

BOOK REVIEW**Ana Petrova & Vladimir Vladimirov**

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Kit Tan & Konstantinos Giannopoulos. 2022

The Bulb Flora of Ilia

The Goulandris Natural History Museum, Kifissia, Greece.
150 pp. Hardback. ISBN: 978-96089808-8-4

Bulb flora of Ilia

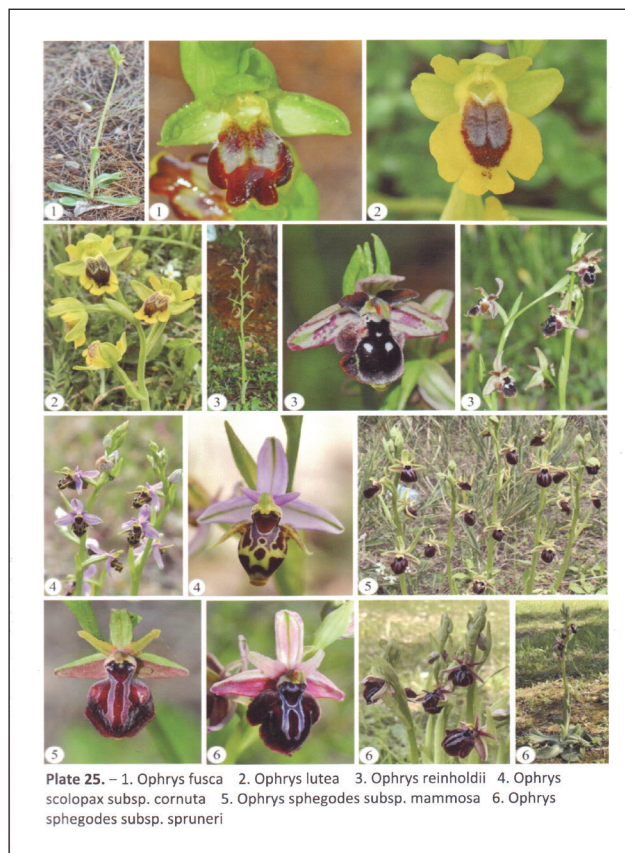
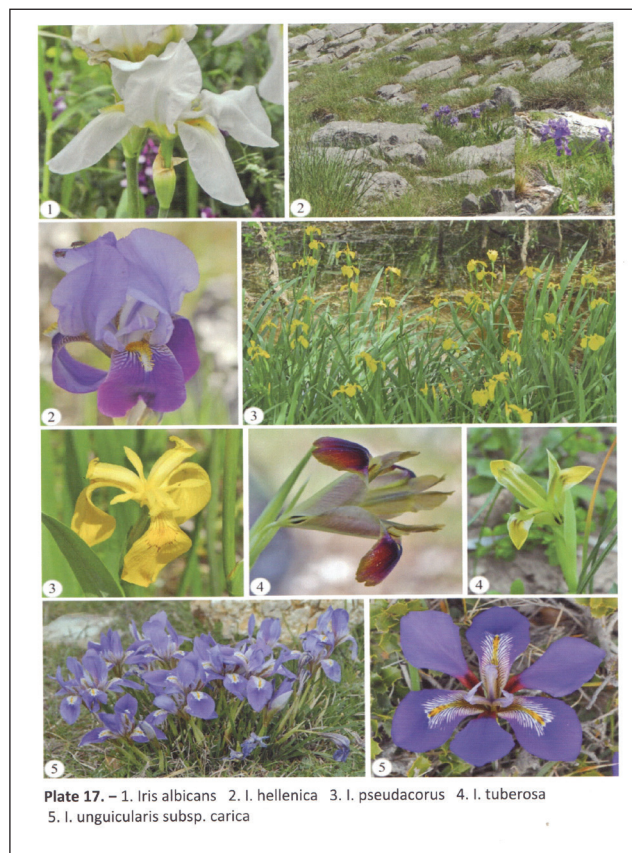
The Goulandris Natural History Museum

