



**Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:**

## Frangokastello: a fabled fort Nasty “Souvenir”: *Microsporum canis* (mycosis)



The Venetian fort is located on Crete’s south coast, about 53 miles south-east of *Chania* and can be reached from there via *Vrysses* and the *Askifou-Plateau* towards *Chora Sfakion*. Short before *Chora Sfakion* follow the coastal road towards east via *Komitades*, *Vraskas* and *Ag. Nektarios* to *Frangokastello*. The journey is scenic particularly since the splendidly constructed road leads along the sea and gives tremendously much to view.

The picture shows a "Sediment bridge" (within a "gravel pit" east of *Chora Sfakion*), where goats found a “shady place” below the bridge.

The fortress *Frangokastello* was built 1371 on a flat peninsula close to the coast and possesses a typical, rectangular layout of early Venetian castles. The south portal is “guarded” by a relief of the Marcus lions.



After the large rebellion of 1826 it came to an embittered battle on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May 1828 at *Frangokastello* between insurgent Cretans and a Turkish army. Allegedly 700 Cretans stood against the supremacy of 8000 Turks, who killed all Cretans, including their leader (CHADZIMICHALI DALIANI). The legend that each year in May the “spirit course of the freedom fighters” pass by the castle keeps up until today, to wit in the early morning hours, “when the dew falls”; wherefore the ghosts passing in eerie silence are also called “the dew-men”.

The (empty) castle inside exhibits no large characteristics; more impressively is its sight from the sea, towered over by the rocks of the cliff coast. A larger point of attraction is the close-by, fine sandy beach, at which even children can go carelessly into the sea. Many young people ensure here that the spirits disappear.



View inside the (empty) castle, where only a few foundation walls of the former buildings are present

At the route towards *Chora Sfakion*, described at the beginning, is also the *Imbros-Canyon*. Hereinafter



are some pictures of it; the Canyon itself will be described at a later stage with a separate leaflet.

Pictures: U.Kluge / H. Eikamp (10.05.2003)



View at the Imbros Canyon from the mountain pass. The entrance of the 5 mile long Canyon is at the Village Imbros – it ends by the Village Komitades (see fig. right) at the Libyan sea.

## Nasty “Souvenir”: *Microsporium canis* (mycosis by cats)



“Hands off from the nice strays” was the heading of the APOTHEKEN UMSCHAU (Pharmacies Newspaper) in its edition 8-04/05; meant are the innumerable cats in Greece (Crete) and elsewhere in south Europe. The “Holiday Kitty’s” can give a bad souvenir to the tourists: *Microsporium canis*, a mycobacterium which leads to heavy infections of the skin and with children possible lead to the feared *Tinea capitis*, the scalp ringworm. In south Europe about 90% of the stray cats are infected; therefore tender loving care are risky and, if they were too enticing, the parts of the body which came in contact with the cat should be washed soon and detailed.

The malicious at this mycosis: it is not to be regarded to the stricken animals. However, the spurs lurk in the fur and change the host while you cuddle. After already ten days the spurs on the skin begin to develop. This forms thereupon circular, edge stressed, reddened, itching and very

contagious “Witch rings”. During vacation usually the pharmacy helps for first; the active substance *Biofonazol* is nearly everywhere prescription-free available. Back home then a physician must take over the further therapy. An infestation of the skin needs nearly 2 months for healing; more detailed information about *Microsporium canis* can be found in the Internet.

However the number of strays on Crete is estimated to 500.000, which increase uncontrolled. A “support” of the animals by the tourists helps at the moment; however it does not affect the total situation. You most effectively help the strays, by supporting the active animal welfare groups on Crete, which, among other things, procure that the animal get neutered, in order to dam the populations. The animal welfare groups also maintain steady fodder places, which help the animals to also survive “outside of the season”. Detailed information’s about animal welfare at Crete can be found in the Internet e.g. at:

<http://tierschutzkreta.wordpress.com/category/englisch-sprachige/>

Pictures: (4) U. Kluge / (3) H. Eikamp (5/2005)