



***Your daffodil candy shop.***  
**December Daffodil Notes**

Many years ago, when I first began to collect little daffodils, I found that, however the fact is deplored, gardening begins--and sometimes ends--in the armchair.

*Elizabeth Lawrence*

**Party Pack o'Daffs**



We had the envious task this season of selecting and packing sixty sets of selected A selection of poetaz, miniatures, .Garden Club narcissus for the Greenwich, CT fragrant, and species, jonquils, triandrus, historic and novel varieties. Whites, the pink cups included

If you wish to offer a similar or other custom challenge box to your club, send me an early wire, it is a fun and unifying pursuit for all. Discounts available

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## Forward Advice

Now that the orders have been dispatched, new additions planted, potted daffs put into the cooler for their winter's slumber, beds mulched, we turn our attention to next year's offerings. We are pleased to offer a lot of American bred daffodils.

Not a settled list yet, but these six stunners are certainly included. Please hold your fire, ordering starts after the new year.





Golden Symphony 5 Y-Y



Jabberwocky 11a Y-O



Marisol 8 W-O



Yellow Magic 6 Y-Y





We are glove wearing gardeners, long since shedding for practical reasons and vanity the man-child shame of sporting protective clothing. For many years the highlight of horticultural trade shows was laboring next to the ebullient Harriet Zbikowski at the Foxgloves booth. She made and marketed truly great gardening gloves long before anyone took notice.

If you order from [Foxgloves](#) before the end of the year you will redeem a 15% discount with this order code : FOXQ15.

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## When is Prosperina Coming ?



*Images of Prosperina's return from the underworld generated by AI (artificial intelligence).*

Now Jupiter intervened  
Between his brother and his grieving sister.  
He parted the year's round into two halves.  
From this day, Properina,  
The goddess who shares both kingdoms, divides her year

Between her husband in hell, among spectres,  
And her mother on earth, among flowers.  
Her nature, too, is divided. One moment  
Gloomy as hell's king, but the next  
Bright as the sun's mass, bursting from the clouds.

*Tales from Ovid, 1997, Ted Hughes*

Our Louisiana friends say that "Spring starts the day after Christmas". True, but how do we northerners hold back the growth till Saint Paddy's Day, which is our accepted first day of Spring? More and more our coldest temperatures of the year are recorded in March. Between the slow to cool down and slow to warm up tempo ole Prosperina hardly has time anymore for her sojourn in the underworld. We mulch not to warm the soil, but to keep the soil frozen.

Every year it seems that the interest in fall blooming species: *N. broussonetii*, *N. obsoletus*, *N. serotinus*, *N. viridiflorus* et al, and their crosses is growing, as are the number of offspring. Then we see contemporaneous posts of spring flowering tazettas coming into bloom.



*Here's an April-November romance, *Gloriosus x Obsoletus*. We should be so lucky. On the right the Bill Welch fall-blooming tazetta "Twenty-Two". Blooms by Harold Koopowitz*

Species and near species Jonquils seem to enjoy our cold winters almost as much as the *Galanthus*. They receive very little intervention in return for their loyalty. Any decline is minimal and gradual, reversed by lifting and replanting. They act as if they are shade tolerant.





*Species Jonquilla Henriquesii after an April 5, 2016 ice storm. He recovered nicely. On the right here is the same Henriquesii again on November 15, 2022, adjacent to the Iris Siberica, at full foliage -- a forward indicator. Waiting for Prosperina.*

Watching the tazettas throw foliage in November before the hard freezes to come makes me think I am guilty of narco-abuse. But they keep returning oblivious to their freeze-burned foliage in the spring. Our only therapy is to mulch them with caressed straw that previously has been allowed to rot and sprout in the elements for a month or so to suppress the oat seedlings .



*Getting rowdy on November 15th, nearly five months away from flowering. On left Tazetta Compressus, right Asturiensis.*

We heard that bulbocodiums are well suited to year over year pot cultivation. Therefore they are a good introduction selection for the millennium generation apartment dweller. Warm and dry in dormancy, free to bloom as early as their spirit instills. Their perfume, undetectable in the cold garden, swells in the house.

The experience of northern gardeners is that bulbocodiums perform for a few seasons and then they are gone. They never establish their feral permanence as they do in the south.



Because of too much cold ? Or rather it is because of lack of heat and too much rainfall. They do not succumb to freeze as much as they diminish.



*Narcissus White Petticoat in bloom April 10th, year three. And the bulbs going into year five on November 15th, now too small to flower, Huntington, Connecticut, zone 7a.*

“The hoopskirts are the best of all little daffodils for warm climates, but Mrs Wilder noted that only two need concern the open gardens north of Baltimore : *N.bulbocodium citrinus* and *N.b. conspicuous* which bloom in her Westchester garden in April or early in May. ‘These charming things,’ she adds, ‘are not difficult to grow; indeed with me they have proved the easiest of the little daffodils, asking only gritty soil in partial shade and good drainage.’ Since Mrs. Wilder’s gardening days many new forms have been introduced, and Mr Brumbach, after trying them out at Reading has added *N.b.romieuxi* and *N.b.obesus* to the hardy ones.”

*Elizabeth Lawrence, The Little Bulbs*



*Bulbocodium Julia Jane with a face full of snow, March 3rd.*

Yes, fine in pots, but massed bulbocodiums deliver a stunning display in the garden – a floriferous mound of cascading foliage and reaching blooms, architecturally akin to Candytuft and the French marigolds to follow. Their possible demise is not a reason not to grow them.

As a countermeasure, in the garden we are lifting them early and then replanting late in a drier bed amended with gravel and 3-5-3.

Today do you have any forward looking indicators in your garden?

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## Somewhat related reading :

A glorious piece of journalism all about the ascendancy of Netherlands agriculture, or agribusiness depending on your take. Trigger warning: includes abattoirs along with some very good looking chickens.

[Netherlands is the second-largest exporter of agricultural products - Washington Post](#)

Slow farming returns to Puerto Rico.

[Can an Island Feed Itself ?](#)

There is continuing research into narcissus alkaloids for cancer and Alzheimer drugs. Aside from the many published research papers on the topic this older article provides a tidy overview for us laypersons.

[Drugs from Daffodils](#)

*Caveat: these sites may be paywalled.*

Thanks for your orders and best wishes for the new year.





*Santas planting daffodils, a little out of season. AI generated image.*

Thanks for reading.

C.W. Harley

Huntington, CT.

12/2/2022



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