

## Rhodes Orchid Odyssey

31st March - 7th April 2024

Led by Yiannis Christofides & Sotiris Alexiou



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#### Day 1

Arrival at Diagoras airport on Rhodes. Yiannis collected Karlheinz and Anna from the airport and also Tiina, Jaak and Robin who had already arrived here in the days before, and set off towards our village base for the week. Our first roadside stop produced masses of *Ophrys cornutula* in good flower.

We continued to the mountains, stopping at a forested area of *Pinus brutia* and *Cupressus sempervirens* to explore by a track. We found tall *Ophrys mammosa*, followed by *Ophrys regis-ferdinandii*, *Ophrys sicula*, *Ophrys blitopertha*, *Ophrys reinholdii*, one specimen of *Ophrys speculum* that was over and *Ophrys reinholdii*. Sotiris collected Rachael, Elizabeth, Robert, Rosamund, Adron and Sue, and stopping at the first location also found *Ophrys polyxo* and *Ophrys halia*.



*Ophrys polyxo* © Sotiris Alexiou

#### Day 2

We assembled at 9.00am for a briefing and then set off due south. The weather was sunny and warm. We slowly descended, observing the landscape changing from pine forest to garigue. Our first stop was at a beach where we saw many of the typical garigue plants, such as *Cistus creticus*, *C. salviifolius*, *C. parviflorus*, *Alkanna tinctoria*, *Teucrium brevifolium*, the endemic *Campanula rhodia*, *Rumex bucephalophorus* and *Ononis natrix*.

Our next stop was on a hillside with low cushion plants. *Asphodelus ramosus*, *Asphodelus fistulosus* and *Glebionis coronaria* were in full flower. We first searched a cultivated field finding *Ophrys speculum* in good flower. We then searched the hillside, finding *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, *Anacamptis coriophora* subsp. *fragrans*, *Ophrys parvula*, *Ophrys cinereophila*, *Ophrys cretica* subsp. *beloniae*, *Ophrys regis-ferdinandii*, *Ophrys calypsus* and *Ophrys iricolor*. We found many other plants as well, such as *Pallenis spinosa*, *Blackstonia perfoliata* and bright red *Ranunculus asiaticus*.



*Serapias carica* © Sue M

We then drove a short distance and stopped for lunch at a little church. Here we saw more *Ophrys cretica* subsp. *beloniae*, *Ophrys regis-ferdinandii*, *Ophrys cornutula* and *Serapias carica*. *Cytinus hypocistis* was seen near a *Cistus* plant.

Our next stop was a nearby roadside, where we found some new orchids such as *Ophrys blitopertha*, *Ophrys lutea*, *Ophrys dodekanensis* and *Ophrys bilunulata* subsp. *punctulata*. We continued to search similar places, stopping to see a field full of *Gladiolus italicus*. We came to a stop by the sea, where some people dipped their toes in the water, while the rest enjoyed the sunshine.

#### Day 3

It was sunny and warm today as we headed back to the south of the island but then followed a course that took us inland and high on a hill with a commanding view of the coast all around us. The hill was covered with scrubby vegetation that, at first glance may have seemed unpromising, but on closer inspection was hiding a wide variety of orchids, including some new ones in their

midst. We saw *Ophrys tenthredinifera*, *Ophrys ferrum-equinum*, *Ophrys cornutula*, *Ophrys reinholdii*, *Ophrys halia*, *Ophrys omegaifera*, *Anacamptis papilionacea*, *Orchis anatolica*, *Orchis provincialis* and others. Other plants seen there included *Helianthemum apenninum*, *Paeonia clusii* subsp. *rhodia*, *Fritillaria rhodia* and *Polygala monspeliaca*. We moved lower down and searched again, finding the same orchids but also *Ophrys bombyliflora*.

We continued, stopping for lunch on the outskirts of one of the villages. We then got back on the tarmac road and headed north. We stopped to see Blue Rock Thrush, and had good views of a pair sitting high on a rock face. Our final stop was near the sea, where we found *Parentucellia viscosa*, *Bellardia trixago*, *Anacamptis fragrans* and *Anacamptis pyramidalis*.



