

The trail near the visitor centre is circular, 250m long and with a gentle incline allowing the use of wheelchairs. Along the trail, a number of representative plants and rocks of the Park are exhibited and named.

The plants

Troodos is widely known as one of the most important mountainous habitats of plants in Europe. The uniqueness of the Park's flora is mainly the result of the specific climatic conditions created by the high altitudes and the peculiar geological substratum. The Park provides refuge to nearly 800 different plant taxa, among them 72 endemics. Of these 72 endemics, 12 are exclusive to the Park. This means that they cannot be found anywhere else in the world. They can only be found growing naturally in the Troodos Park. Along the trail, 30 plants, typical of the Park's higher elevations are displayed.

- 1. *Pinus nigra ssp. pallasiana* (Black pine):** Indigenous coniferous tree, found only in the Park area in Cyprus (alt. 1.200 - 1.950m). Indigenous also to the Balkans, Crimea, Caucasus, Turkey and N. Syria.
- 2. *Juniperus foetidissima* (Foetid juniper):** Indigenous shrub or tree, growing also on the «Madari» peak (alt. 1.500 - 1.950m). Indigenous also to the Balkans, Caucasus, Turkey and Syria.
- 3. *Cotoneaster racemiflorus var. nummularius* (Cotoneaster):** Indigenous shrub found on «Madari» also (alt. 800 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 7. It is indigenous also to Sicily, Greece and N. Africa towards Afghanistan.
- 4. *Dianthus strictus ssp. troodi* (Troodos pink):** An endemic perennial, locally common in many areas of the island (alt. 0 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 10.
- 5. *Crocus cyprius* (Cyprus crocus):** Endemic to the island, growing mainly in the Park, recorded also in the «Madari» area (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 1 - 4. Protected.
- 6. *Paeonia mascula* (Peony):** Indigenous to the Park found also on «Madari» and «Papoutsas» (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 4 - 6. Common locally, especially in shady places. Indigenous also to Europe and through to Iran.
- 7. *Nepeta troodi* (Troodos nepeta):** Endemic to Cyprus found also on «Madari» and «Papoutsas» (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 6 - 10. Common, especially on high elevations.

- 8. *Salvia willeana* (Troodos sage):** Endemic shrub which grows only in the Park area (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 10. Fairly common.



Salvia willeana
(Troodos sage)

- 9. *Rosa chionistrae* (Troodos rose):** Endemic shrub, restricted to the Park and the «Madari» peak (alt. 1.200 - 1.700m). Fl. 5 - 6. Relatively rare.

- 10. *Rosa canina* (Dog rose):** Indigenous shrub, widespread on the entire Troodos range (alt. 700 - 1.950m). Fl. 4 - 6. A common shrub in many countries of Europe and W. Asia.

- 11. *Genista sphacelata ssp. crudelis* (Troodos gorse):** Endemic shrub found only in the Park area (alt. 1.200 - 1.950m). Fl. 6 - 7.



Genista sphacelata ssp. crudelis
(Troodos gorse)

- 12. *Viola sieheana* (Violet):** Indigenous to the Troodos range, common near water springs and stream sides (alt. 800 - 1.950m). Fl. 3 - 5.

- 13. *Hypericum confertum ssp. stenobotrys* (Troodos St. John's wort):** Indigenous to Troodos, typical of the highest altitudes of the Park (alt. 1.300 - 1.950m). Indigenous also to Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

- 14. *Alyssum cypricum* (Cyprus alysson):** Indigenous subshrub confined to the serpentinitic rocks of the Park (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 4 - 6. Indigenous also to S. Turkey.

- 15. *Alyssum troodi* (Troodos alysson):** A very common endemic subshrub, found only on the serpentinites of the Park (alt. 1.300 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 7.

- 16. *Onosma troodi* (Troodos golden-drop):** Endemic to the Park, found also on the «Papoutsas» peak (alt. 1.000 - 1.950m). Fl. 6 - 10. Relatively rare.

- 17. *Quercus alnifolia* (Golden oak):** Endemic shrub forming extensive thickets at lower and medium elevations of the Park (alt. 700 - 1.600m). It is very common all over the Troodos range.

- 18. *Teucrium cypricum ssp. cyprium* (Cyprus german-der):** Endemic subshrub, common on rocky places of the Troodos range (alt. 500 - 1.800m). Fl. 6 - 7.

