

Some observations on the urban flora in Albania

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During study trips through Albania in 2010 and 2023 some historically significant towns have been visited and I made some unsystematic observations on flora and vegetation.

Berat

Berat (Berati) situated in Central Albania has an uninterrupted settlement of 2.400 years. Berat is located at 60 m a.s. at the river Osum. It is a world heritage site of UNESCO since 2005. The number of inhabitants is about 36.500 or 64.500 depending on the information source.



Fig. 1: View from the castle of Berat on modern quarters and the river Osum.



Fig. 2: Dwelling houses inside the closed castle district.

Herbaceous plants:

Ailanthus altissima

Alcea rosea

Anagallis arvensis (petals blue and red)

Anchusella cretica

Antirrhinum majus (walls and roofs)

Arenaria spec. (walls)

Arum italicum

Asplenium ceterach (walls)

Ballota nigra (wall bases)

Brassica napus

Bromus madritensis (top of walls)

Campanula erinus (walls)

Capsella bursa-pastoris

Carduus acanthoides

Catapodium rigidum (walls)

Cerintho retorta

Chenopodium anthelminticum

Chondrilla juncea

Cichorium intybus

Clematis vitalba

Conium maculatum

Convolvulus arvensis

Convolvulus elegantissimus

Conyza bonariensis

Cynodon dactylon

Cynoglossum creticum

Equisetum telmateia

Eryngium cf. *campestre* (walls)

Euphorbia helioscopia
Euphorbia prostrata
Fumaria spec. (walls)
Geranium brutium
Geranium purpureum (walls)
Hirschfeldia incana (top of walls)
Hordeum murinum s. l.
Hyoscyamus albus
Lactuca serriola (walls)
Lamium amplexicaule (walls)
Lophochloa cristata
Malabaila aurea
Malva sylvestris
Marrubium peregrinum
Marrubium vulgare
Matricaria recutita
Malva sylvestris
Mercurialis annua (walls)
Micromeria cf. juliana
Nigella damascena
Onopordum acanthium
Oxalis corniculata
Pallenis spinosa
Papaver rhoeas (walls)
Parietaria judaica
Parietaria lusitanica (walls)
Phlomis fruticosa (forming dense populations in the macchia)
Pinus spec.
Plantago coronopus
Plantago major subsp. *major*
Poa annua
Polycarpon tetraphyllum (walls)
Polygonum aviculare agg.
Potentilla reptans

Pteridium aquilinum
Quercus coccifera
Reseda lutea (walls)
Rhagadiolus stellatus
Rhus coraria
Rubus fruticosus agg.
Rumex pulcher
Sagina apetala
Salvia verbenaca
Salvia viridis
Sambucus ebulus
Saxifraga tridactylites (walls)
Sedum cf. rubens (walls)
Sedum hispanicum (walls)
Selaginella denticulata (walls and steep slopes)
Silybum marianum
Saxifraga tridactylites
Sisymbrium officinale
Sonchus oleraceus
Spartium junceum (macchia)
Stachys germanica s.l.
Stellaria media
Symphyotrichum squamatum
Thelygonum cynocrambre (walls)
Tordylium apulum
Torilis nodosa
Trifolium campestre
Umbilicus rupestris (walls)
Urtica dioica
Verbascum pulverulentum (top of walls)
Verbena officinalis
Veronica arvensis
Veronica persica (walls)
Vitis vinifera

Frequently cultivated shrubs:

Aesculus hippocastanum
Acer negundo
Calendula officinalis
Cedrus deodara
Cercis siliquastrum
Cupressus sempervirens
Ficus carica (wall bases)
Fraxinus angustifolia
Hedera cf. colchicum (wall bases)
Hedera helix
Ligustrum sinense
Lonicera japonica
Olea europaea

Phoenix canariensis
Photinia cf. serrata
Pistacia terebinthus
Platanus orientalis (spontaneous at riverside)
Robinia pseudoacacia
Rosa spec.
Tamarix cf. parviflora. (spontaneous at riverside)
Tilia tomentosa
Trachycarpus fortunei
Vitis vinifera (subspontaneous at wall bases)

Gjirokastra

Gjirokastra (Gjirokastër) is an impressive old town in Southern Albania built at very steep slopes, height above sea is 300 m. The number of inhabitants is between 20.000 and 35.000, it was city of birth of the famous writer Ismail Kadare and belongs since 2005 to the world heritage of UNESCO.



Fig. 3: Gjirokastra.



Fig. 4: Street in Gjirokastra: the roofs are covered with slates.

