

## A Garden of White Daffodils August, 1998

White daffodils? Yes, I know most people think of daffodils as yellow, but if you want, you can plant an entire garden with white daffodils, and still have representatives from all divisions of the classification, blooming over a month or more.

Why would you want only white daffodils? Perhaps to have a garden that is just a little bit different. Or maybe you have shrubs blooming at the same time which would clash with the yellow and orange or pink daffodils. White daffodils will fill the bill nicely for early color in the garden. A green and white color scheme is cool and soothing, though cool probably doesn't matter in early spring.



Your white daffodil garden will begin blooming just a few days later than the big yellow trumpet daffodils, but the smallish cyclamineus hybrid, 'Cazique' is one of the first daffodils to bloom in my garden each year. The cup opens yellow, but soon fades to white, and the perianth flies back like those of a cyclamen. (Clever name for the type, don't you think? Cyclamineus hybrids because the petals reflex like a cyclamen.) 'Jenny' and 'Durango' also fit this category, though the cup on 'Jenny' opens yellow. 'Mary Lou' (pictured) also fits this category, but blooms later.

The typical trumpet daffodils come in white also. The old 'Mount Hood' still makes a wonderful garden display. You can probably find it at your garden center this fall. Other wonderful white trumpet daffodils are 'Empress of Ireland', 'Silent Valley', 'Nile', and 'Panache'. The old 'Rashee' blooms later, near the end of daffodil season, and is welcome among the shorter cupped daffodils then.

Large cupped daffodils have cups which are shorter than the petals, and some of my favorite daffodils are found in this division. You might try 'Gull' and 'Homestead', both of which have been awarded The American Daffodil Society's Pannill Award for exhibition flowers. 'Guiding Light' (pictured) from New Zealand, and 'Who's Who' and 'Lady Diana' from Australia add to the international flair in the garden. Other favorites include 'Silk Cut', 'Areley Kings', and 'Stoke Doyle' from Britain; and the elegant 'River Queen' from Virginia. 'Inverpolly' is one of the latest of this type to bloom.



Short-cupped daffodils have cups not more than one-third the length of the petals, and I don't think you can find a better choice than 'Cool Crystal'. Bred in Oregon, it has won awards on both sides of the Atlantic. 'Verona', 'Silverwood', and 'Angel' are all great choices. And if you can locate 'Dallas', by all means add it to your garden. It is one of

the whitest daffodils, and blooms at the end of daffodil season. A bloom of 'Dallas' held up next to many other white daffodils makes the others look gray in comparison.

For double white daffodils, look for the older 'Gay Song', or the Dutch-bred 'Obdam'. Newer and pricier are 'Ice Diamond' from Oregon and 'Huon Pride' and 'Shykoski' from Tasmania. Smaller and fragrant blooms are found on 'Daphne', 'Rose of May', and 'Santa Claus'. Most of these smaller blooms have been bred from the fragrant poeticus hybrids, and are among the last daffodils to bloom

For white triandrus hybrids with several pendent blooms per stem, look no further than the bells and chimes from Grant Mitsch Novelty Daffodils in Oregon. 'Mission Bells', 'Ringing Bells', 'Russian Chimes', 'Spring Chimes', and 'Sunday Chimes' all please the discriminating gardener. Older 'Thalia' and 'Tresamble' are wonderful in the garden as well, as is the double sport of 'Tresamble', 'White Marvel'.



White jonquil hybrids are not as abundant, but you can't fail to fall in love with 'Dainty Miss'. Perfect little blooms between 1-1/2 to 2-inches across are borne one per stem in great profusion. 'Eland' and the newer 'Ladies Choice' (pictured) with several blooms per stem, add variety to this division.

White tazetta hybrids are mostly the domain of the paperwhites, but there is one which should do well outdoors in most climates—'Silver Chimes.' If you live where winters are not severe, you might also look for 'Scilly White' and 'Polly's Pearl'. These all have upwards of six blooms per stem and are fragrant.

Bulbocodium hybrids are best grown in pots in my area, but can be grown outdoors where winter is not severe. But they will need dry conditions in the summer to ensure bloom the following year. 'Fyno' from Australia is becoming widely available, and others are on the way.

White split corona daffodils include 'Cassata' and 'Ice Crystal.' 'Changing Colours' goes through a series of color changes before ending up as white.

Some white daffodils may be a bit difficult to grow in some climates. As a class, the white trumpets and large cups are more susceptible to basal rot. To guard against rot, you can dip the bulbs in a fungicide (such as benomyl) before planting. They seem to fare worse in hot, moist weather.

Most of the bulbs mentioned are available from specialist daffodil growers. You can find the addresses on The American Daffodil Society home page. (see links)