

# Like daffodils? Get growing, then!

by Reporter Staff

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ELEANOR P. LABROZZI PHOTO | A selection of blooms included in the Garden Club of Shelter Island's Daffodil Exhibit, which ran at the Library from April 23 to May 5.

The Shelter Island Library was filled with cheery floral blooms in recent weeks as part of the Daffodil Exhibit, a three-week show hosted by the Garden Club of Shelter Island. As Youth Chair Carol B. Russell explains, the show at the library highlights the many different varieties of daffodils that have been grown in open areas of Shelter Island — areas where deer freely roam. Despite their appetite for all sorts of plants, especially flowers, Mrs. Russell notes that deer usually refrain from eating daffodils because the flowers make them nauseated.

“Hence, there is a good reason to grow daffodils, which have a very long season of bloom,” she explains. “The earliest daffodils appear in late February and the late blooming daffodils bloom in early May. Some daffodils can bloom in the autumn months.”

It was Alice Hench Fiske, wife of Andrew Fiske, heir to Sylvester Manor, who first promoted the idea of growing daffodils in Island gardens. Mrs. Fiske's daughter, Lissa Williamson, who had a summer home on Sylvester Manor grounds, became an American Daffodil Society Flower Show judge.

Subsequently the Garden Club of Shelter Island promoted the growing and showing of daffodils. At this time, the Garden Clubs of Shelter Island and Rye are the only two clubs in New York State to host American Daffodil Society shows.

While to the untrained eye daffodils may all look the same, Mrs. Russell notes that there are 13 divisions of daffodils — Trumpets, Large-Cupped, Small-Cupped, Double Cupped, Triandrus, Cyclamenius,

Jonquilla, Tazetta, Poeticus, Bulbucodium, Split Corona, Miscellaneous and Species. That means there are hundreds of cultivars and natural species to be found in the landscape. She adds that while most daffodils bloom for less than a week, there are some varieties that offer earlier blooms and make gardens and landscapes beautiful shades of yellow, white, pink, orange, red, rose, green and white while it's still fairly cold outside.

She advises residents to visit the American Daffodil Society's website to learn more and by all means, plant daffodils on Shelter Island. All show entries are open to the general public and you do not have to belong to the garden club to show your daffodils.

"That's my 'Trumpet call' to everyone who loves flowers," adds Mrs. Russell.

Annette Hinkle

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