

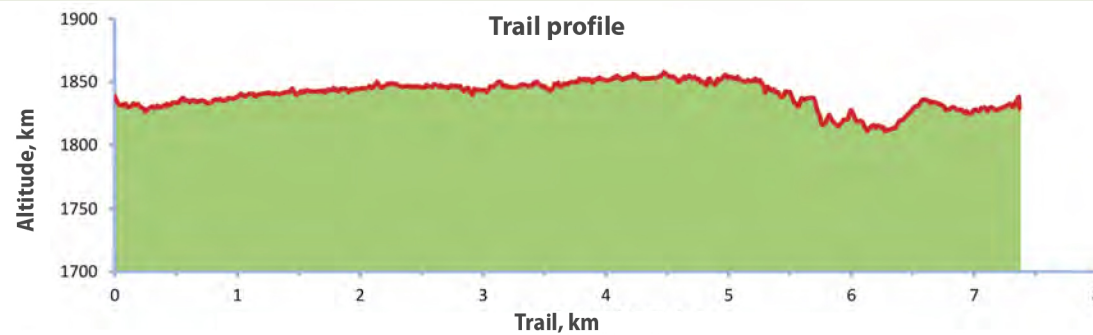
Route	4 km – circular
Walking time	1,5 -2 hours
Difficulty grade	easy moderate difficult
Maximum - Minimum altitude	1860 m – 1820 m
General description	smooth path
Starting point	300 m up the road to Chionistra GPS Coordinates (UTM- WGS84) 488322N/3865628E
Most suitable period	March - November
Cautionary notes	slippery surfaces
Drinking water on route	no

Troodos National Forest Park (NFP)

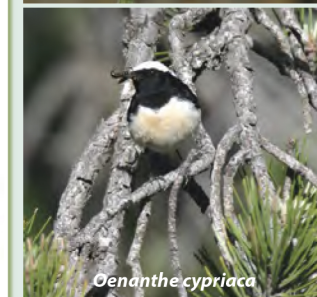
The Artemis Trail is located on the top of the Troodos NFP, the most important natural area of Cyprus. Covering an area of 9.3 km², it is included in the major regions of the world for biodiversity conservation (IUCN Biodiversity hotspots). Troodos is the island's highest mountain range, reaching 1952 m at the highest peak, namely Chionistra or Olympus, while the lowest is at the altitudinal zone of 700 m. Most of the Troodos NFP area is covered with dense natural forests, with the calabrian pine (*Pinus brutia*) and golden oak (*Quercus alnifolia*) dominating up to an altitude of 1400 m, while the black pine (*Pinus nigra*) and Troodos juniper (*Juniperus foeditissima*) prevail at higher altitudes. The Troodos NFP hosts more than 750 plant species (46% of the native flora), of which 72 are endemic to Cyprus (51% of endemics), including 12 species considered as local endemics. The Troodos NFP hosts 11 habitats listed in Annex I of the European Habitats Directive, and 10 Annex II-listed species. In addition, more than 100 wild bird species have been recorded, of which 11 are included in Annex I of the European Birds Directive 2009/147/EC. The geology of the area is also unique. The 90-million-year-old ophiolite complex of the Troodos mountain range is part of the seabed of the ancient Tethys Sea, which uplifted 15 million years ago, as a result of the collision of the African and Eurasian tectonic plates that triggered the creation of the island. All the above, in combination with its special climate and the landscape, make the Troodos NFP an attraction pole for thousands of nature lovers, hikers, skiers, birdwatchers, botanists and geologists. The Troodos NFP is a State Forest managed by the Department of Forests and the main management objectives are its protection, biodiversity conservation and forest recreation.



