillus-veneris*, *Campanula rapunculus*, *Dianthus orientalis*



Fiery Copper (Harry Faull)



Lesser Fiery Copper (Harry Faull)



Powdered Brimstone (Nigel Peace)

## Day 2: 14<sup>th</sup> July 2019

We had an excellent breakfast at the Barhal Pension and made an early start to catch the best part of the day for photography. In a small meadow just outside the hotel, we had our first sightings of the lovely Zephyr Blue, Blue Argus and Reverdin's Blue, all of which we saw on many subsequent days on the trip. We then walked down the narrow road towards Barhal village amongst tall woodland where many butterflies were nectaring at a convenient height on the Dwarf Elder. We had good views of Sloe Hairstreaks and Large Skippers as well numerous Silver-washed, Marbled and Heath Fritillaries, and Nine-spotted Moths, all getting stuck into this important nectar source. An Ionian Emperor flew past but did not stay.

Our second stop was on the road to Yaylalar, a few kilometres above Barhal. Here we saw our first Apollo, flying effortlessly down the mountain-side and along the river. We were also pleased to see several Black-veined Whites as well as a single High Brown Fritillary and Southern Comma. The Dwarf Elder again proved a magnet, with both Ilex and Sloe Hairstreak frequent amongst numerous fritillaries and Scotch Arguses. On one plant, we found an Osiris Blue, nectaring inconspicuously down amongst the white flowers. We followed several Eastern Rock Graylings along the road, where they basked by leaning over to catch the sun.

We then drove back down through Barhal and turned up the side valley to Pisenkaya. Our journey was stopped short by erosion to the river bank, which had caused the road to tumble into the river. We realised that this must be a common occurrence in these steep sided valleys where the roads have no choice but to hug the sides of fast-flowing rivers. A digger was already deep down in the river, bringing up huge rocks to rebuild the bank. While walking down, we had fantastic views of an Ionian Emperor which posed for long periods on Dwarf Elder. We all enjoyed seeing the subtle colours of its hindwings as well as the dramatic markings on its upperside. We had our first sightings of Scarce Copper, with its conspicuous white spots on its hindwings, which differentiates it from other coppers. By now many butterflies were feeding on the wet mud, including scores of Scotch Argus and Southern Small Whites. We also had good views of Aedon Blue, one of the largest blues with chalky uppersides and plain unders, as well as the brighter blue of the Eros Blue. Tony took a photo of an orange skipper which after he got back home was identified as Levantine Skipper, the only one of the trip! A few of us had amazing close-up views of Red-fronted Serin. There were several nice dragonflies, including the sky-blue Southern Skimmer *Orthetrum brunneum*. After a long day a few of us walked a little more of the road below the Pension before going for an excellent supper.

Plants seen included: *Clinopodium vulgare*, *Campanula rapunculus*, *Chelidonium majus*, *Salvia verticillata*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Lysimachia punctata*, *Sambucus ebulus*, *Scrophularia pergrina*, *Calystegia* sp.

2nd stop. *Campanula choruensis*, *Origanum rotundifolium*, *Sedum spurium*, *Campanula rapunculoides*, *Papaver fugax*, *Campanula persicifolia*, *Cephalaria gigantea*, *Dactylorhiza* sp. *Aquilegia olympica*, *Digitalis schischkinii*, *Pelargonium endlicherianum*, *Silene armeria*, *Melampyrum arvense*, *Datisca cannabina*



**Ionian Emperor (Harry Faull)**



**Eros Blue (Martin Warren)**



**Aedon Blue (Martin Warren)**

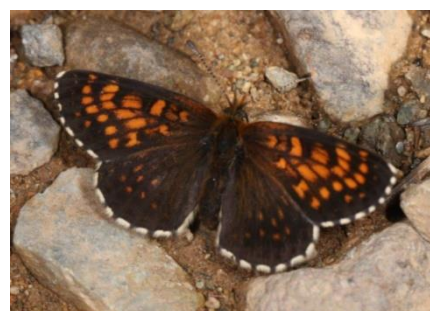
### Day 3: 15<sup>th</sup> July 2019

After a superb breakfast, Mert had a surprise for us. He had obtained the keys to the Georgian Church next door to the Pensyon. In former times, Barhal had been a major trading centre in the mountains and Muslims and Christians lived together in the village. The Church dates from the 10<sup>th</sup>C and during our last two visits had been undergoing extensive renovation, with no access. Inside, Mert played haunting music on a Ney (Turkish Flute) and told us about the church and its history. After this unique experience, we ventured up the nearby Bacackilar Valley where we made two stops: at 1700m and by a junction at 1500m.



**Georgian Church at Barhal where Mert played the Ney (Turkish Flute) (Martin Warren)**

At the first stop, we saw several False Heath Fritillaries, distinguished by their dark hindwings, as well as our first Marsh Fritillary. Several Apollos floated by but did not stop. We were lucky to spot a pair of mating Large Blues which posed conveniently for photos. Numerous blues were nectaring on the colourful roadside plants, including Zephyr, Turquoise, Meleager's, Amanda's, Aedon, Eros, Short-tailed, Common, False-Chalk-hill, Iphigeneia, and Damon. Fritillaries were also abundant including Heath, Spotted, Caucasian Spotted, Silver-washed, Dark Green, Queen of Spain, Marbled, Lesser Marbled and Twin-spot. We had our only sighting of the beautifully marked Geyer's Tawny Rockbrown as well as numerous Scotch Argus and a few Eastern Rock Grayling.



