

Yes, April at Last!



Well it seems that our spring might just be taking a little longer to arrive this year. Snow in March is certainly not common, but it still takes us by surprise when it happens. That first weekend in March was a harsh reminder that Mother Nature is always the one in control!

Our guest speaker at the March meeting had us all dreaming of cherry blossoms...however my tree seems delayed this year and is not blooming at the end of March as per usual. Maybe it will be mostly in April this year?

The usual tulips and daffodils are starting to poke their heads out of the earth, but there's certainly no color in my garden yet.

It may be time to visit the local garden centre and buy some Spring! A favorite flower at this time of the year is the Daffodil. How much do you know about Daffodils? A quick internet search found some interesting information. Some of you may already know a lot of the history, but I learned a few things. Happy reading!



Daffodils, the flowers symbolizing friendship, are some of the most popular flowers exclusively due to their unmatched beauty. Daffodils belong to the genus **Narcissus**. Daffodil flowers have a trumpet-shaped structure set against a star-shaped background.

Often the trumpet is in a contrasting color from the background. The name **Daffodils** includes the cluster-flowered yellow **Jonquils** and the **White Narcissi**, as well as the more common trumpet shaped flowers, members of the genus *Narcissus*.

Daffodils are constantly recurring flowers with at least 50 species and many hybrids. Where climate is moderate, Daffodils flourish among the first spring buds. Daffodils often bloom in clusters.

Daffodils are native mainly to the Mediterranean region, in particular to the Iberian Peninsula, as well as Northern Africa and the Middle East.

In addition to the species, the Daffodil Data Bank lists over 13,000 hybrids. Generally Daffodils are yellow, and range from yellow-and-white, yellow-and-orange, white-and-orange, pink, and lime-green.

All Daffodils have a corona in the center that looks like a trumpet and a ring of petals all around. The natural Daffodil is colored golden yellow all over while the trumpet may often appear in a contrasting color.

The paper-white Daffodils can be planted in gardens, but are most popular grown inside during Christmas.

Daffodils come in all sizes, from 5-inch blooms on 2-foot stems to half-inch flowers on 2-inch stems. Largely for show purposes or for guidance in gardening, certain species and named cultivars have been determined by the American Daffodil Society to be miniatures and must compete by themselves in Daffodil shows.

There is literally no difference between the Daffodils and *Narcissus*. The two words are synonymous. *Narcissus* is the Latin or botanical name for those commonly called Daffodils and Daffodil is the common name for all members of the genus *Narcissus*.

Facts about Daffodils...

- ~The garden Daffodil's ancestors come from the states around the Mediterranean Sea, such as Spain and Portugal and the Middle East, such as Turkey.
- ~The earliest record mentioned about Daffodils was around two or three hundred years B.C.
- ~Grown extensively by the ancient Greeks and the Romans, Daffodils nevertheless became a forgotten flower until about 1600 and even in 1860, there were fewer than 350 cultivated hybrids.
- ~Around 1629, a group of Englishmen took the

Daffodil out of the weeds and put it into the garden. Daffodils were in favor again.

~During the days of the American experience and the expansion west, Daffodils were well established as a "must have" in the garden.

~Daffodils were brought to Britain by the Romans who thought that the sap from Daffodils had healing powers. Actually the sap contains crystals that can irritate the skin.

Daffodils grow perennially from bulbs. In temperate climates they flower among the earliest blooms in spring. Daffodils often grow in large clusters, covering lawns and even entire hillsides with yellow.

Depth, as a general rule, needs to be thrice the height. This means large bulbs should have a depth of 6 to 8 inches, a medium size 3-6 inches and a smaller size 2-3 inches. Always remember that the load of soil proves helpful in protecting the bulbs from breaking too easily and in keeping them upright for a longer duration.

Growing Tips...

~Choose a well-drained, sunny place, with a slightly acidic soil.

~Plant your Daffodils so that their top (pointed end) is at least two times as deep as the bulb is high (top of a 2" bulb is 4" deep).

~High-nitrogen fertilizers should be avoided.

~Daffodils need lots of water while they are growing.

~After blooming, never cut the foliage until it begins to turn yellow (usually late May or June).

~Like most perennials, Daffodils will do well with about 1 inch of water per week while they are actively growing and blooming - from March to May.

~Mulch can be tremendously helpful for Daffodils to conserve moisture.

~The best thing you can do for your Daffodil bulbs is to provide them rich, well-drained soil with lots of organic matter in it.

~Most organic bulb fertilizers can be placed right into the planting hole because they're very gentle and non-burning.

~Since a Daffodil is a perennial, every 5 to 10 years, divide the clumps of bulbs in early summer. If they last that long! I find that squirrels love to eat my bulbs and they all gradually disappear☺.

garden/nature thoughts. If you have something interesting to share, from right here at home or a trip taken afar, please share with us! Or perhaps you have an idea for a future article...

