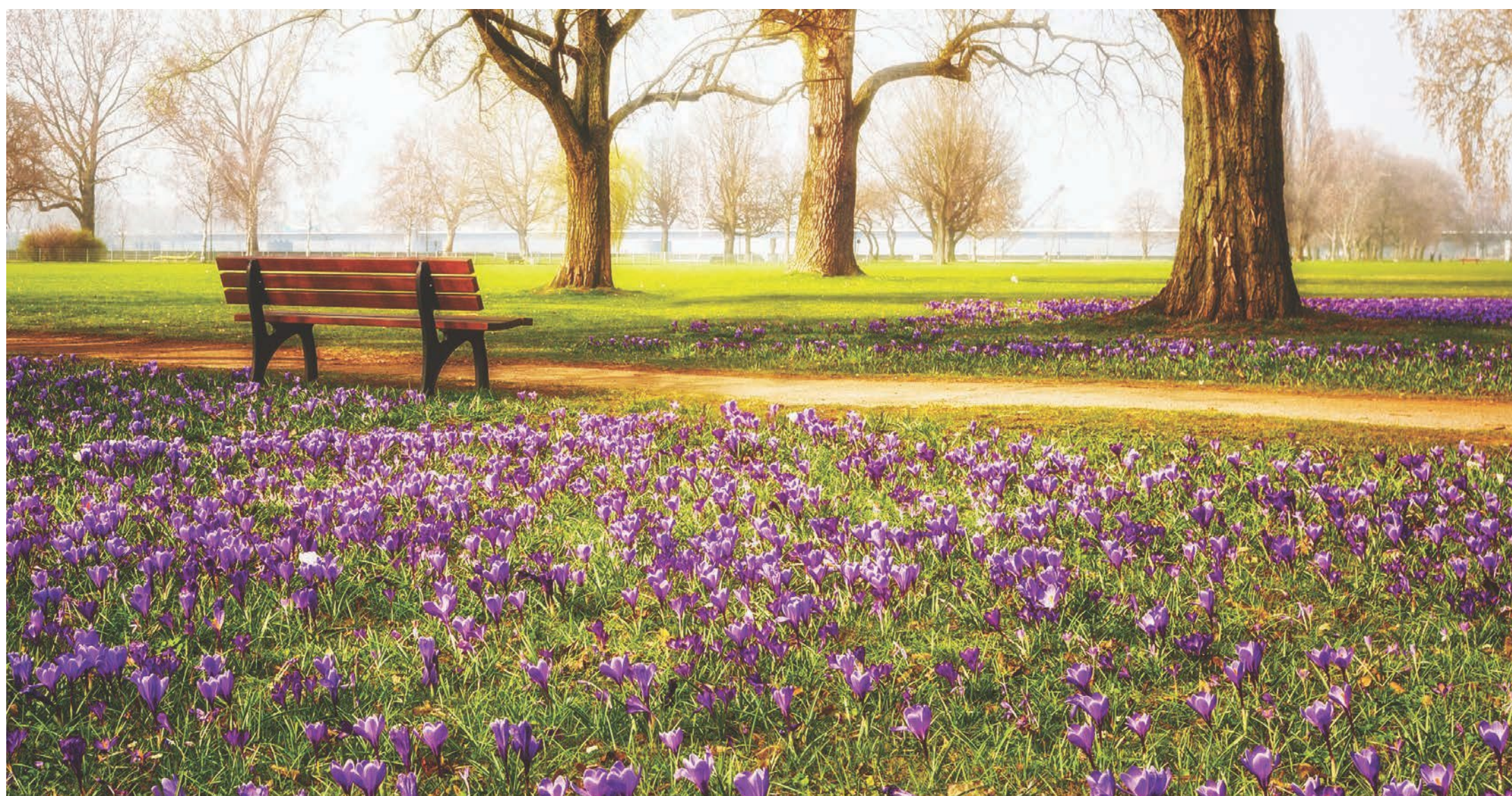


Purple Polio

PLANTING GUIDE



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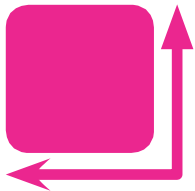
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Step 1 Choosing a site



Crocuses (*Crocus tommasinianus* – Ruby Giant) like a sunny spot where the soil does not get waterlogged in winter. Some shade from deciduous trees will be acceptable but avoid planting too close to the trunks and never under evergreen trees. They can also be planted in containers or pots.