**Geyer's Tawny Rockbrown (Tony Hoare)**

**Zephyr Blue (Martin Warren)**

**False Heath Fritillary (Tony Hoare)**

By the time of our lunch-stop lower down the valley, the temperature had soared to above 35C and we were glad of a little shade. We saw a single Adonis Blue to add to our list but there were noticeably fewer butterflies in the heat of the day. Several bright yellow Ascalaphids, *Libelloides macaronius*, hovered around undaunted as well as a few dragonflies over the river, including Common Darter.

In the afternoon, we travelled up the Barhal valley above the Pension and walked back down amidst the welcome shade. There were the usual fantastic array of fritillaries, hairstreaks, blues and coppers, many nectaring on Dwarf Elder or mint that lined the road. We saw several day-flying moths including Cream-spot Tiger, Jersey Tiger and Nine-spotted. We also saw a large dragonfly with the marvellous name of the Eastern Spectre *Caliaeschna microstigma*. In the late afternoon, Ben, Martin and Mert walked up the steep narrow path to the ruined church that stands high on the opposite hillside. On the way they saw a Long-nosed Viper *Vipera ammodytes*, in a recently cut hay-meadow, fortunately at a safe distance.

Plants seen included: *Isatis glauca*, *Carlina biebersteinii*, *Helichrysum plicatum*, *Tanacetum macrophyllum*, *Heracleum platytaeniucm*, *Dianthus calocephalus*, *Epilobium stevenii*, *Teucrium pruinsum*, *Asplenium septentrionale*. *Euonymus latifolius*, *Lathyrus pratensis*.

## Day 4: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019

We left our lovely sylvan home in Barhal bright and early, and headed up the valley towards the small town of Yaylalar. The word 'Yayla' means summer pasture in Turkish and the town serves a mobile community that heads up to the high pastures after the snow has melted (which can be as late as May). On the way, we stopped briefly at some modern white houses, where we saw both Sloe and Ilex Hairstreaks but sadly no Brown or White-letter Hairstreaks as last year. Several coppers shot around, stopping to nectar on mint, including Small, Scarce, Sooty and Purple-shot. Our second stop at some small hay-meadows was not very productive, so we moved on up the valley to the "butterfly lay-by" which had been very good in previous years. By then, the weather had turned cloudy but still a few butterflies were seen puddling on the mud. They included a nice group of Marsh Fritillaries as well as numerous blues and Small and Essex Skippers. Several other nice species were seen in the grassland, including Large Blue, Long-tailed Blue and a good range of fritillaries, including a very worn Glanville. An Eastern Bath White roosted right by us as we had our lunch and we had our first view of a Dusky Steppe Brown (like a small Meadow Brown).



Blue Argus (Nigel Peace)

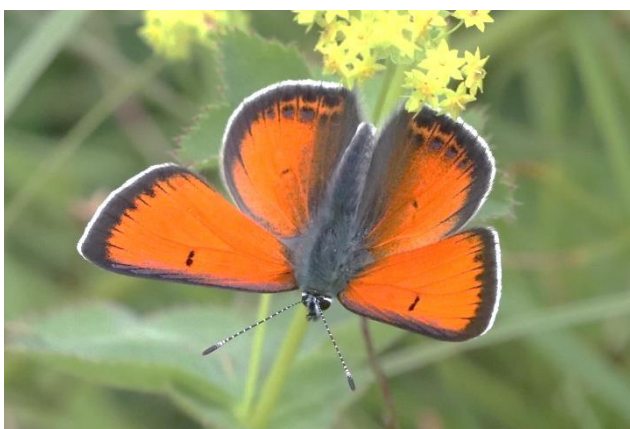


Caucasian Spotted Fritillary (Tony Hoare)



False Chalk-hill Blue (Nigel Peace)

After a good lunch, we continued up the Barhal valley, through Yaylalar and up to Olgunlar, which stands at 2200m. The weather had brightened so we headed straight up through the rustic village where people live cheek by jowl with their animals. The village paths are strewn with cow dung, but this provided good opportunities to see puddling butterflies. Once through the village, the valley widens considerably, giving splendid views of the alpine pasture. Cattle are taken here to graze during the day and are taken back into the village at night. Sadly, many areas are now abandoned and we only saw a herd of c20 cattle up the main Hastaf Valley. The butterflies were excellent, with large numbers seen puddling along the path and on cow-pats. There were hundreds of blues including, Zephyr, Amanda's, Reverdin's, Meleager's, Aedon, Blue Argus to name but a few. The star of the show was a perfectly fresh Balkan Copper, which positively shone in the late afternoon light. We also saw several of the endemic crickets that live here including the black endemic species *Phonochorion* cf. *Artvinensis*, the lovely grey coloured *Poecilimon* cf. *variicercis* and green *Isophya* cf. *zernovi*. Plants here included: *Geranium pyrenaicum*, *Geranium ibericum*, *Polygonum bistorta*, *Stachys macrastachya*, *Rhynchosorys stricta*, *Dactylorhiza osmanica*, *Arnebia pulchra*.



Balkan Copper (Nigel Peace)



Damon Blue (L) and Iphigeneia Blue (R) (Nigel Peace)

## Day 5: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Today was bright and clear and the butterflies were already beginning to gather on the mud outside the hotel at 7.30am. Straight after breakfast, we headed through the village of Olgunlar and walked slowly up the main Hastaf Valley as far as a waterfall at around 2400m. The number of butterflies gathering on the mud was truly spectacular, with many hundreds jostling for position. We noticed that 'groups' of similarly coloured or families of species gathered together, possibly because their colours indicated a 'good' place to settle. Or maybe there is safety in numbers as many groups were persistently attacked by a family of White Wagtails. Either way, the blues huddled together, with a supporting cast of orange skippers to one end, grizzled type skippers somewhere else, and fritillaries in another corner. It was a mesmerising sight and quite difficult to pick out all the species present. We saw over 60 species in this one day!



