

NARCISSUS NOTES

Newsletter of the Midwest Region of the American Daffodil Society

Regional Vice-President - Mrs. Paul Gribshover, Columbus, Ohio

Directors - Mrs. Eugene Kleiner, Cincinnati, Ohio

Miss Virginia Wolff, Scottsburg, Indiana

Mrs. Verne Trueblood, Scottsburg, Indiana

Schools - Mrs. Goethe Link, Brooklyn, Indiana

Treasurer - Wells Knierim, Cleveland, Ohio

Now that the holidays are behind us, we can all sit by the fire and dream of Spring and daffodils to come. Shortly the catalogs will be arriving with descriptions of new, tantalizing cultivars, or perhaps we will find that a coveted bulb has now come into our price range.

The bloom season has begun here--with blooms on 2 bulbs of Jessamy, Div. 12, in the coldframe. The first bloom opened on February 1, then the pot was brought inside--to enjoy! Indeed this small white bulbocodium brought much joy, but the bloom did not last long indoors. (4 days) Our local Central Ohio Daffodil Society held a "show and tell" night on February 4, and Jessamy made her debut! Grace Baird had brought a forced pot of Soleil D'Or, Div. 8, and we promptly cross-pollinated blooms of both cultivars! We shall see what the Master Gardener provides!

Thirty-three people enjoyed the Regional meeting last October. Through the magic of the tape recorder, we are presenting a condensed version of Naomi Liggett's talk on split-coronas, and in the June issue we will have Wells Knierim's talk on bulb planting. Unfortunately the recorder didn't get all the questions asked of the Judges' Panel, but thanks are due Helen Link, moderator; Helen Trueblood; Leonora Wilkie; Christine Hanenkrat; and Mary Elizabeth Blue who answered the many questions.

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SPLIT-CORONA DAFFODILS

There is a lot of confusion when you look through the catalogs and you hear people talking about orchid-flowering, splits, papillons, collars, and butterflies, when they really are officially called split-coronas. Even Gerritsen lists them as three different things in his catalog. The RHS says a split-corona is any corona that is split for at least one-third of its length. There are some catalogs that talk about this type of a daffodil and when you look them up in the Classified List, they are not division 11, they will be registered as a 2b. In fact, at a local garden store last year, I bought one that looked rather interesting--it was called Firestreak. After I planted it and checked the registration, I found out it was a 2b. It was horrid, it had a big floppy perianth, but my mother liked it, so I dug it and gave it to her! So you must be careful that you are buying a split-corona.

These "wierd-looking flowers," as some people think they are, are really not that new. They are new to this generation, but the most primitive types of daffodil species did not have the corona as we see it now; they were without a corona, or only had a rudimentary form of corona. In some of the species, the coronas were divided into six different sections as we see in the split-coronas, and over the many years they have developed into the very nice coronas that we see on our daffodils now. No one seems to know why they developed into one cup as opposed to being divided into six sections, but the feeling is that it had something to do with the protection of the pollen for seed production.

About 1910 the first split-corona was found and caught the interest of a Dutch grower. It was a mutation of a bi-color, Victoria. It was given the name of "Orchid" and later changed to "Buttonhole." The grower tried to propagate this and to improve on it and was not very successful. Dr. DeMol bought some of these bulbs in 1913 and was interested in trying to propagate a better split-corona. But it kept the habit of growth that Victoria had. He couldn't improve on that habit--it had a short stem, and it had horse-feet (ed. note--tendency of the bulb to make many small non-blooming bulbs). It didn't always stay true, even some of the offsets would revert back to an ordinary type trumpet rather than being split. Also the pistil was sterile--it didn't produce seed--and its pollen wasn't very fertile either, so there was difficulty in propagating this. It was felt that the only way to improve it was by self-pollination, which couldn't be done. So he did cross it with some trumpets, King Alfred being one, and from this he did get some viable seed. This produced a larger, better Buttonhole, and he called it Gigantic Orchidflower. This was in 1922.

Now during the German occupation, Dr. DeMol's grower finally got rid of his stock and it was almost completely lost because of the war. But this grower was a friend of the Lefeber's, and had given them some of the bulbs, so they started working on the split-coronas. One of them moved to the United States and brought this stock with him and here has marketed Hillbilly, Burning Heart, First Lady and Papillon Blanc. Here they aroused much interest--and criticism. And they still, I think, are arousing interest and criticism, especially on the part of the old growers. I think maybe some of the newer growers are accepting them because they did not know the kinds before them, and just take them as they are.

Now in 1929, Gerritsen first found his mutation that he started from in his father's stock of trumpets. And he had problems also with his--the offsets again would revert back or they wouldn't always produce all split-coronas. He started trying to improve it by self-pollination, which was successful, and later he crossed other trumpets and very large-cupped cultivars with his split-coronas. He met Dr. DeMol, who encouraged him in this. Dr. DeMol had X-ray equipment in his laboratory and everyone seemed to think that Gerritsen and DeMol had both used X-ray in order to produce this split-corona. He did NOT do this. This happened without the use of X-ray. I would say he's probably had the greatest improvement in the type and they do generally increase well, they have good stems, and many of them are very floriferous.

