

viranatura  
tours 

**SEA TO SKY  
LYCIA, SW TURKEY  
2023**

*Papaver rhoeas*

**Day 1      6 May      Arrival in Antalya**

Various flight arrivals following tours to other parts of Turkey (Cappadocia and Istanbul) and flight delays meant a few of us met up for dinner, whilst Mervi and Anna arrived later.

**Day 2      Saklikent**

The Taurus rise quickly and steeply behind the city, the road cutting up through forest of *Pinus brutia* (Turkish Pine) and *Quercus infectoria*, the scenery becoming more dramatic with deep valleys and raw limestone cliffs. The very tops of the mountains (part of the Bey Daglari) were still wrapped in drifting clouds, but the rain had held off. There was a short stop to look at a rocky knoll with the rich violet of *Aubrieta deltoidea* in large flowery patches alongside various other plants including *Nonea macrosperma*, fiery *Adonis flammea* and *Muscari neglectum*. From here we carried on to the highest ridge at 2200 metres, with the deep Imecik Yayla valley beyond and hints of the snow streaked ridge above it. Taking a few switchbacks higher towards the ski centre we stopped at a delightful alpine garden where blue-and-white *Muscari bourgaei* speckled the rocks with *Veronica caespitosa*, some fine cushions of brimstone *Draba bruniifolia* and the pretty pink lousewort; *Pedicularis cadmea*. On the opposite side of the road were quite a few *Anemone blanda* in various shades. The geophytes continued afterwards when we stopped beside a slope with a few *Fritillaria pinardii*, masses of buttercups and higher up, the bristling 'hairy caterpillar-like' flowers of *Solenanthus circinnatus* as well as our first *Tulipa armena*. Many more of the latter were to follow lower down, together with lots of *Adonis flammea* and the rich blue of *Muscari aucheri* filling a damp pasture.

The terrain switched back to rocky slopes where sweet-scented *Muscari racemosa* rubbed shoulders with the delicate bells of *Fritillaria crassifolia* and both white and blue forms of *Onosma armenum*. Not much beyond this there was a flat rocky area with hundreds of silvered woolly spikes of *Asphodeline taurica*, glowing with the backlight. *Erysimum kotschyannum* and *Cyanus bourgaei* grew among the same flats too. There was a brief and stunning revealing of the main mountain ridge before we turned back stopping for a field with



the remarkable *Leontice leontopetalum* and a delightful show of yellow *Barbarea plantaginea*, *Ranunculus* sp. and deep blue *Anchusa officinalis* filling a meadow. Our 4WD made short work of the muddy track back up and then we descended a little to another flowery patch with more superb mats of *Aubrieta deltoidea*, lots of *Tulipa armena*, *Ajuga reptans*, hairy-leaved *Ornithogalum armeniacum*, the simple white daisies of *Anthemis creticus* and big clumps of ivory-belled *Onosma armenum* embellished with red flashes of *Adonis flammea*.

The rain finally arrived, but it didn't stop us looking at red-and-black *Papaver lacerum* growing with *Saponaria kotschyana* and *Silene subconica* or a woodland filled with *Doronicum orientale* with drifts of *Silene aegytiaca* coating the banks (as it did in fabulous abundance along many parts of the road). A fine patch of *Astragalus schizopterus* did much the same. There was time to stop for a big view of the city below before we had to descend and plunge into it, switching from mountain solitude to bustling seaside in a hour.

**Day 3      Dibek Yaylasi**

The same robust 4WDs were needed today to get us into the remote and special and Dibek, a protected area of cedar forest on the slopes of the Bey Daglari. The road again led up through extensive tracts of pine to the cedar belt, before winding down a dirt track past colourful rocks and then back up the other side, via small farms, cute wooden buildings and orchards, eventually climbing to the entrance. We stopped to look at a large spur-thighed tortoise and the conglomerate rocks nearby had *Ajuga reptans*, *Orchis anatolica*, *Sedum pallida* and some nice ferns; *Asplenium ceterach* and *Cystopteris fragilis*. We drove part of the way up and then our grumpy escorts arrived and reluctantly allowed us to go further, entering the main protected area where we drove to a wonderful area of Cedar of Lebanon coloured with fine clumps of *Paeonia mascula*. There were many



more peonies scattered about the atmospheric cedar woods, each tree caked in lichens, the air fresh and clean. We spent time finding good specimens and then had our lunch among a grove of beautiful trees.