**Apollo (Tony Hoare)**



**Russian Heath (Nigel Peace)**



**Lederer's Heath (Martin Warren)**

As we walked onto the open grassland, we spotted a few heaths which turned out to be the rather drab (but rare and threatened) Lederer's Heath and the more brightly coloured Russian Heath. We were graced by many Apollos, including a few that settled in front of us. A few people walked higher up to around 2800m and saw a wonderful array of plants including: *Onosma* sp., *Helichrysum plicatum*, *Inula orientalis*, *Primula auriculata*, *Asyneuma* sp., *Cicerbita bourgaei*, *Anthemis marschalliana* ssp. *pectinata*, *Erigeron caucasicum*, *Aster alpinus*, *Centaurea pulcherimma*, *Dianthus multicaulis*, *Campanula stevenii*, *Polygala orientalis*, *Astrantia maxima*, *Sedum tenelum*, *Sempervivum minus*, *Traunsteinera sphaerica*, *Antenaria dioica*. Ben walked higher up the mountain and was stunned to see a Brown Bear, right out in the open in broad daylight! He beat a hasty retreat but caught a memorable photo from a safe distance!

After lunch at the Pensyon, we walked down the road as far as a small meadow and hut. Vast numbers of butterflies were puddling all along the road so we made slow progress as we inspected and tried to photograph all the different species. Amid the throng, we were thrilled to see a Bosnian Blue, looking much smaller and paler than the others. This is now thought to be a separate species from the Gavarnie Blue. We also saw a few Alpine Ringlets, looking remarkably like Scotch Argus but with far less red on the hindwings.



**Bosnian Blue (Tony Hoare)**



**Scotch Argus (Martin Warren)**



**Brown Bear (Ben Greenaway)**

## Day 6: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019

After another early start, we headed down below Yaylalar to the start of the Korahmet side-valley at 1900m. Apollos again floated past and among the whites we saw the Mountain Small White (which has no spots showing on the underside). Butterflies were again gathering on the mud, mainly blues we had seen before. Much to our surprise we found a newly hatched Silver-spotted Skipper and Ben had a possible sighting of the orange-coloured Caucasian Clouded Yellow. As the day was heating up, we headed down the valley to revisit the “butterfly lay-by” at 1750m. Here large numbers of blues were now puddling, including large numbers of Silver-studded Blues among a few Aedon, Eros and Turquoise Blues. We also had our first unequivocal sighting of an Idas Blue, looking slightly different from all the Silver-studdeds.



**Silver-spotted Skipper (Harry Faull)**



**Idas Blue (Martin Warren)**

After lunch back at the Pensyon, we walked down the road as far as a small meadow and hut where large numbers of butterflies were gathered on wet mud by a newly excavated road. There was a spectacular group of nine Dark Green Fritillaries, which swamped a poor little False Chalk-hill Blue in their midst. On the bird front, we again had good views of Red-fronted Serin, as well as Common Rosefinch, Red-backed Shrike, Rock Thrush and Dipper in the river.



**Dark Green Fritillaries on mud (Martin Warren)**



**Red-fronted Serin (Harry Faull)**

Early in the day, Anne and Stephen had decided to hike up the valley and reached as far as the base-camp for the ascent to Kackar Dagi at 2900m. They said the plants were fantastic and included: *Centaurea appendigera*, *Arneba pulcra*, *Caltha polypetala*, *Corydalis oppositifolia*, *Gentiana caucasica*, *Geranium cinereum*, *Geranium sanguinemum*, *Parnasia palustris*, *Primula elatior*, *Primula auriculata*, *Pedicularis condensate*. They also saw a montane speciality: the Caucasian Ringlet, but no more bears!



## Day 7: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Today we had to leave the mountains and head back on the long journey to Erzurum. We stopped at three places on the way to break the journey. Our first was at the road to Dereici where we had stopped on the way up, but this time it was exceptionally hot at 37C. We were rewarded by several Little Tiger Blues, a tiny butterfly with remarkable markings. Then a shout went up and we all rushed down to look beneath a Mulberry tree where a White-edged Grayling was feasting on the fallen fruit. In the next 15 minutes we saw no less than three butterflies, one of which posed well for photos, occasionally flicking its wings to reveal its curious white margins. We also identified a Hoppfer's Blue, one of the tricky ones with a thin white stripe on its hindwings. Several people saw a False Grayling, another first for the trip. We had yet another good view of an Ionian Emperor as well as several dragonflies, including the large damselfly called the Odalisque *Epallage fatime*, as well as the Dark Pincertail *Onychogomphus assimilis*, and Southern Darter *Sympetrum meridionale*.



Little Tiger Blue (Harry Faull)



White-edged Grayling (Tony Hoare)

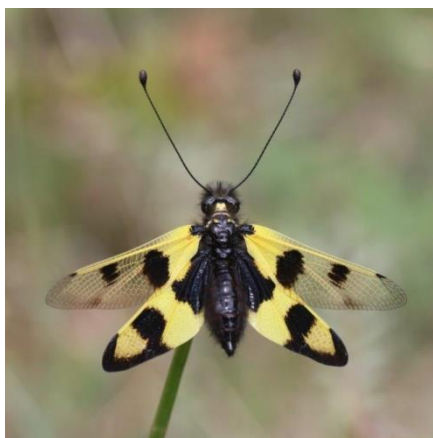


Odalisque damselfly (Martin Warren)

After a long drive back through Yusefeli, we stopped for lunch at the Tortum waterfall. This, the largest waterfall in Turkey, was created by a huge rockfall, though the timing is much disputed. Two years ago we found the rare Hi Blue here, but despite looking at several 'stripey' blues, we failed to find one. We did find Hoppfer's Blue again as well as Brown Argus and Common Blue but few other butterflies were flying in the heat. After lunch we stopped again at the track by the river south of Uzundere. Here we had good views of Blue-spot Hairstreak as well as White-edged Grayling, False Grayling, Orange Hermit and Amasian Satyr. Many blues were flying including Meleager's, Adonis, False Chalk-hill, Hopffer's and Poseidon. After another hours drive we arrived back in Erzurum where we had an excellent dinner.