In 1969, the RHS created a division for split-coronas. Before they were in division 11 with anything else, and now they have their own division.

Now A.N. Kanouse in Olympia, Washington, also has been working on split-coronas for 20 years or more. He has on the market Square Dancer, Party Dress, and perhaps others. Lemon Ice is in these slides that I have, and in the June 1974 ADS Journal he has a little article under hybridizers' forum saying that he has some 4 year old seedlings of Daydream open-pollinated, and that about 40% of them are split-coronas, several of them reverses. This past year he received a silver medal from the Massachusetts Horticulture Society.

It has been interesting to watch their progress in the ADS Symposium that has been published over the years. Back in 1969, it just said "Division 11--very few votes for this class." 1971, Estelle DeMol and Mol's Hobby had 2 votes each, and 3 others had one vote. 1972, seven varieties had 13 votes and Baccarat had three of them. 1973, eight varieties with 15 votes, and Baccarat had three. And Cassata, Elizabeth Bas, Gold Collar, and Mol's Hobby each had a vote. Mrs. Capen's comment that year was, "While this group will add interest on the landscape and arrangements, probably only Mol's Hobby would get as many as ten points

for form on the show bench. Many newer, better formed ones are on the way. Do try some and save the blue ribbons until those with form--not classic--but of precision, balance and symmetry appear." I have seen Baccarat successfully shown in this area, and Elizabeth Bas as well. (Ed. note--slides were shown next, and I am including here only a few comments made about the different cultivars.)

Orangery has not increased well; Baccarat is a good increaser and has done well in local shows. Parisienne has good color in the cup. Grapillon is recommended. Square Dancer, as seen in Chillicothe last Spring, had very good form. Lemon Beauty is not bad.

To sum up, I'd like to close with an excerpt from Mr. Ticknor's article on Judging Collar Daffodils: "To be specific, I think that for an exhibition bloom the perianth of a collar daffodil should be as smooth and flat as any other daffodil. The split parts of the corona should lie back against or protrude out from the perianth in a harmonious balance. The exhibition collar daffodil should be a single, pleasing unit of floral beauty." If you're going to judge them, you should also grow them and I think this is true of anything that you judge, whether you like them or not, you should grow some--maybe they will grow on you--and of course they are getting better--some of them are bad, and some of them are getting much, much better than they were.

--Naomi Liggett

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Welcome to the following new members. We hope to see you at one of the Spring shows.

Orville Ramsey, 207 So. Main, LaFontaine, Ind. 46940
Linden Garden Club, K. Hughes, Pres., 388 Lenore Ave., Columbus, O. 43224
Mrs. Goldie B. Vernia, 525 Seminole Rd., Chillicothe, Ohio 45601
James C. Martin, 423 Powell Dr., Bay Village, Ohio 44140
Mrs. Richard Pennington, 3420 Grace Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45208
Mrs. William Miller, 1377 LaRochelle Dr., Columbus, Ohio 43221
Mrs. Eugene Swigart, Spring Hill Lane, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226
Mrs. James W. Whalen, 26 Buena Vista Ave., Columbus, Ohio 43228

SHOW DATES

April 10-12 - National Show and Convention, Portland, Oregon
April 16 - Adena Daffodil Society, Chillicothe, Ohio
Elaine Dunn, 28 Shawnee Dr., Chillicothe, Ohio 45601
April 19-20 - Southwest Ohio Daffodil Society, Dayton, Ohio
Christine Hanenkrat, 266 Floyd Ave., Dayton, Ohio 45415
April 22 - Indiana Daffodil Society, Indianapolis, Indiana, REGIONAL SHOW.
Ellis Dickens, 2018 Marilyn Dr., Bloomington, Indiana 47401
April 26-27 - Central Ohio Daffodil Society, Columbus, Ohio
Ruth Pardue, 2591 Henthorn, Columbus, Ohio 43221
April 29-30 - Western Reserve Daffodil Society, Cleveland, Ohio
Wells Knierim, 31090 Providence Rd., Cleveland, Ohio 44124

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The ballot for the annual symposium will no doubt be appearing in the March Journal. Do send it in right after your bloom season--while the flowers are fresh in your mind.

