

CROCUS YAKARIENSIS

Crocus yakarianus Sp. Nov. from eastern Turkey Yıldırım & O. Erol

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Crocus yakarianus photographed by Claire Cockcroft in the Doğanşehir Mountains.
Photo from SRGC Forum.

Abstract: *Crocus yakarianus* Yıldırım & O. Erol (Iridaceae) is described as a new species. Diagnostic morphological characteristics, descriptions and detailed illustrations are given on the basis of the type material. *Crocus yakarianus* is restricted to the province of Malatya in eastern Anatolia, Turkey. It is related to and compared with *Crocus biflorus* subsp. *tauri* (Maw) B. Mathew.

Named for the late professor Nebahat Yakar (1915 – 1997) who was a well-known botanist in the field of plant morphology and anatomy in Turkey (Istanbul Univ.) and who was a pioneer of botanical illustration in Turkey.

Description from paper: Corm globose-ovate, 8 – 18 mm in diameter, 10 – 18 mm long. Tunics mostly coriaceous, splitting into rings at base.

Neck short, c. 3 – 5 mm. Cataphylls 3 – 4, silvery white, yellowish – green at apex. Leaves prominent before anthesis, shorter to longer than flowers at anthesis, 3 – 8 (– 9), green, 1.2 – 2.8 (– 3.0) mm in diameter, with two prominent ribs underneath. White stripe normally distinctly wider than 1/3 of leaf diameter. The rosette of perianth white with pale yellow suffusions, glabrous. Perianth tube white with blue speckles. Outer perianth segments 21 – 29 ? 5 – 9 mm; inner segments 19 – 27 ? 5 – 9 mm; all segments uniformly white inside or rarely with very light blue without markings, the outside of the outer segments light blue striped with yellow zones between the stripes on a white ground. Prophyll absent. Bract and bracteole present, silvery white, skinny, and very conspicuous. Filaments 5 – 9 mm long, white, glabrous at base; anthers yellow, 7 – 11 mm; connective colorless, thick and very prominent. Pollen yellow. Style yellow without exception, mostly shorter to equal compared to the stamens, divided into 3 branches; branches 3.5 – 6.5 mm, glabrous. Capsule and seeds not seen. Chromosome number $2n ? 14$.



Photo by Jānis Rukšāns from SRGC Forum

Distribution and habitat *Crocus yakarianus* is endemic to eastern Anatolia and is part of the Irano – Turanian element. It is distributed on open slopes of the mountain facing north and northeast.

Crocus yakarianus differs from the other members of the *C. biflorus* complex by its leaves, which are 3 – 8 (– 9) in number and very prominent before anthesis, and, in addition, they are wider than usual, 1.2 – 2.8 (– 3.0) mm. The outside of the outer segments has light blue stripes and yellow zones in between. *Crocus yakarianus* is morphologically most closely related to *C. biflorus* subsp. *tauri* (Maw) B. Mathew.