Poseidon Blue (Nigel Peace)



*Libelloides macaronius* (Tony Hoare)



Amasian Satyr (Nigel Peace)

## Day 8: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Today, we set off early to visit the remarkable valley of Gungormez around 45 minutes north of Erzurum. Here the rolling hillsides are extensively grazed by cattle, creating vast swathes of flower-rich grasslands. The village itself is extremely rustic, like going back 500 years except for the satellite dishes. The streets are paved with cow dung, and dung is heaped everywhere for drying as a winter fuel. People literally live side by side with their cattle. Small streams run down off the hillsides and through the village, creating superb puddling opportunities for butterflies. First, we walked above the village where the road verge teemed with blues, skippers, marbled whites and fritillaries. It was not long before we saw one of our main targets, a tiny Odd-spot Blue. Soon after we saw another speciality, a Loew's Blue, and then an Eastern Brown Argus. Rather surprisingly, we also saw a lot of hairstreaks (there were no shrubs here as food-plants), most of which turned out to be the dusty looking Rebel's Hairstreak. We must have seen over 30 in the day, when we had seen just one on previous trip. A few of us were lucky enough to see a Gerhardt's Black Hairstreak, distinguished by the small black marking on its under forewing. Several dragonflies were spotted including Yellow-winged Darter *Sympetrum flaveolum* and Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*.



Odd-spot Blue (Tony Hoare)



Loew's Blues mating (Tony Hoare)



Rebel's Hairstreak (Tony Hoare)

We then walked through the village where the children were fascinated by us kneeling down in the dung to photograph butterflies. We showed them our butterfly books and they giggled and ran away! We must be getting famous in this tiny village as this was our third trip. We saw a lovely fresh Yellow-banded Skipper as well as several blues and the occasional Cardinal. After a fine lunch in the shade, we carried on walking down the valley, where we saw a new species, an Esper's Marbled White, as well as Alcon Blue. As a grand finale, we saw a female Hermit, busy nectaring on the Large Scabious flowers. Plants seen included: *Centaurea glastifolia*, *C. spectabilis*, *C. virgata*, *Gundelia glabra*, *Salvia nemorosa*, *Alkanna leptophylla*, *Acantholinon sp.*, *Echinops orientale*. The white cushion plants by the roadside were *Crambe orientalis*. Sadly, we then had to leave these beautiful hills and head to Erzurum. After another excellent meal, we visited several beautiful floodlit Mosques. The following day, we had an early start back to England, after an amazing trip where we had seen over 140 species of butterfly, hosts of plants and other insects.



Cardinal (Nigel Peace)



Gerhardt's Black Hairstreak (Nigel Peace)



Hermit (Harry Faull)

## Epilogue

This was the third Greenwings trip to the dramatic Kackar mountains in north-east Turkey, and probably one of the best. We saw 140 species of butterfly (a record) as well as large numbers of insects and birds. We were lucky to have Stephen Brooks to identify the dragonflies, and Nicholas Branson to identify the birds. We also benefitted from several butterfly experts who grappled with the identification of difficult species. The butterflies seemed less advanced than in previous years, with some species only just emerging. This may account for the fact that we saw several species not seen on previous trips, and missed out on a few others. This year we saw no Brown or White-letter Hairstreak, and several fritillaries eluded us (Knapweed, Lesser Spotted, Freyer's), as did Bavius and Checkered Blue. We did not see a Yellow-legged Tortoiseshell or Hi Blue, but then we only saw a single of these in the last two years, so they were a long shot.

To counter this, we saw several species not seen on previous trips. A single Clouded Apollo, high up at Olgunlar, indicated a late season. We also saw a single Kreuper's White and the Fiery Copper was new, following a tip off to a truly excellent site en route. Other new species were Olive Skipper, Esper's Marbled White, Anatolian Tawny Rockbrown, Amasian Satyr, Eastern Grayling, and Hermit. Thanks to experts on the trip, we were able to identify Poseidon Blue, Hoppfer's Blue and Hubert's Blue. Other plusses were that Ionian Emperor was seen at several sites and seemed to be far more numerous than previous years.

Another pleasing aspect of the trip was that cattle grazing seemed to be thriving at Gungormez. We saw a large herd on the distant hillside and saw several groups of men cutting hay. There seems to be little or no scrub invasion on these extensive grasslands. By contrast, it is clear that some hillsides in the high Kackar mountains around Olgunlar have been abandoned and are becoming invaded by scrub. It is hard to know exactly what the state of grazing here on a fleeting visit, but we were told that only ten cattle graze the valley above 2500m and we only saw 20 in the main Hastaf Valley (2200-2500m) - hardly enough to graze many square kilometres of grassland! On the other hand, several houses in Olgunlar had been renovated recently, with new porches and balconies, and a few new houses had been built. More families were around than in previous years, so it is obviously a popular destination even if they do not keep as many animals.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trip and felt privileged to see such a fabulously rich and scenic part of the world. The food was excellent, and the two family-run Pensions we stayed in in the mountains were superb and our hosts extremely friendly. We would all like to extend a big thank you to our driver, Refik, who negotiated the narrow, and sometimes bumpy, roads with great skill, and who had endless patience while we chased around after butterflies. We were also pleased to welcome Mert as our local leader. He was an extremely efficient organiser and made the trip run very smoothly. He also provided us with much entertainment and was a fount of knowledge on Turkish culture. My friend Yiannis was also brilliant on plant identification as well as ensuring that our guests were well cared for. It was a truly memorable trip.