Herbaceous plants:

Ailanthus altissima

Alcea rosea

Alliaria petiolata (top of walls)

Anchusa undulata (walls)

Anogramma leptophylla (walls)

Anthemis cf. *chia* (walls)

Antirrhinum majus (walls)

Arenaria serpyllifolia agg. (walls)

Arundo donax

Asplenium ceterach (walls)

Blackstonia perfoliata (walls)

Bromus madritensis

Bromus sterilis

Bunias erucago

Campanula erinus (walls)

Campanula ramosissima (walls)

Campanula versicolor (walls)

Capsella bursa-pastoris (walls)

Capsella grandiflora (wall bases)

Cardamine hirsuta (walls)

Carduus pycnocephalus

Catapodium rigidum

Chondrilla juncea

Convolvulus arvensis (walls)

Conyza bonariensis

Crepis spec. (walls)

Cynodon dactylon

Dryopteris villarii (walls)

Euphorbia cf. *characias*

Galium aparine

Geranium molle

Geranium lucidum (walls, wall bases)

Geranium rotundifolium (walls)

Hordeum leporinum

Hordeum murinum s.l.

Lactuca serriola

Lepidium draba

Lophochloa cristata

Malabaila aurea

Malva neglecta

Malva sylvestris

Melilotus officinalis

Mercurialis annua (walls)

Onopordum illyricum

Parietaria judaica

Parietaria lusitanica (walls)

Parthenocissus quinquefolia [and/or

Parthenocissus inserta]

Plantago major subsp. *major*

Platanus orientalis (walls)

Poa annua

Rhagadiolus stellatus

Rumex pulcher

Sedum dasyphyllum (walls)

Sherardia arvensis
Silene vulgaris subsp. *vulgaris*
Sisymbrium officinale
Sonchus asper
Sonchus oleraceus
Stachys germanica s.l.
Symphytotrichum squamatum
Thelygonum cynocrambe (walls)

Trifolium campestre (walls)
Trifolium cf. *pannonicum*
Umbilicus rupestris (walls)
Urospermum picroides (walls)
Urtica dioica
Veronica arvensis (walls)
Vinca major

Cultivated trees and shrubs (among others):

Ailanthus altissima
Cedrus atlantica
Cedrus deodara
Celtis australis (also spontaneous)
Cercis siliquastrum (also spontaneous)
Clematis vitalba (spontaneous)

Cupressus sempervirens
Ficus carica (wall bases)
Hedera helix (walls)
Magnolia grandiflora
Robinia pseudacacia
Vitis vinifera

Kruja

Kruja (Krujë) is a small town some 20 km in the north of the capital Tirana. Kruja was diocesan town already in the 9th century. Its castle played an important role in the defense of the ottomans by the national hero Skanderbeg.



Fig. 5: View at modern parts of Kruja.



Fig.6: Ethnographic Museum.

Spontaneous growing plants:

Alcea rosea
Antirrhinum majus
Arenaria spec. (top of walls)
Asplenium ceterach (walls of the castle)
Asplenium trichomanes (walls of the castle)
Campanula cf. *versicolor* (walls of the castle)

Campanula ramosissima
Chenopodium album
Chenopodium vulvaria
Cynodon dactylon
Dittrichia viscosa
Ecballium elaterium (wall bases)
Euphorbia helioscopia

Galium spec.
Geranium brutium
Geranium purpureum (roofs and top of walls)
Hedera helix
Laurus nobilis juv.
Micromeria cf. graeca (walls)
Parietaria judaica (walls)
Piptatherum miliaceum
Plantago major subsp. *major*
Poa annua
Poa bulbosa (walls of the castle)
Populus alba juv.
Polypodium cambricum

Potentilla reptans
Pseudofumaria ochroleuca (walls of the castle)
Robinia pseudoacacia
Sambucus ebulus
Sambucus nigra
Saxifraga tridactylites (walls of the castle)
Sedum hispanicum
Sherardia arvensis
Silene vulgaris subsp. *vulgaris*
Stellaria media
Tordylium apulum
Urtica dioica
Veronica persica

Sarande

Saranda (Sarandë) is situated at the coast of the Ionian Sea. It is one of the most important touristic centres in Albania. The town is in visibility of the Greek Isle Corfu.



Fig. 7. The bay of Saranda.



Fig. 8: Transforming of the Mediterranean vegetation by uninhibited construction activities.

