

Route 14 km – circular

Walking time 5 hours

Difficulty grade easy **moderate** difficult

Maximum - Minimum altitude 1820 m - 1720 m

General description panoramic view, uphill - downhill

Starting point Troodos Square

GPS Coordinates (UTM- WGS84)
489112N/3864633E

Most suitable period March - November

Cautionary notes slippery surfaces

Drinking water on route yes

Troodos National Forest Park (NFP)

The Atalanti Trail is located on the top of the Troodos NFP, the most important natural area of Cyprus. Covering an area of 9.3 km², it is included in the major regions of the world for biodiversity conservation (IUCN Biodiversity hotspots). Troodos is the island's highest mountain range, reaching 1952 m at the highest peak, namely Chionistra or Olympus, while the lowest is at the altitudinal zone of 700 m. Most of the Troodos NFP area is covered with dense natural forests, with the calabrian pine (*Pinus brutia*) and golden oak (*Quercus alnifolia*) dominating up to an altitude of 1400 m, while the black pine (*Pinus nigra*) and Troodos juniper (*Juniperus foeditissima*) prevail at higher altitudes. The Troodos NFP hosts more than 750 plant species (46% of the native flora), of which 72 are endemic to Cyprus (51% of endemics), including 12 species considered as local endemics. The Troodos NFP hosts 11 habitats listed in Annex I of the European Habitats Directive, and 10 Annex II-listed species. In addition, more than 100 wild bird species have been recorded, of which 11 are included in Annex I of the European Birds Directive 2009/147/EC. The geology of the area is also unique. The 90-million-year-old ophiolitic complex of the Troodos mountain range is part of the seabed of the ancient Tethys Sea, which uplifted 15 million years ago, as a result of the collision of the African and Eurasian tectonic plates that triggered the creation of the island. All the above, in combination with its special climate and the landscape, make the Troodos NFP an attraction pole for thousands of nature lovers, hikers, skiers, birdwatchers, botanists and geologists. The Troodos NFP is a State Forest managed by the Department of Forests and the main management objectives are its protection, biodiversity conservation and forest recreation.



Reference

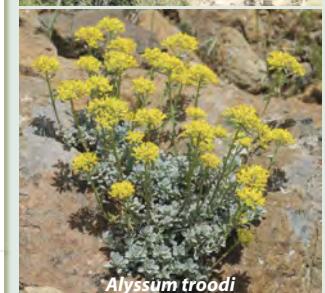
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|------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Path | Starting point | Sanitary facilities | Forest |
| Loose surface road | Parking | Visitor Centre | Built up area |
| Hard surface road | Restaurant | Picnic site | River |
| Main hard surface road | | | |

Trail profile



How to reach the trail

The starting and ending point of **Atalanti Trail** is Troodos Square. You may reach the spot by your private vehicle and park at the central square's parking area or you may use rural buses to and from the cities of Lemesos (route 64) and Lefkosa (route BD39). Relevant buses route details are available for Lemesos and Lefkosa buses at the EMEL and OSEL web links <http://www.limassolbuses.com/rural-routes> and <http://www.osel.com.cy>, respectively.



Alyssum troodi



Trail Description

The trail follows a course around **Chionistra**, lower than the **Artemis Trail**, and passes through dense thickets of black pine and Troodos juniper. Here, you can admire one of the oldest juniper trees, an 800-year-old tree! On the trail, you will find signs with information about plants, mostly endemic shrubs and trees found on the mountain range, such as Troodos germander (*Teucrium cyprium*), Troodos gorse (*Genista fasselata* var. *crudelis*), Troodos sage (*Salvia willeana*), Troodos alysson (*Alyssum troodi*) and the golden oak (*Quercus alnifolia*), as well as information about plutonic rock formations, such as pyroxenite, dunite and harzburgite. You may also have the chance to observe the endemic mouflon (*Ovis gmelini ophion*). The trail offers the opportunity to observe endemic species of wild birds such as the Cyprus wheater (*Oenanthe cypriaca*), the coal tit (*Parus ater cypriotes*), the crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra guillemaudi*), the jay (*Garullus glandarius glanzerii*), the tree creeper (*Certhia brachydactyla dorothae*) and several other more common species.

Furthermore, the route offers an exceptional view of the areas and villages of the Lemesos, Pafos and Lefkosa districts.

At a distance of 3 km from the starting point, there is a drinking water fountain and wooden benches where you can rest. Approximately 5 km from the starting point you will find the entrance to an old chromium mine tunnel, which has been closed since 1982. After a 9-kilometre hike, the trail reaches the **Troodos – Prodromos** road. To continue on the trail, cross the main road and walk for about 200 m on the Chromium Housing settlement forest road towards **Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis**. There, a wooden signpost indicates the direction to the trail. The trail then follows a course almost parallel to the main road to arrive at **Troodos Square**. Alternatively, you may also get to the square by following the main road.

The trail got its name from Atalanta (Atalanti in Greek), a mythological heroine who was an excellent hunter and runner and a protégé of goddess Artemis.

Services

Shops, restaurants, public toilets and hotels are among the services offered at the Troodos Square, while Chionistra area becomes an organized skiing centre during winter. Troodos NFP offers a rich network of forest recreation facilities consisting primarily of 10 picnic areas, 3 campsites, 15 nature trails, an environmental information centre, (near the square), and a Botanical Garden Visitor Center within the asbestos mine. More information on forest recreation infrastructure may be found on the Department of Forests' website <http://www.moa.gov.cy/forest>.



What you should be aware of!

The Troodos National Forest Park is a priceless asset of natural heritage, which we have inherited from our ancestors, to pass on to our children and future generations.

- ▶ The fire hazard in the area is extremely high. The lighting of fire is strictly prohibited. Avoid smoking while walking.
- ▶ Respect the peacefulness of the area. The forest is home to hundreds of animals and a choice for relaxation and calmness for thousands of other visitors.
- ▶ Cutting plants, trimming rocks and harassing wildlife degrade forest ecosystems and is prohibited by the Forest Law.
- ▶ Check the weather forecast for the area and prepare properly. The Troodos area is characterized by severe weather phenomena such as high winds, storms and lightning. Avoid walking under such extreme conditions.
- ▶ In case of danger, the use of wireless communication can be lifesaving. Inform someone of the time of entering the path and the expected exit time.
- ▶ Do not leave the trail. Walking out of the trail and especially on the rocks, can expose you to great danger from falling rocks, slipping or falling. Always wear appropriate footwear.
- ▶ Do not pollute the environment and properly dispose of any litter.
- ▶ In case you see smoke or fire, contact the Department of Forests immediately, by calling 1407 (24 hours, free of charge).

For any information, complaints, suggestions and further assistance contact the Platres Forest Station, tel. 25421422, or the Troodos Forest Division tel. 22608512 and email: troodosdiv@fd.moa.gov.cy.

Atalanti Trail

