

Crocus

and Its Intraspecies Diversity in Slovenia



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Introduction

Slovenia lies at a juncture of different phytogeographic regions. The northwestern and the central parts belong to the Alps, with the southwestern part reaching into the Submediterranean, the northeastern and the eastern parts into the sub-Pannonian region, and the southwestern and the central southern part into the Dinaric world.

The crocus genus includes more than 80 species growing in Central Europe, in the south of Europe, North Africa, the Near East, Central Asia and western China (Brickel 1996). Slovenia is home to no more than four representatives (Martinčič et al. 2007, Wraber & Dakskobler 2008): *C. vernus* (L.) Hill subsp. *vernus*, *C. vernus* subsp. *albiflorus* (Kit.) Ascherson & Graebner, *C. reticulatus* (Steven ex Adam) (*C. biflorus* Mill. subsp. *biflorus*.), the subspecies of *C. vernus* showing particularly high diversity levels.

Material and Methods

The plants have been collected from different parts of Slovenia. Every plant is first photographed, then dug out, potted in plastic 10x10 pots. It is described as to its specific features. Every pot is given its own reference number. The stability of special features is checked in the course of the subsequent year.



C. vernus (L.) Hill subsp. *vernus*



C. vernus (L.) Hill subsp. *vernus*



Results and Discussion

The most diverse among the four representatives growing in Slovenia are *C. vernus* subsp. *vernus* and *C. vernus* subsp. *albiflorus*. After several years in culture different colour variants have mostly proved stable whereas bi- and triflorousness and a larger number of perianth segments rarely re-appear in culture conditions. Even though the populations blend into one another, it was just in one single location that I found distinctly intermediate specimens. Compared to the previously mentioned subspecies, *C. reticulatus* is less diverse and *C. biflorus* subsp. *biflorus* even less so. The latter, however, grows in no more than two smaller local populations.

C. vernus subsp. *albiflorus* ((Kit.) Ascherson & Graebner)



C. vernus subsp. *albiflorus* ((Kit.) Ascherson & Graebner)



C. reticulatus (Steven ex Adam)



C. biflorus Mill. subsp. *biflorus*



Hybrids (*C. vernus* subsp. *vernus* x *C. vernus* subsp. *albiflorus*)



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