

“The daffodil, ‘Birth Flower’ of March”

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Written by Reginald Frontispiece Ltd

Continuing my monthly theme of 'Birth Flower of the Month,' here's the flower for March:

The daffodil.

From the genus *Narcissus* daffodils are also known under the name *daffadowndilly* and *jonquil*. It is the national flower of Wales, or Cymru to Welsh speakers.

Not only is the narcissus family beautiful to our eye, it has the potential to be beneficial to our bodies and minds.

It has long been used in traditional medicines for the treatment of ailments.

Narcissi produce alkaloids from which galantamine has been created for the treatment of dementia in Alzheimer's sufferers.

However, alkaloids can also have harmful effects on both humans and animals.

Many cases of poisoning or death have occurred when narcissi bulbs have been mistaken for leeks or onions and cooked and eaten.

Daffodils are dangerous to herbivores and as a result are not welcome on farmers' land.

Gardeners beware! They are also toxic to fellow plant life, including roses in which they inhibit growth.

They also reduce the life of cut flowers when placed in the same bowl.

Despite this, they remain one of our most loved flowers, as they herald the arrival of Spring with a splash of colour after the dark days of winter.

Our illustration is from Cicely Mary Barker's "Flower Fairies of the Spring," published in 1923.

See this image from the collection of Frontispiece Ltd **here**.