



Bulb Gardening



News and advice for better gardening.

Newsletter no. 12

DAFFODILS IN POTS

Growing plants in pots is often seen as a “safe” way to grow those rare and/or expensive treasures. This is not so! Growing plants, and in particular bulbs, successfully in pots is a highly-skilled activity. This is because a pot is an unnatural environment and the relieving effects of a soil profile is not available. Attention to a few details will mean that you will have more success.

Pot growing techniques

Potting media - Use the best quality potting media that you can find. Never buy one that doesn't conform to the Australian Standard for potting mixes. Home-made mixes can be successful but the results are variable, in particular when soil is used.

Pot size - Choose a pot size appropriate to the number of bulbs planted and their size at maturity. It is best to use deep pots to allow better root development.

Multiplication - Bulbs by their nature multiply. This means that they become crowded and compete with each other for available resources. Pots of bulbs need to be “worked”, the bulbs should be regularly repotted with only the largest bulbs replanted. Plant the small bulbs in the garden and once larger they can be used in pots.

Fertiliser - Because potting media do not have the buffering of nutrients seen in soil, fertiliser needs to be supplied in the slow-release form (osmocote or nutricote). Liquid fertilise regularly.

Watering - Pots dry out quickly so watering needs to be more frequent. Use a wetting agent so that watering is more effective. Consider having a water-holding saucer under the pot if watering is infrequent.



Bulbs in large tubs

91 YEARS BULB OFFER



The “90 Years Collection” was so popular last year we have decided to update it to a “91 years collection” of 91 bulbs.

It will contain 25 *Ranunculus*, 25 grape hyacinths, 3 hyacinths, 5 *Colchicum*, 5 *Nerine*, 5 Dutch iris, 12 *Freesia* and 11 assorted named Daffodils valued at \$3.75 each. A great way to fill in blank spaces in your garden or as a gift for new gardeners.

The “91 Years Collection” is \$39.95 postage paid (a saving of \$43.90).

DAFFODIL ETYMOLOGY

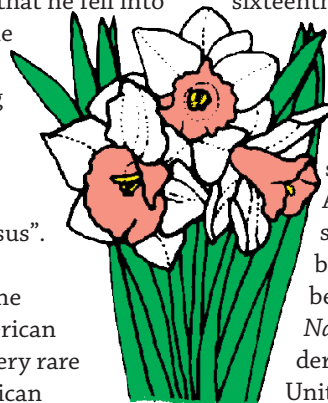
We are often asked about the meanings and derivation of names associated with daffodils. The following explanation comes from Wikipedia.

“The name *Narcissus* is derived from that of the youth of Greek mythology called Narkissos, who, in at least one of many variations of the tale, became so obsessed with his own reflection as he kneeled and gazed into a pool of water that he fell into the water and drowned. The legend continues that the *Narcissus* plant first sprang from where he died.

There are several plurals in common use: “Narcissi”, “Narcissuses”, and “Narcissus”. This last is common in American English, and is the form preferred by the American Daffodil Society, but it is very rare in British usage. The American Webster's Third New International Dictionary gives plurals in the order “Narcissus”, “Narcissuses”, and “Narcissi”, but the British Compact Oxford English

Dictionary lists just “Narcissi” and “Narcissuses”.

The name Daffodil is derived from an earlier “Affodell”, a variant of Asphodel. The reason for the introduction of the initial “d” is not known, although a probable source is an etymological merging from the Dutch article “de,” as in “De affodil.” From at least the sixteenth century “Daffadown Dilly” or “daffadown dilly” has appeared as a playful synonym of the name.



The name jonquil is sometimes used in North America, particularly in the south-eastern United States, but strictly speaking that name belongs only to the rush-leaved *Narcissus jonquilla* and cultivars derived from it. In the southern United States, *Narcissus* are sometimes referred to as buttercups.

In Australia most multi-headed daffodils, in particular those derived from *Narcissus tazetta*, are known as jonquils.”

Published by

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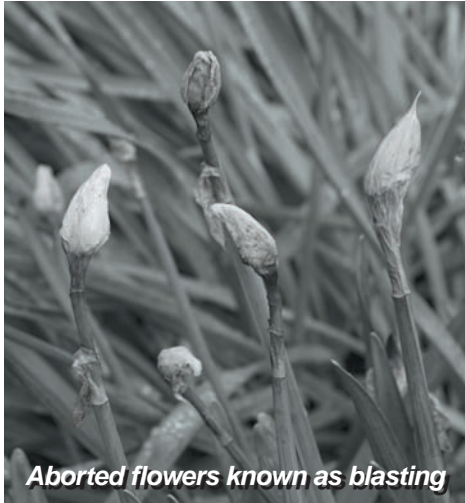
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FLOWER BLASTING

Sometimes daffodil buds fatten up and look like they are about to flower but fail to open. Squeezing the bud you find it is hollow and papery. This is a phenomenon known as blasting. Happily it is rarely seen, although when it does it is rather distressing.



