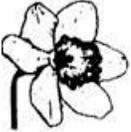


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# florida daffodil society news



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## WHAT'S GOING ON?

Late September and early October, our dry months, usually start the blooming season with Autumn Colors. Not this year! No blooms, not even in daffodil-heavy Texas. Then came the hot dry 90° days mingled with two heavy rains and a cool spell and boom! the race was on! Everything wanted to bloom. The Van Beck garden, now open to the public, was a sea of December white row upon row of Paper Whites, Nony, Omri, and Nat Williams before Christmas, followed by N. Italicus. By January, some N. Italicus were still opening but Grand Primo, Early Pearl and others, including Carlton and modern dafs from Cornwall/Scilly Isles were blooming. The many white clumps scattered over large and small beds were an unbelievable sight.

The same sequence occurred at Tallahassee's Goodwood Museum and Gardens, where some areas in the bulb lawn garden are overcrowded and in other areas, once heavily wooded, the bulbs are not yet up to blooming size. All over the South, daffodils were 4 to 8 weeks early. In Atlanta, Sara Van Beck's garden had Cragford blooming in mid-January. The tazetta section seems most affected. Other bulbs seem to be a week or two early.

January 22, Hildegard in Leesburg reported Erlicheer in bloom with Nony and Grand Primo not far behind. In Ocala, Paula's Soleil d'Or bloomed first.

What might have happened is that the deeper soil did not cool, where the soils above warmed up quickly and cold temperatures did not penetrate. Gardens that were heavily mulched never warmed up and are not blooming early. The FDS warns against heavy pine straw mulch as it can make a mat that keeps soils wet and cold. To date there has been little or no prolonged freezing weather. Twice before, some Carlton bloomed in January and the rest bloomed in late March or not at all. A seedling from Bill Welch, N. viridiflorus x Matador, hasn't bloomed or looked healthy in 4 years. Now it has 4 stems. N. viridiflorus loves DRY heat. Another surprise was double Chinese Sacred Lily (CSL). There were so many in the garden! Welch leaves his lifted CSL bulbs out in the sun for a "good baking" as he thinks it improves doubling. Looking at 1999 IFAS data from hot Lake Apopka, this bulb (called Double Roman there) survived the dry conditions and did well. Under the name Constantinople, the bulb is being tested in the FDS Central Florida program. Currently, the name used the most is double CSL. All in all, it is an old and beautiful flower.

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## ARE YOU READY?

“Amaze your friends and neighbors!” Daffodils for summer blooming -- June and July! Take your pick -- Erlicheer, Soliel d’or, and Avalanche right out of a catalogue! (mine was Van Bourgondin). This was probably a combination of cool dry storage and heat to “hold” the bulbs and then trick them into blooming. Many forgetful FDS members have already experienced this phenomena. Maybe the Dutch should follow the Canadian advertisements which guarantee one time blooming. There is no comment on the fact that “deferred” blooming is a one time only event.

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## SAD NEWS

The pioneer house, pictured in Daffodils in Florida, A Field Guide to the Coastal South, has been sold and will be dismantled for its tongue and groove lumber. Located near the Wire Grass Highway (84) and HW 33, just north of Boston, Georgia, the house has been deteriorating. Local historians in Thomasville have been notified by the FDS and hopefully the history of the Moody family and pictures of the house and daffodils will be taken to help preserve the memory of this rare old home.

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## MOROCCAN TIDBITS

Linda Van Beck went to Morocco in September and hoped to meet a botanist. She wanted to compare Florida’s historic Paper Whites with those found in Morocco. No luck. One can report that a yellow bulbicodium is still flourishing in the high Atlas mountains and that large bouquets of Paper Whites are still brought into Tangiers and sold at Christmas time. A field guide book showed tazettas with small florets similar to those brought back from Turkey and blooming well in the Van Beck garden. E.A. Bowles observed in his 1934 A Handbook of Narcissus that many Moslems, especially on Friday, scattered Narcissus Tazetta on graves, “having pulled each bloom away from the main stalk”. Linda learned that this widespread custom is not religious, performed mostly by women and is based the superstition that the flowers would curry favor and good luck from the good people buried there. There are no grave markers with names.