Afterwards we drove on higher into the forest along a narrow rock strewn track, passing some superb patches of peony on the way. A short walk up into the forest took us past some impressive old trees, but none more so than the venerable two-thousand year old giant at the top. This magnificent tree was well worth the climb. Around about we found some decent *Cyclamen alpinum*, *Corydalis wendelboi* and its cousin *C. lydica*. The tree line was remarkably abrupt and the cedars almost immediately yielded to rocky subalpine slopes, where we found a few *Eranthis hyemalis*.

On the way back down we stopped for a couple of particularly fine peony patches and the gracefully arching stems of Solomon's Seal; *Polygonatum multiflorum*, then retracing our steps through the scenic valleys and back roads of the Taurus and down to Antalya and a good fish dinner to end the day.

#### Day 4 Termessos

One of the best archaeological sites in the area also doubles up as an excellent botanical location. However, before we reached the main ruins we stopped for a wander up and down a productive roadside where bushes of *Spartium junceum* were in full flower and there was a bank of *Ptilostemon chamaepeuce*, also with plenty of bloom these ones proving attractive to the many painted lady butterflies on the wing. The pretty, lacy discs of *Artemisia squamosa* were mingled with red *Papaver dubium*, each flower of the latter with a large black blotch inside. *Euphorbia hieroscolymitana* was in fruit, both *Phlomis lycica* and *P. grandifolia*, were in flower as were the scrambling masses of *Rubia angustifolia*, smothered in tiny greenish-yellow stars, slender *Knautia integrifolia* and yellow *Isatis tinctoria*. Two bellflowers were seen along the roadside too; the large spiked *Campanula lyrata* and smaller, bristly-hairy *C. drabifolia*.



The following is intentionally out of sequence. Several wonderful spikes of *Ophrys reinholdii* were found in perfect flower with some variation in the attractive lip patterns. A highlight.

On up to the ruins and we set off on a very enjoyable hike up to the main ruins, passing through woods with large *Ostrya carpinifolia* and the oak; *Quercus infectoria*. Airy clumps of white *Silene italica* stood below impressive city walls and we found the first *Aristolochia lycica* halfway up. Plenty more *Aristolochia* clumps were around the gymnasium/haman, which was filled with foamy umbels of *Anthriscus nemorosa* and brimstone *Coronilla emerus* bushes with fearsome, spiny plants of *Onopordum acanthium* close to flowering and various peas. Some huge *Ephedra foemina (major)* grew high into the trees. Farther on and we found a few *Allium sicutum* among the rocks and then on reaching the next level we walked across to the impressive cisterns. There were photocalls from various viewpoints, none more so than the superbly positioned theatre with Gulluk Dagi mountain behind and expansive views in all directions. Quite a place to watch a performance.

Carpets of *Anthemis cotula* daisies covered the Agora and rich violet *Legousia speculum-veneris* were flowering along the path as we left, taking a different path down past some interesting burial niches and carved reliefs. The path wound down through mature oak woods and then exited next to Temple of Artemis Gate, the area around swathed in lovely drifts of *Anthemis cotula* punctuated with the elegant and rather architectural stems of *Pisum sativum*. There were superb photos of the ruins filled with *Coronilla emerus* and massive, silvery rosettes of heavily armed *Onopordum bracteatum*.

After a good picnic lunch we looked at *Aristolochia hirta* in flower and then had a short walk to look at the varied and impressive sarcophagi hidden in the woods as well as a large tomb with lion reliefs. It was then time to drive onto Egirdir, making good time enough to stop a superb display of *Papaver rhoeas* on the way as we drove the scenic route via fine oaks woods and then past extensive apple orchards to



*Ophrys reinholdii*

our comfy hotel tucked away not far from the shore of the vast Egirdir Golu (lake), ringed by hills and snowy mountains.

#### Day 5 Kasnak

Hidden away in a corner of the inner range of Taurus is the beautiful woodland enclave of Kasnak, an area especially rich in oaks (with five species), as well as cedars and three species of juniper. We drove directly there, climbing steadily along a stony track, past fine open oak woods and rock banks brimming with *Silene aegyptiaca* and loose mounds of *Aubrieta pinardii*, until we reached the top and a pleasant glade of oaks. Chief among these was the giant old specimen of endemic *Quercus vulcanica*, ringed by a protective fence. There were many other large specimens together with many other younger ones that seems to form suckering rings, possibly emerging once the original mother tree has declined. Setting off on a walk with bird song ringing in our ears we were soon stopping for flowers with matt blue *Anchusa barellieri*, lilac-pink *Geranium tuberosum* and the large pale pink flower of *Cyanus reuterana*. Moving to look at some particularly fine mounds of *Aubrieta pinardii* in full flower, Mervi then saw the first of what turned out to be hundreds of *Fritillaria whittallii*. Indeed, scattered across the rocky slope were many of pristine frits, with scarcely a tarnished or aging flower among them, the whole colony in perfect flower and in a variety of colour forms from green to heavily chequered with red. Tiny violets grew among them.