*Fritillaria rhodia* © Sotiris Alexiou

#### Day 4

Another sunny and warm day. We crossed the island to the east coast making our first stop to look for *Anacamptis laxiflora*. Our first orchids were *Ophrys bombyliflora*, followed by *O. cornutula*, *Anacamptis laxiflora* and *Serapias politisii*. We also saw *Linaria pelisseriana* and the last flowers of *Anemone coronaria*. We continued to the coast and stopped in some olive groves where we saw *Ophrys colossaea* and also *Ophrys mammosa*, *Ophrys rhodia* and *Ophrys heldreichii* subsp. *polyxo*. *Bellardia trixago* and *Parentucellia viscosa* were common here. Many *Serapias politisii* were found throughout the area. We then drove due south and took our lunch in an area of olive groves further inland and then moved to a nearby area where we found red *Ranunculus asiaticus* and many *Serapias carica* and *Ophrys cornutula*. Two *Orchis anthropophora* were also seen.

#### Day 5



*Ophrys lucis* © Sotiris Alexiou

Our good weather continued today as we set off to the mountains. We stopped in the foothills and explored the area there finding *Ophrys sicula*, *Ophrys candica*, *Ophrys reinholdii* and *Cyclamen rhodium*. Moving higher up we saw *Ophrys omegaifera* and the first flowers of *Limodorum abortivum*. Green-underside Blue, Green Hairstreak and Eastern Festoon butterflies were on the wing. We continued on our way stopping just outside a village, to look at another beautiful Rhodian orchid, *Ophrys lucis*.

Our next stop was at the foot of the mountain, where we had our picnic. This is an area dominated by *Cupressus sempervirens* and *Pinus brutia*. The understory is carpeted with *Anemone blanda* and *Cyclamen rhodium*. We found *Ophrys reinholdii*, *Ophrys oreas*, *Ophrys dodekanensis*, *Ophrys ferrum-equinum* and *Neotinea maculata*.

We then moved higher up the hill where a different set of orchids awaited us. We found beautiful *Anacamptis picta* and *Neotinea lactea* in good flower. Also more *Orchis provincialis*, *Ophrys omegaifera* and *Ranunculus paludosus*. We spend considerable time exploring the area before setting off in the afternoon on the return journey, stopping to see *Centaurea lactucifolia* in flower.

#### Day 6

It was sunny and warm again today. We set off inland, stopping at a woodland roadside to explore. This was not very fruitful so we moved on again. Our next stop produced *Silene salamandra* and one flowering specimen of the beautiful *Dianthus critinus* and *Erodium cicutarium*.

Our next stop was at a lake, where we searched the scree for specialist plants, finding *Campanula*

*rhodensis*, *Gypsophila confertifolia*, *Trifolium grandiflorum*, *Ornithogalum narbonense*, *Allium junceum*, *Serapias politisii* and *Linum virgultorum*. Little Ringed Plover and Wood Sandpiper, as well as Fresh Water Crab were seen near the lake. We had our picnic at the lakeside and then we continued, stopping at a nearby site to see more *Orchis italica* and also finding *Aristolochia guichardii*.

We made a brief stop to photograph *Scilla hyacinthoides* and Scarce Swallowtail and continued on the road, where we made our last stop, finding *Ophrys rhodia*, *Orchis anatolica* and *Ornithogalum nutans*.



*Scilla hyacinthoides* © Sotiris Alexiou

### Day 7

The morning began at the base of one of the mountains, where we walked a woodland track to explore. We found *Neotinea maculata* and *Ophrys candica*. We wandered here for a short while before returning to the vehicles. We then drove to one of the islands numerous castle ruins, and continued past it to a beach where we had our lunch. On our return the hotel we stopped and explored the castle and its commanding views.

### Day 8

It was departure day today. Yiannis took the first to depart and then continued for a little exploration before meeting with Matt who took those departing by ferry to the port of Rhodes.

## Species Lists

Notable Plants			
Angiosperms			
<b>Cupressaceae</b>		<b>Pinaceae</b>	
Italian Cypress	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	Turkish Pine	<i>Pinus brutia</i>
Prickly Juniper	<i>Juniperus oxycedrus</i>		
Gymnosperms - Dictyoledons			
<b>Anacardiaceae</b>		Wrinkled Medick	<i>Medicago rugosa</i>
Lentisk	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	Spanish Restharrow	<i>Ononis hispanica</i>
<b>Apiaceae</b>		Hop Trefoil	<i>Trifolium campestre</i>
Fennel	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Large-flower Hop Clover	<i>Trifolium grandiflorum</i>
Shepherd's Needle	<i>Scandix pecten-veneris</i>	One-flowered Clover	<i>Trifolium uniflorum</i>
Giant Fennel	<i>Ferula communis</i>	Hairy Vetch	<i>Vicia villosa</i>
<b>Aristolochiaceae</b>		<b>Gentianaceae</b>	
A Birthwort	<i>Aristolochia guichardii</i>	Yellow-wort	<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>
<b>Asteraceae</b>		<b>Geraniaceae</b>	
Greek Chamomile	<i>Anthemis chia</i>	Common Storksbill	<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Long-beaked Cranesbill	<i>Erodium gruinum</i>

