

NEWSLETTER
THE DAFFODIL SOCIETY
WESSEX GROUP

(Established 1988)

November 2012



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This was held on Sunday 14th October at Yatton Village Hall, North Somerset. Sixteen members attended from a wide area. The officials and committee were elected as follows:-

Chairman/Treasurer
Derek Phillips
Vice Chairman
Ray Hayward
Secretary
Basil Billinger
Show Secretary
Jackie Petherbridge
Committee Members
Caryl Cheesewright
Gwynne Davies
Ian Penny

The finance of the group remains sound with a small profit for the year although raffle income was down.

Chris Yates and Ted Perren gave a demonstration talk on raising daffodils from seed and by division. This was well received with some interesting points being made.

The ladies once again looked after the meeting refreshments and 2013 AGM was set for Sunday 13th October. Venue to be decided,

Membership remains at £2.00. contributions are now due.

WESSEX LOTTERY

Drawn at the AGM the lottery was a great success this year. A generous donation of bulbs from Bramcote Bulbs matched by equally generous donations from members produced 50 prizes on the day. Income from the lottery was £160 which is a record for our lottery and £100 up on last year. Thanks to

member bulb donors and those that bought tickets not forgetting Alan and Angela Purnell for organising the sale of tickets on the day.

AGM TALK

Two snippets from Chris and Ted's talks.

Chris has been hybridising for some twenty years and in that time he has registered five blooms. A labour of love but so rewarding.

The skill and dexterity of Ted's cutting technique was to be seen to be admired. Did you know that common or garden baking powder (bicarbonate of soda) is a top fungicide? Sprinkle on all bulbs when planting is a worthwhile tip.

It is hoped a fuller report of the talk will be available for a future issue.

2013 ANNUAL SHOW

Takes place on Sunday 14th April at our usual venue, The Henton Village Hall, Henton, Near Wells, Somerset. This marks the Group's 25th show.

In this era a struggling shows this is a credit to the organising committees over the years and the support of exhibitors.

To mark this milestone the Daffodil Society has agreed to the award of a Silver Medal and the American Daffodil Society the presentation of a ribbon for American class blooms. Full details of the latter was included in the last Newsletter and we hope that members will support this innovation.

NATIONAL DAFFODIL SOCIETY COMMITTEE NEWS

Camilla Bassett-Smith has joined the committee as our new editor. Camilla has a great deal of media experience and of course an interest in daffodils, even having an entry in the Daffodil Register.

It seems fairly certain now that we will continue with two printed publications per year, although this may mean a small rise in membership fees by 2014, due to printing and postage price increases.

With the problem of an editor solved, a new crisis appeared as there is currently no Show Secretary and no Show Manager. Things were not looking good for this year's National Show at one stage. Wessex Group has come to the rescue temporarily. Gwynne will stand in as show secretary with assistance from Ian Tyler, and Derek will take on Show manager responsibilities. This is a temporary measure however, and the Society must find people to fill these posts going forward.

On a more positive note, there is an exciting development concerning a future venue for the show. This is being looked at due to spiralling costs of school hire and a withdrawal of catering facilities. A serious proposal is under discussion, which whilst a little under wraps at the moment, may see us in a more fitting venue by the time of the 2014 show. More details hopefully by the next newsletter.

Keith Boxall as Membership Secretary has ideas for a membership starter pack which he is taking forward.

Membership has fallen drastically. A new venue could change our fortunes in this respect, and Keith is gearing up for it.

As part of the Wessex Group report a vote of thanks was given to Bramcote Bulbs for their generous contribution to our Wessex bulb lottery.

REFRIGERATION OF BLOOMS

Here are the Daffodil Society of Minnesota's recommendations on keeping daffodils in a Refrigerator for an Extended Period of Time

Daffodils can be kept in a refrigerator for 4-5 weeks if necessary.

It is certainly not recommended, but sometimes is necessary if spring comes much earlier than the show.

1. Keep the humidity high in modern frost-free refrigerators. Use trays of water and/or wet towels. Option: create a 'tent' with sticks and a plastic bag around the flowers to retain humidity. The sticks hold the plastic away from the petals.

2. Keep temperature in the 34-36 degree range, as low as possible without freezing the blooms. A refrigerator thermometer is a must.

3. Put blooms in deep containers, covering as much of the stem as possible. Daffodils lose water through their stems, not the petals.

4. MOST IMPORTANT: Do not store any fruit or aging produce in the same refrigerator! Gases from ripening fruit will kill daffodils.

5. If a daffodil dies in the refrigerator, remove it as soon as found. If the flower wilts, recut the stem to open the pores and replace in fresh water.

6. Take out of the refrigerator the day before the show if:

* The flower is not fully mature (e.g. colour not fully developed).

* The flower is not fully open ("hooded").

* The flower is looking downward (and that is not its natural pose) – place a light behind the bloom to get it to raise its head. It is easier to adjust the pose downward but hard to raise the head of the flower.

In all these cases, make sure it has 6 petals, no nicks in the petals, and that the cup/corona is in good shape.

7. Before refrigerating, clean off any dirt or stains. Use a damp q-tip or soft brush. Look at the back as well as the front of the petals, and inside the cup. Stains and dirt are almost impossible to get off after refrigeration.

8. Pick in the morning if possible.

9. Pick flowers if temperatures are predicted to go below 22 degrees.

10. Division 6 flowers tend to last the longest in refrigeration.

11. Daffodils that have yellow petals / yellow cups and yellow petals / red cups do not need sunlight to complete their development – they can be picked before they are completely open.

12. Flowers that are reverse bicolor, have lemon coloured petals, or have pink cups need sunlight to complete development. They must be left on the plant in the ground to completely mature.

Article submitted by Jackie Petherbridge

And finally

DAFFODILS NO MORE

I wondered lonely as a cloud
That flows down streets and
avenues
my spirit darkened by a cloud
of troubles I could not refuse,
for I had looked for daffodils
and found but few in England's
hills.

For butterflies, for birds I
sought
for all of nature's finest gems
that I had long ago been taught
bedecked the Pennines and the
Thames,
caressed our valleys, blessed
out moors
And danced by thousands on
our shores.

But what I found was barbed-
wire fence
protecting repetitious fields
that offered up in self defence
statistics on their better yields
with ne'er a thought towards
the cost;
that fragile beauty we have lost.

A poet could not help but sigh
on seeing how the world is
changed
and ask himself, or God on high,
why humankind is so deranged
it can destroy, for such poor
ends,
the world on which its life
depends.

Gorden J.L. Ramel

"With due praise to W.
Wordsworth.

Food for thought?

Contributions for future issues
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