



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



Hiking through the Roúwas-Canyon / Middle Crete

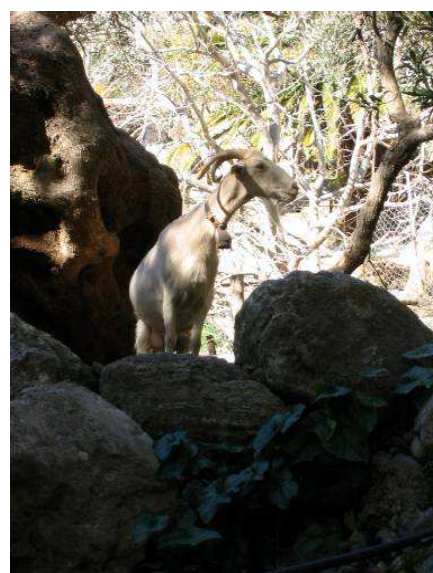
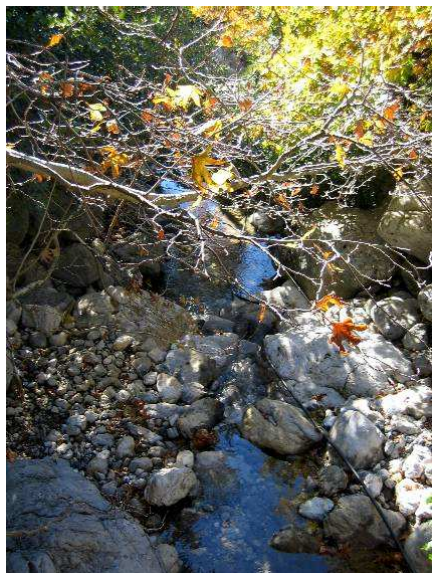
Friar's Cowl (*Arisarum vulgare*)

With regards to the leaflet No. 050-04/E: "Zaros: known for its water wealthiness!" we start the hike at the described artificially dammed-up source, where the marked hiking route starts (at the Tavern "Limni") and which leads after about 900 metres over a high route to the canyon. The distance to the "endpoint" Chapel Ágios Ioannis on a high plateau is roughly 3.1 miles. Because there are about 500 metres in altitude to overcome, once downhill, once uphill, it takes something over 2 hours for the tour. The Monastery Ágios Nikólaos is reached over the high route after about 1 mile. From here you do not follow the apparent main path but take the path left, just behind the monastery, down to the river bed. After its crossing you climb up the hill on the other side in serpentines. Halfway up the path than leads again (right) down into the valley. Here the walls of the Canyon are closer together and you have to search a way through the streambed; hereafter the road is again evident and leads further fortified with wood steps in serpentines uphill and downhill. At a (signposted) crossroads you go right - from here it becomes ever steeper and you have the actual Gorge in your view. When you are through the Gorge, its about 500 m to the target point at the Chapel. Apart from a very beautiful, scenic impressive environment this trail offers many opportunities for discovery, both geologically (e.g. karst caves) and botanical (e.g. Wild arum).



The pictures (above left to right) show the artificially dammed-up source seen from the high route and a view into the valley (close to the end of the canyon) which is botanically very interesting in the area of the creek. Fig right: Karst caves (as they often are found in Summit area of mountains along the hiking trail) invite to geological studies





The images show (from left to right): view on the Canyon creek, which must be crossed at several points to continue the hike; who dares, may take the bridge (at the place of the Monastery / middle picture). Meddlesome goats ogle walkers even if their ignoring look and the posture point in a different direction.

Pictures: U. Kluge / H. Eikamp (12/2004)

Friar's Cowl (*Arisarum vulgare*)



Friar's Cowl is a bract where the true flower is hidden in its interior. The "flower" is identified by its reddish brown or olive green striped colouring. Belonging to the "sliding trap flowers", this plant attracts pollinating insects by carrion odour, which then due to the very smooth surface of the club "crash" inside the flower. Only after they have pollinate the there hidden flowers and "loaded" new pollen, the smooth surface is shrinking and "Visitors" can escape. Only 3 types of the small bulbous perennials are among of the Mediterranean (and also in Crete) genre of Arum family. The plants grow directly from the ground and end in small, arrow-or heart-shaped leaf blades. The (also in Crete) rare plant is often confused with orchids; its flowering period begins in the territory of the Roúwas Canyon (St. Nikolaos Gorge in the Psiloritis natural park) end of December.



Pictures: U. Kluge (12/2004)

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

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