

October 2022

**Autumn crocus, Meadow saffron, *Colchicum autumnale* L.**

From the Liliaceae family (lily family).

The autumn crocus is a perennial, herbaceous plant. Its development cycle begins in autumn with flowering. From September onwards the funnel-shaped, pale pink to violet flowers sprout from the tubers that survive in the soil. The flower of the meadow saffron consists of 6 petals and 6 stamens, the ovary is deep in the soil. In spring the leaves appear and in the middle of them the seed capsule. The leaves of the meadow saffron are up to 40cm long, 3-5cm wide, lanceolate and parallel-veined. The capsule fruit ripens in summer and the leaves wither at the end of June.

Chemical compounds: Colchicine

Strongly poisonous

The autumn crocus grows on moist meadows, embankments and also in sparse riparian forests. As with lily of the valley, there is a risk of confusion with wild garlic.

As meadow saffron is very poisonous, the plant should not be planted in the garden. Autumn crocus is also highly poisonous for animals, especially the leaf of autumn crocus in hay leads to cases of poisoning. The trivial names poison crocus and corpse flower also indicate the strong toxicity of the plant and its possible consequences.

