

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

## The Orchids of Crete (Part 13): genus *Ophrys* (VII)

(*Ophrys apifera*, - *mesaritica*, - *spruneri* [ssp. *spruneri*])

So far we introduced **51 Orchid types** of Crete with our leaflet series “The Orchids of Crete”; including 25 species of the genus *Ophrys*; therefore see at [www.kreta-umweltforum.de](http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de) [Navigator rubric Botanical] the info-leaflets 280-08 (Part 6), *Ophrys* (I) – 285-08 (Part 11), *Ophrys* (VI). Here we continue with 3 more species of the genus *Ophrys* with pictures and short description.



*Ophrys apifera* pollinates itself [Autogamy (gr. αὐτό *autó* „self“, γάμος *gamos* „marriage“)], already during early blossom the pollen clap on the stigma. The sepals are whitish-green to pink; the petals are short and slim. The pistil column runs in an extended extension. Once orange, yellow-white bordered, lateral lobate are strongly pilose.

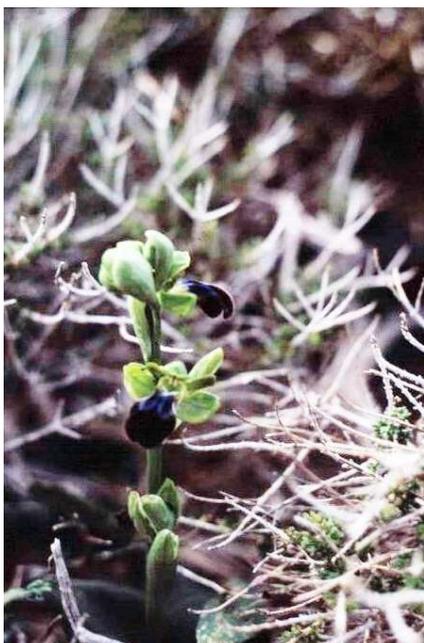
**Flowering season:** end March to mid May.

**Habitat:** open olive groves, coastal marshes, change wet ground.

**Plant find spot:** Phaistos (Festos), Prefecture Iraklion (04/20/2001)

Picture: © G. Blaich.

**Hybrids:** currently not known for Crete.



*Ophrys mesaritica* is a slim, tall, extremely early blooming Orchid. The labium underside is green to greenish-brown. The labium basic colour is dark blue, little shining paint drawing, black purple. The labium is deep and broad notched at the basis. [for the pictures on page 1]

**Flowering season:** early January to end February. **Habitat:** strongly bushy Garrigue, also in open, graze area. As the species name says (*mesaritica* = Messara), the main occurrence is around the Messara-Plateau in the South of Crete and in the Asteroussia Mountains.

**Plant find spot:** Asteroussia (01/11/1999) and Phaistos (Festos), Prefecture Iraklion (02/11/2002)

Pictures: © G. Blaich. Picture left is from the database of NHMC (52291); Photo: K. Vardioyannis.

**Hybrids:** not known.



*Ophrys spruneri* [ssp. *spruneri*] is a vigorous plant with stately flower. The sepals are pink, the lower half some darker. The petals are shorter and thinner, pink to red-greenish. The labium is tripartite with a larger mid labote, about the same length (or only little shorter) than the mid sepal; with a small, reddish coloured appendix at the top. The basic colour is deep black, velvet. The mark is grey-blue to intensive blue, "H"-shaped, starting from the base of the labium.

**Flowering season:** mid February to early April. **Habitat:** meadows and bushy Garrigue, in open olive groves, in altitudes up to 900 m.

**Plant find spot:** Gerakari (04/19/2001) and Rodovani (04/06/1990)

Pictures: © G. Blaich.

**Hybrids:** H. & G. KRETSCHMAR & W. ECCARIUS (2004) therefore describe (S. 130): "*O. bombyliflora*, *O. cretica* ssp. *ariadnae*, *O. episcopalis*, *O. mammosa*, *O. phogodes* ssp. *gortynia* und *O. tenthredinifera*".

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

NR: Pflanzen [Art.-Nr. 2.999; Zitat-Nr. 7.933] impr. eik.amp 01/2011



*O. apifera* var. *tilaventina*

Visit also ...  
**Günther's Homepage**  
European Orchids and their Hybrids

[www.guenther-blaich.de](http://www.guenther-blaich.de)



*O. apifera* var. *bicolor*