Martin Warren  
July 2019



<b>Kaçkar butterfly records 13-20 July 2019</b> (see end for key to locality numbers)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Names as in Baytas, 2007,2019: Butterflies of Turkey		13/7	14/7	15/7	16/7	17/7	18/7	19/7	20/7
<b>Papilionidae</b>									
Swallowtail	<i>Papilio machaon</i>	1,2				1,2	1,3	3	1
Scarce Swallowtail	<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	1,2	1	1			3	1,3	1
Clouded Apollo	<i>Parnassius mnemosyne</i>						4		
Apollo	<i>Parnassius apollo</i>		2	1	3	1,2	1,2		
<b>Pieridae</b>									
Black-veined White	<i>Aporia crataegi</i>	3	2,3	1	3,4	1,2	1-3		1
Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>		2,3	1	1				
Small White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>								1
Southern Small White	<i>Pieris mannii</i>	1-3	1-3	1,2	1-4	1,2	1-3	1-3	1
Mountain Small White	<i>Pieris ergane</i>	1				1	1,2	3	1
Green-veined White	<i>Pieris napi</i>	1,2	1						
Mountain Green-veined White	<i>Pieris bryoniae</i>					1			
Kreuper's Small White	<i>Pieris kreuperi</i>	1							
Eastern Bath White	<i>Pontia daplidice</i>	1,2	2		3		1,2	3	
Small Bath White	<i>Pontia chloridice</i>			1					
Eastern Orange-tip	<i>Anthocaris damone</i>			1					
Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias crocea</i>	1,2	1-3	1,2	1-3	1,2	1,2	1-3	1
Balkan Clouded Yellow **	<i>Colias caucasica</i>				3?		3?		
Southern Clouded Yellow	<i>Colias alfacariensis</i>			1,2	2,3	1,2	1,2		1+L
Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx rhamni</i>	1,2	2	1		2	1,2	1	
Powdered Brimstone	<i>Gonepteryx farinosa</i>	2							
Wood White complex	<i>Leptidea sp</i>	1	1-3	1-3	1,2			1,3	1
<b>Lycaenidae</b>									
Sloe Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium acaciae</i>		1,3	1-3	1-4	2	1,2		1
Ilex Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium ilicis</i>		2,3	1-3			2		
Blue-spot Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium spini</i>	1,2						3	
Gerhard's Black Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium abdominalis</i>								1
Rebel's Hairstreak	<i>Satyrium myrtale</i>								1
Green Hairstreak	<i>Callophrys rubi</i>						2		
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phlaeas</i>	2	1	1,2	1,2	1	1	1	1
Scarce Copper	<i>Lycaena virgaureae</i>		3	1,2	3	2	1-3		1
Sooty Copper	<i>Lycaena tityrus</i>	2	1-3	1-3	1-3	2	1	2,3	1
Purple-shot Copper	<i>Lycaena alciphron</i>	1,2	1-3	1-3	3		1,2	1,3	1
Lesser Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thersamon</i>	2							
Balkan Copper	<i>Lycaena candens</i>				4	1	1,3		
Fiery Copper	<i>Lycaena thetis</i>	2							
Long-tailed Blue	<i>Lampides boeticus</i>		1		3				1

Little Tiger Blue	<i>Tarucus balkanicus</i>	3						1	
Short-tailed Blue	<i>Cupido argiades</i>	1-3	1-3	1,2	1,3			1,3	
Little/Small Blue	<i>Cupido minimus</i>			1					
Osiris Blue	<i>Cupido osiris</i>	1	2			1?	2	2	
Holly Blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	2	1-3	1					1
Alcon Blue	<i>Glycopsyche alcon</i>								1
Large Blue	<i>Glycopsyche arion</i>			1	3		2		
Eastern Baton Blue	<i>Pseudophilotes vicrama</i>		3	1				1	
Odd-spot Blue	<i>Turanana endymion</i>								1
Balkan Zephyr Blue	<i>Plebejus sephirus</i>		1-3	1-3	1-3	1,2	1-3		1
Eastern Brown Argus	<i>Plebejus euryпилus</i>		1						1
Loew's Blue	<i>Plebejus loewii</i>								1
Silver-studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>		3	1-3	1-4	1,2	1-3		1
Idas Blue	<i>Plebejus idas</i>						2		1
Reverdin's Blue	<i>Plebejus argyrognomon</i>	1	1,3	3		1			1
Bosnian Blue	<i>Plebejus dardanus</i>					2			
Brown Argus	<i>Plebejus agestis</i>	1,2	1	1,2	3,4			1-3	1
Mountain Argus	<i>Plebejus artaxerxes</i>					4	1,2	1-3	
Geranium Argus	<i>Plebejus eumedon</i>			1	4	1			
Blue Argus	<i>Plebejus crassipinctus</i>		1,2	1	3,4	1,2	1-3	1	1
Mazarine Blue	<i>Polyommatus semiargus</i>		3	1,3	3,4	1,2	1-3		
Turquoise Blue	<i>Polyommatus dorylas</i>			1	3		2,3		
Meleager's Blue	<i>Polyommatus daphnis</i>	2	3	1-3	3,4	1,2	1-3	3	1
Amanda's Blue	<i>Polyommatus amanda</i>		2,3	1,2	1-4	1,2	1-3		1
Aedon Blue	<i>Polyommatus aedon</i>	1	3	1,2	3,4	1,2	1-3		1
Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>	1,2	1-3	1-3	1-4	1,2	1-3	3	1
Eros Blue	<i>Polyommatus eros</i>		3	1,2	3	1,2	2,3		
Adonis Blue	<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>	2		2				3	
False Chalk Hill Blue	<i>Polyommatus corydonius</i>	2	2	1,2	2		1,3	3	
Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus admetus</i>							2	1
Ripart's Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus ripartii</i>			1	3	1,2	1-3		1
Persian Anomalous Blue	<i>Polyommatus demavendi</i>	1?							
Hoppfer's Blue	<i>Polyommatus hopfferii</i>							1-3	
Poseidon Blue	<i>Polyommatus poseidon</i>	1						3	
Hi Blue **	<i>Polyommatus merhaba</i>	1							
Hubert's Blue	<i>Polyommatus huberti</i>	2?							
Iphigeneia (Chelmos) Blue	<i>Polyommatus iphigenia</i>	1		1	3,4	1,2	1-3		1
Damon Blue	<i>Polyommatus damon</i>			1	4	1,2	1-3		
<b>Libytheidae</b>									
Nettle-tree Butterfly	<i>Libythea celtis</i>	1	3				3		

