

CODS CORNER

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL OHIO DAFFODIL SOCIETY

VOL XXX I NO 2 March 2001

Nancy Kolson, President

Naomi Liggett, Editor

Dear Daffnuts,

I am eagerly awaiting March 20--that is the first day of spring! Then we will really see our daffodils (or buttercups, as Bill Pannill calls them) spring up and open. I can hardly wait! It has been such a long, dark winter. Recently, we have had some mild days that have teased us with the promise of spring, but reality sets in a few days later as the weather goes back to winter. We need spring!

The last several meetings have been fun! First, Pat Crooks Henley gave us a super talk on perennials with an emphasis on daylilies. She also raffled off gift certificates to their garden. I know exactly what I am going to spend mine on--Strawberry Candy--a daylily that is several beautiful shades of pink. Recently, Peggy Macneale gave us a heart-warming look at some of the 'movers and shakers' of the daffodil world. Maybe some of you recognized yourself in some of her slides. Light refreshments (cookies and coffee) were served. This was an experiment--if you like having refreshments or do not like having them please take this time to let Sue hear your comments.

The Delaware Master Gardeners are having a big Gardener's Fair on April 7 at the JVS North Campus, 1610 State Route 521. It's from 9 - 5. Price is \$5.00. Many of us will be in Louisville for the ADS Convention that weekend, so we will not be able to participate. I hope some of you take advantage of the many trade items and seminars offered.

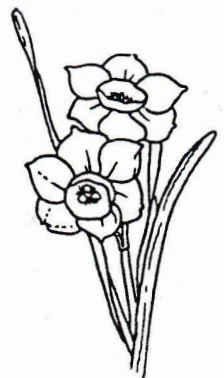
Right now, we (the officers and Ways and Means) are busy trying to lock in upcoming dates for the fall. It is hard because there is something almost every weekend. Here are the dates that have been set so far:

September 29 ADS Fall Board Meeting in Dallas
October 7 CODS Bulb Sale, Franklin Park Conservatory
October 20 ADS Regional Meeting, Dayton, OH

Remember, we still have to set a weekend for planting at Whetstone. Right now, we have October 14 free. It's just the right time to get our daffodils planted.

This will be the last time I write the President's letter to you. I am stepping down to take over the reins of Whetstone Garden, so there will be a new president for CODS elected at the next meeting. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve you.

Nancy



2001 ANNUAL SHOW

Cindy Hyde, Chairman

Thank goodness our show is almost here! I am so tired of winter!

Set-up will be Friday, April 20 at 2:00 p.m. Please join us if you can. It doesn't take very long, so you can still be home to pick some last minute blooms.

If you are going to be trimming your taxus, please bring your trimmings for staging. We also will need a couple of buckets and some cardboard trays.

Keep in mind that we will need volunteers for clerking during the show. It's a great learning experience for new members.

Lastly, I need you lunch choice (leave a message on my machine 740-474-7488) from the following by **Monday, April 9:**

Selection 1: Roast Beef & Cheddar Croissant with chips, salad, cookie and drink

Selection 2: Turkey and Bacon Wrap with chips, salad, cookie and drink

Selection 3: (Vegetarian) Hummus Club with chips, salad, cookie and drink

The drink will be your choice of ice tea or bottled water. The cost is \$8.95 a person. Please send your check to Elise Hack by **April 12.**

GOOD LUCK TO ALL -- MANY THANKS FOR EVERYONE'S HARD WORK!

ACCLIMATING DOWN UNDERS

Nancy Kolson

This is a continuation of an article in the last issue.

Kirby Fong, CA I live in one of the coastal valleys of California where the lowest overnight low in the winter is generally no worse than 22 Fahrenheit, with the coldest nights coming in December and January. February and March are generally cool, potentially with some warm spells, but no heat waves. Mid-March is the peak of the daffodil season here. The weather starts to turn warm in April, though the really hot weather usually does not come until June. Hot means

daytime highs of 90 to 100 degrees. This is a Mediterranean climate where it rains in the winter and does not rain in the summer.

