

The nature trails of «Adonis» and «Aphrodite» were the first to be created in the Akamas Forest, an area with considerably diverse flora, fauna and geology, unspoilt landscapes, picturesque coastlines and a rich historic and cultural heritage.



Baths of Aphrodite

The Akamas peninsula owes its uniqueness not only to its attractive natural landscapes and rich natural environment but also to the vast wealth of elements of Hellenic history and mythology dating back 3000 years.

The two trails are circular and both have their start at the renowned «Baths of Aphrodite». Here, according to the legend, the goddess of love first met her lover «Adonis». She also used to bathe in the crystal cool waters of the natural pond adorned by beautiful, sweet-smelling wild plants and flowers.

A café-restaurant operating in the area offers the visitor the opportunity to take a rest, taste the Cyprus cuisine and obtain information about Akamas. It is also worth - visiting the small botanical garden created by the Forestry Department comprising most of the perennial indigenous plants of Akamas.

2.5 km of the route is the same for the two trails. This route starts from the «Baths of Aphrodite» and ends at



“Pyrgos tis Rigainas”

the historic location «Pyrgos tis Rigainas». This is the legendary route followed by Aphrodite who used to rest under the large oak tree after her bath. This part of the trail has an uphill incline on rocky ground and it takes about one hour to walk.

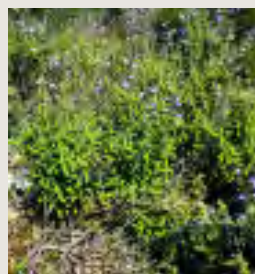
Thereafter the «Aphrodite» trail follows a northwestern direction ascending on the «Sotira Top», then descending to reach a forest road leading back to the start. The «Adonis» trail follows a southeastern direction, passes through the scenic area of «Kephavrysia» and returns back to the Baths of Aphrodite.

Both trails have a total length of about 5 km and can be walked in two hours time.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NUMBERED POINTS ALONG TRAILS

A. COMMON PART OF TRAILS: Baths of Aphrodite - «Pyrgos Rigainas»: Points 1 - 24 .

1. **Ceratonia siliqua, Carob Tree:** Evergreen tree, indigenous of the Eastern Mediterranean countries. In Cyprus it is found in maqui and pine forests (alt 0 - 700 m). It is widely cultivated in Cyprus and other countries with Mediterranean climate.
2. **Olea europaea ssp. oleaster, Olive Tree:** Evergreen tree, widespread in the Mediterranean region. In Cyprus, it occurs mostly in maqui forests but also in pine forests (alt 0 - 1000 m). It is widely cultivated in countries with Mediterranean climate.
3. **Pistacia lentiscus, Lentisc:** Mediterranean, evergreen shrub with strongly aromatic leaves and fruits, common in maqui forests in the zone of 0 - 600 m.
4. **Rubus sanctus, Bramble:** Shrub native of the East Mediterranean and Western Asia. In Cyprus it is usually found in moist situations (alt 0 - 1500 m).
5. **Baths of Aphrodite:** Natural pond with crystal cool water, where according to the legend the goddess of love, Aphrodite used to bathe and meet her lover Adonis. In some versions of the legend, Aphrodite is replaced by the Rigaina and Adonis by Digenis. It is said that, once you drink water from the pond you feel younger and erotically invigorated, irrespective of age. **Be aware however, the water is non-potable!**
- 5A. **Ficus carica, Fig Tree:** Native of the Eastern Mediterranean, extending towards Iran. In Cyprus it occurs both as wild and as cultivated (alt 0 - 1400 m).
6. **Eucalyptus camaldulensis, Murray Red Gum:** Evergreen tree, native of Australia. It has been planted in many lowland areas of Cyprus and in most countries worldwide.
7. **Salvia fruticosa, Three - foliate Sage:** Also an eastern Mediterranean's plant which in Cyprus is very common in a variety of habitats in altitudes 0 - 1400 m. Its dried leaves are locally used for tea.
8. **Forest cairn:** The borderline of state forest land is marked with numbered cairns.
9. **Onosma fruticosum, Shrubby Golden-drop:** Endemic shrub of Cyprus, common in many areas (alt 0 - 1100 m).
10. **Lithodora hispidula ssp. versicolor:** Indigenous shrub common in areas with garigue vegetation (alt 0 - 1000 m). It grows naturally also in Turkey and Syria.

