



florida daffodil society news

ISSUE NO.
72

FEBRUARY 2010

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- March FDS FLOWER SHOW – Location: Tallahassee Nurseries
March 6, 10:00 – 5:00
March 7, 10:00 – 4:30
- May 8 Annual Meeting 9:15 a.m. Location: To be announced
- October 15 Bulb Sale

*Pre-Sale order forms will be mailed
with the next newsletter!*

WHAT'S NEW

Members and the general public are invited to bring their daffodils for show, identification or just plain fun to the Annual Flower Show. There will be a table with tools, cards and greenery for those showing daffodils, Saturday 8:00 – 9:45. Linda Van Beck will give a daffodil talk at 10 AM.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

We need helpers for the Flower Show! If you want to be a greeter or general worker bee, call Lori Johnson at 321-4885

NEW ZEALAND

The British landed in 1863. They made Christchurch their garden city. In the Botanic Garden, near the Bandsmen's Memorial Rotunda, 16,000 daffodils were planted in 1933. "Daffodil Woodland" still makes a yellow blaze and patients are still bundled up and wheeled out of the nearby hospital for fresh air and daffodils. Starting five years ago, the Lions Club began planting over 1,000 daffodil bulbs annually.

New Zealand is the land of Daffodils and daffodilians. Both are vigorous, friendly in appearance and very industrious. New hybrids, daffodil farms and exhibitions abound. Unfortunately, Linda Van Beck picked December to take a tour, mostly of the rugged South Island, thus seeing many summer flowers but no daffodils. Her only free time was in Christchurch, home of one of the daffodilians – David Adams, owner of Templeton Daffodil Nurseries which specializes in international hybrids, his hybrids, and small and miniature daffodils. Finding David was easy!

It all began with the Brits being stand-offish and the ex-colonists sticking together. The daffodilian traffic between the American Daffodil Society and the New Zealanders is amazing. They pop off to see each other's flowers, inspect gardens, exhibit together and consume large quantities of food and refreshment. They write and share articles, obituaries, give speeches to each other and think nothing of hopping across the Pacific Ocean to attend a convention or exhibition. David was not surprised to see me and we will meet again in March. The ADS has a large silver plate awarded to the best Kiwi hybrids grown in America. It is problematic that we could get Kiwi tazettas to grow in Florida even if we followed all the instructions, due to the March heat waves. The FDS tested a "seasoned" Paper White from Australia but no luck.

WHAT HE SAID

George Engleheart- 1897- The cream-white *Tazetta* is an immemorial dweller on the rocky slopes of St. Michael's Mount. If we suppose the tazettas to have been introduced by the monks half a dozen or more centuries ago, they probably did not have our esthetic enjoyment of its great tufts of pale bloom against the lichened stone, but employed it for medicinal or 'still-room' concoctions. One ingredient of the celebrated liquor of the *grand chartreuse* is said to be the expressed juice of a yellow daffodil. But possibly it is a true native, a western outlier of the widely distributed race of *narcissus polyanthus*, which extends from Portugal to China and from Switzerland to North Africa. Mount lilies are glad in their Cornish environment untended... Engleheart hopes they will be held sacred and inviolable by the tourist (from *Cornish Magazine*).

WEATHER

The two plus weeks of freezing January weather is over and all is up and well. As the weather remained dry, there was little frost damage. The Paper Whites bowed or bent with the cold weather and the blooms were all down by week two. The late blooming Paper Whites, Omri and some Nony stayed straight.

The most affected by the temps, coldest 19 degrees plus chill factor, was *N. Italicus*. The blooms tended to collapse (turned mushy) even when watered (hollowed stems will always bend). At the IFAS Quincy test garden, *N. Italicus* bloomed early and the stems collapsed -- everything else looked good and was blooming on schedule.

N. Panizzianus has seven stems -- if anyone wants a short lovely Paper White, this is it. In early December, the big surprise was finding *N. Tazettas* 8W-Y in bloom. Again, colder weather was at play. Other marginals blooming are: Innisidgeon 8Y-O, Rijnveld's Early Sensation 1Y-Y. Ariel 8W-W is an early bloomer. The huge florets make an impressive cascade and the sturdy leaves give this Israeli hybrid our vote over other early budding Paper Whites on the market. Let's hope it's a keeper!

To date, the biggest daffodil show has been Miss Linda 8W-W. Next year we will lift, separate and replant Miss Linda so that the mass planting can be enjoyed. Unfortunately, the cold weather slowed down the budding of Nat Williams so as yet there has been no official Van Beck open garden. The dafs loved the four inches of rain. Peak bloom may be the end of January. If you are interested in seeing thousand of daffodils blooming, call 878-9753 for the timing of the open garden.

Lawrence Trevanio who recently moved from Perth to colder Canberra (Australia) noted that his tazettas bow and rise with the cold and warm temperatures, but frost will kill the ovaries --i.e., no viable seeds. Every year we see some pods with undeveloped seeds. Now all is explained. Most of our tazettas are sterile mules, but a few Paper White varieties make seeds.

GOLDEN DAYS

In the December FDS newsletter, we reported on the National Garden Clubs, Inc Daffodil "Golden Days" project. The FDS has offered the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Carlton, Ice Follies, Fortune and Erlicheer at vendor prices. Tina Tuttle, long time FDS member, is in charge of the project.

BOARD DECISIONS

1. The board agreed to set aside funds to update the FDS web site and bring us into the 21st Century. Our first site was created by a member's twelve year old son, and has only been updated once. The site is considered part of the FDS outreach program, hence the free information on daffodil cultivars and planting. We are linked to www.daffodilusa.org (the American Daffodil Society).
 2. The board agreed to underwrite the construction of signage for Clarke Park in Orange Park up to \$500.00. This sign will be similar to the wooden signs at Goodwood Museum and Gardens and will tell the history of Florida daffodil farms with emphasis on the St. John's river basin.
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Happy Valentine's Day