

General Information:

The nature trail "Argaka Dam" is located within the Agios Merkurios valley, part of the Pafos state Forest, on the south-eastern part of Argaka village.

It is a circular trail with two routes. The short one 8 km long has a walking time of 2 hours while the long route with length 10 km requires 2,5 hours. The trail follows an existing forest road without significant inclinations.



Walkers along the trail

On both routes, hikers have the opportunity to see significant elements of natural environment and enjoy wonderful view such as the unique view of Argaka Dam. More specifically the trail offers panoramic view towards Argaka village, the North - eastern site of Akamas and the entire Bay of Polis tis Chrysochous.

The construction works for the Dam started in 1961 and completed in 1963. The capacity of the Dam is 980,000 m³, which is used for the irrigation of 250 hectares of agricultural land of the villages Makounta and Argaka, with either permanent or seasonal plantations.

The Calabrian pine (*Pinus brutia*) is the main tree species met in the way of the trail, among the many shrub and bushy plants such as, Thorny gorse (*Genista fasselata* subsp. *Fasselata*), Lentisc (*Pistacia lentiscus*), Thorny burnet (*Sarcopoterium spinosum*), Wild thyme (*Thymus capitatus*), Rock rose (*Cistus spp.*), Caper (*Capparis spinosa* var. *canescens*), Prasium (*Prasium majus*) and many more.



Pistacia terebinthus, Terebinth



Falco tinunculus, Common Kestrel



Alectoris chukar, Partridge



Ovis orientalis ophion, Cyprus Mouflon

The trail and the entire Pafos Forest are parts of Special Protected Areas (SPA), and therefore fauna lovers have the opportunity to watch birds, small animals and insects, as well as the endemic Mouflon.

Until 1948, year in which all the shepherds had been kicked out of the state Forest, according to a specific law been enacted by the Colonial Government, the wider area of the trail used to be a grazing area.

It is noted that some historical events or activities gave their name to a specific locations such as:

- **Argaki tou Asomatou.** The name was given to the specific stream (argaki) because of the ruins of a church located there, which was dedicated to Agios Asomatos.
- **Lepros.** The name is related to the disease leprosy and refers to the place where the leprous people were isolated, for the containment of the disease.
- **Argaki tou kaminiou.** The name refers to the ruins of kilns (kamini) used for resin and charcoal production.



Argaka dam



View Point

Description of the numbered points of the trail:

1. ***Sarcopoterium spinosum*. Prickly Burnet:** Small shrub up to 40 cm, usually found on rocky hillsides (alt. 0-1,250 m). The ripe seeds find various uses in traditional medicine.
2. ***Capparis spinosa* var. *canescens*. Caper:** Deciduous, spreader, ramose, spinous shrub up to 1,5 m (alt. 0-900 m).



Sarcopoterium spinosum, Prickly Burnet



Capparis spinosa var. *canescens*, Caper

3. ***Calycotome villosa*. Thorny Broom:** Common spiny shrub up to 2 m high (alt. 0-1,100 m). In the beginning of spring its mass flowering gives a special yellow colour and flavour to the area.
4. ***Cistus mospeliensis*. Narrow-Leaved Rock-Rose:** Shrub up to 1 m high with white flowers growing on rocky slopes, in forests and shrublands (alt. 0-600 m).
5. ***Phagnalon rupestre* subsp. *rupestre*. Fleabane:** Low shrub common in the southeastern part of Cyprus (alt. 0-800 m). It occurs in maquis forests and garigue.
6. ***Eucalyptus camaldulensis*. Murray Red Gum:** Evergreen tree, native in Australia. It has been planted in many lowland areas of Cyprus and in most countries worldwide.
7. ***Asparagus acutifolius*. Wild Asparagus:** Evergreen perennial subshrub, up to 2 m high (alt. 0-1,500 m).
8. ***Salvia fruticosa*. Three-Leaved Sage:** Strongly aromatic shrub up to 120 cm high. (alt. 0-1,000 m).
9. ***Genista fasselata* subsp. *fasselata*. Thorny Gorse:** Spiny shrub up to 3 m high (alt. 0-1,000 m) common in burned and grazed areas.
10. ***Prasium majus*. Prasium:** Erect or climbing shrub with stems up to 4 m. (alt. 0-700 m).
11. ***Lithodora hispidula* subsp. *versicolor*. Gromwell:** Perennial small shrub up to 60 cm high (alt. 0-700 m).
12. ***Coridothymus capitatus*. Thyme:** Aromatic shrub, indigenous in the Mediterranean countries. Very common in Cyprus in areas with low vegetation (alt. 0-1,000 m). It's an excellent honey plant.
13. ***Fumana thymifolia*. Thyme-Leaved Fumana:** Subshrub up to 25 cm high, with young stems thinly or densely hairy (alt. 0-900 m).
14. ***Hyparrhenia hirta*. Thatching Grass:** Perennial herb up to 1 m high, found on dry, rocky fields and hillsides, and along roads (alt. 0-1,400 m).