<b>Nymphalidae (Nymphalinae)</b>									
Ionian Emperor	<i>Thaleropsis ionia</i>	2	1,3	2				1	
Southern White Admiral	<i>Limenitis reducta</i>	1-3	1,3	1,3	3			1-3	
Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	2	1-3	1-3			1		1
Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i>	2	1,2	1-3	1-4	1,2	1-3	1-3	1
Comma	<i>Polygonia c-album</i>	3	1-3	1-3			1,3	1	1
Southern Comma	<i>Polygonia egea</i>	2,3	2						
Small Tortoiseshell	<i>Aglais urticae</i>		1		3	1,2			1
Marsh Fritillary	<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>		3	1	3,4	1,2	1-3		
Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>		3		3	2	1		1
Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea athalia</i>		1-3	1	1-4	1,2	1-3		
False Heath Fritillary	<i>Melitaea diamine</i>			1	4	1,2	1-3		
Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea didyma</i>	1	2,3	1			1		1
Caucasian Spotted Fritillary	<i>Melitaea interrupta</i>		3	1	1-4	1,2	1-3		1
Cardinal	<i>Argynnis pandora</i>	1,2	3						1
Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>	1	1-3	1,3	2			1	
Dark Green Fritillary	<i>Argynnis aglaja</i>	1	1-3	1,2	1-4	1,2	1-3		1
High Brown Fritillary	<i>Argynnis adippe</i>		2				3		1
Niobe Fritillary	<i>Argynnis niobe</i>	1							1
Queen of Spain Fritillary	<i>Issoria lathonia</i>	2	2	1	1	2	3		1
Twin-spot Fritillary	<i>Brenthis hecate</i>			1	3,4	1,2	2,3		1
Marbled Fritillary	<i>Brenthis daphne</i>		1-3	1,2	3L		1		
Balkan Fritillary	<i>Boloria graeca</i>					1			
Lesser Marbled Fritillary	<i>Brenthis ino</i>			1					
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>		1						
Weavers (Violet) Fritillary	<i>Boloria dia</i>								1
<b>Nymphalidae (Satyrinae)</b>									
Balkan Marbled White	<i>Melanargia larissa</i>	1						3	1
Esper's Marbled White	<i>Melanargia russiae</i>								1
False Grayling	<i>Arethusana arethusa</i>							1,2	
Eastern Grayling	<i>Arethusana pellucida</i>			1				3	
White-bordered Grayling	<i>Hipparchia parisatis</i>							1,3	
Eastern Rock Grayling	<i>Hipparchia syriaca</i>	1	1-3	1,2	1		2	3	
Great Banded Grayling	<i>Brintesia circe</i>	1	2	1,2	1		2	3	
Freyer's Tawny Rockbrown	<i>Pseudochazara beroe</i>								1
The Hermit	<i>Chazara briseis</i>								1
Orange Hermit	<i>Chazara bischoffii</i>	1,2						1,3	
Geyer's Tawny Rockbrown	<i>Pseudochazara geyeri</i>			1					
Freyer's Tawny Rockbrown	<i>Pseudochazara beroe</i>								1?
Anatolian Tawny Rockbrown	<i>Pseudochazara mamurra</i>	2							
Amasian Satyr	<i>Satyrus amasinus</i>	1						3	

Scotch Argus	<i>Erebia aethiops</i>		2,3	1-3	1-4	1,2	1-3		
Woodland Ringlet	<i>Erebia medusa</i>					1			
Alpine Ringlet *	<i>Erebia melancholica</i>					1,2	3		
Caucasian Ringlet	<i>Erebia graucasica</i>						4		
Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>	2	1,2	1-3	1-3	1	1-3		1
Dusky Steppe Brown	<i>Maniola lycaon</i>				3,4	1,2	1-3	3	1
Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	1,2	3			1		3	1
Russian Heath	<i>Coenonympha leander</i>					1,2			
Lederer's Heath *	<i>Coenonympha symphita</i>				4	2	2,3		
Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>	1	1-3	1				1,3	
Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	2		1					
Large Wall Brown	<i>Lasiommata maera</i>		2			1	1	1	1
Lesser Latticed Brown	<i>Kirinia clamina</i>	1							1
<b>Hesperiidae</b>									
Large Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus alveus</i>					1,2	1		
Olive Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus serratulae</i>	1				1	3		1
Sandy Grizzled Skipper	<i>Pyrgus cinarea</i>				4				1
Yellow-banded Skipper	<i>Pyrgus sidae</i>					1			1
Aegean Skipper	<i>Pyrgus melotis</i>					2			1
Red Underwing Skipper	<i>Spialia orbifer</i>	1-3	2	1			2	1	1
Persian Skipper	<i>Spialia phlomidis</i>					2	2,3		1
Mallow Skipper	<i>Carcharodus alceae</i>	1,2	3	1	3,4	1	1		1
Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus lavatherae</i>	2	3		3		3		
Tufted Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus flocciferus</i>		1,3			1			
Oriental Marbled Skipper	<i>Carcharodus orientalis</i>					2	1		1
Dingy Skipper	<i>Erynnis tages</i>	1,2		1	4	2	3	2,3	
Silver-spotted Skipper	<i>Hesperia comma</i>						1		
Large Skipper	<i>Ochlodes venatus</i>	1	1-3	1	1,3	1	1,2		
Essex Skipper	<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>		3	1	3,4	1,2	1-3		1
Small Skipper	<i>Thymelicus sylvestris</i>		2,3	1	3,4	1,2	1-3	3	1
Levantine Skipper	<i>Thymelicus hyrax</i>		3						