A new book on the flora of Greece has been recently published. It presents the bulb flora on the territory of the regional unit of Ilia located in NW Peloponnese, after a detailed survey. The bulbous plants have

exceptionally beautiful and attractive flowers. One of the authors is a well-known botanist, enthusiastic and tireless researcher of the Greek flora, Dr Kit Tan, author or editor of such books like *Mountain Flora of Greece* (1991), *Flora Hellenica* (1997, 2002), *Endemic Plants of Greece the Peloponnese* (2001), *Flora of Amorgos* (2019), etc. As it is noted in the book, she is responsible for the text. The impressive, high-quality original colour photographs are contributed by the second author, Konstantinos Giannopoulos, a physicist and resident of Ilia.

Ilia is a remarkable historical region on the territory of the former prefecture of Ilias, with exceptional archaeological and natural beauty. It consists of two provinces: Ilia in the north and Olympia in the south, with the city of Pyrgos as its capital. The most important archeological sites in this region include the ancient remains of the cities of Elis, Epitalion and Olympia, where the Olympic Games had started in 776 BC. The magnificent Temple of Apollo Epicurios – the first Greek monument officially recognized by UNESCO in 1968, the beautiful and well-preserved fortress of Chlemoutsi Castle built by the French Prince of Morea between 1220-1225, as well as ancient monasteries, traditional mountain villages, icy-cold waterfalls and thermal springs are also located in Ilia. It is the third most populous regional unit of the Peloponnese (with population *ca.* 150 000).

Climate in Ilia is Mediterranean, with dry summers and mild wet winters. It is more humid than the eastern Peloponnese, with December as the most humid and August as the driest month. Carbonate formations constitute 20% of the land area and are restricted mostly to the Lampeia and Andritsaina highlands. Sedimentary formations prevail in the rest of the Prefecture. About one-third of the land is fertile and under crop production, the mountainous terrains of the other parts are not suitable for crops. Most of the former swamplands have been drained for agricultural purposes. The territory of Ilia is 2621 km², with a total of 1347 plant species spread on it (the total



number of plant species in Greece is *ca.* 5900).

The book comprises 135 native and naturalized bulb taxa, belonging to 15 families (six dicots and nine monocots), and 44 genera. In fact, as it is noted in the Preface, earlier information published in *Phytologia Balcanica* does not include *Orchidaceae*. The authors have noted that, strictly speaking, the bulb plants are monocots, but they have also included in the book all plants with corms, tubers and rhizomes from the dicots distributed in that region. Richest in species is the orchid family (*Orchidaceae*), with 12 genera and 37 species and subspecies.

The families, genera and species are presented in alphabetical order, beginning with *Alliaceae*. Keys to all species are provided, as well as to the genera in the families with more than one genus. Concise descriptions, phenology, habitats, chromosome number (if there is any study for the country or the region of Ilia), distribution in Greece, and external distribution are given for all included taxa. Original colour photographs arranged in 30 plates (e.g., see the plates above) and distribution dot

maps supplement the information on all species.

A total of 26 endemic taxa are reported: 15 endemic to Greece (*Allium frigidum*, *A. oreochellenicum*, *Crocus laevigatus*, *Iris hellenica*, etc.), and 11 endemic to the Balkan Peninsula (*Allium chamaespathum*, *Colchicum graecum*, *Crocus boryi*, etc.). A few alien species are also listed for the region of Ilia (*Nothoscordum gracile*, *Oxalis pes-caprae*).

A List of figures and a List of colour plates are presented at the beginning of the book, and at the end, there is a List of scientific names and the References.

The *Bulb Flora of Ilia* is an impressive deluxe edition, with a beautiful photo of the attractive flower of *Lilium halcedonicum* (a Balkan endemic) on the book cover. It is published with the support of the Regional Unit of Ilia, Greece, with the Goulandris Natural History Museum, Kifissia, Greece, as publisher.

Indeed, with all information included in it, the book will attract the attention and interest both of specialists and lovers of the beautiful native flora. Congratulations to the authors!