



Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:



Hiking through Aradena-Canyon

Old World Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*)

The *Aradena* Canyon runs from the southern slopes of the *White Mountains* (at the foot of *Kedrokefala* Mountain in *Lefka Ori* [Λευκά Όρη]) to the small *Marmara* Beach in the *Finika* Bay (West of *Loutro* [Λουτρόν]) on the southern coast of Crete in the *Sfakia* [Σφακιά]. The approximately 4 mile long Canyon can be perambulated from the sea as well as of the country. The short description here describes the way from the sea to the exit or entry above the abandoned village *Aradaina* [Αραδάινα]. From the sea, you follow a path within the river bed between the high steep faces. After approximately 30 minutes, the Gorge is wider and edge forward. The pathway is highlighted with Cairn or blur of colour and contains steep passages which can be deal without facilities. During the around 3-hours taking Trek you overcome a difference of around 750 m. After 2 hours you reach a 10 m high steel ladder, which actually consists of two parts, where you reach the following passages of the river bed. Hereafter it is easier and soon after you will see a bridge above (built in 1986 / around 150 m high), the road between the villages of *Anopolis* [Ανωπολίς] and *Aradaina* [Αραδάινα] crossing the Gorge. After the bridge, follow the river bed for another 15 minutes upwards until you reach well-developed path, leading in zigzag out of the Canyon. The left junction leads to the old abandoned village *Aradaina* (the right turning, slightly above, results in the village of *Anopolis* on the other side of the Gorge).



Picture left is showing the zigzag path in / out of the canyon. Middle picture is showing the route towards the sea (seen from the bridge), in the rear section the steep faces are up to 250 m high. The right figure show building remnants of old abandoned village *Aradaina* (next to the Church, whose frescoes currently are restored).

Old World Swallowtail (*Papilio machaon*) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papilio_machaon]

The lively marked butterfly with its distinctive "tails" of the rear wings reached a wingspan up to 8.5 cm. There are generally two generations of mid April to mid June and July and August. Lifetime of individual butterfly is about 30 days. The caterpillars are velvety green with black rings and 7 brown red spots in these. They are approximately 4.4 cm long. With the 2nd "Dress" they get a so-called neck fork. When touching the Caterpillar it turns outside the fork. A strong spicy smell then escapes. The swallowtail over winters as grub. The Caterpillar lives in the Mediterranean area (also in Crete) mainly at citrus trees.



The left image block shows the butterfly and caterpillars of swallowtail: left in the "black-green old-age dress" and right a young caterpillar.

The right image block shows encounters on the edge of the walk: out of the 14 species of reptile in Crete, the lizards are the most common representatives, leading the way the **Balkan Green Lizard** (*Lacerta trilineata*) and the **Erhard's wall lizard** (*Podarcis erhardii*). Even the boulders of karst phenomena colonize Araceae (Araceae), the high inflorescence of *Dracunculus vulgaris* is up to 1 m high. The streambed fringes are preferred location of Oleander (*Nerium oleander*), here with white flowers instead of predominant pink flowers.

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Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