Herbaceous plants:

Alcea rosea
Allium subhirsutum
Anagallis arvensis (red form)
Andropogon distachyos
Asparagus acutifolius
Asplenium cf. onopteris
Avena cf. sterilis
Bituminaria bituminosa
Briza maxima
Capsella bursa-pastoris
Catapodium rigidum
Crithmum maritimum

Dactylis glomerata ssp. *hispanica*
Dichondra micrantha (growing along lawn edges and in flower beds. Not yet mentioned by VANGJELI (2015) or by PILS (2016).)
Dittrichia viscosa
Dorycnium hirsutum
Ecballium elaterium
Echium plantagineum
Euphorbia peplus
Fumaria capreolata
Galactites tomentosa
Geranium brutium

Geranium lucidum (moist and shaded walls)
Geranium purpureum
Hirschfeldia incana
Hordeum leporinum
Jacobaea maritima (running wild in the neighbourhood of cultivation. Not mentioned by VANGJELI (2015) or by PILS (2016).)
Lactuca serriola
Malva sylvestris
Mercurialis annua
Muscari spec.
Onopordum illyricum (castle)
Ornithogalum narbonense
Papaver rhoeas
Parietaria judaica (growing on walls)
Piptatherum miliaceum
Plantago major subsp. *major*
Platanus orientalis
Polycarpon tetraphyllum subsp. *tetraphyllum*
Potentilla reptans

Quercus coccifera
Ricinus communis
Rumex pulcher
Sambucus ebulus
Scolymus hispanicus
Silene vulgaris subsp. *vulgaris*
Sisymbrium officinale
Solanum nigrum
Sonchus oleraceus
Stachys germanica s.l.
Stellaria media
Symphotrichum squamatum (= *Aster squamatus*)
Tordylium apulum
Tropaeolum majus
Umbilicus horizontalis
Verbascum sinuatum
Verbascum macrurum
Vicia sativa
Xanthium cf. orientale subsp. *italicum*

Trees and shrubs (among others):

Callistemon citrinus
Ephedra foemina (spontaneous)
Ficus carica (also spontaneous)
Justicia adhatoda
Nerium oleander
Osyris alba (spontaneous)
Paliurus spina-christi (spontaneous)
Parthenocissus [inserta or quinquefolia] (epiphyte on *Phoenix canariensis*)

Phillyrea latifolia (spontaneous)
Phoenix canariensis
Platanus orientalis
Rosa sempervirens
Salvia fruticosa (spontaneous)
Sambucus nigra (spontaneous)
Smilax aspera (spontaneous)
Spartium junceum (spontaneous)

Tirana

Tirana (Tiranë) was founded in 1614. The region is however settled earlier. In 1920 Tirana was proclaimed as capital of Albania. Its number of inhabitants is between 557.000 and 625.000 according to differing sources. It lies in the Mediterranean climate, about 100 m above sea. The vegetation reflects the remarkably high mean annual precipitation (1265 mm).



Fig. 9: View at Tirana.



Fig. 12: Urban greening in the centre of Tirana.

Herbaceous plants

Anagallis arvensis
Antirrhinum majus (on roofs)
Artemisia verlotiorum
Arum italicum
Arundo donax
Asparagus acutifolius
Bellis perennis
Brassica napus
Bromus hordeaceus
Bromus madritensis
Bunias erucago
Capsella bursa-pastoris
Carduus pycnocephalus
Carex divulsa
Carlina corymbosa
Campanula lingulata
Catapodium rigidum
Chondrilla juncea
Convolvulus arvensis
Conyza bonariensis
Cynodon dactylon
Dactylis glomerata
Descurainia sophia
Dichondra micrantha (growing along lawn edges and in flower beds. Not yet mentioned by VANGJELI (2015) or by PILS (2016)).
Dittrichia viscosa
Dysphania ambrosioides
Echium plantagineum
Geranium sanguineum
Geranium purpureum
Hirschfeldia incana

Hordeum leporinum
Hordeum murinum s.l.
Humulus lupulus
Iris pseudacorus
Lactuca serriola
Lotus corniculatus
Malva neglecta
Malva sylvestris
Oenothera speciosa (cultivated)
Orlaya grandiflora
Oxalis corniculata
Plantago lanceolata
Plantago major subsp. *major*
Poa annua
Polycarpon tetraphyllum
Potentilla reptans
Pteridium aquilinum
Rorippa austriaca
Rubus fruticosus agg.
Rumex pulcher
Sambucus ebulus
Senecio vulgaris
Sherardia arvensis
Sisymbrium officinale
Sonchus oleraceus
Sorghum halepense
Stellaria media
Trifolium repens
Urtica dioica
Verbascum sinuatum
Verbena officinalis
Veronica arvensis
Veronica peregrina

Tirana is situated in the plant hardiness zone 9 which enables the cultivation of many trees and shrubs.