Send to Cheryl Fiddis @ ecfiddis@telus.net

BRAGS Membership:

Please visit Anne at the membership desk to pay your 2014 dues or to join up – only \$12 per year. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy monthly guest speakers, plus are entitled to a 10% discount of regularly priced items at Garden Works by presenting their membership cards. Many other garden centres also offer discounts when your card is presented. All meetings start at 7 pm at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2nd floor. Easy to get to with ample parking. Refreshments are served. All are welcome!

Rhododendron Festival & Plant Sale! Sunday, May 4th, 2014

Rhodofest is a fun, family-oriented event held at the Shadbolt Centre and Deer Lake Park in Burnaby. The Festival is a celebration of Burnaby's official flower and offers many information booths, vendors and entertainment for the enjoyment of the whole family. We will be running a combined Silent Auction and Plant Sale. Come buy plants at great prices, and get advice on your questions about gardening. The proceeds of these two events will be awarded to worthy environmental and beautification projects in Burnaby.

We need many volunteers to run this event, both on Saturday May 3rd, as well as on the day of the festival, May 4th. The more volunteers we have, the less work there is for everyone. The tasks are easy: distributing posters, picking up and organizing plants, skirting tables, directing traffic, cashiering, answering questions, and the wrap up. If you have not already signed up and would like to volunteer an hour or two of your time, please contact either Verna Adamson @ 604-294-5550, or v_adamson@shaw.ca, or June Dodson @ 604-939-2597 or junedodson@shaw.ca.

Come join us at the 26th annual Rhododendron Festival!

The BRAGS Plant Sale is back again and we need your help to make it a success. If you (or someone you know) are able to donate any healthy, non-invasive plants, let us know! Any donation would be much appreciated.

The wish list is available at:

http://brags.ca/forms_files/plantsale2007a.pdf or contact us if you would prefer a copy by mail. In addition to the

☺We love to have members share their 'secrets' and

BRAGS EXECUTIVE

President

Wendy Thompson
604-420-6513

Vice-President

Bev Glover
604-540-2883

Treasurer

Susan Brandl
604-433-4250

Secretary

Linda Cholette
604-298-9059

Past President

Verna Adamson
604-294-5550

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STANDING COMMITTEES

Membership

Anne Forsyth
604-298-6350

Nominations

Verna Adamson

Publicity

Evelyn Crawford
604-437-8395

Rhododendron Festival

Verna Adamson
604-294-5550
June Dodson
604-939-2597

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OTHER COMMITTEES

Plant Sale

David & Anne Forsyth

Newsletter

Cheryl Fiddis
604-435-2801

Anne & David Forsyth

604-298-6350

Welcome

Faye Kilpatrick
604-434-5921

Sheila Chowdhury
604-298-1196

Raffle

Faye Kilpatrick
604-434-5921

Refreshments

June Dodson
604-939-2597

Speakers

Bev Glover
604-540-2883

Website

David Forsyth
604-298-6350

wish list, please consider donating indoor plants such as aloe vera, peace lily, snake plants, golden pothos, chrysanthemums, red-edged dracaena, weeping fig, indoor azalea, Warneck dracaena, Chinese evergreen, bamboo palm, and heart leaf philodendron - to name a few!

Please let us know:

- How many plants you are donating, so we can estimate how much space we need.
- Plant name (common or Latin names), to make sure that we have the picture of each plant during the sale.
- If you need help with digging plants, pots or soil, or help with transferring the plants.
- If you have any extra 1-gal or 2-gal pots and/or trays, please bring them with you to the April meeting to share with other members who may need them for their own donations.
- We want to avoid using plastic knives to avoid waste. Please write the plant name directly on the pot, or use masking tape, sticky labels just before you drop off the plants at Shadbolt.
- Labeling ahead of time will help reduce the amount of work to be done by volunteers the day before the festival. It is difficult to sell "Unknown" plants! If you are able to help in any way with the Plant Sale, please contact: David Forsyth or Anne Forsyth @ 604-298-6350 or email David @ drforsyth@telus.net, or Anne @ amforsyth@telus.net. Thank You!

Upcoming Meetings

April 2, 2014

Join us as Les Clay, a Rhododendron specialist, gives a talk on "Rhododendrons". The current President of the Arboretum and Botanical Society, this evening promises to be very informative. Perfect timing for our Rhodofestival which happens next month!

May 7, 2014

Catherine Dale from the Land Conservancy will talk. Many of you will know Catherine from her involvement with BRAGS and various Burnaby clubs and committees. It's bound to be an enjoyable evening!



Out & About Etc...

Customer Appreciation Day April 17, 2014

Be sure to mark the date for GardenWorks 15% savings all day.

Vancouver Dahlia Society Tuber Sale

To be held April 12 and 13, 2014, 1-4 pm each day in the Floral Hall at VanDusen Botanical Gardens, 37th and Oak St., Vancouver, BC.

Free admission!

For information contact Evelyn at 604-437-8395 or visit:

www.vancouverdahliasociety.com