

ADS Gold Medal

John Hunter
Nelson, New Zealand



Peter Ramsay photograph

The ADS Gold Medal for Meritorious Service is given in recognition of accomplishment of a preeminent nature in the advancement of daffodils.

This year's recipient has been growing and breeding daffodils for over 60 years. Making daffodil crosses for 60 years is certainly an achievement of its own, especially when the results of those crosses include some of the finest daffodils in the world.

He has registered just over 100 daffodils, the first in 1963, but such daffodils! 'Elfin Dell' and 'Elfin Moon' (intermediates); brightly colored 'Flash Dance', 'Navigator', and 'Excalibur'; and his "Polar" series are all blooms with all the qualities we want in our flowers.

He is the Historian of the National Daffodil Society of New Zealand, and quietly sets us straight on Daffnet from time to time.

He was one of the first to use *N. viridiflorus* in his breeding program, to give us daffodils that bloom in the autumn and winter.

But his greatest achievement may be the development of 'Emerald Sea', an autumn-blooming flower bred from *N. viridiflorus*. On its own, 'Emerald Sea' is a lovely 7 W-G flower. Rarely does a single flower have such an impact on future breeding. But it is the foundation of a host of other autumn-blooming flowers being bred around the world, much as 'Falaise' was the stepping stone to modern doubles, or the fertility of 'Quick Step' opened the way to a whole range of fertile jonquil hybrids.

John Hunter, of Nelson, New Zealand, is a worthy recipient of the ADS Gold Medal for 2011. 🌸