Carrying on down the path there were many more fritillaries along the edge and on the flanking slopes. Alas, the abundant peonies were still in tight bud, their handsome foliage everywhere among the oaks. Win some, lose some! The joyful yellow of *Doronicum orientale* lit up the still leafless woods and we also found a solitary *Orchis pallens* before turning around a walking back up, photographing more nice frits or whatever else. Lunch was in the oak glade with masses of *Barbarea intermedia* colouring the grassy clearing, and in shadier parts *Viola alba* and *Veronica chamaedrys*. Following the food we started to walk down soon finding a large population of *Ornithogalum nutans* filling the verge and adjacent field, the strongly green tepals elegantly curled up. We carried on down through the pleasant woods to the entrance gate seeing a particularly large *Acer monspessulanus* on the way.

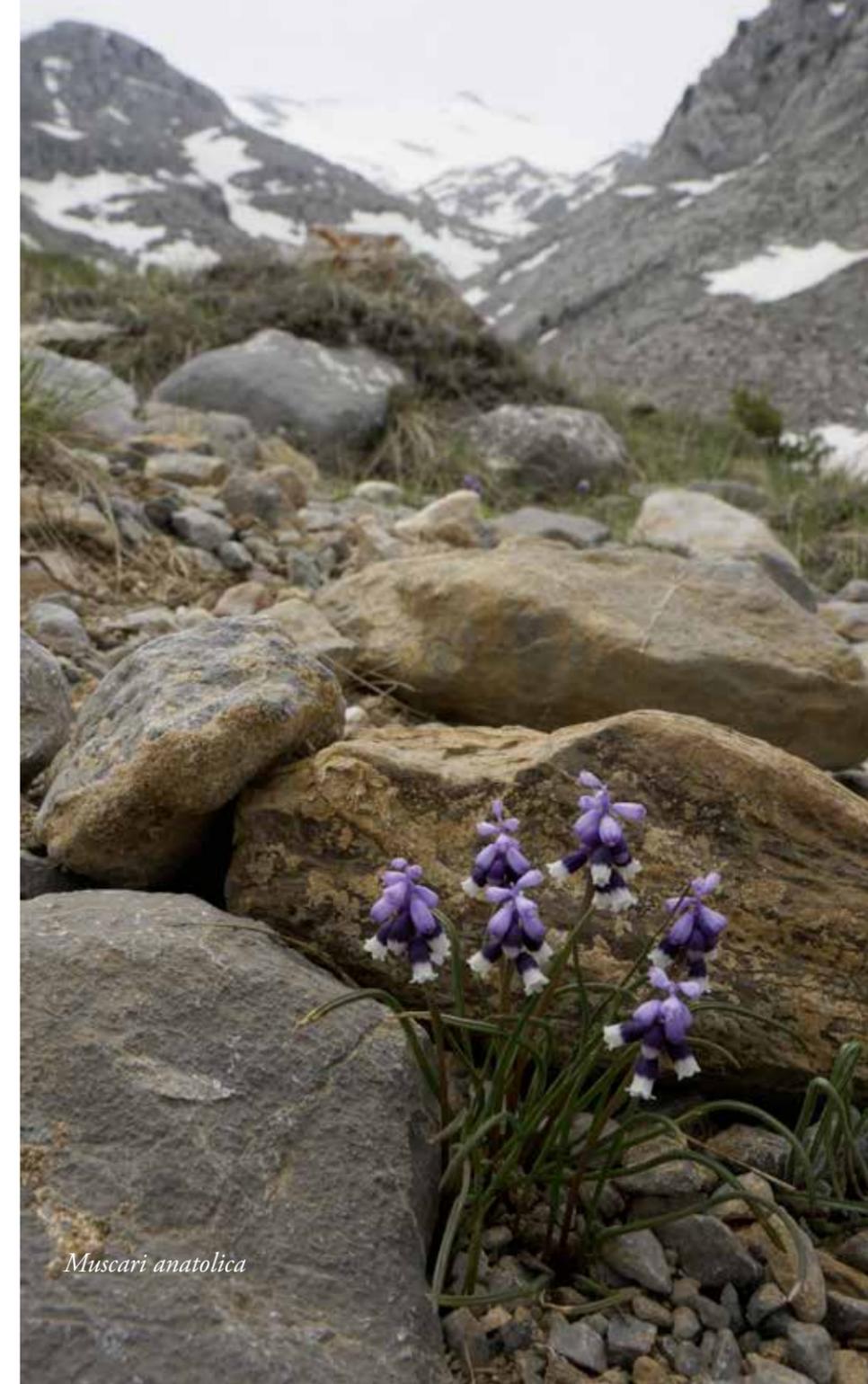


*Fritillaria whittallii*

There was a short stop for the view across the ridges of the Taurus, and then an impromptu 'chat' with a local man who welcomed us and said we could go and see the peonies. Moving on from Kasnak we drove back to Egirdir and then onto an area of macchie. Here we a bit of work searching the spiny Kermes oak bushes and pines we found an array of different plants from plentiful *Cyanus triumfettii*, *Ornithogalum montanum*, a colony of *Orchis anatolica*, mats of *Scutellaria orientalis* in flower, *Moltkia aurea*, *Alkanna tinctoria* and both *Papaver lacerum* and pink (with a black blotch) *P. postii*. It was proving tricky at first to find many orchids until Jenna saw a group of several *Cephalanthera longifolia* tucked away in the bushes, including one with half a dozen spikes tight together. The leaves of *Orchis purpurea* and spikes of *Himantoglossum comperianum* were a bit frustrating, but despite a thorough search none could be found in flower. On the drive back there was one last stop for some interesting roadside plants close to town with the burgundy spikes of *Astragalus campylosema*, fiery orange *Glaucium corniculatum* and bushes of *Colutea melanoclayx* in full bloom.

#### Day 6 Dedegol Dagi

The heights of the Taurus beckoned again as we drove west of town and into forested hills clad in black pines, cresting a rise to gaze at a full, stunning view of Dedegol Dagi, a rugged ridge of limestone that tops out at around 2992 metres. Much of the upper slopes were still blanketed in snow, but below this and nestled against craggy cliffs and knolls were snow patches that promised much. The start of the hike was a short sharp shock to get us to the edge of