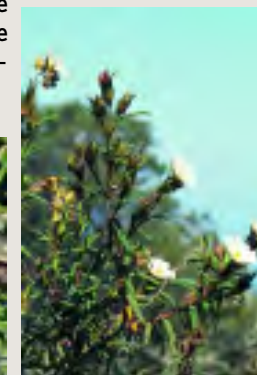


Salvia fruticosa - Three - foliate Sage

11. **Thymus capitatus, Wild Thyme:** Aromatic shrub, indigenous in the Mediterranean countries. Very common in Cyprus in areas with low vegetation (alt 0 - 1000m). It is an excellent honey plant.
12. **View point:** Panoramic view to the Chrysochou Bay.
13. **Limestone (Kafkalla):** Hard rock made up of high concentration of carbonate calcium. Shallow red soils (terra rosa) are formed in cavities as a result of long term erosion, creating a mosaic of red soil and rock.
14. **Pinus brutia, Brutia Pine:** The most common forest tree of Cyprus (alt 0 - 1400 m). Indigenous of the eastern Mediterranean region.
15. **Smilax aspera, Common Smilax:** Common climbing shrub in the elevation zone 0 - 1200 m.
16. **Ceratonia siliqua, Carob Tree:** See point no. 1.
17. **Limestone geological formation.**
18. **View point.** Panoramic view to the Chrysochou Bay.
19. **Cistus monspeliensis, Narrow - leaved Cistus:** This shrub, which is common in Europe, in Cyprus is restricted to the western parts of Paphos and the Akrotiri area. Cyprus is the easternmost boundary of its natural distribution.



Cistus creticus, Rockrose



Cistus monspeliensis
Narrow - leaved Cistus

20. **Phlomis cypria var. occidentalis, Cyprus Jerusalem - Sage:** Endemic, rare shrub occurring in altitudes 150 - 600 m.
21. **Quercus infectoria ssp. veneris, Cyprus Oak:** Semi-deciduous tree whose numbers have been constantly declining over the last decades (alt 0 - 1400m). It is a long - living tree and often it attains large dimensions. Many century - old oak trees are protected in Cyprus.
22. **Pyrgos tis Rigainas:** The Regent's palace, which is in ruins, is very often the object of historical and legendary references. Some historical evidence supports that it was a mediaval monastery.
23. **Stone - built fountain.**
24. **Styrax officinalis, Storax:** Deciduous shrub indigenous of the Mediterranean, fairly common in Cyprus (alt 0 - 1100 m).

B. INDEPENDENT ROUTE OF APHRODITE'S TRAIL: Pyrgos tis Rigainas - Baths of Aphrodite: Points A 25 - A 49.

A.25. **Olea europaea, Wild Olive Tree:** See point no. 2.

A.26. **Ceratonia siliqua, Carob Tree:** See point no. 1

A.27. **Calycotome villosa, Thorny Broom:** Common shrub in the broader Troodos range (alt 0 - 1000 m).

A.28. **Genista sphacelata, Thorny Gorse:** As in thorny broom above.

A.29. **Pistacia lentiscus, Lentisc:** See point no. 3

A.30. **Arbutus andrachne, Strawberry Tree:** Evergreen shrub occurring from Akamas up to an altitude of 1400 m on Troodos. Its fruits are edible and provide an excellent food for birds.



Calycotome villosa,
Thorny Broom

A.31. **Cistus monspeliensis, Narrow - leaved Cistus:** See point no. 19

A.32. **Cistus parviflorus, Rock - rose:** Shrub indigenous of the eastern Mediterranean, common locally in Cyprus (alt 0 - 800 m).

A.33. **Cistus salvifolius, Sage-leaved Cistus:** A very common shrub in Cyprus with white flowers (alt 0 - 1500 m).

A.34. **Cistus monspeliensis x parviflorus:** A natural hybrid occurring in places where both parents grow (*C. monspeliensis* and *C. parviflorus*).

A.35. **View point:** Panoramic view of the Chrysochou Bay.

A.36. **Sarcopoterium spinosum, Prickly Burnet:** Shrub, common in areas covered with garigue vegetation (alt 0 - 1000 m).

A.37. **Panoramic view to Fontana Amoroza and Arnaouti cape.**

A.38. **Olea europaea, Wild Olive Tree:** See point no. 2.

A.39. **Burnt Area:** Hillside with vegetation mainly of rock-roses and other low shrubs, which are the plants first colonizing a burnt area.

A.40. **Salvia fruticosa, Three - foliate sage:** See point no.7.

A.41. **Genista sphacelata - Thorny Gorse:** See point no.A28.

A.41A. **Calycotome villosa, Thorny Broom.** See point no.27.

A.42. **Juniperus phoenicea, Phoenicean Juniper:** Mediterranean shrub, one of the four indigenous juniper species of the island (alt 0 - 500 m).

A.43. **Lithodora hispidula ssp. versicolor:** See point no.10.

A.44. **View point:** Panoramic view of the coast.

A.45. **Pistacia x sapportae:** A natural hybrid of *P. terebinthus* and *P. lentiscus*, very rare. It has intermediate features of the two parents.

A.46. **Pinus brutia, Brutia Pine:** See point no. 14.

A.47. **Arbutus andrachne, Strawberry Tree:** See point no. A30.

A.48. **View point.**

A.49. **View point:** You can see the «Baths of Aphrodite» and the island of «Agios Georgios» which dominate the landscape.

C. **INDEPENDENT ROUTE OF ADONIS TRAIL: Pyrgos tis Rigainas - Baths of Aphrodite: Points: B25 - B55**

B.25 **Juniperus phoenicea, Phoenicean Juniper:** See point A.42

B.26 **Arbutus andrachne, Strawberry tree:** See point no.A.30

B.27 **Eroded site:** The sparsely vegetated, inclined ground is constantly subjected to erosion by torrential rains, causing the formation of furrows on the soil surface.