## Notable Plants

Southern Daisy	<i>Bellis sylvestris</i>	Mediterranean Storksbill	<i>Erodium malacoides</i>
Lettuce-leaved Star-thistle	<i>Centaurea lactucifolia</i>	<b>Lamiaceae</b>	
Yellow Crown Daisy	<i>Glebionis coronaria</i>	Henbit Deadnettle	<i>Lamium amplexicaule</i>
Mediterranean Strawflower	<i>Helichrysum conglobatum</i>	White Hedgenettle	<i>Prasium majus</i>
Spiny Starwort	<i>Pallenis spinosa</i>	Greek Sage	<i>Salvia fruticosa</i>
Salsify	<i>Tragopogon porrifolius</i>	Annual Clary	<i>Salvia viridis</i>
<b>Boraginaceae</b>		Thyme-leaved Savory	<i>Satureja thymbra</i>
Dyer's Alkanet	<i>Alkanna tinctoria</i>	Short-leaf Germander	<i>Teucrium brevifolium</i>
Undulated Bugloss	<i>Anchusa undulata</i> ssp. <i>hybrida</i>	<b>Linaceae</b>	
Narrow-leaved Bugloss	<i>Echium angustifolium</i>	A Flax	<i>Linum virgultorum</i>
Shrubby Gromwell	<i>Lithodora hispidula</i>	<b>Orobanchaceae</b>	
<b>Campanulaceae</b>		Bellardia	<i>Bellardia trixago</i>
Large Rhodian Bellflower	<i>Campanula hagielia</i>	Branched Broomrape	<i>Orobanche ramosa</i>
Small Rhodian Bellflower	<i>Campanula rhodensis</i>	Broadleaf Glandweed	<i>Parentucellia latifolia</i>
<b>Caryophyllaceae</b>		Sticky Glandweed	<i>Parentucellia viscosa</i>
Long-haired Pink	<i>Dianthus crinitus</i>	<b>Paeoniaceae</b>	
A Baby's Breath	<i>Gypsophila confertifolia</i>	Rhodian Peony	<i>Paeonia clusii</i> ssp. <i>rhodia</i>
Argentine Tea	<i>Paronychia argentea</i>	<b>Papaveraceae</b>	
Cretan Catchfly	<i>Silene cretica</i>	Common Poppy	<i>Paper rheas</i>
Rhodian Catchfly	<i>Silene salamandra</i>	<b>Plantaginaceae</b>	
<b>Cistaceae</b>		Jersey Toadflax	<i>Linaria pelisseriana</i>
Cretan Rockrose	<i>Cistus creticus</i>	<b>Polygalaceae</b>	
Small-flowered Rockrose	<i>Cistus parviflorus</i>	Mediterranean Milkwort	<i>Polygala monspeliaca</i>
Sage-leaved Rockrose	<i>Cistus salviifolius</i>	<b>Polygonaceae</b>	
Thyme-leaved Fumana	<i>Fumana thymifolia</i>	Horned Dock	<i>Rumex bucephalophorus</i>
White Rock-rose	<i>Helianthemum apenninum</i>	Tuberous Dock	<i>Rumex tuberosus</i>
<b>Cytinaceae</b>		<b>Primulaceae</b>	
A Cytinus	<i>Cytinus hypocistis</i> ssp. <i>clusii</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>
<b>Ericaceae</b>		Rhodian Cyclamen	<i>Cyclamen rhodium</i>
Greek Strawberry Tree	<i>Arbutus andrachne</i>	<b>Ranunculaceae</b>	
Strawberry Tree	<i>Arbutus unedo</i>	Greek Anemone	<i>Anemone blanda</i>
<b>Fabaceae</b>		Crown Anemone	<i>Anemone coronaria</i>
South Aegean Milkvetch	<i>Astragalus austroaegaeus</i>	Turban Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus asiaticus</i>

