

CROCUS GROUP SPRING 1989

This is just a reminder in case you forgot to enter things in your 1989 diary.

Saturday 25th February 1989

Mr & Mrs Alan Edwards have invited us to visit their garden near Dorking. Details of how to find them etc. in the autumn bulletin. Please telephone them, Dorking 883775 if you intend to come, and arrive at 11 am.

In the afternoon there will be an opportunity to visit the large Plantsman's Garden 7 miles away, owned by Mr Harry Hay who has kindly offered to show us round.

Tuesday 14th March 1989

The annual crocus lecture, entitled "Autumn Crocuses" will be given by Chris Brickell at 5.30 pm in the R.H.S. New Hall. This will be followed by an auction of crocuses to raise money for the Crocus Group. Please come and bring and buy.

Primrose Warburg
South Hayes
Yarnells Hill
Oxford OX2 9BG
Tel: Oxford 247883

CROCUSES IN PORTUGAL

I was very interested to read Dick David's report on crocus hunting in Portugal, having done one short trip to the Algarve myself in the autumn and others in the spring. It is very pleasing to report that C.serotinus is still growing strongly in the area despite the enormous tourist development. Fortunately, some of the pine woodland areas have been saved, at least for the time being. My first sighting was in the spring where I noticed the leaves when closely inspecting the carpet of Narcissus bulbocodium. This was within the Vilamoura complex (to the east of Albufeira). Another similar site near Quarteira also yielded evidence of the crocus.

In the autumn at the Vilamoura site another area of pine woodland showed hundred of crocuses, but not growing with the Hoop Petticoat. Colour variation was reasonably broad with one or two albinos and near whites with stripes. On the darker side, none matched the depth of purple of my Crocus asturicus, but some had a lovely rich colouring. All seem to have the coarse-fibred tunic. My other sighting has been on the cliff edge at Bordeira a few miles north of Cape St Vincent. Few crocuses grow further west than this! They may again be more common in this area in the stretches of Stone Pine forest, but we had no time to linger. Added to which when approaching Sagres and Cape St Vincent the clutch pedal broke! This delayed our autumn viewing of the flora of the Cape until nearly twilight which was useless for most plants and especially crocuses.

There are said to be many Nar. bulbocodium under pines to the east of Faro where I have yet to wander. This is less intensively commercialised and maybe many crocuses grow along this stretch of the Algarve.

Are these south western forms of C. serotinus hardy? For myself I have yet to find out. With some other lovely bulbous plants from this interesting area, they may not be the easiest to acclimatise to our conditions; especially if we have many more wretched hard winters.

Derek Fox.