Reference



Nepeta troodi



Oenanthe cypriaca

How to reach the trail

The starting and ending point of **ArtemisTrail** is 300 m from the junction of the Troodos Square-Prodromos road, towards Chionistra. The starting point is accessible by private vehicle or alternatively on foot from the main Troodos Square, located at a distance of 2,4 km from the trail starting point. Parking spaces are available both at the trail starting point and the Troodos Square. Alternative access to Troodos Square from Lemesos and Lefkosia are the daily rural bus routes of EMEL (to and from Lemesos-route 64) and OSEL (to and from Lefkosia-BD39 route). Information related to rural bus schedules is available at the web links <http://www.limassolbuses.com/rural-routes> and <http://www.osel.com.cy> for Lemesos and Lefkosia, respectively.

Trail Description

The trail, at an average altitude of 1850 m, is the highest ride in Cyprus and follows a circular course around Chionistra peak. With the help of information signs, you have the opportunity to explore the forest and admire unique beauties such as: two ancient black pine trees aged over 500 years, the rich and rare flora, such as Troodos catmint (*Nepeta troodi*), Troodos germander (*Teucrium cyprium*), Troodos alysson (*Alyssum troodi*), Troodos sage (*Salvia willeana*) and Troodos helleborine (*Epipactis troodi*) and also the area's rock formations (such as dunite, harzburgite and pyroxenite). The trail offers the opportunity to observe endemic species of wild birds such as the Cyprus wheater (*Oenanthe cypriaca*), the coal tit (*Parus ater cypriotes*), the crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra guillemardi*), the jay (*Garullus glandarius glanzerii*), the tree creeper (*Certhia brachydactyla dorotheae*) and several other more common species.



The trail got its name from the goddess Artemis, daughter of Zeus and Leto and twin sister of god Apollo. The gorgeous, clever and often capricious and cruel goddess, as the ancient Greeks imagined her to be, was the protector of wildlife, mountains and forests.

Ta Tishia tis Palias Choras (translated to 'the walls of old Chora') are a site of historical interest. They are the ruins of makeshift fortifications built during the last year of the Venetian period in Cyprus (1571 A.D.) by a group of Venetian generals in an attempt to defend themselves against the Ottomans. Having watched the occupation of Chora (an old name for Lefkosia), and fearing the strength of the Ottomans, they decided to surrender.

Services

In the surrounding villages of the **Troodos National Forest Park** you will find many quaint taverns where you can relax, try traditional Cypriot cuisine and traditional local products. Shops, restaurants, public toilets and hotels are among the services offered at the Troodos Square, while Chionistra area becomes an organized skiing centre during winter. Troodos NFP offers a rich network of forest recreation services consisting primarily of 10 picnic areas, 3 campsites, 15 nature trails, an environmental information centre, (near the square), and a Botanical Garden Visitor Center within the asbestos mine. For more information on forest recreation infrastructure please visit the Department of Forests' website <http://www.moa.gov.cy/forest>.



What you should be aware of!

The Troodos National Forest Park is a priceless asset of natural heritage, which we have inherited from our ancestors, to pass on to our children and future generations.

- ▶ The fire hazard in the area is extremely high. The lighting of fire is strictly prohibited. Avoid smoking while walking.
- ▶ Respect the peacefulness of the area. The forest is home to hundreds of animals and a choice for relaxation and calmness for thousands of other visitors.
- ▶ Cutting plants, trimming rocks and harassing wildlife degrade forest ecosystems and is prohibited by the Forest Law.
- ▶ Check the weather forecast for the area and prepare properly. The Troodos area is characterized by severe weather phenomena such as high winds, storms and lightning. Avoid walking under such extreme conditions.
- ▶ In case of danger, the use of wireless communication can be lifesaving. Inform someone of the time of entering the path and the expected exit time.
- ▶ Do not leave the trail. Walking out of the trail and especially on the rocks, can expose you to great danger from falling rocks, slipping or falling. Always wear appropriate footwear.
- ▶ Do not pollute the environment and properly dispose of any litter.
- ▶ In case you see smoke or fire, contact the Department of Forests immediately, by calling 1407 (24 hours, free of charge).

For any information, complaints, suggestions and further assistance contact the Platres Forest Station, tel. 25421422, or the Troodos Forest Division tel. 22608512 and email: troodosdiv@fd.moa.gov.cy.

Artemis Trail