the pines from where could see our intended route threading up the steep slopes. Crossing the grassy plateau between we found superb drifts of *Viola gracilis* punctuated here and there by stout spikes of *Orchis pallens*. *Muscari armeniaca* was abundant and near constant presence from here on up and *Ornithogalum oligophyllum* was nearly as ubiquitous. Scaling the rocky path we reached a flatter area where a few *Globularia trichosantha* were flowering. Then continuing up a gentler ridge, the delightful *Muscari anatolica* was very common and there were pretty patches and tufts of this distinctive bulb with its prominent white teeth fringing violet bells. Crossing over to an rocky knoll we could see *Galanthus elwesii* here and there and then in a depression where snow must have lain longer were some superb clumps. Neat cushions of *Draba brunifolia* were smothered in domes of yellow flowers, wedged into



*Muscari anatolica*

crevices or colouring areas of limestone pavement alongside the charming *Muscari anatolica*. Both *Corydalis wendelboi* and pink-and-white *C. lydica* grew together, *Fritillaria pinardii* appeared here and there and closer to the snow were the deep blue of *Scilla bifolia*. The scenery all the time was magnificent with sweeping views across the slopes and wider landscape beyond. After a while we dropped down to the flatter area again and checked the snow patches, finding a few *Colchicum soboliferum* to wrap up the mountain bulbs.

Lunch was on a hillside with views all around and after recharging our batteries we set off again, though we did not get far as a good colony of *Dactylorhiza romana* stopped us, with many plants in both pale yellow and pink colour forms. The road descended and our next stop was also for orchids with a fine spike of *Orchis mascula* subsp. *pinetorum* together with smaller *Neotinea tridentata*. They grew in a little patch of macchie with lots of attractive *Lathyrus digitatus*, *Polygala anatolica* and a few spikes of *Acanthus hirsutus*. Our final botanical flurry for the day was down by the marshes that fringe the huge Beysehir Golu (in fact the lakes waters were still four kilometres away from where we stood). These damp areas support a large population of *Leucojum aestivum* and even our relatively small patch had hundreds of hefty clumps in full flower, each stem dangling a three or four white bells. A local girl child provided some engaging moments, though her frequent use of her grandad's car horn was not her cutest moment. Waving goodbye we photographed a white stork and then drove back to base gaining last views of the impressive Dedegol Dagi as we went.