Lithodora hispidula subsp. *versicolor*, Gromwell



Fumana thymifolia, Thyme-Leaved Fumana

15. ***Urginea maritima*. Squill:** Common perennial herb up to 1,5 m high, found in sandy beaches, and on dry hillsides (alt. 0-1,350 m).
16. ***Asphodelus aestivus*. Asphodel:** Common perennial herb, typical of grazed areas with garigue vegetation and compacted soil (alt. 0-1,900 m).
17. ***Cupressus sempervirens* var. *sempervirens*. Mediterranean Cypress:** Evergreen, resinous tree up to 30 m high with erect, fastigate, thin branches.
18. ***Cupressus sempervirens* var. *horizontalis*, Mediterranean Cypress:** Evergreen, resinous tree up to 30 m (alt. 0-1,200 m).
19. ***Pinus pinea*. Stone Pine:** Evergreen, resinous, monoecious tree up to 25 m high. Exotic to Cyprus (alt. 0-1,400 m).
20. ***Pistacia terebinthus*. Terebinth:** Common deciduous shrub or small tree up to 6 m high (alt. 0-1,600m).
21. ***Rhamnus oleoides* subsp. *graecus*. Buckthorn:** Spiny shrub, characteristic of the driest areas in Cyprus (alt. 0-900 m).
22. ***Asperula cypria*. Asperula:** Much-branched subshrub up to 60 cm high. A very common endemic of Cyprus (alt. 0-1,400 m).
23. ***Echium angustifolium*. Narrow-Leaved Bugloss:** Erect sprawling perennial herb, 15-40 cm high (alt. 0-950 m).
24. ***Smilax aspera*. Green Brier:** Common evergreen, climbing shrub, with stems up to 4 m long (alt. 0-1,400 m).
25. ***Pinus brutia*. Calabrian Pine:** The most common tree of the forests of Cyprus, up to 40 m high (alt. 0-1,400 m).
26. ***Olea europaea*. Olive Tree:** Evergreen tree, widespread in the Mediterranean region. In Cyprus, it occurs mostly in maquis forests but also in pine forests (alt. 0-1,000 m). It is widely cultivated in countries with Mediterranean climate.
27. ***Styrax officinalis*. Storax:** Deciduous shrub or small tree up to 8 m high (alt. 0-1,200 m). The gum of storax is used in perfumery and medicine.
28. ***Prunus armeniaca*. Apricot Tree:** Deciduous tree or shrub up to 8 m. An adventive species to Cyprus, widely cultivated for its edible fruits (alt. 0-900 m).