Blasting is often seen in flowers of other plants but is often overlooked as it is not as obvious as when a daffodil fails to open. It's occurrence is best put in the gardening category known as bad luck. A well populated category.

The physiological reason for the abortion of flowers is that, at a critical point of the flower bud formation, not enough water is available. It is often seen in double flowers that have complicated flowers with many layers of petals.

Occasionally in Spring we have unseasonally hot and /or windy weather during the critical time of bud formation. Even though plenty of moisture is available to the plant it can't be taken up fast enough into the flower to avoid the failure of the bud.

If blasting occurs in successive seasons then it may be a good idea moving the affected bulbs to a moister and more sheltered spot in the garden. In particular protected from strong winds.

DAFFODIL SOCIETIES

Interested in finding out more about growing (and maybe even showing) daffodils or maybe just to chat to like-minded folk? Why not contact your local Daffodil Society for more information.

www.daffodilbulbs.com.au/vds.html

DAFFSEEK

Can't remember what that flower looks like? Not in any of your catalogues. Read about an interesting daffodil? Where was it bred and who by?

Well now there is a place to go on the world wide web;

www.daffseek.org

Created by our daffodil fancier friends Ben Blake and Nancy Tuckett, it is web site that not only tells you all about a specific variety of your favourite flower but may also have a picture.

We were fortunate to sit with Ben Blake at the formal dinner of the World Daffodil Convention held in Melbourne in 2004. Talk that night ranged over many topics but one was the difficulty in finding out about specific daffodils. Ben's skill as a software engineer has been put to good use.

We highly recommend this web site and hope to find time to add more pictures from our library to add to the 350 that have been sent already.



New Query		2 W-YYO	
Division:	2 - Large-Cupped	Perianth Colors:	W Coron
Division Description:	One flower to a stem, corona (cup) more than one third but less than the perianth segments (petals).		
Season:	Mid-Season		
Height:	Standard - 32.5 to 67.5 cm		
Hybridizer:	J.N. Hancock & Co.		
Year Reg:	2002		
Country:	Australia		
Seed Parent:	Tammy		
Pollen Parent:	Artist's Model		
Pedigree Tree:			
Comments:	56/82H; Fl. forming a double triangle, 90 mm wide; perianth segment rounded at apex, mucronate, greenish white spreading, with margin membranaceous substance, overlapping; corona bowl-shaped, ribbed strong orange at rim, mouth expanded, lobed, frilled, with rim notch		



GAMBLERS POT-LUCK

At the end of the dispatch season (April) we often have small quantities of bulbs packaged up. We offer these bulbs at half-price to people who are happy to take pot-luck.

We make up packages of at least \$70 worth which are available for \$35 post free. The packages generally contain a wide variety of bulbs as well as some daffodils.

To order, simply add to your order;
Gamblers Pot Luck \$35

SHOW DATES 2008

To see our living catalogue display next Spring, please note the following dates;



Farm Display at Menzies Creek

23rd August - 28th September

Gardening Australia Expo – NSW

29th - 31st August

Royal Adelaide Show

5th - 13th September

Royal Melbourne Show

18th September - 28th September

Gardening Australia Expo – VIC

3rd - 5th October

updates on www.daffodilbulbs.com.au

FAMILY AFFAIR

Our children Jessica (aged 15) and Simon (aged 12) both exhibited at the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society's Daffodil & Camellia show this year. Jessica's busy social life meant she only had a few flowers to put up. Happily she helped her brother with his staging as it was his first time. Between them they shared the majority of 1st and 2nd prizes. Simon won the Eve Murray Trophy and the Hancock Memorial (that was money which satisfied his cargo cult vision) with two beautiful collections.

Dad decided to put up some of his own miniature seedlings as he had to wait around. Gratifyingly Grand Champion was again awarded to one of his seedlings, this time to a bulbocodium hybrid (Hoop Petticoat). This is a rare occurrence as we are unaware of one ever winning before anywhere.

Christine missed all this as she was showing our flowers at the Royal Adelaide Show and catching up with our gardening friends there.