#### Day 7 Phaselis & Adrasan

The lake was calm and tranquil as we set off for the journey back to the coast via the fine oak woods, stopping for a rather fine *Cercis siliquastrum* in full flower. Down below the road was also a pristine spike of *Cephalanthera kurdica*, and *Cistus creticus* and *Onosma oreodoxa* were both in good flower. We continued all the way to the coast and then along to the sweep of Phaselis Bay, the site of an ancient Lycian town. More importantly, it is the only known location of a beautiful endemic sweet pea; *Lathyrus phaselitanus* and this year there was plenty growing in tall grasses and scrub mingling with its cousin, the slender leaved *L. stenophylla*. Rumbles of thunder from up on the



*Lathyrus phaselitanus*

looming bulk of Tahtali Dagi threatened rain but it never really arrived. Instead we had a pleasant (dry) wander about the ruins where the tall spires of *Verbascum levanticum* (and the odd *V. chrysochaete*) grew alongside stands of hairy *Lupinus pilosus*. On the ruins the cracks and crevices were home to *Ricotia sinuata*, *Campanula delicatula*, *Umbilicus horizontalis* and the marbled leaves of *Cyclamen graecum*. Climbing up to the theatre there was also *Papaver gracile* sprouting from the walls. After seeing the bay at the end of the promenade we returned to have another filling picnic lunch (prepared by Basak).

The afternoon was spent looking at various sites on the Adrasan Peninsula, an area of mainly serpentine rocks and one which has its own endemic plants. We found the first growing along a track, the lovely orange-and-yellow *Lathyrus belinensis*. It grew with tall hollyhocks; *Alcea pallida* and *Ononis mitissima*. A nearby area of pine woods and macchie had a good selection of orchids with sombre *Serapias bergonii*, pink *Anacamptis coriophora* and the attractively patterned *Ophrys fuciflora*. *Gladiolus anatolicus* was common throughout the woods and a few spikes of *Ornithogalum narbonense* were seen further along as was a spur-thighed tortoise. Not far from these was an very strong population of *Anacamptis sanctus* with many perfect spikes, mainly soft pink but with a few darker forms too. Fine stands of *Onopordum boissierianum* were a magnet for hefty hornets and bees. Moving on we reached the Adrasan Bay and then eventually found the right track up onto the cliffs where there was a rich assortment of plants growing on the serpentine. Most noteworthy (if not exactly the most glamorous) was *Centaurea wagenitzii*, a shrubby plant with small pale yellow flowers, which is only found on this one headland. Alongside these was another serpentine specialist; *Phlomis chimerae*, a tidy shrub with soft yellow flowers and silvery undersides to the leaves. Flowery bushes of spiny yellow *Genista acanthoclada* were common as were the silvery leaved clumps of *Inula heterolepis* and *Lamyropsis cynaroides* (a spiny-leaved thistle) growing on the rocks. There were great views along the picturesque coastline, architectural gnarled pines and the oh so dainty translucent yellow *Bupleurum gracile* lining the track. The only negative was booming music from a party boat moored in the bay. There was one final stop for the day to look for more bee orchids (*Ophrys fuciflora*) and



*Anacamptis sanctus*

we found a good one with two perfect flowers growing with more *Anacamptis sanctus*, the slender cornflower *Crupina vulgaris*, whilst the yellow bobbles of *Trifolium campestre* and similar *T. mesogitanum* were abundant as understorey.

It was short ride down to Cirali and our accommodation set in very flowery gardens.

#### Day 8      Beycik & Cirali

The triangular form of Tahtali Dagi rises rapidly from the Mediterranean Sea, reaching 2265 metres in a few short kilometres. The many deep gorges and canyons, varied aspects, proximity to the sea, etc have resulted in high diversity of plants with over 900 taxa recorded. On a blue, blue sky day we spent the morning exploring the western slopes, driving up into the cedar forest above the village of Beycik and stopping first for a colourful roadside with plentiful endemic *Silene cryptoneura*, the large yellow flowers of *Helianthemum nummularium* and showy *Lamium garganicum*. These were all set below the layer cake branches of cedar and the dangling catkins of *Ostrya carpinifolia*. Moving onto the main 'yayla' the area was swathed in flowery meadows. The first had lots of blue-tipped *Bellevalia tauri*, *Lathyrus digitatus*, masses of yellow and white daisies, *Silene subconica*, scarlet *Adonis flammea* and lacy umbels of *Tordylium apulum*. Punctuating the meadows and growing on the rocks were the golden spires of *Asphodeline lutea* and there was the odd architectural *Smyrniium connatum* too. There was lots more of the former in the next meadow, which looked lush and green at this season. Along with the asphodels were clumps of *Cerintho minor* and plenty more *Silene subconica*, which created many delightful vignettes with the other meadow flowers. The drier slopes had vivid pink *Saponaria kotschyana* and glancing across the valley we could see something else that was vivid pink. A quick scan with binoculars revealed some big plants of *Paeonia mascula* and we went across to the rocks finding one especially fine clump with a dozen flowers. We drove on further, reaching an area of fallow fields that had many red *Papaver argemone* and the lovely *P. postii* with black-centred pink flowers. There were drifts of *Anthemis cotula* and pretty frothy masses of *Tordylium apulum* lying like feather blankets on the meadows.

