

## **A Simplified Key to Spring-Flowering Crocuses**

Members of the iris family, crocuses are popular as garden and amenity plants and are a familiar sight come spring. Despite the fact that none of our spring-flowering species are native to the UK, this group of plants can be commonplace in churchyards, amenity areas, parks, scrub and wasteland close to habitation. This crib addresses the species most likely to be encountered in the North East alongside several others which may turn up soon.

Large-flowered, petals white or deep purple	Feathery stigmas shorter than surrounding stamens; petal tube purple at flower base	<b>White Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus vernus</i> )	
	Feathery stigmas longer than surrounding stamens; petal tube white with a purple wash	<b>Spring Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus neapolitanus</i> )	
Small-flowered, petals lilac or very pale purple	Petal tube white at flower base	<b>Early Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus tommasinianus</i> )*	
	Petal tube yellow at flower base	<b>Sieber's Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus sieberi</i> )	
	Petal tube variable; at least some purple smudging at flower base	<b>Snow Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus x hybridus</i> )	
Variable-flowered, petals pale yellow or golden	Flowers golden yellow	Large flowered, corms splitting vertically	<b>Yellow Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus x luteus</i> )*
		Small flowered, corms splitting horizontally	<b>Golden Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus chrysanthus</i> )*
	Flowers pale, faded yellow with purple wash at flower base	<b>Snow Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus x hybridus</i> )	
Flowers mauve or white with dark stripes on the outer tepals	<b>Silvery Crocus</b> ( <i>Crocus biflorus</i> )		

\*Very common in churchyards and the crocus most likely to form extensive drifts

\*Very common in amenity planting schemes e.g. verges and parks

\*Seemingly rather rare and seldom planted