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## FREE DAFFODIL SEEDS

The advantage of warm weather is that the pollinators are out and about. To date, all pollination in the Van Beck garden is done by insects, especially the common skipper butterfly. Seeds are already available from the “Autumn Colours”, and more pods are ripening especially small floret Paper Whites. If you would like to plant some seeds, don’t wait! It’s best to get them into the ground as soon as possible so as not to lose them. The seeds are sprinkled in a mass on 2” of dirt in a plastic “woven” berry basket and approximately 4” of dirt put on top and them planted so you can see the edge of the basket. Roots can go out the bottom, and after 2 years you can replant if the foliage is sturdy. Most large Paper Whites are “planted”, i.e., dropped into grass which is not mown. The grass protects the eventual tall foliage and keeps seeds moist. They navigate downwards on their on. Count on at least 5 years before blooming. If the seeds don’t germinate the first year, that’s it! Call 850-878-9753.

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# FDS FLOWER SHOW

March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Tallahassee Nurseries Greenhouse  
2911 Thomasville Road, Tallahassee

The **ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW** is 10:00 -5:00 both days. Call Chair Lori Johnson if you want to help set up or “man the table”? Call 321-4885.

The **SMALL FLOWER SHOW** opens at noon on Saturday and comes down at 4:30 on Sunday. If you have questions or want to help, call Carol Allen 385-6559. Entry starts at 8 AM and judging at 9:30 AM. Let’s hope we still have blooms! Remember, daffodils have 6 petals, and must be clean, undamaged and without extra bits of foliage. No buds. Do your part and enter. Judges will be from Georgia – Bonny Campbell and John Lipscomb. Regional director Becky Fox Mathews hopes to come. If she does arrive, we will have either another judge or she will be available during the judging time to meet you and answer questions, particularly about prepping daffodils.

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## MOVE FROM THE NORTH

Part 1 by Jackie Turbidy

In November, 2003, I moved to St. Simons Island, GA, from Rumson, N.J. where I had grown daffodils for nearly 30 years. With me I brought a good many of the 100 or so different cultivars that I had grown all these years. No one warned me that this was a special part of the world.

St. Simons is part of the southeast coastal region. It is hotter longer, more humid and has very little cold time. This winter has been particularly warm. So much so that the Bradford Pear tree that I rely on in the summer to give shade to my dafs is still bearing a good third of its leaves in mid-January. My dafs need the sun that the existing leaves are blocking.

In the fall of 2004, I redid the garden of the hastily planted bulbs. (I had dug up all the bulbs six weeks after they had bloomed in the spring). I took out all of the “soil”(almost 100% sand, unlike NJ where I used an augur on a cordless drill to dig a hole and then added sand in the bottom of the hole for drainage in the very heavy soil!) 12” down. I put in landscape cloth for several reasons. One, it seems to have kept the palmettos out; two, it holds the soil (I had mixed top soil with some of the existing sand).

I then replanted the bulbs. Most were planted 6” down and 6” apart. The miniatures and small bulbs I put in berry baskets and sank in the ground 4” deep. This “year” has seen Miss Linda blooming 12/15/06 (a whole month earlier than last year) followed by Nat Williams (12/21/06), Grand Solei d’Or (12/21/06), Grand Primo (1/12/07), Sugar Cups, and Erlicheer to date.

Like last year the tazettas are going gangbusters and will need to be divided in 2007.

Part 2 will be the list of 06-07 bloomers.

*Jackie Turbidy is a Southeast Regional Director of the American Daffodil Society and grows bulbs to exhibit in flower shows. She won the top awards last year at the FDS Flower Show. A promoter of daffodil culture, Jackie gives speeches and the FDS slide show to Georgia garden clubs.*

Last year there were 2 new Flower Shows on the American Daffodil circuit. The FDS was the first in the nation, and will be first again this year. Printed in the ADS Journal was the account of our show, lifted from the FDS Newsletter. Late in the season Chriss Rainey of Reston Virginia decided to have an "after the season" daffodil show which he titled "First Ever ADS Pie Eater's Show". Put together with a lot of love, clothes pegs and bamboo sticks, the show was held in the fellowship room of an apartment complex where the public and mostly senior residents enjoyed the show. His account was humorous and although there were few exhibitors (9) they had 209 blooms. Local awards included money (\$10) and a bottle of English ale.

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### **FDS CONDOLENCES**

The FDS Board would like to extend their sympathy to Roxanne Daniel on the death of her husband. Dennis Daniel planted daffodils by the acre. Together, Dennis and Roxanne championed historic daffodils, initiated a large and successful daffodil show in Camden, Arkansas, and provided support to the FDS in its early days.

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### **SPRING FLOWER SHOW**

The Tallahassee Garden Club's Spring Flower Show will be held April 13 & 14. Call Lynette Pichard at 224-6863 for entry information for perishable flowers.