The daffodils I get from Australia and New Zealand typically arrive from late January to early March. If I cannot plant them right away, I store them in a refrigerator. I plant the daffodils in 8-inch pulp pots. They are about eight inches in height as well as diameter and are made of wood fiber or pulp. They drain very freely and will last about two or three years before rotting. I jam a 12-inch square of plastic screen into the bottom of the pot to keep the potting soil from falling out the large drain holes in the bottom of the pot. I want the soil to drain very quickly so that I can water frequently with cool water to keep the soil temperature as low as possible.

For a planting medium, I use approximately three-quarters Supersoil and one-quarter horticultural perlite. Supersoil is a brand name of a soilless blend of ground fir bark, peat moss, sand and a very small amount of fertilizer. It used to be advertised as steam sterilized but now merely claims to be weed and disease free. I believe it is very important to use a disease free medium in order to reduce the risk of basal rot. Although I have not tried it, I believe ordinary dirt from the garden is likely to have a higher incidence of *Fusarium oxysporium*. Real dirt is also heavier, an important consideration if you have to move a lot of pots around.

I put two inches of planting medium in the pot, a pinch of supersphosphate, two inches of planting medium and then shake in some bulb dust. There are various brands and mixtures of bulb dust on the market. Basically, they all contain some insecticide and some fungicide. I think it is only the fungicide that helps as I have not noticed any insect problems in the soil. I set the bulb in the pot, add three more inches of planting medium, sprinkle with bulb fertilizer and then fill to the top of the pot. The amount of bulb fertilizer varies with the size of the bulb. I use more on standard size cultivars and very little on small species.

For bulbs potted in February and March, I place the pots on the shady side of my house and water them. For late arriving bulbs, I put the watered pots in a refrigerator. Typically the foliage will come up in May or June for the outdoor pots and July for the refrigerated pots. In the latter case, I move the pots outdoors when the foliage comes up. Some bulbs will not put up foliage. In this case, leave the pots alone and stop watering until fall when you would normally start watering daffodils. Most bulbs will put up foliage and most vigorous cultivars will bloom in July. I keep watering as long as the leaves are green and stop

watering when it looks like they are turning yellow. Some bulbs will keep green leaves right through the fall. Although I keep the pots on the shady side of my house all summer, they do get some late afternoon sun. The only insect problem I have noticed is that earwigs will chew on the flowers.

The bulbs can be transplanted into the ground during the normal fall planting season. There will still be live roots attached (if the bulb produced foliage in the summer), so you have to be careful not to injure the roots and give fungus a chance to invade the bulb. I prefer to keep the bulbs in the pots until the following summer, even though it is hard on the bulb to grow in such a limited amount of soil. In late fall I move the pots into the open where they can receive more sun and rain. Surprisingly, many will begin regrowth early. This is good because it will give them a longer growing season before they go dormant again in late spring.

At the end of this process, the bulbs will probably be smaller than normal because they have used up more energy making two sets of foliage than they recovered by photosynthesis. The most vigorous cultivars will still be blooming size, but the least vigorous will need growing on for a year or two to bring them back to blooming size.

Obviously, this regimen would have to be modified for a climate that has hard freezes in the late winter and early spring. The basic idea is to push the daffodil through its period of root formation, leaf growth and photosynthesis from spring through fall and then drastically shorten the dormant period to get it in synchronization with the northern hemisphere.

Whetstone Dark

Nancy Kolson, Chairman

It is almost time for our garden to start blooming! I check it out every Sunday morning and the daffodils have really started coming up--some are up as much as three inches (as of 3/11). The weather conditions seem to have favored the bulbs and now, hopefully, we should see the results. This should be a very good year for the daffodils if we do not get a storm that hurts the buds.