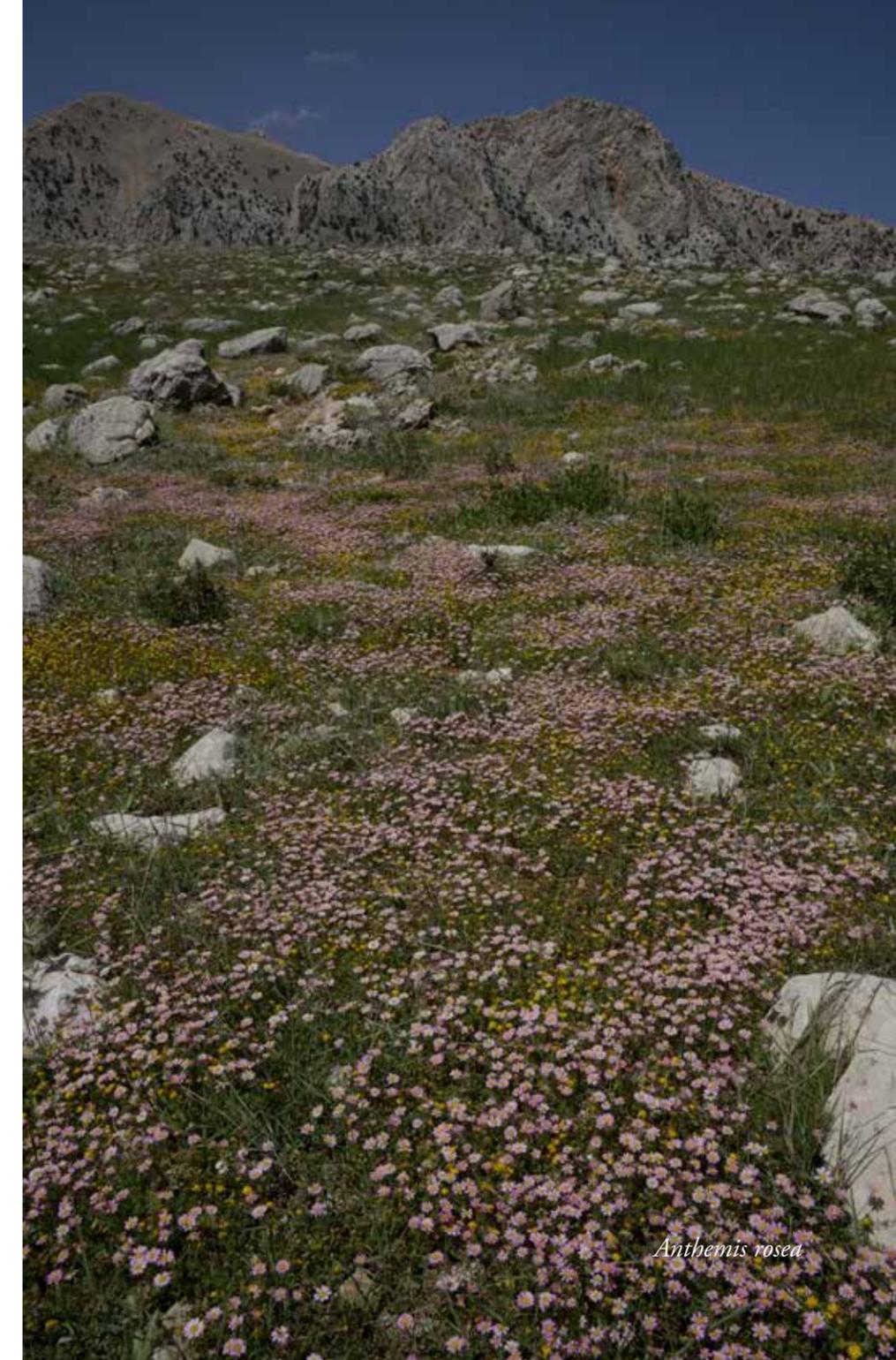


*Asphodeline lutea*

Lunch was taken with a spectacular view of the Bey Daglari, framed by cedars, where a huge *Onopordum sibthorpiatum* was almost in flower next to us. Returning we stopped for the views down to the coast, which was our next location and in complete contrast we set off (on a warm afternoon), swapping cedars for gnarled Turkish pines that took many interesting forms growing on the harsh, serpentine rocks. *Gladiolus anatolicus* was common, *Lavandula stoechas* still had flowers, but the hoped for *Asphodeline breviscapa* seemed mainly finished this season. We did see the delicate *Allium myrianthum*, gentle drifts of *Pennisetum orientale* (grass) and the views along the coast were wonderful, with pine-framed bays and azure waters. Luckily, on the return leg a few *Asphodeline breviscapa* were found. It was a warm afternoon, so relaxing by the pool or swimming seemed the best ideas for the rest of the time before an excellent pizza dinner.

#### Day 9      Ak Dagi

Another blue sky day had us driving north-west, on a route that went along the coast, paralleling a long stony beach before cutting inland and climbing to the shallow waters of Avlan Golu. From here we could see our ultimate goal; the snowy reaches of Ak Daglari, a range that parallels the longer Bey Daglari, and is almost as high. Indeed, we also had superb views of the length of the latter with the obvious peak of Kizlar Sivrisi, at 3086-metres the highest in the western Taurus. We drove on until we reached a big wide, green pasture with sinuous rivers running across it. There were drifts of bright yellow buttercups (*Ranunculus constantinopolitanus*) and the lush vegetation contrasted strongly with the craggy, grey mountains behind. A few *Fritillaria pinardii* were found and these also proved to be very common where we parked next. From here we climbed a slope to an area of low cliffs, hoping to find *Omphalodes luciliae* in flowers, but alas not this year. However, there was plenty that was in flower with purplish-blue *Alkanna areolata*, tufts of white-flowered *Aurinia rupestris* and plenty of *Aubrieta deltoidea*. Higher up the cliffs and rocks had plenty more delights with pale pink *Lamium carica*, clumps of silvery leaves of *Papaver pilosum* and the showy pink flowers of *Geranium cinereum* subsp. *subcaulescens*. Looking carefully we also picked up some beautiful *Fritillaria whittallii* (including one being pollinated by a queen wasp) and then Anna spotted our first



