Wild Flowers of Eastern Andalucía

A field guide to the flowering plants of Almería and the Sierra de los Filabres region

Sarah Ball

This photographic field guide describes a selection of the most frequent and characteristic flowering plants to be found in this part of south-east Spain, many of which can also be seen elsewhere in southern Spain or further afield. The book describes 625 species, with 575 illustrated by colour photographs. It will appeal to local residents or holidaymakers, visiting botanists or anyone with an interest in wild flowers who is planning to visit the region. The book includes a glossary and introduction to the geology and habitats of the region and there is an introductory account to each plant family. Each species account also includes the English and local Spanish names where known and a summary of cultural and medicinal uses.

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Family Caryophyllaceae 101

Caryophyllaceae – *Carnation and Pinks family*

Mainly herbaceous species with opposite and entire leaves. The family includes pinks and carnations and a number of familiar wild species such as campions (*Silene* species) and chickweeds. The stems are often swollen at the nodes and the leaf bases wrap around the stem. Flowers are usually several in a head. Petals can be deeply divided and uneven on the edges. Fruits are dry capsules.

Rhodalsine geniculata

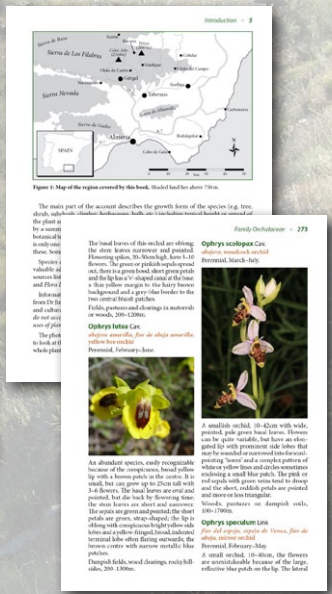
Agrostemma githago L.
negullón, negullón, clavel de asno (and many other local names), corn cockle

Annual. March–July.

An upright herb, 20–80cm tall, grey because it is covered in long hairs. The opposite, stalkless leaves are narrow, linear, pointed and joined together. The large, attractive, pink-purple flowers, 2–5cm across, are solitary on long stalks surrounded by the green calyx tube which is much longer than the un-notched petals. Fruits are multi-seeded capsules which split into five teeth between the calyx lobes to release the seeds.

Weedy and field vegetation, 0–2000m.

Corn cockle seeds are a nuisance in cereal crops because they contain saponins which are harmful if too many are mixed in with grain and ground into flour.



Introduction 5

Figure 1: Map of the region covered by this book. Shaded land lies above 750 m.

Family Orchidaceae 273

Ophrys scolopax Cav.
abejera, woodcock orchid

Perennial. March–July.

A smallish orchid, 10–42cm with wide, pointed, pale green basal leaves. Flowers can be quite variable, but have an elongated lip with prominent side lobes that may be rounded or narrowed into forward-pointing 'horns' and a complex pattern of whitish or yellow lines and circles sometimes enclosing a small blue patch. The pink or red sepals with green veins tend to droop and the short, reddish petals are pointed and more or less triangular.

Woods, pastures on dampish soils, 100–1700m.

Ophrys fusca Link
abejera amarilla, flor de abeja amarilla, yellow bee orchid

Perennial. February–June.

An abundant species, easily recognizable because of the conspicuous, broad yellow lip with a brown patch in the centre. It is small, but can grow up to 25cm tall with 3–6 flowers. The basal leaves are oval and pointed, but the back by flowering time the stem leaves are short and narrower. The sepals are green and pointed, the short petals are green, stray-shaped; the lip is oblong with conspicuous bright yellow side lobes and a yellow-fringed, broad, indented terminal lobe often flaring outwards; the brown centre with narrow metallic blue patches.

Dampish fields, wood clearings, rocky hillsides, 200–1300m.

Ophrys speculum Link
flor del espejo, espejo de Venus, flor de abeja, mirror orchid

Perennial. February–May.

A small orchid, 10–40cm, the flowers are unmistakable because of the large, reflective blue patch on the lip. The lateral