

General

The «Loumata ton Aeton» nature trail was designed and constructed by the Forestry Department during 2003 – 2004 and was financed by the Cyprus Tourism Organization.

The Trail



Starting point - Information

It is a linear trail, 2 km long with a walking duration of 0.5 – 1 hour. It starts from a rural road at Kato Amiantos village and passes through a dense forest to reach the «Loumata» river, where it then runs along the river side to end at a village road close to the communal

park. Both entrances of the nature trail are denoted with signs, along the Kato Amiantos – Karvounas road and also on a secondary street within the village. The nature trail is located on state forest land and is part of the Troodos National Forest Park, which is also a proposed *Natura 2000* site.

The gradient of the trail is comparatively gentle, but particular caution is needed where the trail crosses the river, especially during spring time when the water level is high. During winter time and early spring, the section of the trail that runs along the river will be impassable. Loumata river has a considerable flow of water even during summer months. The trail has a peak altitude of 1110m and 1010m at the lowest point. Most of the nature trail forms a section of an old trail, that the labourers of the Amiantos asbestos mine used to follow on their way to the nearby villages.



Calabrian Pine natural forest

The surrounding environment

At the beginning of the nature trail, the vegetation is more or less uniform, dominated by Calabrian pine (*Pinus brutia*) and rock rose (*Cistus creticus* & *Cistus salvifolius*). The golden oak (*Quercus alnifolia*), the terebinth (*Pistacia terebinthus*), the officinal storax (*Styrax officinalis*) and the strawberry tree (*Arbutus andrachne*) are also significantly present.



Thorny Gorse

Continuing on the trail, while approaching the Loumata river, the dominant species are the bay-laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), the myrtle (*Myrtus communis*), the barberry (*Berberis cretica*), the oleander (*Nerium oleander*), the etruscan honeysuckle (*Lonicera etrusca*), the common smilax (*Smilax aspera*), and the sage (*Salvia fruticosa*). The mean annual precipitation of the area is approximately 900 mm.

Features of interest



View point



The beginning of the trail offers a beautiful view of the Kyperounta village and towards the Amiantos mine, where reforestation works are significantly evident.

Half way along the nature trail, visitors have the opportunity to see a hideout used during the liberation struggle of 1955-59, as the nature trail passes very close to it.

Along the trail, signs have been placed denoting names of various plant species and rock formations. For those that would like to know more about the flora and geology of the region more information is given below.

Points along the trail

- 1. Strawberry Tree, *Arbutus andrachne*:** Evergreen shrub found only in the eastern Mediterranean, the Balkans and towards Caucasus. Quite common in Cyprus, at altitude between 600-1400m (in some areas even down to 100m).
- 2. Golden Oak, *Quercus alnifolia*:** Evergreen shrub, endemic to Cyprus, very common in the Troodos mountain range (alt. 600-1700m). Designated as the national tree of Cyprus.
- 3. Rock Rose, *Cistus salvifolius*:** Common evergreen shrub (alt. 0-1300m).
- 4. Sage, *Salvia fruticosa*:** Aromatic shrub, indigenous to the eastern Mediterranean, very common in Cyprus at altitude between 0-1300m.
- 5. Calabrian Pine, *Pinus brutia*:** The most common tree in the Cyprus forests, restricted in the eastern Mediterranean countries. In Cyprus it occurs at altitude between 0-1200m and up to 1600m in warmer sites.
- 6. Storax, *Styrax officinalis*:** Deciduous shrub, indigenous to the eastern Mediterranean. It can be found scattered in maqui vegetation and sparse pine forests (alt. 0-1300m).
- 7. Rock Rose, *Cistus creticus*:** Common evergreen shrub (alt. 0-1300m).
- 8. Terebinth, *Pistacia terebinthus*:** Deciduous Mediterranean shrub, common to many forested areas (alt. 0-1500m).
- 9. Barberry, *Berberis cretica*:** Thorny, deciduous shrub. Found in pine forests (alt. 900-1950m).
- 10. Prickly Juniper, *Juniperus oxycedrus*:** Evergreen shrub or small tree (alt. 700-1500m).
- 11. Laurel, *Laurus nobilis*:** Evergreen shrub. Thrives on wet, rocky soil (alt. 30-1300m).
- 12. Pegmatitic Gabbro:** A very coarse-grained basic igneous rock consisting essentially of plagioclase and a smaller percentage of clinopyroxene and olivine.
- 13. Thorny Gorse, *Genista sphacelata subsp. crudelis*:** Endemic shrub found only in Troodos area (alt. 1200 – 1700m).