*Anthemis rosea*

yellow-belled *Fritillaria carica*. Shrubs of *Prunus prostrata* hugged the rocks with some flowering well and everywhere something sprung from the rocks.

Walking away from the cliffs along a ridge there was *Astragalus microrchis* and then a green patch had *Colchicum soboliferum*. Best of all we found many more *Fritillaria carica* as we descended the slope back to the vehicle. After lunch surrounded by mountain splendour we drove down and stopped by an overlook of the town of Gombe with a long ridge of the Taurus in the distance. A short distance away was a tranquil green mountain tarn and the slopes around it were generously dressed in carpets of countless pink *Anthemis rosea* mingled with as many golden *Trigonella aurantiaca*. There were two more short stops to photograph the Ak Dagı ridge and then to look at the bright orange cups of *Glaucium leiocarpum* and then it was homeward bound.

Dinner was far too big!

#### Day 10 Flights or to Myra & Simena

Glenys, Mary and Jenna took their transfer to Antalya airport at 6am leaving Mervi, Anna and myself to continue the tour further west. Not that we got that far before stopping, with a fine *Ferula tingitana* in flower just outside the town. Then up on the main road we stopped for *Lathyrus belinensis* growing in grassland with *Anacamptis coriophora*. The road followed the coast, winding through a series of tight bays until we reached Myra. This ancient city has some of the finest rock carved burial rooms to be found in Lycia, along with other interesting stonework. The main site has a series of these set in a cliff with a large sarcophagus to one side. On the other side is the large theatre and this also had some interesting flora with the spiny architecture of *Echinops spinosissimus* beginning to flower. Wedged in the crevices between the stone blocks of the theatre were many other plants including; *Campanula drabifolia*, *Glebionis coronaria*, a yellow pea; *Securigera parviflora*, the trailing stems of *Cymbalaria microcalyx*, pellitory, tiny sedums and some fine tufts of *Ajuga reptans*. Driving on towards Simena we took the inland route passing through tracts of macchie and fields studded with large spreading *Quercus ithaburensis*. A fallow field thronged with *Papaver rhoeas*, together with rich pink *Gladiolus italicus* and the broad heads of *Allium nigrum*. An



*Iris junonia*

adjacent field had oceans of *Anthemis cotula* daisies.

