



## WELCOME TO CALIFORNIA

Californians on a whole are very curious. They ask questions like “why don’t your daffodils bloom when ours do” or say such things as “our daffodils bloom in October/ November”. Well, this year we might as well be Californians! The constant heavy rain that came in September caused all bulbs to start up their cycle even earlier than last year. It’s not just daffodils and it’s not just Florida. Mississippi, Alabama and parts of Georgia have been affected.

Of course, one must not forget those three days of cold weather that sent temps below freezing. The Van Beck Garden had a great over-planting of self-seeding zinnias – but the freeze made it a zinnia graveyard. All had to be removed by hand to allow the daffodils to come up -- and are they coming. Large areas are green and demanding daily doses of water. Even an *n. Italicus* from Mississippi is blooming. Small Paperwhites and Autumn Color have been coming since early November.

This coming year the FDS will showcase and sell some of William Welch’s California hybrid tazettas. We have been trialing “Bill the Bulb Baron’s” tazettas for a long time and many members are already growing Early Pearl and Autumn Colors. The last batch started in 2010. Joyce Dennis, in the Marianna area, is trialing in full sun. The results last year were not good -- foliage was poor and stunted. Mary Nelson, Quincy, trials near her front door, in partial shade, and the results last year were okay. Van Beck’s trial area is getting more shade this year and was fertilized. The results are amazing. You can see the sturdy flowers and foliage in the photographs. The large 1¼ florets on 36 in. tall stems have up to 8 to 9 florets to a cluster.



First to bloom – Autumn Colors



Another modern tazetta hybrid

FDS’s goal is to find daffodils for our growing conditions.

What we need to emphasize is drinking. When foliage appears, it is drinking time whether it is happy hour or getting soaked or just a spray -- the mantra is water, water, water. The more water the faster and stronger it grows. John Van Beck said that we grew so few Irish Daffodils because they missed their morning fog and so, as we think of the joys of drinking, please imagine the poor daffodils that are out there crinkling and shriveling in the drought and are desperately in need of a drink!

## CLOSING DOWN

In November 2004 four pallets of books were delivered to a storage unit in Tallahassee. Linda and Sara Van Beck had become the proud parents of 2,500 books entitled: *Daffodils in Florida: A Field Guide to the Coastal South*. Sara announced that the books would not sell well in Georgia, and she was right. However, they sold elsewhere! In November 2012, only 30 books remain in Tallahassee and are available at \$15 plus shipping and handling. (Call 850-878-9753 to order). Amazon is closed but there are also a few books available at the American Daffodil Society's web store, [www.daf.usa.org](http://www.daf.usa.org).

It has been an interesting adventure. The books have had a wider audience than expected. There was obviously a need for a common sense, accurate primer available to the average gardener interested in growing and identifying daffodils. For all of you who have participated in this adventure, we thank you and hope that you will continue to conserve historic daffodils, as they are fast disappearing from most American catalogues.

A special thanks goes to Denise Choppin for designing our book.

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## GARDENS: 2012

- ❖ Clara Jane Smith, garden designer par excellence, has designed a pond embankment featuring 2,000 daffodils: 400 Fortune flanked by 800 Carlton and 800 Ice Follies. We hope she will take photos. The farm is situated near Bainbridge, Georgia.
- ❖ In Tallahassee we have added Chinese Sacred Lily to the 1860's Brokaw McDougal house gardens and Nony to John's Van Beck's memorial garden in McCord Park.
- ❖ In Georgia we sold 1,000 Carlton to Hills and Dales Public Gardens and 400+ mixed daffodils to Thomas University.
- ❖ FDS donated 1,000 Ice Follies to march along a 400 foot long path leading to a remembrance garden – situated on the grounds of the St. Johns County IFAS Extension Office.

- ❖ Pensacola State College still offers a variety of horticulture management courses. Professor Amy Horner is in charge. Her students participated in an informal daffodil program and have planted 15 large clumps of 200 common tazettas in a long bed that backs on her greenhouse. The flowers will be easily seen from one of the main entrances to the college. The other public daffodil Garden in Escambia County is located at the IFAS Extension Service in Cantonment.
- ❖ Valdosta gardener Pam Chiang planted a drift of 1,000 Carlton a few years ago. This year a tree had to be taken out and it took 300 Carlton to fill the gap. All are doing well.

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## The Perfect Garden

Gardeners never die – they just go on to the great garden where there are no weeds or pests and the sunshine and rainfall are always perfect. Given that, we still miss those who have left us. FDS President Lori Johnson is sad to announce the death of long time member: Bob Denk. He and his wife Jean could always be found dispensing information and the joy of daffodils at our annual flower show. Lori also offered our condolences to Paula Karrah on the death of her husband Randy. Paula is a long time defender, advocate and exhibitor of historic daffodils in Georgia

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## NEWS ITEMS:

The FDS handled 30,520 bulbs in 2012. The bulb report will be given in the next issue of the newsletter.

Since the last newsletter programs have been given at Esposito Nursery in Tallahassee and at the Perry, FL, Garden Club.

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*The FDS Newsletter "staff", Linda Van Beck, Writer, Emily Millet, Preproduction, Phyllis Graham, Editor, Linda Williams and Karen Kurz, Distribution, wish you a happy and healthy 2013!*

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