Asphodelus aestivus, Asphodel



Prunus armeniaca, Apricot tree



Cistus creticus subsp. *creticus*, Rock-Rose



Ptilostemon chamaepeuce var. *cyprius*, Ptilostemon

- 29. **Rubus sanctus. Blackberry:** Shrub up to 3 m high. A common indigenous species growing in moist places (alt. 0-1,550 m).
- 30. **Cistus creticus subsp. creticus. Cretan Rock-Rose:** Shrub up to 1,5 m high, growing on rocky slopes, in forests and shrublands (alt. 0-1,800 m).
- 31. **Myrtus communis. Myrtle:** Evergreen shrub up to 3 m high. Indigenous to Cyprus, occurring throughout the island along river banks, near springs and moist places (alt. 0-1,500 m).
- 32. **Thymus integer. Thyme:** Much-branched, aromatic subshrub with erect or prostrate branches, sometimes rooting up to 10 cm high. Endemic to Cyprus (alt. 0-1,700m).
- 33. **Pistacia terebinthus. Terebinth:** Common deciduous shrub or small tree up to 6 m high (alt. 0-1,600 m).
- 34. **Rubia tenuifolia. Madder:** Climbing shrub with tetragonal stems up to 3 m long (alt. 0-1,500 m).
- 35. **Fumana arabica. Arabian Fumana:** Subshrub up to 60 cm high. It grows on sandy beaches and rocky slopes (alt. 0-1,200 m).
- 36. **Crataegus azarolus. Hawthorn:** Deciduous tree or shrub up to 10 m high. Branches with short, strong spines. The edible yellowish-red fruits are also used in preparation of marmelade (alt. 0-1,800 m).
- 37. **Inula viscosa. Fleabane:** Viscid-glutinous, aromatic subshrub up to 1,5 m high, occurring in disturbed ground, along road-sides, often in moist situations and near springs and rivers (alt. 0-1,600 m).



Myrtus communis, Myrtle



Thymus integer, Thyme

- 38. **Rhamnus oleoides subsp. graecus. Buckthorn:** Spiny shrub, characteristic of the driest areas in Cyprus (alt. 0-900 m).
- 39. **Pistacia terebinthus. Terebinth:** Common deciduous shrub or small tree up to 6 m high (alt. 0-1,600 m).
- 40. **Olea europaea. Olive Tree:** Evergreen tree, widespread in the Mediterranean region. In Cyprus, it occurs mostly in maquis forests but also in pine forests (alt. 0-1,000 m). It is widely cultivated in countries with Mediterranean climate.
- 41. **Pistacia lentiscus. Lentisc:** Evergreen shrub up to 2 m, resiniferous. The fruits are used in sausages, pastries and as condiment (alt. 0-800 m).
- 42. **Ceratonia siliqua. Carob Tree:** Evergreen tree up to 10 m high. Cultivated for its fruits (alt. 0-600 m).
- 43. **Cistus creticus subsp. creticus. Cretan Rock-Rose:** Shrub up to 1,5 m high, growing on rocky slopes, in forests and shrublands (alt. 0-1,800 m).
- 44. **Helichrysum conglobatum. Everlasting:** Subshrub up to 80 cm high. Stems erect, white and hard (alt. 0-700 m).
- 45. **Ptilostemon chamaepeuce var. cyprius. Ptilostemon:** Endemic, evergreen shrub up to 1,5 m high (alt. 50-1,600 m).
- 46. **Pinus brutia. Calabrian Pine:** The most common tree of the forests of Cyprus, up to 40 m high (alt. 0-1,400 m).
- 47. **Cistus mospeliensis. Narrow-Leaved Rock-Rose:** Shrub up to 1 m high with white flowers growing on rocky slopes, in forests and shrublands (alt. 0-600 m).



Crataegus azarolus, Hawthorn

Be aware of the following!

- ☞ Respect the natural environment.
- ☞ Keep on trail.
- ☞ Respect animal and bird life.
- ☞ Lighting of fires in or near the forest is strictly prohibited.
- ☞ Avoid smoking while walking on Nature trails.
- ☞ Help to keep the trail clean; please pick up litter and use litter receptacles.
- ☞ Avoid cutting or collecting plants and disturbing wild life; it is damaging and it is prohibited.
- ☞ Don't cause any damages to the constructions along the trail.

For any query please contact the **local forest station of Lysos tel. 26352336** or the **HQs of the Pafos Forest Division, tel. 26991858, 26918860**, email: paphosdiv@fd.moa.gov.cy

- ☞ **In case of fire call 1407.**
- ☞ **In case of injury call 112 or 199 or at 26806280 (Local Police Station), and give the name of the trail you are and the number of the nearest information sign to locate your position.**



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"Argaka Dam" Nature Trail