The beds are in good condition--relatively weed-free, except for the ever-present wild onion. I have talked with Paul Gibson (Perg's husband), who is the president of the Volunteer Association and they will give us some help in digging and planting. Right now, we are working on an evening weeding schedule. More about that later.

As many of you recall, when I took over the garden in 1993, we eliminated two of the side beds to make more room. We will have to be thinking about eliminating a bed again. There was talk at the Horticultural Sub-commission as to laying a brick walkway through the Daffodil Garden. This would make the driveway wider and practically eliminate Bed # 14. We were going to have to make it narrower, anyway, since the six-foot mowers the Park uses cannot mow between the edge of the bed and the taxus hedge. (Yes, we did take this width into account when we measured for the bed, but the hedge has grown outward in ten years and now the strip of grass is too narrow.) I really do not believe this is going to happen very soon, but the subject has been mentioned, so we should be thinking about how and when we want to do it.

Dates to remember:

March 31...LABEL DAY

Please come and help to put out the labels.
We will start at 10:00 a.m.

April 22.....OPEN GARDEN

The Open Garden tour will include the
Whetstone Garden. No volunteers needed.
Go to our show instead.

When you get a chance, walk through the garden in April--it's the prettiest sight in Columbus!

CONFESSIONS OF A WEED PULLER Aka DAFFODIL GROWER

Phyllis Hess

First I must confess, Dave, that's the better half, says I grow the absolute best weeds. He's right of course. Peter Ramsay tries to tell him not to worry about them, it's not a golf course. Besides they make good green mulch. (Wish I could really believe that.)

That said, having just spent a couple days trying to get rid of some of them, I must say it is no wonder we have trouble getting new members to our Society. Daffodil growers are crazy!

Now consider, first we ask someone to catch Yellow Fever. Who in their right mind wants to catch a fever? I get shots every year to NOT get a fever, then turn around and ask someone to catch one with me. Something wrong here.

And there are the weeds themselves, in one bed it was wild onions and just a little Johnson grass. By the way, my apologies to all Johnson's, I was not thinking of you too kindly today. And speaking of you even less

kindly, who on earth would want that horrible stuff to carry their name anyway. Must have been drunk when they named that one. Took several hours to try to get rid of the Johnson grass in one bed. I know, I know, any little piece of root will just grow more. Crazy, I tell you. Just as any tiny wild onion bulblet will grow into a big bulb, just like the daffodils! They like that good stuff too.

Then in another bed, dear old Charlie had come creeping. To think I once saw that stuff in a garden center all potted up imitating a house plant! If there was any money in it Central Ohians could make a fortune!

Then there is the bed with the roots that go to New Zealand! I do not even want to know the name of that weed. And the one weed with the little green leaves and white flowers, had a discussion on daffnet about this one last week or so. Even this early it spreaaaaads! And we must not forget the bed the squirrel decided to use to hide his walnuts so we have little trees with a VERY long tap root. Not good on the old back trying to get them out.

Oh yes, also found a mysterious tunnel down the edge of one bed, wonder what has been lurking there? When I find the deer tracks, dog tracks, see the ground hog in

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the beds, I am reminded of the covers on Kate Reade's catalog. More trials and tribulations of a daffodil grower. But in the midst of all this is that broad green tip just peeking through the soil reminding me that soon Spring will arrive and with it that best harbinger of all, a beautiful daffodil. Maybe we are not so crazy after all. No, a little crazy definitely helps! They call this growing daffodils fun, I wonder if I will still think so as I try to get out of bed in the morning?

Ouch, that hamstring! Dave, where's the heating pad?
)xzwdfdkljlrlkil weeds anyway!

Nominating Committee

Phyllis Hess, Chairman, Elsie Hack, Therese Edwards

The slate of officers for 2001-2002 are:

President: Tag Bourne
Vice-President: Sue Redmond
Secretary: Betty Kealiher
Treasurer: Elsie Hack

Deadline for July newsletter: June 15, 2001.



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