## Notable Plants

Spruner's Milkvetch	<i>Astragalus spruneri</i>	Fan-leaved Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus paludosus</i>
Pitch Trefoil	<i>Bituminaria bituminosa</i>	<b>Rosaceae</b>	
Annual Scorpion Vetch	<i>Coronilla scorpioides</i>	Almond-leaved Pear	<i>Pyrus spinosa</i>
Thorny Broom	<i>Genista acanthoclada</i>	Spiny Burnet	<i>Sarcopoterium spinosum</i>
Red Vetchling	<i>Lathyrus cicera</i>	<b>Solanaceae</b>	
Button Medick	<i>Medicago orbicularis</i>	Mandrake	<i>Mandragora officinarum</i>
<b>Monocotyledons</b>			
<b>Amaryllidaceae</b>		<b>Asphodelaceae</b>	
An Allium	<i>Allium junceum</i>	Summer Asphodel	<i>Asphodelus aestivus</i>
Naples Garlic	<i>Allium neapolitanum</i>	Hollow-stemmed Asphodel	<i>Asphodelus fistulosus</i>
Sea Daffodil	<i>Pancratium maritimum</i>	Branched Asphodel	<i>Asphodelus ramosus</i>
<b>Asparagaceae</b>		<b>Iridaceae</b>	
Three-leaved Hyacinth	<i>Bellevalia trifoliata</i>	Field Gladiolus	<i>Gladiolus italicus</i>
Tassel Hyacinth	<i>Muscari comosum</i>	Barbary Nut	<i>Moraea sisyrinchium</i>
Weiss' Grape Hyacinth	<i>Muscari weissii</i>	<b>Liliaceae</b>	
Narbonne Star-of-Bethlehem	<i>Ornithogalum narbonense</i>	Rhodian Fritillary	<i>Fritillaria rhodia</i>
Drooping Star-of-Bethlehem	<i>Ornithogalum nutans</i>	Greek Star-of-Bethlehem	<i>Gagea graeca</i>
Common Star-of-Bethlehem	<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	A Star-of-Bethlehem	<i>Gagea sp.</i>
Seven-year Hyacinth	<i>Scilla hyacinthoides</i>		
<b>Orchidaceae</b>			
<b>Anacamptis group</b>			
Fragrant Bug Orchid	<i>Anacamptis coriophora</i> ssp. <i>fragrans</i>		
Loose-flowered Orchid	<i>Anacamptis laxiflora</i>		
Pink Butterfly Orchid	<i>Anacamptis papilionacea</i>		
Green-winged Orchid	<i>Anacamptis morio</i> ssp. <i>picta</i>		
Pyramidal Orchid	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>		
<b>Himantoglossum group</b>			
Giant Orchid	<i>Himantoglossum robertianum</i>		
<b>Limodorum group</b>			
Violet Limodore	<i>Limodorum abortivum</i>		
<b>Neotinea group</b>			
Milky Orchid	<i>Neotinea lactea</i>		

## Notable Plants

Dense-flowered Orchid	<i>Neotinea maculata</i>
<b>Ophrys group</b>	
<b>Ophrys fusca group</b>	
Attaviros Ophrys	<i>Ophrys attaviria</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys bilunulata</i> subsp. <i>punctulata</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys blitopertha</i>
Ashy Ophrys	<i>Ophrys cinereophila</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys parvula</i>
<b>Ophrys heldreichii group</b>	
Calypso Ophrys	<i>Ophrys calypsus</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys heldreichii</i> ssp. <i>polyxo</i>
<b>Ophrys holoserica group</b>	
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys candica</i>
Colossus Ophrys	<i>Ophrys colossaea</i>
Halia's Ophrys	<i>Ophrys halia</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys oreas</i>
<b>Ophrys lutea group</b>	
Yellow Ophrys	<i>Ophrys phryganae/lutea</i>
Small Yellow Ophrys	<i>Ophrys sicula</i>
<b>Ophrys iricolor group</b>	
Rainbow Ophrys	<i>Ophrys iricolor</i>
Bosom Ophrys	<i>Ophrys mammosa</i>
<b>Ophrys mammosa group</b>	
Horseshoe Ophrys	<i>Ophrys ferrum-equinum</i>
Rhodian Horseshoe Ophrys	<i>Ophrys lucis</i>
<b>Ophrys oestrifera group</b>	
Horned Ophrys	<i>Ophrys cornutula</i>
Dodecanese Ophrys	<i>Ophrys dodekanensis</i>
<b>Ophrys omegaifera group</b>	
Omega Ophrys	<i>Ophrys omegaifera</i>
<b>Ophrys reinholdii group</b>	
Cretan Bee Orchid	<i>Ophrys cretica</i> ssp. <i>beloniae</i>
Diamond Ophrys	<i>Ophrys reinholdii</i>