Lunch was in the shade of a large *Quercus aucheri*, before continuing across the Sicak Peninsula towards the convoluted bays and islets that stud the sea at Simena. A short walk took us up to huge sarcophaguses, some perched high above the macchie with superb views of the coastline. As we walked up there was the delicate *Teucrium monbretii* on the rocks, and around the gnarled old olives we found the swollen fruits of *Lupinus pilosus* and the stand of the handsome blue-flowered *Delphinium staphisagria* growing in the macchie. Mervi and Anna climbed up to the fort and looked at the theatre while I looked for plants lower down. Walking back to the vehicle there were drifts of the very soft grass; *Polypogon monspeliensis* growing with the contrasting spiky-leaved *Juncus acutus*.

There was time visit one more location, this time a bit higher and cooler than where we were. However, shortly before we reached there was a bonus of many superb plants of *Campanula aktascii* spreading across the cliffs laden with large blue trumpet flowers. Below them were quite a few *Cyanus depressus* and we found many more of these higher up growing among drifts of *Silene cryptoneura*, themselves set below a large clump of *Iris junonia* in full flower. Quite a few more irises were found in various violet shades and there was a good number of *Orchis anatolica* and *Gladiolus anatolicus* too. A walk deeper into the mixed cedar and oak woods that resounded with bird song produced a few late *Tulipa armena*, *Aristolochia adalica*, *Onosma frutescens* and delightful drifts of pink and blue *Silene* and *Cyanus* on woodland banks and in open areas a blend of grasses; *Aegilops geniculata*, *Cynosurus echinatus* and *Hordeum murinum*.

A final half hour had us back down at the coast and our hotel perched just above the warm water of the Mediterranean.

#### Day 11 Xanthos, Patara & Pinari

It was going to be a warm day so we tried to plan with shade in mind, visiting the open spaces of Patara first. Here we walked through big stands of *Onopordum boissierianum* in full bloom with *Notobasis syriaca* and airy stands

*Campanula aktascii*



of *Ammi majus*. Also, the fine *Delphinium staphisagria* we had seen yesterday was flowering well here. We wandered about the various ruins; the theatre (with great acoustics), the assembly hall (with two white goats) and the colonnaded street with plenty of marsh frogs and the odd stripe-necked terrapin in the pond at the end. Photographing the triple arch as we left, we continued to Xanthos. This also had wide street, but this time solid marble, with many clovers and their cousins crowding the crack. A trail led to hefty sarcophaguses and up to a larger crypt with imposing square tower above. Dainty *Lagoecia cuminooides* dangled its little pom-poms and a solitary *Allium stamineum* was seen on the way down. Before lunch we squeezed in a look at the rest of Xanthos including the impressive entrance to the theatre, the monumental sarcophaguses and large obelisk covered in Lycian writing. Plants included *Dianthus tripunctatus* and *Verbascum lasianthum*, whilst a big agama waggled his head at us from high wall.

Lunch was in the shade of a pine and most welcome. Nestled in the foothills was our final site; Pinari, an interesting collection of features including a towering cliff with dozens of coffin niches (somehow) carved into the solid rock. This was more rambling site fit for some exploration, much of it swathed in pines or macchie. The imposing theatre had been hacked out of the roughest stone imaginable and was decidedly uncomfortable to sit on (cushion sellers must have done a brisk trade two thousand years ago). A large (two hundred strong) herd of goats moved through as Anna and I enjoyed the shade of a carob tree growing from the upper terraces of the theatre. We summoned the energy to climb up the trail to the upper burial rooms, seeing *Campanula aktascii* on the rocks on the way. A contorted weeping pine lent out and provided a good foreground for the cliff niches and yet more tortoises we seen.

From here we drove Anna to Dalaman for her flight and then Mervi and I returned to Kalkan just before the light faded from the day.

### Day 13 Flights

Time to return to Antalya and it was as well it was not a field day, since there was heavy rain (and hail) for much of the way. The weather eased a lot as we reach the city and made it to the airport in good time.



*Fritillaria whittallii* &  
*Aubrieta deltoidea*

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