

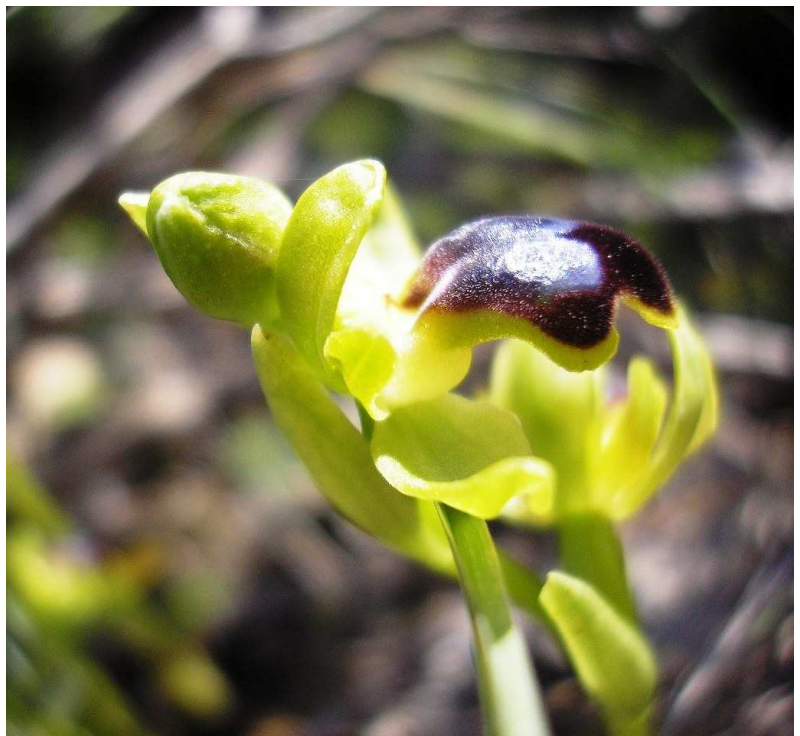
Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

The Orchids of Crete (Part 8): genus *Ophrys* (III)

(*O. cinereophila*, - *sitiaca*, - *iricolor*, - *omegaifera*, - *basilissa* and - *fleischmannii*)

(An article ^[1] from our forums member [Ralf Schwab](#), Obertshausen [Hessen]).

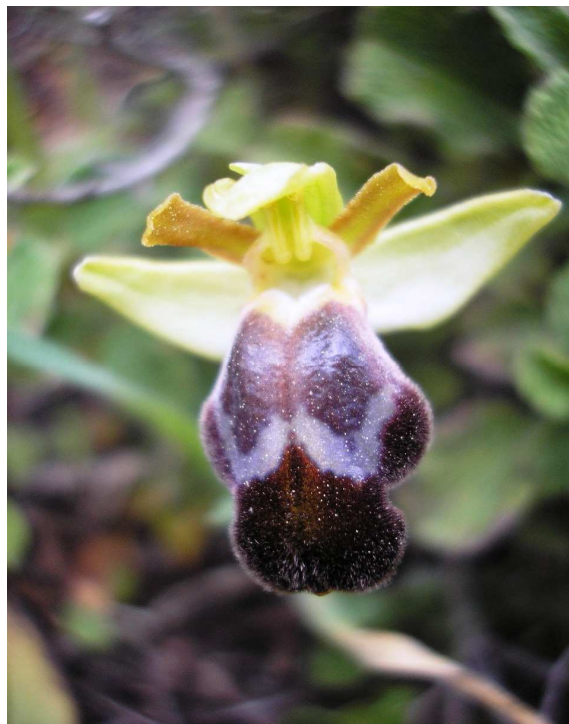
So far we introduced **32 Orchid types** of Crete with our leaflet series “The Orchids of Crete”. With info-leaflet No. 281-08/E [Part 7, *Ophrys* (II)] we informed about the complex of brown *Ophrys*, which will be continued with the below description of additional 6 species.



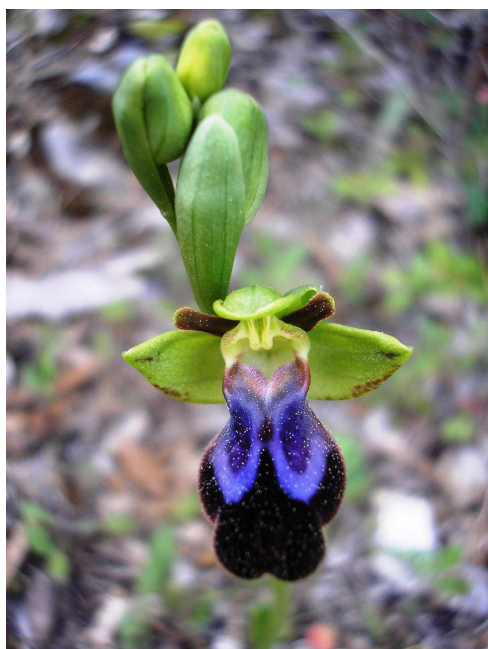
Ophrys cinereophila is characterised by its eponymous small flowers and early blooming. The labium has a yellow edge, is strongly bent downwards and has a distinct notch. The fruits large in relation to flowering are conspicuous. It is widespread and common on Crete. **Flowering season:** mid February to end March. **Habitat:** Pine forest, recultivated forest in forest fire areas, bushy Garrigue, requires basic underground, from the coast up to 900 m altitude. **Plant find spot:** Apesokari, south-east of Mires / Prefecture Iraklion (18th of March 2008).

