

CODS CORNER

Newsletter of the Central Ohio Daffodil Society

With the holidays behind us and January's winter weather arriving, our thoughts turn once again to daffodils, for if Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? With the mild weather we've had to date, foliage on some varieties is several inches above ground. In my own garden, Trevithian, Baby Moon, Baby Star, and N. jonquilla are sprouting, and an early form of N. jonquilla sent to me from Arkansas has foliage at least 6" tall. I have had early growth before, and aside from the Arkansas jonquilla, do not expect any damage. Generally, you will find that the jonquil hybrids begin growth early. Ruth Pardue reports Playboy, Marcola, Sweet Pepper, Content, Unsurpassable, and Trousseau all showing growth, and Grace Baird expects blooms on N. bulbocodium momentarily! Incidentally, if you've never grown Playboy, 2a, do try it. It's neither new nor expensive, but an excellent variety. What's growing in your garden?

ADS SCHOOL #2

Judging School #2 will be held April 24 at Northwest Christian Church, beginning at 9:00a.m. and running until approximately 3:00p.m. The fee will be \$5.00, plus lunch. We are privileged to have Mrs. Harry Wilkie and Mrs. Alfred Hanenkrat as instructors. Topics to be covered include diseases and judging ethics. Remember, it is not necessary to be an ADS member to attend the school, and you need not have attended School #1 to attend this session. Study guides will be available upon payment of the \$5.00 fee.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- April 15 -- Adena Daffodil Society Show - Chillicothe
- April 15 -- Midwest Regional Show of ADS - Bloomington, Indiana
- April 22-23 - SouthWest Ohio Daffodil Society Show - Cincinnati
- April 24 -- Judging School #2 - Columbus
- April 28 -- Central Ohio Daffodil Society Show - Columbus
- May 6-7 -- NorWest Flower Show - Columbus
- May 6-7 -- Western Reserve Daffodil Society Show - Cleveland

EXTENDING THE SEASON

When does the first daffodil bloom in your garden? Do you know which one it is? Keeping records of bloom dates can be helpful. When you dig and replant, you can plant the earliest bloomers in the warmest spot. Take advantage of those micro-climates! To put a late blooming variety in a warm spot negates the late-flowering effect, and wastes the advantage that could be gained by planting an early type there. All our gardens have micro-climates. It's easy to find them when there's snow on the ground. Look for the place where the snow melts first--that's the place to plant the early ones so they'll be even earlier. And of course the place where the snow lingers longest will be a good spot to plant the late ones so they'll be even later. This will help extend the blooming season. Then too, you can look for earlier or later blooming types. These are not always exhibition material, but the pleasure they bring with their sprightly blooms earns them a place in the garden. Little Witch, an all yellow 6a, was the first standard size daffodil to bloom last year, opening on April 10. This is certainly no show flower, but it made a charming picture near my front door. A pair of 1b's, Foresight, in yellow and white, but on rather short stems; and Trousseau, in an enchanting pale buff and white, were next. These opened on April 12, and were followed by all yellow Peeping Tom, 6a, April 14; and Lunar Sea, a precisely formed 1d; and Dove Wings, a white and pale yellow 6a, both on April 15. Other early bloomers for me are Content, a very pale 1b; and Carlton, an all yellow 2a, which is very prolific. My daughter's garden is on the South side of the house, and she had Satellite, a 6a with an orange cup, on April 8; and red and yellow Fortune, 2a; Spellbinder, 1d; and Binkie, 2d, on April 10. (To illustrate the effect of those micro-climates, my clump of Binkie, which is out in the open - not by a South wall - didn't bloom until April 18.) Her Chinook, 2b, opened on April 12, along with the first of my blooms.

However, I did have miniatures in bloom beginning March 31, when *N. asturiensis* opened. This is the smallest of the wild trumpets, and quite charming. Little Gem, 1a, and Mustard Seed, 2a, both opened on April Fool's Day. Little Gem is a hybrid of *N. minor*, and at its best is a well formed small trumpet, considerably larger than *asturiensis*. Mustard Seed is a tiny all yellow 2a, on a short stem which on opening barely holds the bloom above the ground. Small Talk was next, on April 8. This another miniature trumpet with a star-like perianth. *N. minor*, a wild trumpet, and Marionette, 2a, opened next on April 9 and 10. Marionette is a 2a with a red rim on the cup, but the flower is somewhat large (for a miniature) on a short stem. As the flower ages, the stem does grow, lending much better proportion to the bloom, but it is still too big for the miniature class in my opinion. Wee Bee, 1a, Mite, 6a, and *N. bulbocodium nivalis* all opened with Little Witch on April 10. Mite is a yellow cyclamineus hybrid with well swept-back perianth segments. *N. bulbocodium nivalis* is the tiniest of all bulbocodiums, with a practically non-existent perianth. We refer to it as "our oddity." Another early miniature is *N. scaberulus*, with two tiny blooms on each stem. The entire bloom stem was no larger than a bobby pin. *N. obvallaris*, sometimes called the Tenby Daffodil, is also early. This is a trumpet-type, grows 9-12" tall and has good color and form. This is the so-called wild English daffodil.

Some other early varieties (according to various sources) are Unsurpassable, 1a; Bambi, 1b miniature; well-formed Prologue, 1b; Sacajawea, 2a; and Woodgreen, 2b. *N. cyclamineus* is very early, and likes a damp spot in the garden. It is reported to be difficult to grow. However, its hybrids Bartley, Estrellita, February Gold, February Silver (described as resembling February Gold, but milk white), Cornet, and Jana are much easier.

In the early varieties, you will note that there are many trumpets, some yellow and red large cups, and good choice among the cyclamineus hybrids. The choice of pale varieties and other divisions is more limited.

In the lates, which we will discuss next issue, the small-cup, near relatives of the poets dominate, with enough yellow from the late jonquils to give contrast.

HYBRIDIZING

Have you ever tried your hand at hybridizing daffodils? It's a simple process, really. Just take a pair of tweezers and pull an anther from a flower and daub the pollen on the stigma of a different flower. Hopefully the seed will set, and ripen in about six weeks. Let the seed dry for a week or two, and then plant in ordinary potting soil, plunge the pot in the ground, and keep it moist until growth appears the following Spring. After two years, the bulblets can be planted in the open ground, and should bloom when they are five years old. It all sounds very easy, doesn't it? Well, it is, but be prepared for disappointments. Jonquil and triandrus hybrids are usually sterile - they do not set seed. And not all the seeds will germinate, nor make it to blooming size. Then too, the resulting bloom may not be an improvement on varieties already in existence. Of one thing you can be sure--you will get a variety of different blooms as each seed will produce a different bloom, unless you have used the same specie for pollen and seed parent. If you really become interested in hybridizing, you may want to concentrate on a specific area, such as miniatures, or working with the jonquil and triandrus hybrids, trying to find one that will set an occasional seed. If it sounds like I have a rather negative attitude toward hybridizing, let me assure you that I enjoy it thoroughly. I think everyone should try it, if for no other reason than to learn first hand the development of a new variety. Try it, you'll like it!!

MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be held January 17, at 9:30a.m., at the home of Cecile Spitz, 4985 Charlbury Rd. There will be election of officers and dues for 1972 (\$2.00) are now payable. Program will be on miniature. Why not bring an interested friend?

Mary Lou Gripshover
Editor