



florida daffodil society news

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2008 FDS BULB SALE

NOVEMBER 1 9:15-11:30
JUBILEE COTTAGE
GOODWOOD MUSEUM AND GARDENS
TALLAHASSEE

No bulbs can be picked up unless 2008 dues are paid up or dues are paid at the sale.

FERTILIZER: If you wish to purchase a 50 pound bag of 6-24-24, call 850-878-9753 now. Small 50-cent bags will be available at the bulb sale.

The good news is that there will be complementary juice and coffee, batches of 2008 bulbs for sale, and **free** samples – Early Pearl slabs, Silver Chimes 8W-Y and Bridal Crown (2 doubles to a stem, white with yellow flecks). Bulbs are big and fat this year. The bad news is that the order for pseudo narcissus and Telemonius Plenus fell through. The daffodils are located on a family farm in North Georgia that was severely affected by the drought. There were hopes that the drought would end in time, but it did not. As with the Flower Carpet situation last year, the hard clay could not be dug even with a pickaxe – especially the location of the Telemonius Plenus. The family basically “got in over their heads” and did not alert the FDS that problems existed. They would/could not dig a sufficient number of bulbs for the entire FDS membership order.

Helping with the sale will be Dianna Norwood, Mary Ann Tonnacliff and Emily Millett and treasurer Pete Millett. Linda Van Beck will be in Tennessee attending the fall board meeting of the American Daffodil Society.

To date, bulb baggers include Doris Partridge, Margaret Feaster, Rachel Bradford, Lenny Kennedy, Charlotte Watkins, Charlotte Holland, Lovie Hall, Tiffany Bourassa, Isabelle de Sercey and Ann Toefield. A rough count indicates the FDS purchased over 40,000 bulbs. Sue

Warren and her Escambia County Master Gardeners accounted for close to half. Betty Ragland, daffodil philanthropist of Macon, Georgia, and the Georgia Daffodil Society also purchased large quantities. It all adds up as volume is the key to discounts and low wholesale prices.

OTHER PLACES OTHER SALES

Two master gardener organizations – Jackson and Baker counties – sold bulbs for the first time helped by Linda Van Beck’s Daffodil Talk. Other talks and FDS bulb sales included garden clubs in Inverness, FL; Pelham, GA; The Villages, FL; Monticello, FL; as well as Sweetbay Circle in Pensacola and Daffodil Circle in Tallahassee. New territory for the FDS was Yulee up in Nassau County. FDS member Dorothy Kelly not only offered bed and breakfast for the two day stint, but included a party and night trip to the beach. Best of all, she contacted a local magazine writer who wrote an excellent article on daffodils complete with photo and plug for the master gardeners’ plant sale/event. The publicity drew lots of people.

The fall season is nearly over. Last but not least is a date with the Master gardeners of Green Cove Springs. The “new” talk has been well received. Slides show the daffodil seasons which lead to what we will see and what the bulb is doing during its carbohydrate cycle. The wonderful view of the Pyrennes in bloom as well as jonquilla distribution around the Mediterranean Basin leads into the predetermined adaptation to Mediterranean climates. The “talk” adds biological information on primitive roots, the need for water and potash during the photosynthesis period, and other cultural practices.

A commercial-quality “product” was produced for Central Florida. A spiffy brown bag with photos of four daffodils – one of each in the bag – Chinese Sacred Lily, Nony, Soleil d’Or and Early Pearl, all early bloomers. Our mixture for the small garden has been very successful. Duval Master Gardeners are adding Erlicheer to the mix.

We need to promote all the tazettas as Florida's Daffodils, especially in urban areas where it heats up at night.

LET'S GET IT STRAIGHT

Speaking of Erlicheer, New Zealander John Hunter wants to set the record straight. The flower was first noticed in a New Zealand garden by New Zealander Alan Gibson in 1934. There is a general consensus that the original correct spelling is Erlicheer, that Erlicheer is a sport of the tazetta White Pearl (simple double form) and that there has been confusion ever since. After World War II, Gibson purchased the stock and registered the bulb. He credited the original owner in 1953.

A "sport" is a spontaneous permanent distinctive deviation or variation from type. In this case, the tazetta florets became doubles with the cup changing into yellow specks of color. The mutated characteristics remain true for future generations of the bulb.

This round bulb is a notorious feeder. There are accounts of mowing the vegetation to make the bulb stop feeding. In the English literature, Jean Stevenson commented on a 4-foot high stem. FDS member Sharon McDow in Gainesville, FL had herself photographed in 2008 with arm outstretched and an Erlicheer stem touching her arm. The other side of the coin is that when bulbs are not forced into dormancy, some won't stop growing and the bulb is eventually spent.

WEEDS AS GROUND COVER

When visiting gardens, weeds are a good indication of soil fertility. In Pelham, the plants in the old section of town looked scruffy. When the knife wouldn't go down easily into the sand and there weren't any weeds to speak of, one knew the soil was poor. The pretty plants all grew in pots. Daffodils in that type of soil will need all the help they can get.

Dr. Frazier Bingham, a founding member of the Florida Daffodil Society, said of weeds growing in daffodil beds: "the daffodils don't know they are weeds." Weeds do make a good ground cover, especially in the summer as the daffodils are not feeding and hence not in competition for nourishment from April through September. The field of daffodils at the top of the Van Beck garden remained intact during the 20" of rain from Hurricane Ike, all thanks to the heavy mulch anchored by strong tall weeds. On its own, the

mulch and topsoil would have sailed down to Lake Lafayette.

ANIMALS

Daffodils and Snow Flakes are usually animal proof. According to Scott Kunst's newsletter at oldhousegardens.com, most animals will not touch alliums, cassassia, chinodoxa, colchicum, hyacinths, Spanish blue bells, ipheion, muscari and scilla. Of course, we all know deer love the delectable tulips and lilies. At every FDS lecture there is always the pronouncement "Squirrels EAT DAFFODILS." Q: How do you know? A: The bulbs aren't there! Daf bulbs may rot – but they don't get eaten, because they're poisonous.

A MYSTERY STORY PART I

This spring, Julia Van Beck gifted the book [A Guide to the Georgia Coast](#) to Linda Van Beck. The book listed a plantation, previously unknown to Linda, which was famous for a "one-acre floral and botanical garden of international renown"...with "outstanding camellias and bulbs." Think pears and the name Le Conte comes to mind. The original owners William and John Eatton Le Conte purchased the land in 1760. Their grandfather was a French Huguenot émigré and the family resided in New York State. The males in the family were the scientists of the day. A descendant, Joseph, co-founded the Sierra Club and climbed everything, including many named after him – two mountains and a glacier for starts.

The 63.8 acre plantation is named Le Conte–Woodmannston (LC-W), and is located south of Midway. It was owned at one time by the Garden Club of Georgia, which in 1933 transferred the title to the LC-W Foundation, which today offers environmental and historic activities for the public. There are no buildings and a bare garden site. As Sara Van Beck was writing an article on historic bulb gardens, she contacted the LC-W director, only to learn that the garden had been planted 1812-1813 and the list of cultivars for the bulb garden was lost. *Can there be a happy ending for the records of this historical site? ...To Be Continued.*

Happy Halloween