



Bulb Gardening



News and advice for better gardening

Newsletter no. 17

DAFFODILS AT KAYDALE LODGE

Gardens open to the public in Australia with extensive plantings of daffodils are fairly rare. One of the best is the private garden at Kaydale Lodge in Tasmania. This amazing garden is hidden amongst the wilds of Northern Tasmania at Nietta, south of Ulverston. It has its origins back 40 years ago when Robert Crowden took his new bride Kay to a draughty old farmhouse on an overgrown farm. The development of the garden had to be balanced with management of the farm and the arrival of two daughters, Amarlie and Lesley. Now with their help, Kaydale Lodge has become a true jewel amongst Tasmanian gardens.



Kaydale Lodge

We have been visiting Kaydale over the past 20 years and the changes have been dramatic. It is a testimony to the energy of the family to see what features have been added and what is planned. Lesley and Amarlie are now actively managing the garden and rock work is particular favourite, with no rock too big or wall too small.

Robert has been collecting and breeding daffodils for most of his life and has many varieties, particularly from Northern Tasmanian hybridizers which are a feature of his collection. The stories associated with him obtaining them are pure gold. The daffodil world owes a lot to these hybridizers, in particular the development of the "Tasmanian Pinks" and decoratives such as the flat-cupped varieties.

Other highlights of the garden are the enormous drifts of extremely rare plants. "Why have one when you can have a mass" is a repeated theme. The origin of these rarer plants is some initial

purchases 40 odd years ago by Kay and constant propagation and nurturing since.

The garden is arranged in a series of garden "rooms" around their hand-built and crafted home. These rooms have themes or are often planted to one group of plants such as the Rock Garden Zen Garden, Fernery and Rockery which is more like a hillside. A couple of dramatic rooms when we visited recently were the Fritillaria meadow and the Trillium garden.



Rockery

The Trilliums are worth a special mention as the interbreeding of a number of species has created a unique hybrid swarm of colours ranging from whites to yellows and purples. We are pleased to be able to offer progeny from this swarm in our Spring Bulbs catalogue as *Trillium* 'Kaydale Kaleidoscope'.

The garden is open to the public 7 days a week; entry fee \$5. Morning & afternoon teas, light meals and bed and breakfast style accommodation are also available.

<http://www.kaydalelodge.com.au>



Established Trillium 'Kaydale's Kaleidoscope'

DAFFY DUCKS



A feature at many Agricultural shows for years has been Brian Harrington and his performing ducks. Brian has told us that he is going to retire from shows. We will miss his ducks in their daffodil themed jackets and caps, his friendly smile and cheery words.

<http://www.bhthefamilyshow.com>

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Gamblers Pot Luck



At the end of the dispatch season in 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 bulbs to the value of at least \$90 worth. These are available for \$45 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 \$45.00

TRUMPET BIOLOGY

The trumpet of a daffodil is a unique flower structure and its presence makes identifying members of the genus *Narcissus* easy. But what part of the floral structure has it developed from? Recently on the Science Show there was a piece about this puzzling floral part.

Dr Scotland of Oxford University had a teacher's gotcha moment "on a trip one day a student asked me, 'Dr Scotland, what is the trumpet of a daffodil,' when we were doing some very basic botany, trying to identify all the flower parts."

Subsequently he found that no one else knew either, so he started research with genes and has recently published his findings.

It seems that basically trumpets form from fused modified stamens. The doubling of daffodil centres occurs when the inner stamens become modified to look like extra petals and they often still have anthers attached. I often see interesting artefacts on the corona called spicules.

<http://tinyurl.com/b2lamkn>



Long trumpet daffodil.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Jessica & Simon, our children, help out at the shows and other times. We appreciate their help as we do that of our part-time staff who help us in numerous ways.

Jessica is continuing her Agriculture studies with enthusiasm and is resident at Dookie next year. Simon is currently in the midst of VCE exams. Both are still busy in their spare time with scouting, water sports and basketball.

Christine & Will have enjoyed supporting our children's academic & extracurricular activities and may find themselves with an empty nest next year.

2013 SHOW DATES

To see our living display next spring, please note the following dates:



Farm Display (Menzies Creek)

Friday 23rd Aug. to Sunday 29th Sep.

Royal Adelaide Show

Friday 6th Sep. to Saturday 14th Sep.

Royal Melbourne Show

Saturday 21st Sep. to Tuesday 1st Oct.

Baw Baw Plant Expo (Lardner Park)

Saturday 12th Oct. to Sunday 13th Oct.