

**Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:**
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:**Jeep-Tour through Dikti Mountains from Geráki to Kaminaki**
Gonepteryx cleopatra (also called **Cleopatra** or **Cleopatra butterfly**)

There is a nice runway through the *Dikti Mountain* (Dikti or Dicte [Δίκη] or Lassithiotika Ori [Λασιθιώτικα Όρη]) coming from the south-west from *Geráki* [Γεράκιον] to *Kaminaki* [Καμινάκιον] at the south border of the *Lasithi Plateau* (Oropedio Lasithiou or Lasithi Plateau [Οροπέδιο Λασιθίου]). The around 12 miles long runway follows at the beginning (right before entering Geráki) a dry stream bed and then leads up in to the mountains. Because this “road” does not have any blazes (apart from small “cairn” once in a while) the rule “always uphill” takes effect at every intersection; “downhill” paths end in 90% at sheep- or goat fences or peter out. Only after well 2/3 of the way this rule no longer applies. After you passed the chapel on the hillside of Mount *Virgomeno* it is still 1 mile uphill and than downwards towards a farmhouse which is visible from the hill; here the path enters a paved road towards *Kaminaki*. Below the chapel right of the path is a bordered spring where you can refresh and prune yourself of the road dust. At this point of the mountain, left the road you will find rectangular layered stone formations, which could be wall remains of an earlier settlement. Except from a farm (about 3 miles past *Geráki*) you wont see any “human soul” on this route and it is therefore advisable to tackle the tour with full tank and enough water. Past wintertime (April maybe still in May), you must attune also unexpected obstacles; landslips can block the road or torrents have washed away parts of the runway. They are usually quickly eliminated / repaired, so you certainly can drive the tour with a off-road vehicle starting in early June – a worthwhile undertaking; see also the following pictures.

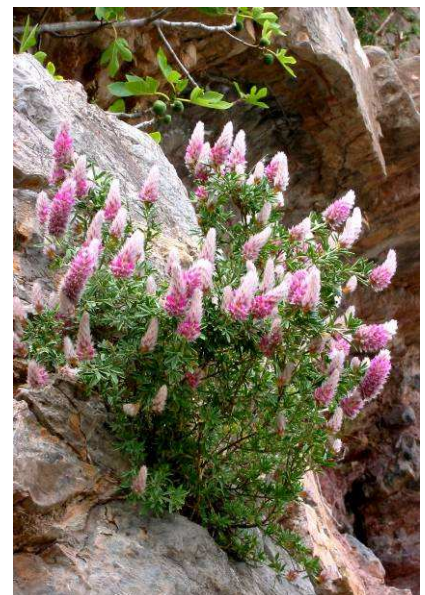
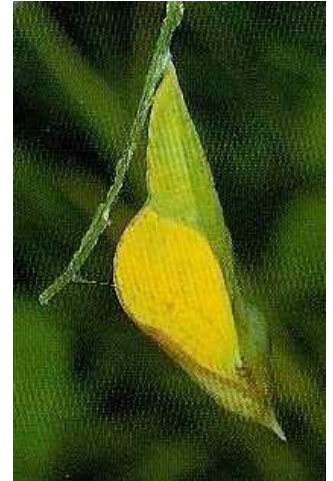


Figure left shows the "ruin" remains below the chapel at the *Virgomeno*, in the upper third of the image the remainder of the slopes uphill is visible as "white band". The picture in the middle shows the entrance of the chapel. The figure right shows the Cretan ebony wood shrub (*Cretica ebenus*), the candle-like inflorescences were previously used due to its dense hairiness as cushion wadding. This old Aegean relict flora occurs up to 1000 m height.

Gonepteryx cleopatra (also called **Cleopatra** or **Cleopatra butterfly**)

The Cleopatra butterfly, also called Brimstone butterfly, belongs to the family of Pieridae (a large family of butterflies with about 76 genera containing approximately 1,100 species, mostly from tropical Africa and Asia). The male of this Mediterranean brimstone type identifies spilled orange red front wings. The female however, is very similar to our central brimstone butterfly. The same applies to the larvae (caterpillar) living in the Mediterranean on evergreen buckthorn (*Rhamnus alaternus*), the basic colour is blue-green, the shoulders are more intensive. The doll is dirty green with yellow faces. 6 features differ females of Brimstone butterfly (*Rhamni gonepteryx*) from the Cleopatra butterfly: The front wings of *G. rhamni* are green-yellow in there basic colour, *G. cleopatra* white-yellow. The leading edge is concave indented by the Cleopatra Butterfly straight. Orange wipe (on the bottom of the front wing) is clearly visible at *Cleopatra*, but only weakly at *Brimstone*. All wings are isochromatic at the *Brimstone*, however *Cleopatra's* rear wings are darker. The basic form is thinner than long, this is not the case with Cleopatra butterfly, wing of this kind are only slightly thinner than long.



The butterfly picture shows *G. Cleopatra*, in the upper corner left the egg. The well-camouflaged larvae and the doll are from *G. rhamni* the outwardly differ very little from Cleopatra butterfly.



Picture is showing a male of *Philaeus chrysops* a species of "Gold eye" jumping spider (*Salticidae*). Typical characteristic are the red stripes at the abdomen. Up to 15 mm it is one the largest within central European jumping spiders and the gorgeous. Yet often found in southern Europe (and in Crete), it is strictly protected in Germany. Jumping spiders from the family of the *Salticidae* are freely hunting animals with conspicuous large front eyes. The catch is done through „jump at“. Spider silk is needed only to build housing tubes and cocoons and the "security line".

Photo: U. Kluge 2004

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

[Art.-Nr. 2.813, Zitat-Nr. 5.914] – impr. eik.amp 2004

At this point tips for accommodation and property search on the north coast of the island



www.tdsv.de/mariamar/

Ktimatoemporiki Kritis

Property agency, in Chania, offers not only real estate of any kind but is endeavours to find the right solution and the right real estate for their customers.

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