

## Catch "Yellow Fever"



### Northern California Daffodil Shows

First Weekend in March  
Alden Lane Nursery  
981 Alden Lane, Livermore

Second Weekend in March  
Ironstone Vineyards  
1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys

For exact dates, go to [daffodil.org](http://daffodil.org)



**Join the**

**Northern California Daffodil Society**

**Go to [daffodil.org](http://daffodil.org)**



**Join the**

**American Daffodil Society**

**Go to [daffodilusa.org](http://daffodilusa.org)**



**The Northern California Daffodil Society  
and**

**The American Daffodil Society  
are 501(c)(3) nonprofit  
educational and charitable organizations.**

## Daffodil Internet Resources

Northern California Daffodil Society  
[daffodil.org](http://daffodil.org)

American Daffodil Society  
[daffodilusa.org](http://daffodilusa.org)

DaffLibrary – Online library with  
more than 3,000 daffodil publications  
[dafflibrary.org](http://dafflibrary.org)

DaffTube – Videos, Powerpoint  
presentations and self-study programs  
[dafftube.org](http://dafftube.org)

DaffSeek – Daffodil Database  
Information & photos for 32,000+ daffodils!  
[daffseek.org](http://daffseek.org)

Daffnet – An International daffodil  
discussion forum  
[daffnet.org](http://daffnet.org)



The Northern California Daffodil Society  
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# A Pocket Guide for Growing Daffodils in a High Desert Northern Nevada Climate



Prepared by a Nevada Member of the

Northern California Daffodil  
Society

[daffodil.org](http://daffodil.org)

**DO:**

- Always plant daffodils in a sunny location. Hillsides and raised beds are best. Too much shade might result in the daffodils not blooming after the first year down.
- Plant deep tinted pink, red, or orange daffodils to get some shade for longer color retention.
- Always plant daffodils in a well-drained location. Growing in areas where water regularly stands will result in bulb loss. If good drainage does not exist, good solutions are building a raised bed or growing in containers.

**DON'T:**

- Don't plant daffodil bulbs too early. Wait until nights are cool and the soil temperature has dropped. In most high desert areas, October is an ideal time to plant.
- Don't use bone meal when planting if you have visiting critters such as squirrels or marmots. They will dig up the bulbs to get to the bone meal. They don't eat the bulbs. Daffodils are toxic to deer, marmots, rabbits, squirrels, rodents, horses, dogs and cats.
- Don't mow the daffodil foliage down after blooming; let it die down naturally. After the daffodils bloom, cut the dead flower stems off near the ground; however, leave the leaves! Next year's bloom begins to form in the bulb immediately after blooming. Thus, early cutting down of the foliage will result in next year's flower not being formed in the bulb. Wait to cut the foliage until the leaves begin to yellow, (indicating growth completed).
- Don't braid the daffodil leaves or tie them up in bunches! Weaving the leaves lessens their exposure to sun and interferes with the making of food to feed the bulb and the developing flower inside it.
- Don't water daffodils during their dry

dormant period during the summer. However, some modern (registered after 1969) daffodils may need more water.

**PLANTING:**

- Plant standard-size bulbs about six inches deep and six inches apart in trenches or holes which have been dug in well-prepared soil. Top (pointy ends) should be about 2x deeper than the bulb is high. As a rule, miniature-size bulbs are planted only one to two inches deep. Clay soil can be loosened by the addition of (organic) planting mix, soil amendment, or raised bed mix to the bed during preparation. Also, well-composted organic matter can be added to the soil. A little sand (1/2 - 1 inch) or Perlite at the bottom of the trench or hole is said to facilitate rooting of the bulb and provides good drainage.
- After planting, mulch the beds with an inch or two of coarse sand or ground bark if wind is not an issue. This will help to keep down weeds and will reduce the amount of dirt splashed up on the blooms. It also will insulate the bed from the sun during the summer. However, to minimize animal digging, top off with native soil only and tamp down to look like the undisturbed surrounding area.
- You needn't water your bulbs immediately after planting. Wait for the winter snows and spring rains to water the bed to avoid birds (quail) making dust baths in your beds. If winter is a dry one, consider watering. Usually the storms are sufficient.
- Go to <https://daffodilusa.org/growing-daffodils/> for more information about daffodil planting (including planting daffodils in containers).

**FERTILIZING:**

- The relative amounts of the essential elements Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium supplied by a fertilizer are indicated by corresponding numbers (N, P, K) on its container. Avoid using high-nitrogen fertilizers (N greater than 10) or fresh manures as they seem to promote bulb rot. Phosphorus and potassium are greatly needed by bulbs. Nitrogen and potassium compounds

are soluble and washed through the soil.

- A reasonable fertilizing option after planting is to liberally broadcast a granular feed low in nitrogen, moderate in phosphorus and high in potassium (e.g. 5-10-20). Alternatively, fertilizer can be worked directly into the soil during bed preparation. A pinch of super triple phosphate added at the very bottom of the hole before the Perlite, sand or soil amendments has worked well for some high desert gardeners.
- Some authorities recommend that daffodils be fertilized three times a year: 1) at planting, 2) as the foliage emerges from the ground, and 3) after blooming. However, other authorities feel that fertilizing three times a year is probably excessive unless the soil is extremely sandy and all the nutrients are continually being leached from the soil.
- Good advice: "Have your soil tested by the Agricultural Extension Service; see your County Agent for details." You can also check your soil type by visiting the USDA web: <https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx>

**DIGGING:**

- In order to keep the daffodils from becoming too thick and decreasing in bloom, dig and replant the bulbs after bloom about every three to five years.
- When the foliage has died down naturally, but not disappeared, dig the bulbs, wash them with a hose after cutting off any remaining foliage, let them dry thoroughly out of the sun, and place them in a mesh bag.
- Hang the bags of bulbs in a well-ventilated garden shed or garage. After several months, clean the bulbs by hand to remove dried outer scales, etc.
- If blooming does not happen one season, try moving the bulbs to a different location.