- 19. *Jurinea cypria* (Cyprus jurinea):** Endemic to the Troodos range (alt. 900 - 1.700m). Fl. 6 - 8. Uncommon.

- 20. *Scorzonera troodea* (Troodos viper's grass):** An endemic of the island, common in the Park, rarer in other parts of Troodos (alt. 700 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 7.

- 21. *Colchicum troodi* (Troodos autumn - crocus):** Indigenous perennial, common in the Park and lowest regions as well (alt. 0 - 1.950m). Fl. 9 - 11. Found also in SE Turkey, Syria and Lebanon.

- 22. *Scutellaria cypria var. cypria* (Cyprus skullcap):** A common endemic of the Troodos range (alt. 500 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 7.

- 23. *Cynoglossum troodi* (Troodos hound's tongue):** Endemic to the Park, locally common (alt. 1.500 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 8.

- 24. *Sorbus aria ssp. cretica* (White beam):** Indigenous shrub restricted to the Park and the «Madari» peak (alt. 1.600 - 1.950m). Fl. 5 - 7. Indigenous also to SE Europe, Caucasus, Turkey, Iran and Iraq.



Onosma troodi
(Troodos golden-drop)



Jurinea cypria
(Cyprus jurinea)



Colchicum troodi
(Troodos autumn - crocus)



Scutellaria cypria var. cypria
(Cyprus skullcap)



Anthemis plutonia
(Troodos chamomile)

- 25. *Ornithogalum chionophilum* (Troodos star-of-bethlehem):** Endemic to the Troodos range, fairly common in moist sites (alt. 900 - 1.950m). Fl. 3 - 6.

- 26. *Berberis cretica* (Barberry):** Indigenous shrub found also on «Madari» and «Papoutsas»

- 27. *Cedrus brevifolia* (Cyprus cedar):** Endemic, coniferous tree growing naturally only in the «Cedar Valley» in the Paphos Forest. Extensively planted on Troodos.

- 28. *Euphorbia cassia ssp. rigoi* (Troodos spurge):** Endemic to the Park, common at medium and higher elevations (alt. 1.500 - 1.950m).

- 29. *Anthemis plutonia* (Troodos chamomile):** perennial, endemic to the Troodos range, very common in the Park (alt. 250-1.952m). Fl. 3 - 7.

- 30. *Saponaria cypria* (Cyprus soapwort):** Endemic to the Park, common locally (alt. 1.400 - 1.950m). Fl. 7 - 10.

Note:

Some of the herbaceous plants of the trail, like crocus (5), autumn crocus (21), star-of-bethlehem (25) etc, though perennial, appear above ground only during parts of the year, usually near flowering. Flowering period is given: Fl. 5-8 (= Flowering from May to August).

The rocks

The rocks of Troodos belong to the well known Troodos ophiolite complex. They were formed about 90 million years ago at the bottom of the ancient sea, Tethys. The uplift of Troodos above sea, began approximately 15 million years ago and that was the start of the creation of a new island, Cyprus. This uplift is attributed to the collision of the African lithospheric plate with the Eurasian plate and the subduction of the first beneath the latter. Both the composition and the layered sequence of the Troodos ophiolite are much the same as the composition and structure of the modern oceanic crust. For this, the Troodos ophiolite has long attracted great scientific interest. It is noteworthy that due to tectonic processes (uplift and erosion) the sequence of rocks on the surface is the reverse of that of the ocean crust and so the lowest (harzburgite) appears high on the summits and the highest (lavas of the ocean floor) appears at the Troodos foothills.

Volcanic rocks (extrusives)

Lavas: These rocks have been formed as a result of volcanic eruptions at the ancient sea floor. They commonly appear in a characteristic spherical or elliptic shape (hence pillow lavas), 30 to 70 cm in diameter. They are mainly composed of basalt and andesite and they appear on the lowest elevations of Troodos, lower than diabase. In the Park area, they can only be seen at the Pera Pedi forest. Lavas contain economically important minerals like pyrite and chalcopyrite. The slags found widespread in lavas outcrops are indicative of ancient copper exploitation on the island.

Sheeted dykes

Diabase: It was formed by the crystallisation of the magma in feeder zones of the overlying submarine lavas. It consists mainly of basalt to dolerite and it occupies the largest part of the range topographically above lavas and below gabbro. It is extensively used for the production of the construction material aggregates.