further literature (German):

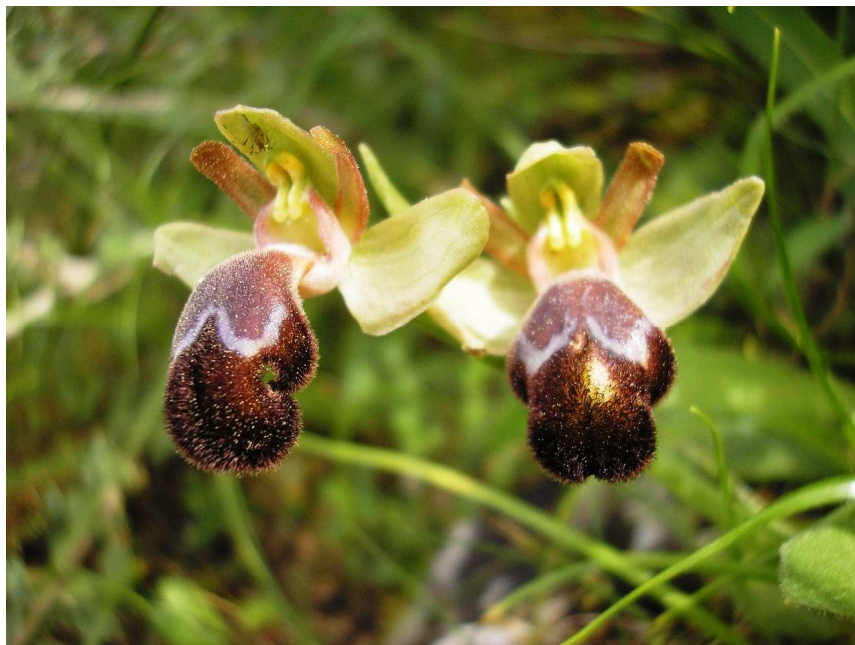
PAULUS, H. F. (1998): Der *Ophrys fusca* s.str.-Komplex auf Kreta u. a. Ägäisinseln (mit Artbeschreibungen). - Journ. Eur. Orch. (30)1: 157-201.



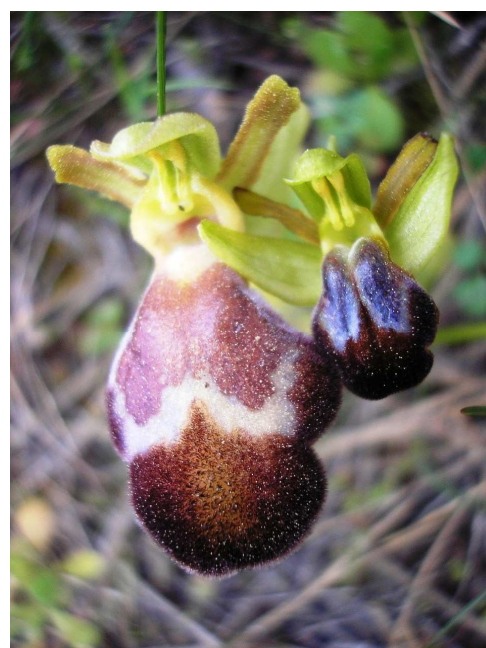
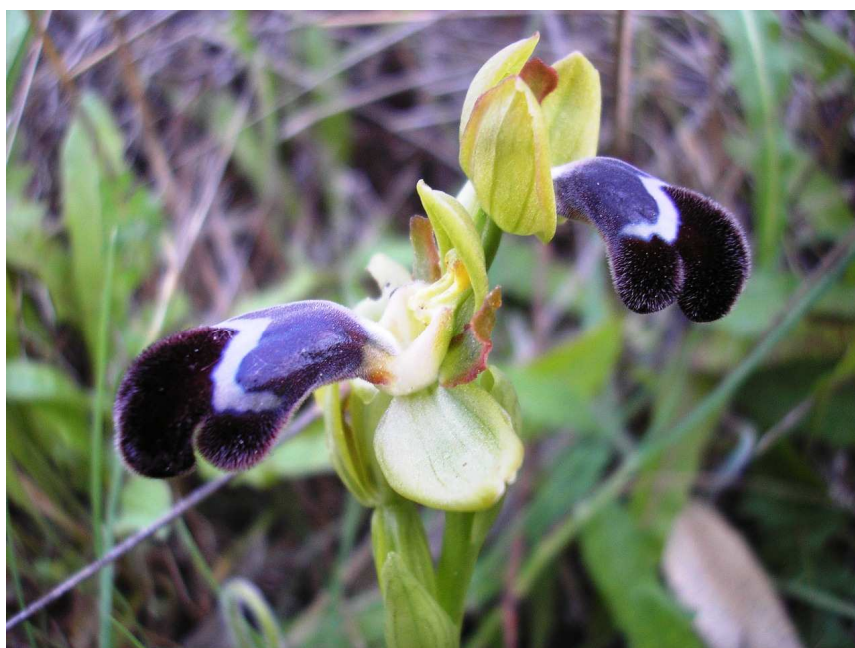
Ophrys sitiaca is a very early blooming and occurring only locally on Crete, mainly in the East of the island. The labium is only less bend, has a weak notch and a articulate Omega-drawing. **Flowering season:** early February to mid March. From mid-March onwards there are flowering plants only in very shaded areas. **Habitat:** Pine forest, Garrigue. **Plant find spot:** Region of Kalo Chorio - Prina / Prefecture Lassithi (26th of March 2008).



