

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

The Orchids of Crete (Part 16): Heart-flowered Serapias & *Himantoglossum samariense*^[1]

So far we introduced **57 Orchid types** of Crete with our leaflet series “**The Orchids of Crete**” (Part 1-15); therefore see at http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/NLUK_en.htm [Navigator rubric **Botanical**], there under in Part 5 four of five on Crete occurring species of the genera *Serapias*, therefore see [http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/273-08E_.pdf]. Here we continue with the 1 missing 5th species, the **Heart-flowered Serapias** (*Serapias cordigera*) with pictures and short descriptions. In addition the endemic type from the genus *Himantoglossum*, here the *Himantoglossum samariense*^[1].

^[1]*Himantoglossum samariense*: German: **Kretische Bocksriemenzunge**, English: **no known common name**.

As already mentioned above, we already reported in detail about the genus *Serapias* with our leaflet 273-08 (Part 5), therefore we straightly introduce with below pictures and short description the Heart-flowered Serapias, here the Cretan subspecies: **Heart-flowered Serapias** (*Serapias cordigera* ssp. *cretica* B. & H. Baumann).



Less, upright leaves wrap the stem on the bottom, along with it are fine, dark-red lines on the base of the stem a characteristic mark. The flowers are almost as big as of *Serapias orientalis*, the Oriental Serapias. Typical and name giving is the narrow to wide heart-shaped front of the labium. Characteristic is also the contrasty, brighter, reddish grey coloured, formed from sepals and petals helmet. The labium is dark, black to brown-red; in the middle part long setaceous hairy. **Flowering season:** end April to end of May. **Habitat:** on sour soil only, in bushy Garrigue, especially in the thicket of spiny Saxifrage (*Sarcopoterium spinosum*). **Plant find spot:** Panormo / North Crete (04/22/2001) and Xidas (05/06/1991), Pictures: © G. Blaiich

Protection and endangerment: by law (EG) No. 811/2008

Based on literature Hybrids occur with *Serapias lingua*. Mistakes with hybrids are possible between *Serapias cordigera* and *Serapias lingua* (real *Serapias*), which bear only a single, wide, sulcate weal.

Himantoglossum hircinum is a conspicuously, stately species of the genus of *Himantoglossum*, which occurs in the warmer areas of Central Europe and has spread their areas in recent years. The name *Himantoglossum* derives from the Greek words *ἰμάς himas* = belt (German: Riemen), *γλῶσσα glossum* = tongue (German: Zunge) and *hircinum* from Latin *hircus* = goat (German: Ziegenbock) (therefore: Bocksriemenzunge). The German name means basically nothing else than the botanical name: "smell like a goat tongue" (nach Bock stinkende Riemenzunge).

More detailed information about the genus *Himantoglossum* can be found at: <http://culturesheet.org/orchidaceae:himantoglossum:hircinum>

To alert the public to their worthiness of protection, *Himantoglossum* was elected to the "Orchid of the year" in Germany in 1999 by the "working groups of native orchids" (AHO). Different types of *Himantoglossum* were counted in the past as subspecies, now they have their own species status, e.g. the Cretan *Himantoglossum* (*Himantoglossum samariense*); therefore see following pictures and short description.



The only on Crete occurring **Cretan Himantoglossum** (whose species status is still controversial) makes strong plants, above 50 cm high with up to 30 flowers. These are very loosely organized; the long labium's stick out stiff side wards. Their central lobe is sometimes only 2 mm at the top, but also up to 18 mm deep two-parted. At the base the labium is wavy with 3-10 mm long lateral lobe. The labium base colour is reddish-brown violet with greenish tinge.

Flowering season: end of May to end of June. **Habitat:** the Orchid grows in partial shade in surrounded deciduous and pine stands; rarely found below 1000 m. Known habitats are in West and South-East Crete.

Plant find spot: Omalos (05/17/1991), Pictures: © G. Blaich

For further details see also at: [<http://www.orchideen-kartierung.de/KKreta/HIMANT.PDF>].

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

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Listera ovata

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