B.28 **Genista sphacelata, Thorny Gorse:** See point no.A.28.

B.29 **Forest Roads:** A forest road network is absolutely necessary for effective management, protection and surveillance of the area.

B.30 **Brutia pine (Pinus brutia) stand:** For species see point no. 14. The forest stand grows on a comparatively good site quality and is formed by trees growing in close association.

B.31 **Poor Site Quality:** This site compared to the previous one (no. B.30) is characterized by poor soil conditions reflected on the density and type of vegetation.

B.32 **Thymus capitatus, Wild Thyme:** See point no.11.

B.33 **Old nursery site:** Here, some decades ago, there was a small nursery producing seedlings for the reforestation of the area.

B.34 **Potable Water Spring.**

B.35 **Myrtus communis, Myrtle:** Aromatic evergreen shrub, common in Cyprus near moist situations (alt 0 - 1300 m).



Myrtus communis, Myrtle

B.36 **Limestone Rock:** Typical limestone rock. A site with high diversity in plant species.

B.37 **Cupressus sempervirens, Mediterranean Cypress:** A coniferous tree native of the eastern Mediterranean extending towards India (planted here). Natural stands are relatively rare in Cyprus.

B.38 **Pistacia terebinthus, Terebinth Tree:** Deciduous shrub or tree, quite common in Cyprus (alt 0 - 1500 m).

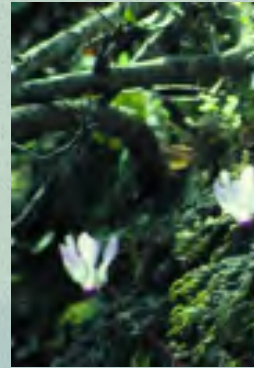
B.39 **Bosea cypria, Cyprus Bosea:** One of the most important endemics of Cyprus, since the genus Bosea includes only 3 species worldwide. Common locally in low altitudes (0 - 300 m).

B.40 **Ptilostemon chamaepeuce var. cyprius:** Endemic shrub, common in many areas (alt 0 - 1100 m).

B.41 **Pistacia lentiscus, Lentisc:** See point no. 3.

B.42 **Ballota integrifolia:** Endemic shrub of Cyprus, common locally in low altitudes (alt 0 - 600 m).

B.43 **Cyclamen persicum, Cyclamen:** Perennial rhizomatous plant, native of the eastern Mediterranean, fairly common in Cyprus (alt 0 - 900 m).



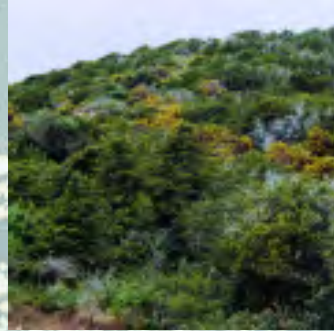
Cyclamen persicum, Cyclamen

B.44 **Quercus coccifera var. calliprinos, Kermes Oak:** Evergreen shrub, common in low and medium altitudes (0 - 1100 m). This variety occurs naturally also in S. Turkey, Syria and Palestine.

B.45 **Smilax aspera, Common Smilax:** See point no.15

B.46 **Hard limestone layer (Kafkalla):** See point no.13

B.47 **Maqui vegetation:** Vegetation type characteristic in the Akamas Peninsula. Its main feature is the dominance of sclerophyllous, xerophyllous, evergreen shrubs with a mixture of sporadic small trees and sub-shrubs. It is often distinguished into high maquis with an average shrub height exceeding 2m and low maquis with the height of the shrub layer ranging from 1 - 1.5 m.



Maqui vegetation

B.48 **Cistus monspeliensis, Narrow-leaved Cistus:** See point no. 19.

B.49 **Cistus monspeliensis x C. parviflorus, Hybrid Cistus:** See point no. A.34

B.50 **View point:** Panoramic view of the Chrysochou Bay.

B.51 **Forest Cairn:** See point no. 8

B.52 **Rhamnus alaternus:** Mediterranean evergreen shrub or small tree, rather uncommon (alt 0 - 1000 m).

B.53 **Origanum majorana var. tenuifolium, Cyprus Marjoram:** Endemic of Cyprus (alt 0 - 800 m) but widely planted in many countries for its medicinal and aromatic properties and naturalized in some cases.

B.54 **Salvia fruticosa, Three-leaved Sage:** See point no. 7

B.55 **Calycotome villosa, Thorny Broom:** See point no. A.27.

Please keep in mind the following:

- ⇒ Lighting of fire in, or near, the forest is strictly prohibited.
- ⇒ Avoid smoking or eating during your walk.
- ⇒ Do not use bicycles or motorbikes on the trail.
- ⇒ Do not cut plants and do not disturb wildlife in any way.
- ⇒ Keep on the trail.



If you have any remarks, suggestions or questions you are welcome to contact the Forest Station at Stavros tis Psokas, tel. 22942746 or 26999144.

In case of fire only, call at once 1407 (24 hours) and in case of injury call 112 or 199



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Adonis and Aphrodite Nature Trails



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