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One of the pleasures of this job is receiving nice letters from the members. One of our new members, Richard Connors, wrote as follows:

"If I fail to attend any meetings or shows, it will not be for a lack of interest. I am 80 years old and my wife is 79....Being confined to the house as I am, I welcome my hobbies, raising Silver Laced Wyandotte Chickens for show....Mr. Wellington Wells, Jr. ...is President and I am

Secretary. Mrs. Wells is a daffodil enthusiast. She sent me a list of daffodils she was getting together for her garden club...so I ordered 12 varieties. Mrs. Wells wrote send no money, but I did. Then the next thing I knew the American Daffodil Society advised me that I was a member for 3 years. I found out later this was a gift from Mrs. Wells. So this was my beginning with the ADS. ...I now have a total of 27 varieties of daffodils on order. My ground is all ready, labels are made waiting for the bulbs.

Daffodils are not new to me. I was with the McCullough Seed Co. in Cincinnati for 43 years, the latter half of that time I was manager of their retail store in Cincinnati and Manager and buyer of all flower seeds and bulbs and all garden supplies....In my department we would bag one solid railroad car of bulbs from Holland and 3/4 of a car of daffodils, Dutch Iris from Oregon Bulb Farms of Gresham, Oregon. The Oregon grown daffodils were fine looking. Bright, clean solid bulbs. The daffodils from Holland all had a brown rusty skin. Mr. DeGraaff of the Oregon Bulb Farms would send us 5 to 6 large boxes of daffodil cut flowers, all tagged with names. We would place them in bud vases in our store, advertise them in the paper and take orders from the live flowers."

And from Helen Trueblood . . .

Virginia and I grew up together.. .. Our Dads were buddies, so we share flowers of all kinds and she got me started in named daffodils. I've a field and hills of old paueos, etc., so wondered why I'd buy any. She got me by "To prolong the season".....

What got you started?

A friend of mine told me, "You simply must join the ADS! The symposium is marvelous this year!" And if you knew my friend, you know there was no way of refusing! Think about your reasons for joining--and then try to get someone else to join, too.

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CONVENTION, ANYONE?

I have been doing some checking regarding air transportation costs to Portland, Oregon. It seems that group rates are not available; however, United Air Lines has a Tour Base Rate which will save about \$100 on the air fare from Columbus. Perhaps it would save you some money, too. They start out by telling you that you have to stay 7 days to get the lower rate, but 4 nights is the minimum, provided you go and return in two different calendar weeks (i.e.--go Thursday, return following Monday). They must make at least \$65 worth of ground arrangements (hotel, tours, etc.) for you. And luckily, the Sheraton Portland is one of the hotels they can make arrangements with. Based on 2 to a room, hotel for 4 nights plus a \$15 trip to Mt. Hood would come to \$66, enough to get the reduced air fare. Since you're probably going to pay a hotel bill anyway, it's worth checking out if you're thinking about going to the convention.

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To paraphrase the words of a famous American--"Ask not what the Society can do for you--ask what you can do for the Society!" And since you asked--I'll tell you! Send the following article to your local paper in time for printing during daffodil season (to the "Garden Editor" if there is one). It would be great publicity for daffodils--and a small plug for the ADS. Fill in your name and address as the person to contact locally--and then send me a clipping when it's printed. Let's see how many we get!

Don't forget!

The daffodil is one of the most popular Spring garden flowers in the United States. To the impatient gardener, they bring Spring a month early; and the wise gardener knows that the bulbs he planted last Fall will increase and grow in beauty each year.

The terms daffodil and narcissus are interchangeable, daffodil being the English term, and narcissus the Latin botanical term for the entire genus. Jonquil, or more properly jonquil hybrid, should be used only for those plants having the species jonquilla in their ancestry.

Daffodils are natives of the Northern Hemisphere, growing wild in Spain, Portugal, Southern France, and the Alpine meadows of Austria and Switzerland. A very few species are native to Northern Africa. The United States has no native daffodils, but many of the species and wild forms which were brought over by the early colonists have been successfully naturalized in parts of the South.

The modern hybrids which grace our gardens today are the results of careful selection by amateur and professional hybridizers--mainly from Ireland and England. The most successful American hybridizer is Grant Mitsch of Canby, Oregon. Currently, over 10,000 named hybrids, which have been developed from the original 30-40 species, are registered with the Royal Horticultural Society of Great Britain.

Daffodils come in a wide range of sizes, from half-inch blooms on two-inch stems, to five-inch blooms on two-foot stems; and in color combinations of yellow, red, white, pink, or orange. Through proper selection of cultivars, they may be had in bloom over a six-week period.

The daffodil is easy to grow, and is almost certain to provide good bloom the first Spring after planting and for many years thereafter. They grow best in a well-drained soil in full sun; however, they also thrive in locations which receive sun for at least half the day. Fertilizers low in nitrogen can be mixed with the soil at planting time, or can be worked into the soil around established plantings. Leaves should never be removed until the foliage has yellowed.

While September is the best time to plant them, now is the ideal time to visit local gardens which feature daffodils, or visit daffodil shows, and make note of which of the many cultivars you'd like to grow in your own garden. Orders can be placed at any time with specialist growers for Fall delivery. a member of the American Daffodil Society, will be glad to offer advice on those cultivars which have done well locally.