



## CROCUS

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**CROCUS**, generic name of a large number of hardy bulbous flowering plants of the family Iridaceae. Per Wendelbo and Brian Mathew have reported and fully described nine wild species of *Crocus* L. from Persia and some adjacent areas (pp. 2-11; see also Parsa, pp. 114-21; Wendelbo, pp. 60-63; Matine, pp. 3-4; Ghahreman, pls. 61, 93, 540, 541, 542, 1176; cf. Schlimmer, pp. 168-69).

*Crocus almehensis* Brickell & Mathew, found on Ālma mountain near Golestān national forest park in northeastern Gorgān.

*Crocus biflorus* Miller (according to Wendelbo and Mathew, often called *Crocus aërius* in connection with Persia; cf. Pārsā: *C. aërius* Herbert, identified as a distinct species found between Ḳosrowābād and Kerend in Kurdistan), which grows in the hills north of Tabrīz and around Qalāja in Kermānšāh.

*Crocus michelsonii* B. Fedtschenko, found on the steppes of northern Khorasan.

*Crocus korolkowii* Regel ex Maw, which grows in Afghanistan, western Pakistan, and Tajikistan.

*Crocus caspius* Fischer & Meyer, found from sea level to an altitude of 1,300 m in the southern Caspian region.

*Crocus speciosus* Marschall von Bieberstein, found all over the southern Caspian region between altitudes of 1,000 and 1,800 m and in Tehran province on the southern side of the Alborz.



*Crocus cancellatus* Herbert, which grows on the stony hills and plains of the Zagros region at altitudes between 1,000 and 2,500 m; in the Lārḵāna alpine forest in Gīlān; around Lāhū in the Kalārdašt district; and in mountain forests between Šahsavār and Javāherdeh in Māzandarān.

*Crocus haussknechtii* Boissier, found around Kermānšāh and Hamadān, on the Dālekānī heights between them, and in Arāk, Oštorānkūh, Fārs, and so on; it is closely related to the cultivated saffron crocus (see below). According to Wendelbo (p. 62), the corms of both *C. cancellatus* and *C. haussknechtii* (*jowqāsem* in Golpāyagān) are collected in the spring and eaten boiled in milk or roasted.

*Crocus gilanicus* Mathew, found between Kalkāl in Azarbaijan and Asālem in Gīlān.

In addition to these nine, Ahmad Parsa has reported *Crocus ochroleucus* Boissier & Gaillardot from Gīlān.

Finally, there is a species that is cultivated in Persia, *Crocus sativus* L. (= *C. ofcinalis* Pers.), which yields the well-known *zafarān* (saffron).

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