Plutonic rocks (intrusives)

Rocks with similar mineral composition, differing mainly in the way of crystallization and the concentration of each mineral. They appear on medium and the high altitudes of the Park, but also in certain other areas of Troodos, e.g. the Limassol forest. They have been formed by gradual crystallization of the magma 4 to 6 km beneath the ancient oceanic floor.

- **Gabbro:** It is made up mainly of olivine, augite and feldspar. It appears in different types and colours and good outcrops are exposed in many areas of the Park, such as «Chrysovrysi» along the Kakopetria - Troodos road and along the old Platres - Troodos road.
- **Plagiogranite:** Very similar to gabbro from which it differs in its higher concentration of silica oxide. It is volumetrically much less common than gabbro.
- **Pyroxenite:** It contains a large proportion of readily visible pyroxene crystals. It can be seen along the main roads Troodos - Pano Platres and Troodos - Prodromos roads.
- **Wehrlite:** It is composed mainly of clinopyroxene and olivine crystals. (It often bears scattered brown spots on its surface).
- **Dunite:** It is largely made up of olivine and chromite. Surface exposures are to be found along the Troodos - Prodromos and Platres - Troodos roads.

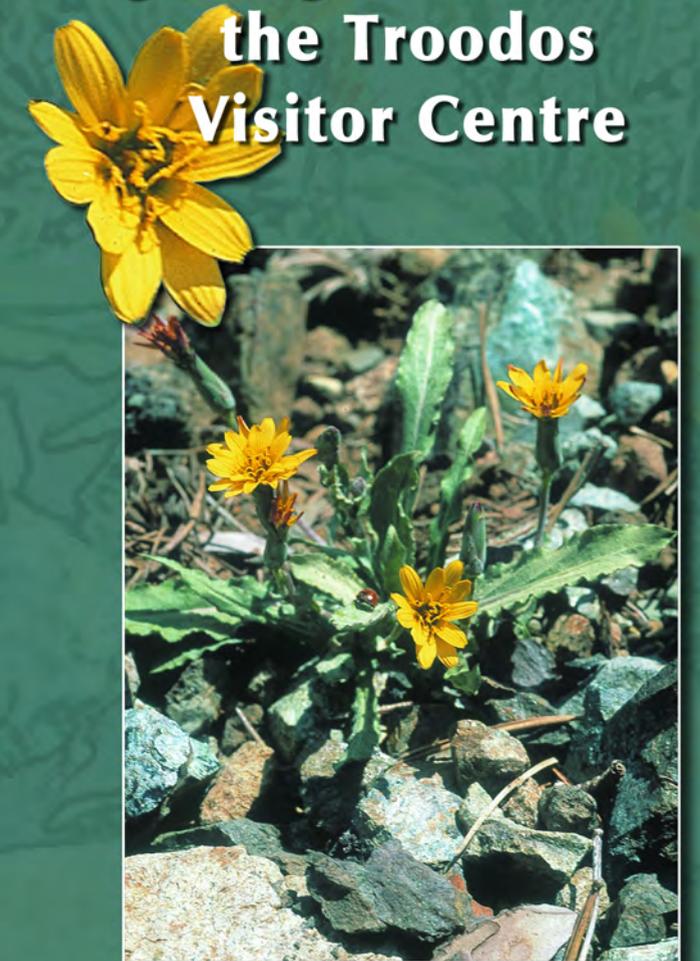
Upper mantle rocks

These rocks were formed from the magma portion of the earth's upper mantle which is the most difficult to melt and they include:

- **Serpentinite:** Group of minerals produced under the influence of water on ultrabasic rocks like harzburgite, dunite and wehrlite. Its most extensive outcrops can be seen around the old asbestos mine of «Amiandos». Troodos serpentinite contains the chrysotile type of asbestos in thin fibrous veins, usually less than 15 mm thick.
- **Harzburgite:** It is the main base rock from which serpentinite has been formed and, therefore, with similar mineral composition. Very often it is accompanied by dunite and may contain chromite. Extensive exposures can be seen around the Chionistra peak.



Botanical and geological trail of the Troodos Visitor Centre



Scorzonera troodea (Troodos viper's grass)



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