

Mahairas Forest

The site is an Endemic Bird Area as it hosts significant numbers of our two endemic bird species: the Cyprus Wheatear *Oenanthe cypriaca* and the Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax*. The site is also a designated Natura 2000 area, and therefore belongs to a paneuropean network of protected areas.

District: Nicosia

Altitude: 400-1415 m

Coordinates (the centre of the site): 34° 56.097'N 33° 13.180'E

Area size: 10402 hectares

Habitats: Pine forest dominated by Calabrian pine and open areas with scrub and phrygana.

Birds: Over **80** different bird species have been recorded in this area. The bird species for which this area is protected are the Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*, European Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*, the Cyprus Wheatear *Oenanthe cypriaca*, the Cyprus Warbler *Sylvia melanothorax*, the Cyprus Coal Tit *Parus ater cypriotes*, the Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*, and the Cretzschmar's Bunting *Emberiza caesia*.



Other fauna and flora: Other than birds, here you can find foxes, hares, hedgehogs, reptiles such as snakes and lizards and rare endemic butterflies. Here you will find the endemic Golden oak, which is the national tree of Cyprus, as well as the Calabrian pine which is the dominant forest tree of Cyprus. You will also find 27 species of endemic plants, like the Cyprus Crocus.

Threats:

1. Creation of roads and creation and maintenance of firebreaks (fire prevention zones), as they make areas more accessible and therefore increase the risk of disturbance for the wildlife there, including poaching.
2. Abandonment of traditional, low-intensity agriculture is an important threat to this site. Low intensity farming creates a diverse and varied habitat. This diverse habitat is often simplified after abandonment.
3. Training of hunting dogs during the breeding season (spring) can be an issue.

Did you know...? The song “Chrysoprasino Fyllo” (“Golden-green Leaf”) refers to the golden oak tree. The upper part of its leaf is dark green while the lower part is golden. Hence the name, golden oak.

What else can you find in the area?

1. There are 6 in total nature trails in Mahairas Forest. The ‘Mandra tou Kampiou’ trail, with difficulty level 1 (out of 3), is a circular trail with starting point being the picnic area. It is 1 kilometre long and is wheelchair accessible.
2. The Mahairas Monastery is one of the best known in the island.