## Notable Plants

<b>Ophrys speculum group</b>	
King Ferdinand's Orchid	<i>Ophrys regis-fernandii</i>
Mirror Orchid	<i>Ophrys speculum</i>
<b>Ophrys tenthredinifera group</b>	
Sawfly Orchid	<i>Ophrys tenthredinifera</i>
<b>Ophrys umbilicata group</b>	
Bumblebee Orchid	<i>Ophrys bombyliflora</i>
Rhodian Ophrys	<i>Ophrys rhodia</i>
An Ophrys	<i>Ophrys umbilicata</i>
<b>Orchis group</b>	
Anatolian Orchid	<i>Orchis anatolica</i>
Man Orchid	<i>Orchis anthropophora</i>
Naked Man Orchid	<i>Orchis italica</i>
Provence Orchid	<i>Orchis provincialis</i>
<b>Serapias group</b>	
A Tongue Orchid	<i>Serapias carica</i>
Small-flowered Tongue Orchid	<i>Serapias parviflora</i>
A Tongue Orchid	<i>Serapias politisii</i>
<b>Hybrids</b>	
<i>Ophrys ferrum-equinum</i> x <i>Ophrys reinholdii</i>	
<i>Ophrys tenthredinifera</i> x <i>Ophrys ferrum-equinum</i>	
<i>Ophrys speculum</i> x <i>Ophrys regis-fernandii</i>	





Birds			
<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>	Short-toed Eagle	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	Red-rumped Swallow
<i>Buteo buteo</i>	Common Buzzard	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	White Wagtail
<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Marsh Harrier	<i>Monticola solitarius</i>	Blue Rock Thrush
<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Kestrel	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	Stonechat
<i>Falco columbarius</i>	Merlin	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird
<i>Alectoris chukar</i>	Chukar	<i>Sylvia melanocephala</i>	Sardinian Warbler
<i>Larus michahellis</i>	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Blue Tit
<i>Tringa glareola</i>	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Corvus corax</i>	Raven
<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	Hooded Crow
<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	Collared Dove	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	Jay
<i>Upupa epops</i>	Hoopoe	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Chaffinch
<i>Otus scops</i>	Scops Owl	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow
<i>Galerida cristata</i>	Crested Lark	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	Corn Bunting
<i>Hirundo rusticola</i>	Swallow	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Wren

Butterflies	
<b>Papilionidae</b>	
<i>Iphiclides podalirius</i>	Scarce Swallowtail
<i>Papilio machaon</i>	Swallowtail
<i>Zerynthia cerisy</i>	Eastern Festoon
<b>Pieridae</b>	
<i>Colias croceus</i>	Clouded Yellow
<i>Euchloe ausonia</i>	Eastern Dappled White
<i>Pieris brassicae</i>	Large White
<i>Pieris rapae</i>	Small White
<b>Lycaenidae</b>	
<i>Callophrys rubi</i>	Green Hairstreak
<i>Glaucopsyche alexis</i>	Green Underside Blue
<b>Nymphalidae</b>	
<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Red Admiral
<i>Vanessa cardui</i>	Painted Lady

Other Taxa	
<i>Dama dama</i>	Fallow Deer
<i>Hemidactylus turcicus</i>	Mediterranean House Gecko
<i>Empusa fasciata</i>	Fasciated Conehead Mantis
<i>Potamon rhodium</i>	Rhodes Freshwater Crab

# Photo Gallery



*Serapias* sp. © Sue M



© Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys tenthredinifera* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys cinereophila* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys rhodia* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Anacamptis laxiflora* © Sue M



*Ranunculus asiaticus* © Sotiris Alexiou



© Sotiris Alexiou



© Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys regis-ferdinandii*  
© Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys calypsus* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys bilunulata* subsp. *punctulata*  
© Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys cretica* © Sotiris Alexiou



© Sue M



© Sotiris Alexiou



*Centaurea* sp. © Sue M



*Ophrys omegaifera* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys reinholdii* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys parvula* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys iricolor* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys cornutula* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys halia* © Sotiris Alexiou



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*Serapias carica* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Cyclamen rhodium* © Sotiris Alexiou



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*Ophrys collosaea* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Bellevalia trifoliata* © Sotiris Alexiou



*Ophrys ferrum-equinum* © Sotiris Alexiou



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*Ophrys dodekanensis*  
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