\*\* Threatened species in Butterfly Red List Turkey

\* Near endemic or classed as Near Threatened

<b>Moths</b>									
Nine-spotted moth	<i>Amata (Syntomis) phegea</i>		√	√	√				
Burnet with 5 spots	<i>Zygaena sp</i>		√						
Burnet with 6 spots	<i>Zygaena ephialtes?</i>								
Burnet with white/red spots	<i>Zygaena carniolica ?</i>	√						√	

Forester sp	<i>Adscita sp.</i>		√						
Purple-barred Yellow	<i>Lythria purpuraria</i>		√						
Cream-spot Tiger	<i>Arctia villica</i>		√	√	√	√	√		
Jersey Tiger	<i>Euplagia quadripunctaria</i>			√		√L			
Scarlet Tiger	<i>Callimorpha dominula</i>					√			
Chimney Sweeper	<i>Odezia atrata</i>						√	√	
Speckled Yellow	<i>Pseudopanthera macularia</i>					√	√		
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Shaded Broad-bar	<i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>				√	√	√		
Clouded Buff	<i>Diacrisia sannio</i>						√		
Common Heath	<i>Ematurga atomaria</i>		√						
Lime Hawk-moth	<i>Mimas tiliae</i>			√					
Spurge Hawk-moth larvae	<i>Hyles euphorbiae</i>								√ L
Black micro with white spots	<i>Eurrhysis pollinalis?</i>		√						
Red and yellow micro	<i>Pyrausta purpuralis ?</i>						√		

### Key to locations

Date	Site no	Site name	Altitude (m) (approx.)
13/7/19	1	Uzundere (track by river)	1200
	2	Uzundere (old road)	1200
	3	Dereici road by tunnel	750
14/7/19	1	Road down from Barhal Pensyon to Barhal village	1300
	2	Road from Barhal to Yaylalar - c 2km from Barhal	1300
	3	Valley to Pisenkaya	1400
15/7/17	1	Bicakcilar valley – upper	1700
	2	Bicakcilar valley – lower	1500
	3	Valley above Pensyon, Barhal	1500
16/7/17	1	Yaylalar valley (white houses)	1400
	2	Meadows nr turn to Mikelis	1500
	2	Butterfly lay-bye with water tap	1800
	3	Hastaf valley above Olgunlar	2200
17/7/17	1	Hastaf valley above Olgunlar	2200-2400
	2	Road down from Olgunlar to hut	2100
18/7/17	1	Korahmet valley below Yaylalar	1900
	2	Butterfly lay-bye with water tap	1800
	3	Road from Olgunlar to hut (again)	2100
	4	Stephen and Anne's walk up Hastaf valley	2300-2900
19/7/17	1	Dereici turn by tunnel (again)	750
	2	Picnic by Tortum waterfall	1000
	3	Uzundere (track by river, again)	1200
20/7/17	1	Gungormez valley	1500



## Dragonfly list – Kackar mountains 2019

Courtesy of Stephen Brooks

(Dates are definite but many we saw elsewhere as well)

### Damselflies

Scarce Emerald *Lestes dryas* 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Southern Emerald *Lestes barbarus* 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Odalisque *Epallage fatime* 13/7/19 (site 3); 14/7/19 (site 2); 19/7/19 (site 1); 20/7/19 (Site 1)

### Dragonflies

Eastern Spectre *Caliaeschna microstigma* 14/7/19 (site 2)

Migrant hawkler *Aeshna mixta* 14/7/19 (site 1)

Blue-eyed hawkler *Aeshna affinis* 20/7/19 (site 1)

Blue-eyed Goldenring *Cordulegaster insignis charpentieri* 15/7/19 (site 3)

Dark Pincertail *Onychogomphus assimilis* 13/7/19 (site 2); 19/7/19 (site 1)

Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa* 13/7/19 (site 1)

Southern Skimmer *Orthetrum brunneum* 14/7/19 (site 3); 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* 20/7/19 (Site 1); 15/7/19 (site 2)

Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum* 13/7/19 (site 1); 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Southern Darter *Sympetrum meridionale* 19/7/19 (site 2); 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Yellow-winged Darter *Sympetrum flaveolum* 20/7/19 (Site 1)

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii* 20/7/19 (site 1)

## **Bird list – Kackar mountains 2019**

(thanks to Nicholas Branson and Wendy Black)

Little Egret  
Common Crane  
White Stork  
Kestrel  
Goshawk (probably)  
Booted Eagle (probably)  
Quail  
Robin  
Blackbird  
Chaffinch  
Wren  
Dipper  
Red-fronted Serin  
Common Rosefinch  
Grey Wagtail  
White Wagtail  
Blackcap  
Garden Warbler  
Blue Tit  
Great Tit  
Cretzschmar's Bunting  
Red-backed Shrike  
Common Swift  
Crag Martin  
Cuckoo  
Green Woodpecker  
Great-spotted Woodpecker  
Black Woodpecker (heard)  
Golden Oriole  
Whinchat  
Wheatear  
Black Redstart  
Ring Ouzel (juvenile)  
Rock Thrush  
House Sparrow  
Starling  
Jackdaw  
Jay  
Rook  
Chough  
Magpie  
Hooded Crow

