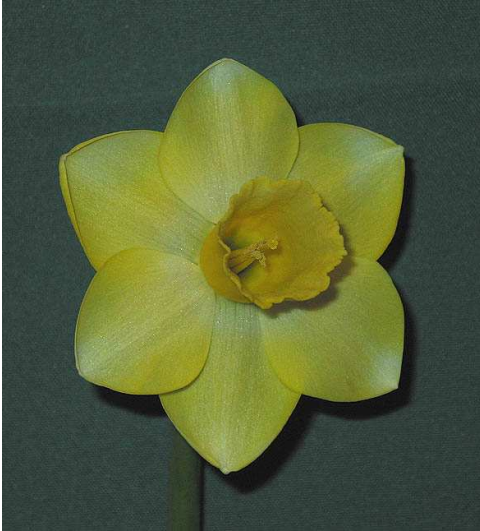


A Visit to the Daffodil Convention April, 2003

I've just returned from the convention of The American Daffodil Society which was held in Asheville, NC. It was a busy week which included the national daffodil show, lots of interesting speakers, and a tour to Biltmore House and Gardens and the North Carolina Arboretum. Since my own daffodil season is late, and the daffodils are just beginning to bloom, it was great to see so many daffodils on the show table and in the gardens we visited.



There were almost 2000 blooms entered in the show, about 500 of them being miniature daffodils. This must be the most miniatures ever exhibited in a show, as I can't remember any ever having that many. The best bloom in the show was 'Jan Dalton', a lovely large-cupped yellow flower with a whitish halo around the cup, exhibited by Bob Spotts from California. Best miniature was 'Smarple', an all white bulbocodium-type daffodil exhibited by Rod Armstrong of Texas. Picture an ice white "hoop petticoat" and you'll have a pretty good idea of what 'Smarple' looked like.

The timing and location of the convention show enabled Bill Gould of North Carolina to enter some of his choice seedlings. This amateur daffodil hybridizer needs to become better known! His beautiful flowers are seldom seen outside his garden. He won the award for best seedling in the show, as well as the classes for three and six seedlings, and the class for five intermediate daffodils.



Our morning tour took us to Biltmore House and Gardens. "Fantastic" hardly describes it. The garden was designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, and the now mature garden bears witness to his design skill. The daffodils were not labeled, but still looked beautiful. There were wonderful clumps of the white triandrus hybrid, 'Thalia', in front of flowering trees, and lots of plantings of 'Tahiti', a yellow and orange double. In another area, beds of the double 'Ice King' and a pink double which could have been 'Delnashaugh' fronted a long wall.



In one interesting bed, there were groups of 'Ice Follies', a yellow trumpet which was almost over which I couldn't identify, and 'Tete-a-Tete' all intermingled. Some tulips appeared to be coming on for some later bloom. I couldn't decide whether I liked such a grouping or not. In another area, blooms of what looked like 'Suzy' were peeking through the flowering branches of *Corylopsis spicata*.

The North Carolina Arboretum is a much newer garden, and one which shows much promise. I spotted a wonderful group of *Trillium sessile* which I've put on my "want list." The jonquil hybrid daffodil 'Quail' was much in evidence here,

sometimes in large drifts, and in other areas underplanted with colorful pansies. Here, too, were large drifts of the old 'W. P. Milner' looking wonderful amongst other spring flowers. Don't miss these gardens if you're ever in the Asheville area.

Many thanks to my friend, Tom Stettner, for the photos of 'Jan Dalton' and the intermediate collection.