Rock formation

- 14. Myrtle, *Myrtus communis*:** Evergreen shrub. It can be found in most places of the island and it thrives along riverbanks.
- 15. Everlasting, *Helichrysum italicum*:** Sub-shrub, very common in Troodos mountain range (alt. 300-1500m).
- 16. Etruscan Honeysuckle, *Lonicera etrusca*:** Deciduous creeper. Indigenous to Cyprus (alt. 500 – 1200m).
- 17. Troodos Rock-cress, *Arabis purpurea*:** Endemic perennial sub-shrub (alt. 600-1400m).
- 18. Harzburgite:** An ultra-basic igneous rock rich in olivine and orthopyroxene.
- 19. Sumach, *Rhus coriaria*:** Deciduous shrub, very common in the Troodos mountain range (alt. 500-1650m). In older times it was widely used in tannery while its fruit is still used in our days for culinary purposes.
- 20. Euphorbia of Aphrodite, *Euphorbia veneris*:** Endemic perennial sub-shrub, common in Troodos (alt. 600-1700m).
- 21. Oleander, *Nerium oleander*:** Evergreen shrub, very common species of riverine vegetation (alt. 0-900m).
- 22. Common smilax, *Smilax aspera*:** Evergreen climber, common in many parts of the island (alt. 0-1200m).
- 23. Wehrlite:** An ultrabasic igneous rock consisting essentially of olivine and clinopyroxene and a smaller percentage of plagioclase.
- 24. Pyroxenite:** A coarse-grained igneous rock consisting essentially of clinopyroxene.
- 25. Maple, *Acer obtusifolium*:** A small evergreen tree, thriving on rocky slopes, pine forests and gullies (alt. 0-1200m).
- 26. Gabbro:** A coarse-grained basic igneous rock consisting essentially of plagioclase and a smaller percentage of clinopyroxene and olivine.



Troodos Rock-cress



Common Smilax

Fauna

The nature trail passes through an area which is characterized by its rich biodiversity. The unique vegetation, morphology of the ground and the presence of water, make it an ideal habitat for a wide range of wildlife. Some of the fauna species found in the area are listed below:

Mammals

- Hare, *Lepus europaeus cyprius*
- Red Fox, *Vulpes vulpes indutus*
- Long-eared Hedgehog, *Hemiechinus auritus dorotheae*



Hare

Birds

- Bonelli's Eagle, *Hieraetus fasciatus*
- Goshawk, *Accipiter gentilis*
- Raven, *Corvus corax*
- Chukar, *Alectoris chukar*
- Woodpigeon, *Columba palumbus*
- Blackbird, *Turdus merula*
- Song Thrush, *Turdus philomelos*
- Cyprus Wheatear, *Oenanthe cypriaca*
- Cyprus Warbler, *Sylvia melanothorax*
- Magpie, *Pica pica*
- Robin, *Erithacus rubecula*



Bonelli's Eagle

Reptiles

- Blunt-nosed Viper, *Macrovipera lebetina*
- Montpellier Snake, *Malpolon monspessulanus*
- Large Whip Snake, *Dolichophis jugularis*
- Cyprus Whip Snake, *Heirophis cypriensis*
- Agama Lizard, *Laudakia stellio cypriaca*
- Chameleon, *Chamaeleo chamaeleon recticrista*

Code of behaviour for visitors

- Lighting of fire in, or near the forest is strictly prohibited by law.
- Avoid smoking and eating during your walk.
- Do not cut plants, or scratch tree trunks.
- Do not disturb wildlife in any way.
- Keep on the trail.
- The use of bicycles, motorbikes or any other motor vehicle is not allowed.