## **Reptiles**

Nose-horned Viper

**Kackar Plant list 2019 (numbers indicate day of trip seen)**

<b>Pteridophyta</b>		<b>Brassicaceae</b>	
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	1	<i>Crambe orientalis</i>	7
<i>Asplenium septentrionale</i>	3	<i>Isatis glauca</i>	4
<b>Pinaceae</b>		<b>Campanulaceae</b>	
<i>Picea orientalis</i>	2	<i>Asyneuma amplexicaule</i>	4
<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	3	<i>Campanula choruhensis</i>	2
<b>Anacardiaceae</b>		<i>Campanula lactiflora</i>	2
<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	1	<i>Campanula persicifolia</i>	2
<b>Apiaceae</b>		<i>Campanula rapunculoides</i>	2
<i>Astrantia maxima</i>	4	<i>Campanula stevenii</i>	4
<i>Heracleum platytaenium</i>	3	<b>Caprifoliaceae</b>	
<b>Asclepiadaceae</b>		<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	2
<i>Cynanchum fuscatum</i>	7	<b>Caryophyllaceae</b>	
<b>Asteraceae</b>		<i>Dianthus calocephalus</i>	3
<i>Antennaria dioica</i>	4	<i>Dianthus multicaulis</i>	4
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	7	<i>Silene armeria</i>	2
<i>Anthemis marschalliana</i> ssp. <i>pectinata</i>	3	<i>Silene multifida</i>	3
<i>Aster alpinus</i>	4	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	2
<i>Aster caucasicus</i>	3	<b>Celastraceae</b>	
<i>Carlina biebersteinii</i>	3	<i>Euonymus latifolius</i>	3
<i>Centaurea appendicigera</i>	5	<b>Cistaceae</b>	
<i>Centaurea glastifolia</i>	7	<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>	6
<i>Centaurea pulcherrima</i>	4	<b>Crassulaceae</b>	
<i>Centaurea spectabilis</i>	7	<i>Sedum spurium</i>	2
<i>Centaurea virgata</i>	7	<i>Sedum tenellum</i>	4
<i>Cicerbita bourgaei</i>	4	<i>Sempervivum minus</i>	2
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	2	<b>Datisceae</b>	
<i>Helichrysum plicatum</i>	3	<i>Datisca cannabina</i>	2
<i>Inula orientalis</i>	4	<b>Dipsacaceae</b>	
<i>Tanacetum macrophyllum</i>	2	<i>Cephalaria gigantea</i>	2
<i>Xeranthemum annuum</i>	1	<b>Ericaceae</b>	
<b>Betulaceae</b>		<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	4
<i>Carpinus orientalis</i>	2	<b>Fabaceae</b>	
<b>Boraginaceae</b>		<i>Coronilla varia</i>	2
<i>Alkanna leptophylla</i>	7	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	3
<i>Arnebia pulchra</i>	4	<b>Gentianaceae</b>	
<i>Echium vulgare</i>	1	<i>Gentianella caucasica</i>	5

<b>Geraniaceae</b>		<b>Pyrolaceae</b>	
Geranium cinereum	5	Pyrola rotundifolia	
Geranium ibericum	4	Orthilia secunda	
Geranium pyrenaicum	4	<b>Ranunculaceae</b>	
Geranium sanguineum	5	Anemone narcissiflora	6
Pelargonium endlicherianum	2	Aquilegia olympica	2
<b>Lamiaceae</b>		Caltha polypetala	5
Ajuga chamaepitys	1	<b>Rhamnaceae</b>	
Clinopodium vulgare	2	Paliurus spina-christi	1
Prunella vulgaris	2	<b>Rosaceae</b>	
Salvia nemorosa	7	Geum coccineum	5
Salvia verticillata	2	Geum rivale	
Scutellaria albida	2	Potentilla argentea	5
Stachys macrastachya	4	Rubus idaeus	2
Teucrium orientale	4	<b>Rubiaceae</b>	
Teucrium pruinatum	3	Asperula orientalis	
<b>Lentibulariaceae</b>		Asperula pontica	4
Pinguicula balcanica		<b>Salicaceae</b>	
<b>Malvaceae</b>		Salix alba	6
Alcea hohennackeri	2	<b>Scrophulariaceae</b>	
<b>Monotropaceae</b>		Digitalis schischkinii	2
<b>Onagraceae</b>		Melampyrum arvense	2
Epilobium stevenii	3	Pedicularis condensata	5
<b>Papaveraceae</b>		Rhynchocorys stricta	4
Chelidonium majus	2	Veronica anagallis-aquatica	2
Glaucium corniculatum	1	<b>Solanaceae</b>	
Papaver fugax	2	Solanum villosum	2
Papaver lateritium	4	<b>Violaceae</b>	
<b>Parnassiaceae</b>		Viola tricolor	2
Parnassia palustris	6	<b>Orchidaceae</b>	
<b>Plumbaginaceae</b>		Dactylorhiza osmanica	4
Acantholimon ulicinum	7	Dactylorhiza urvilleana	2
<b>Polygalaceae</b>		Gymnadenia conopsea	4
Polygala anatolica	4	Traunsteinera sphaerica	4
<b>Polygonaceae</b>			
Polygonum bistorta ssp. carneum	4		
<b>Primulaceae</b>			
Primula auriculata	4,5		
Primula elatior ssp. meyeri	5		

Plant gallery – courtesy Yiannis Christophides