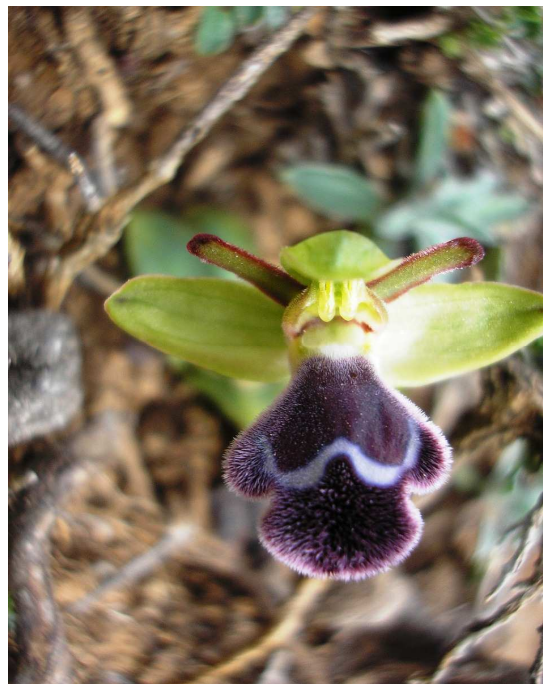
Ophrys iricolor is widespread on Crete and rather late flowering species with a major labium. This is coloured dark blue and black and has a deep, wide notch whose edges are formed by thick bars where the dark flower colour changes into red. Characteristic is also the reddish underside of the labium. **Flowering season:** mid March to mid April. **Habitat:** in an open and highly grazed terrain, also as successions following after forest fires occurring. **Plant find spot:** Region of Kalo Chorio - Prina and Mohlos (21st of March 2008 and 27th of March 2008).



By *Ophrys omegaifera ssp. omegaifera* the labium is strongly bent at its base, but has no notch. It is long dark brown hairy on the edge. The name giving white or light blue wide Omega line is located in the central part of the labium. **Flowering season:** end February to mid April. **Habitat:** in bushy, grassy Garrigue; in pine forests. **Plant find spot:** Region of Kalo Chorio – Kalamáfka - Prina / Prefecture Lassithi (21st of March 2008 and 26th of March 2008).



Ophrys omegaifera ssp. basilissa has the largest flowers of all Ophrys types with over 30 mm labium length. It belongs also in the area of *Ophrys omegaifera* and has no notch at the base of the labium, the bend is usually not so strongly pronounced like at the Omega Orchid, and is rounder over the most of fine furry hairy labium. This type is spread only locally and blooms very early. **Flowering season:** end February to mid April. **Habitat:** in bushy, grassy Garrigue; in pine forests. **Plant find spot:** Miamou (18th of March 2008) and Region of Kalo Chorio – Kalamáfka - Prina / Prefecture Lassithi (26th of March 2008). Picture right shows a “Queens Ophrys” and a “Small blooming brown Ophrys” (*Ophrys cinereophila*) close to each other at one location.



Ophrys fleischmannii is a small, delicate plant from the area of *Ophrys omegaifera*. The labium is without a notch and hardly bended, contributes in the Centre a white Omega and is equipped with a long grey hair. The geographic area is the East of Crete. **Flowering season:** mid March to mid April. **Habitat:** in pine forest, in open Garrigue; only on basic soil. **Plant find spot:** Kalamáfka - Prina / Prefecture Lassithi (26th of March 2008) and south-west of Thriptis (19th of March 2008).



The figure left shows a biotope section of the Region Kalamáfka – Prina / Prefecture of Lassithi (26th of March 2008) where occur 3 types close to each other (*Ophrys cinereophila*, *Ophrys omegaifera* ssp. *omegaifera* and *Creberima*).

Also the orchid world of Crete distinguishes by a large number of different hybrids especially within the genus *Ophrys*. Also a large number of crossings and hybrids are not described by date.

^[1]; with the co-operation of *Ute Kluge* and *Heinz Eikamp*
 © all Pictures: *Ralf Schwab*
 [to be continued with Part 9]