



THE SHOPPING  
TRIP

*Erophaca baetica*



*Securigera parviflora* & *Ricotia sinuata*



*Bituminaria bituminosa*

The frustrating but necessary days of lockdowns are upon us. No venturing out unless it is to essential work, walking the dog or of course shopping for food. Just so happens we had a very scenic and interesting route to get there and back! Now this is not us showing off, we are fortunate to be able to do this, but we want to share with all other plant lovers and keep collective spirits up.

We needed to stock up with two weeks of supplies for Chris in our mountain house so drove to Antalya, shopped fully kitted in masks, gloves and eye protectors, disinfected and then it was time to head back. A big police check we'd seen on the way in rather put us off so we took the beautifully scenic back road that passed inside the first range of the Taurus.

As we left the city the low level roadsides were choked in early spring Mediterranean flowers and it was impossible to resist stopping on the way. Lovely, bushy clumps of lilac *Bituminosa bituminaria* crowded the verge, along with a delicate swirl of pink and yellow *Securigera parviflora* with white *Ricotia sinuata*. Golden yellow *Phlomis lycica* was also abundant and colouring the macchie together with impressive stands of *Euphorbia characias*, a common but wonderfully architectural plant.



*Phlomis lycica*



*Euphorbia characias*



*Iris unguicularis*

Our rather serpentine route wound up into the forested northern flank of the Taurus, with snow still draped across the upper slopes. Extensive pines gave way to Cedar of Lebanon, the bare slopes in between glowing with great swathes of *Euphorbia rigida*. Then, our route down plunged into the Kemer Valley a soon the verges with carpeted in patches of pretty pink *Silene aegyptiaca*, a charming little annual that brought the sombre woods to life. Above one patch grew a large flowering shrub of *Anagyris foetida*, the attractive green-yellow pea-flowers stained blood red. *Iris unguicularis* appeared here and there too, most now reaching the end of their flowering, but some were still lovely.



*Silene aegyptiaca*



*Anagyris foetida*



*Aristolochia lycica*

The Kemer Valley is one the most species rich flower places we know and it was impossible not to stop more. Big clumps of *Erophaca baetica* (*Astragalus lusitanicus*) were in perfect flower, with spikes of ivory flowers and silver-fringed leaves. Among these grew a local speciality, the endemic *Aristolochia lycica*, with marbled funnels as well as an plenty of *Fritillaria acmopetala* in a range of forms, some with more red, some striped like this one.

We really needed to get home, but plant people aren't good at that, and a colony of *Ophrys sphegodes* subsp *climacis* delayed us once again. A third spurge was common lower down the rather longwinded *Euphorbia hieroscolymitanus* and plenty of dainty *Ricotia sinuata* frosted the rocks before we reached the main road and the end of botany.

One of more interesting shopping trips we've ever made!



*Fritillaria acmopetala*



*Ophrys sphegodes* subsp. *climacis*