Decomposing wood

Information

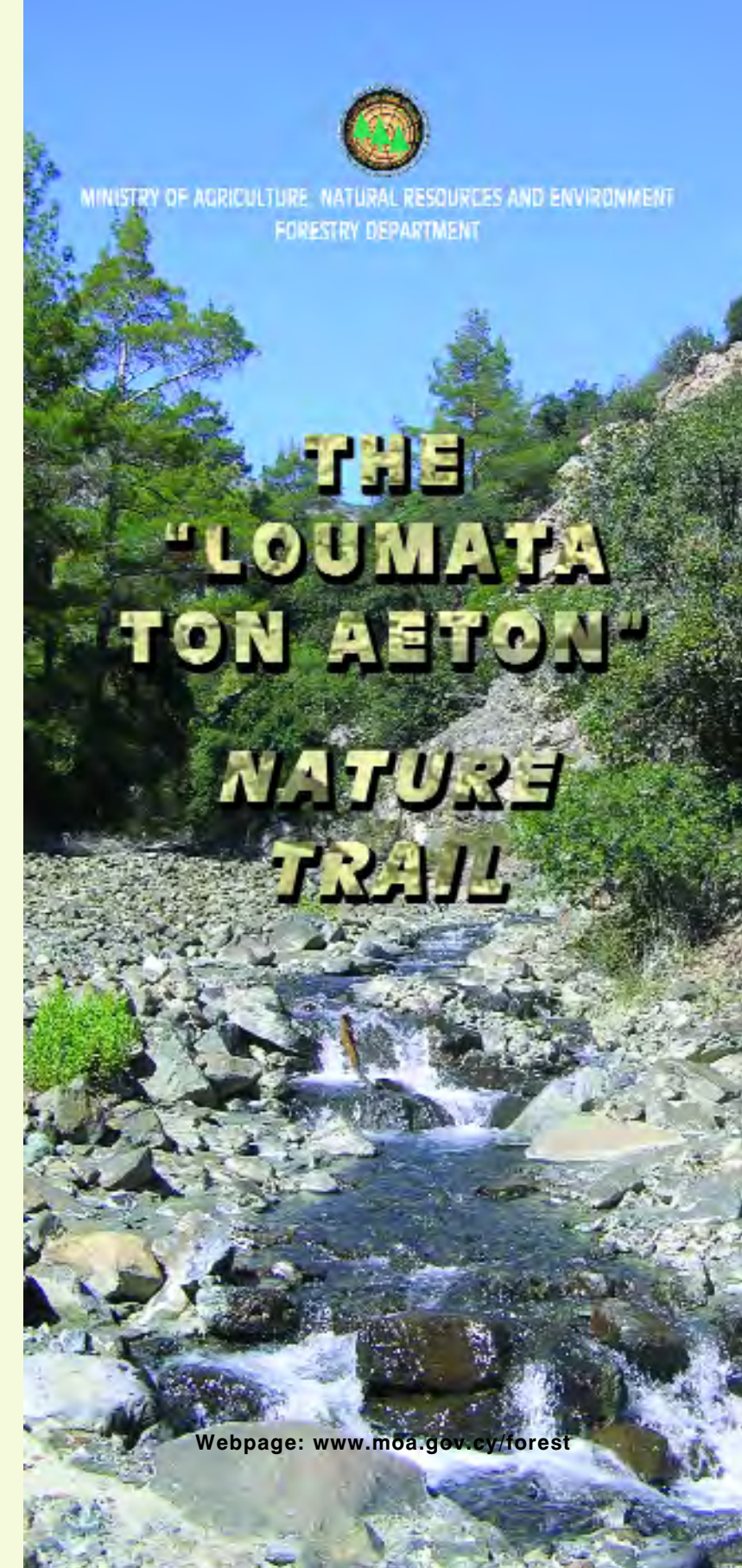
Further information about Cyprus nature trails can be found on the Cyprus Forestry Department's webpage www.moa.gov.cy/forest

If you have any remarks, suggestions or questions do not hesitate to give us a call. Telephone numbers: 22805533, 22924219.



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ΛΟΥΜΑΤΑ ΤΩΝ ΑΙΤΩΝ Nature trail

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT
FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

THE "LOUMATA TON AETON" NATURE TRAIL

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