

Trace the path to pink

Search the family history of a modern pink-cupped daffodil back to some of its wild ancestors. A flower has many ancestors, just like you.

People make daffodil history

For generations, daffodil lovers from around the world have artfully paired daffodils in pursuit of prized offspring—new hybrids. Hybridizers select daffodil parents for their color, shape, form or for other characteristics, such as how well they grow. They mate—or cross—two flowers by transferring pollen from one flower (the pollen parent) to the stigma of the other flower (the seed parent). The cross is recorded as seed parent x pollen parent or, for example, ‘Dailmanach’ x ‘Quasar’—the match that produced ‘Assertion’.



‘Assertion’ 2 W-P, 1997, Brian S. Duncan, Northern Ireland

‘Assertion’ is a Division 2 large-cupped daffodil with white petals and a pink cup. It was registered in 1997 and hybridized by Brian S. Duncan of Northern Ireland in 1986.

Parents of ‘Assertion’ ‘Dailmanach’ x ‘Quasar’

‘Quasar’ 2 W-PPR, 1977, Murray W. Evans, United States



Courtesy Kirby Fong



Courtesy George Terry

‘Dailmanach’ 2 W-P, 1972, J.S.B. Lea, England

Two grandparents of ‘Assertion’

‘Cordial’ 2 W-P, 1970, Murray W. Evans, United States

The parents of ‘Quasar’ are ‘Cordial’ and ‘Precedent’. That makes ‘Cordial’ one of the four grandparents of ‘Assertion’.



Courtesy Becky Fox Mathews



Courtesy George Terry

‘Inverpolly’ 2 W-W, 1980, J.S.B. Lea, England

‘Inverpolly’ is a parent of ‘Dailmanach’ and, therefore, another grandparent of ‘Assertion’. Though the eventual goal may have been a pink flower, this hybridizer chose a white parent flower, perhaps for its smooth petals, large cup, or other desirable features.

Recurring relatives of ‘Assertion’



Courtesy Scott Kunst, Old House Gardens

‘Green Island’ 2 W-GWY, pre1938, J. Lionel Richardson, Ireland

‘Green Island’ appears twice in the ancestry of ‘Assertion’, once as a great-grandparent and once two generations earlier. Registered before 1940, ‘Green Island’ is an historic daffodil.



Courtesy Scott Kunst, Old House Gardens

‘Bernardino’ 2 W-YYO, pre1907, Philip John Worsley, England

‘Bernardino’ is also twice an ancestor of ‘Assertion’—six and again eight generations back.



Courtesy Scott Kunst, Old House Gardens

‘Will Scarlett’ 2 W-O, pre1898, Rev. G.H. Engleheart, England

‘Will Scarlett’ shows up three times as an ancestor of ‘Assertion’, in generations six, seven and eight. Hybridized from two species daffodils, *N. abscissus* x *N. radiiflorus poetarum*, ‘Will Scarlett’ was considered so ungainly by some breeders that they refused to grow it, fearing an accidental cross pollination.



Courtesy Scott Kunst, Old House Gardens

‘Madame de Graaff’ 1 W-W, pre1887, de Graaff Brothers, Holland

‘Madame de Graaff’ appears in several early generations of ‘Assertion’. Compare early and modern hybrids and note the differences in shape or form. Modern daffodils tend to be more symmetrical than earlier daffodils, with smoother, thicker petals that overlap each other.

Earliest ancestors of ‘Assertion’

Species start it all

N. abscissus is one of several species found in the 8th generation back.

The wild daffodils are called species. Most daffodil species are found in Portugal, Spain, France, and Austria, with a few discovered in northern Africa and other countries. Crosses between species produced the first hybrid daffodils. Hybridizers often cross modern daffodils with species to see what results.



Courtesy Mary Lou Grigahoven



Courtesy Mary Lou Grigahoven

Poets write more than pink

N. poeticus

Following the path to pink in ‘Assertion’, we find *N. poeticus* in its ancestry six, seven and eight generations back.

Daffodil colors other than yellow or white come from the species, *N. poeticus*. The red in the rim of its cup provides pink, orange, and red colors in all modern daffodils!