Trees and shrubs cultivated in parks or along streets in Tirana:

<i>Acer negundo</i>	<i>Paliurus spina-christi</i>
<i>Acer platanoides</i>	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i> (and/or
<i>Aesculus flava</i>	<i>Parthenocissus inserta</i> ?)
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	<i>Photinia</i> spec.
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	<i>Pinus pinea</i>
<i>Catalpa bignonioides</i>	<i>Pittosporum tobira</i>
<i>Cedrus cf. atlantica</i>	<i>Platanus orientalis</i>
<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	<i>Platanus x hispanica</i>
<i>Celtis australis</i>	<i>Populus alba</i>
<i>Cercis siliquastrum</i>	<i>Populus nigra</i> var. <i>italica</i>
<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
<i>Eleagnus angustifolia</i>	<i>Punica granatum</i>
<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i>	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>
<i>Ficus carica</i>	<i>Quercus ilex</i>
<i>Fraxinus ornus</i>	<i>Raphiolepis bibas</i> (syn. <i>Eriobotrya</i>
<i>Hedera colchica</i>	<i>japonica</i>)
<i>Hedera helix</i> (variegated cultivars)	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	<i>Rosa</i> div. spec.
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	<i>Spartium junceum</i>
<i>Magnolia grandiflora</i>	<i>Tamarix</i> cf. <i>parviflora</i>
<i>Melia adzedarach</i>	<i>Tilia tomentosa</i>
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	<i>Trachelospermum jasminoides</i>
<i>Nerium olerander</i>	<i>Vitis vinifera</i>
<i>Olea europaea</i>	

Vlora

Vlora (Vlorë) is a port city in southern Albania with a long tradition of settlement since the antiquity. Vlora became temporarily capital of Albania after the declaration of independence in 1912.



Fig. 11: Vlora.



Fig. 12: Pond with *Phragmites* in an excavation pit.

Herbaceous plants:

<i>Agave americana</i> (cultivated)	<i>Lavatera cretica</i>
<i>Allium</i> cf. <i>roseum</i>	<i>Lophochloa cristata</i>
<i>Allium subhirsutum</i>	<i>Malva parviflora</i>
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> (blue sepals)	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>
<i>Antirrhinum majus</i>	<i>Matricaria recutita</i>
<i>Artemisia verlotiorum</i>	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>
<i>Arum italicum</i>	<i>Melilotus</i> spec.
<i>Arundo donax</i>	<i>Mentha</i> cf. <i>longifolia</i>
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	<i>Mercurialis annua</i>
<i>Brassica napus</i>	<i>Oryzopsis miliacea</i>
<i>Bromus diandra</i>	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>
<i>Bromus madritensis</i>	<i>Parietaria judaica</i> (roof of old buildings)
<i>Calystegia sylvatica</i>	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
<i>Capparis</i> spec. (walls of buildings)	<i>Plantago major</i> subsp. <i>major</i>
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	<i>Poa annua</i>
<i>Chenopodium murale</i>	<i>Poa trivialis</i>
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	<i>Polycarpon tetraphyllum</i>
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>
<i>Consolida orientalis</i>	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
<i>Coronopus didymus</i>	<i>Ranunculus muricatus</i>
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	<i>Silybum marianum</i>
<i>Dasypyrum villosum</i>	<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i>
<i>Daucus carota</i>	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i>	<i>Symphotrichum squamatum</i>
<i>Dysphania ambrosioides</i>	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	<i>Triticum aestivum</i>
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	<i>Typha</i> spec.
<i>Galium aparine</i>	<i>Urospermum picroides</i>
<i>Glebionis coronaria</i>	<i>Verbascum sinuatum</i>
<i>Hirschfeldia incana</i>	<i>Vicia lutea</i>
<i>Holoschoenus vulgaris</i>	<i>Xanthium orientale</i> subsp. <i>italicum</i>
<i>Hordeum leporinum</i>	
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	

Cultivated trees and shrubs:

<i>Acer negundo</i>	<i>Cupressus sempervirens</i>
<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	<i>Eleagnus</i> cf. <i>macrophylla</i>
<i>Araucaria heterophylla</i>	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> (also spontaneous)
<i>Bougainvillea spectabilis</i>	<i>Ficus carica</i>
<i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i>	

Ligustrum vulgare
Magnolia grandiflora
Melia azedarach
Morus alba
Nerium oleander
Pinus halepensis
Pinus pinea
Pistacia lentiscus (spontaneous)
Platanus orientalis
Platanus x hybrida
Populus alba
Populus nigra var. *italica*
Punica granatum

Phoenix canariensis (with the epiphytes:
Conyza sumatrensis, *Ficus carica*, *Sonchus*
oleraceus, *Oryzopsis miliaceum*).
Rhamnus alaternus (spontaneous)
Raphiolepis bibas (syn. *Eriobotrya*
japonica)
Robinia pseudacacia
Rosa spec.
Spartium junceum
Tilia tomentosa
Trachycarpus fortunei
Washingtonia cf. *filifera*

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