The best results will come from planting in lawned areas or on grass banks but bear in mind that the grass will need to be left unmown until the crocus leaves die down naturally. This may look untidy so choose a site where the longer grass will blend in with its surroundings. It is also important to avoid areas where the public are likely to walk over during the growing and flowering months of January to March.



You will need a site of up to 40 square metres for 4,000 corms for a less intense and more natural effect, but you could plant them in an area as small as 10 square feet if you want a fuller grouping. The corms will increase in future years to give an improved show each year. If you're looking to add some variety to the display, crocuses mix well with other flowers such as Snowdrops.



If you decide to plant the crocuses in turned or prepared soil such as an existing flower bed there is a danger that squirrels, or other rodents may eat them. You must ensure they are pushed well in to at least 3cm and the ground is heeled in firmly afterwards. It is still possible they will be used as a food source rather than being left to grow and flower!

Feeling creative?

See the separate [Briefing note for Planting a Rotary Wheel or Rotary words.](#)

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Step 2 Care of corms on delivery



Store the corms in a dry place with a temperature around 17°C.

A garage or garden shed would be perfect, but be sure to protect them from mice by keeping them raised off the floor.



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Step 3 Involving your community



To coincide with the perfect time for planting, we are encouraging clubs to arrange their planting around World Polio Day on 24th October.

This is a great opportunity to involve a wide range of volunteers from your local community including the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom groups and other RHS community gardening groups as well as other local groups with whom you have an established relationship.

Reach out to country estates, National Trust properties, gardens open to the public and other visitor attractions in your area as well as local places of worship, sports grounds, training grounds, leisure centres (both private and local authority) and more to identify new planting sites and get different parts of your community involved.

How about running a media campaign seeking ideas from local people for possible sites and groups who want to get involved?

It is a great way to engage with RotaKids, Interact and Rotaract, local youth groups, schools, residential homes, hospital trusts, special needs groups, young mums, local councils, parks and garden departments and so many more.

It gives you an opportunity to engage in discussion with them about Rotary generally, the other activities you get involved with in your communities and of course the Rotary Polio Story.

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Step 4 Planting the corms



Be sure to be prepared to take some clear, high resolution photos of the planting in progress for using in media releases and on social media to get publicity in your local area. Action photos will provide an engaging picture and help bring the event to life!

Please ensure your participants (and their responsible adults where necessary) are happy to be in those photos which may be used in media releases, online and in social media and may appear locally, nationally and even internationally.

Make sure you tell the local media all about your planting event. Draft Press Release Templates will be available for you to adapt and use.



If you are planting on grass ensure it has been mown as short as possible and give it a heavy watering the day before if possible so the soil is thoroughly soaked.

Using spades

Using the spade slice under the top of the turf at a depth of two to three inches (like you see with a roll of turf). Lift the turf up enough to place (for more formal display) or throw in (for a more natural display) 5-10 corms then release the turf back down. Ensure you firm the turf back well by stamping it down with your feet or using a roller.

Using forks

Use a sturdy four-pronged garden fork to make planting holes by pressing the fork about 10 cm into the soil and shifting the soil to make holes wide enough to take the corms.

Make lines of holes 20 cm apart and stagger them to avoid a regimented look. Don't attempt this in dry soil. Push the corms into the holes down to about 3 cm. Use a stiff broom to brush sand over the grass after planting to fill the holes. The sand can be builder's sand and a 20kg bag per 4,000 crocus corms is likely to be all you will need.

With a team of five people, the job should take about two to three hours at a leisurely pace and allowing for a well-deserved tea break!

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Step 5 After care



Growth should be straightforward and trouble-free. It is a good idea to get the area mown in mid-December and then do not do any further mowing until the leaves have died right back after flowering.

Remember to:

- Have signage about the purple crocus in bloom and Rotary (see [Signage Rotary Club Briefing](#) and the links to the suggested Signage templates within it).
- You could get the people involved with the planting back to see the results to thank them, perhaps organise a celebration / awareness event and ask them about helping next year
- Get some more photos when the crocus are in bloom. Try to choose a sunny day when the flowers will open fully as on dull days they don't look nearly as impressive
- Tell the local media about the flowering. [Draft Press Release Templates](#) will be available for you to adapt and use.

Once they have finished flowering the leaves must be left uncut to die down naturally to improve the display each year. Do not use any lawn weed killers whilst the crocus leaves are visible. The display should remain pest free. Applying a top dressing after flowering will also help to establish the new corms for the following year.

Please send photos with captions, a story and any media coverage of the crocus in bloom to [Rotary GB&I Polio Champion Derek Rothwell](#)