

The Green Patch

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Daffodil aka Narcissuses, aka Jonquil By Tom Surber , Madison County Master Gardener

The common daffodil is a commonly used perennial, spring bulb throughout the world and throughout history. It is native to the Americas, Europe and much of Asia. A member of the Amaryllis Family (Amaryllidoideae) it is as toxic as the other members of the family. It's bulb, which can be easily confused with the onion bulb by the careless, has caused several instances of serious alkaloid poisoning.

The plants will vary from miniatures, less than 4 inches, to giants nearly 24 inches tall. The colors of the prominent flowers vary from white, to yellow, to green, to orange, to red, with the parts of the flower varying separately among these colors. A glance into any North American or European bulb catalog will show seemingly endless varieties of size and color combinations. The Royal Daffodil Society recognizes 13 different variants. Over 28,000 cultivars, varieties and species have been identified.



Cultivation is simple. Daffodils like to be in sunshine, but tolerate the partial shade of trees before their leaves come out. Place the bulb in well drained loam, pointed side up, at a depth of about twice the height of the bulb, in the early fall. It will emerge in the spring, barring being eaten by small mammals, as a slender shoot, then a group of narrow, parallel veined, strap like leaves. At their tips, some of the leaves will shortly start to twist and thicken into flower buds. These rapidly burst into the well known shape, a round cup with what appear as 6 petals (actually sepals) surrounding a "horn" of three petals.

After the flowers die, the seed pods and leaves should remain for six weeks, but are usually back in the ground resting til next spring by mid June. For best results allow the leaves to die back naturally before removing the brown leaves from the top of the ground. In well drained loamy soil each bulb should last many years, but light fertilizer will also help. Later appearing plants may be planted with the daffodils.

Daffodils tend to resist deer, rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, and other rodents (who do not like the taste of the bulbs in the Narcissus family). The most common prob-

lems include large narcissus bulb fly, bulb scale mite, narcissus nematode, slugs, narcissus basal rot and other fungal infections, and viruses. In my experience, failure is most often due to soil heaviness or wetness.

Reproduction is usually asexual with the bulbs multiplying rapidly underground. Once flowers decrease or the leaves appear thin, these may be dug up as the leaves die back, left in dry, warm, well ventilated space til planted that same fall. There is a small round, black seed. But from the cultivars, these may not return true to the parent's cultivar.

Daffodils have been associated with Easter (the German name for them is Osterglocke or Easter Bell), The Chinese New Year (for which they require forcing), Cancer Societies since the mid 1950's, and are the National Flower of Wales, where one is worn on the lapel March 1. Their meaning in the language of flowers is variable, from high regard, to deceit, to beautiful eyes, to rebirth, to Easter, to narcissism. Part of the lore is that to give just one Daffodil foretells misfortune, while giving a bunch foretells good luck.

The origin of the name, narcissuses, is unknown. It is most likely from an ancient Greek, borrowed word. The legend of the youth Narcissus probably was the youth being named for the flower, not the other way around as often quoted.



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Arrangements Made from Your Own Perennials are the Best

What better way to decorate than with an arrangement made from your own perennials, woody cut florals and ornamental grasses? A rose bouquet or bundle of peonies is the standard but let's be resourceful and make an arrangement that is unique and that we can gather from our own yard whenever we want.

Woody cut florals are one way to give yourself that option. Woody florals are shrubs or trees with colorful or unusual shaped stems, buds, flowers, berries or bark collected for use in arrangements, where they can add remarkable color, texture and form.

Ornamental grasses can add neutral colors and a variety of different textures to arrangements. Cut in the fall, they add fall color to arrangements. When ornamental grasses are dried, they can look completely different than fresh, and they can last for years.

It's worthwhile to grow ornamental grasses, woody flowering shrubs and perennial flowering plants in your landscape. They're a lovely and inexpensive way to brighten up the landscape outdoors, and they also can be pruned and used for arrangements inside. Depending on how much pruning you will be doing, you might want to consider having a cutting garden that is somewhat hidden in the landscape. This way you can cut as much as you want from the plants without worrying how your landscape looks. Ornamental grasses don't need to be hidden because they need to be cut back each year anyway.

Try growing plants that aren't grown by all of your neighbors. Add some diversity and create a trend, experiment with new plants whenever the opportunity arises. Plant choices can be made strategically to provide interest throughout the year, which means arrangements can be cut through most of the year. Below are some plants that work well in cut arrangements.



Woody cut florals for twigs, flowers or berries (the following plants can grow higher than 5 feet): *Forsythia*; Winterberry or *Ilex verticillata*; American cranberrybush or *Viburnum opulus*; red chokeberry or *Aronia arbutifolia*; dragon's claw willow or *Salix matsudana* 'Tortuosa'; red twig dogwood or *Cornus sericea* 'Farrow'. Or, growing less than 5 feet high: blue mist spirea or *Caryopteris*.

For seed pods: Blue false indigo; poppy; Mexican hat coneflower; milkweed.

Fresh cut florals: western sunflower or *Helianthus occidentalis*; Fireworks goldenrod or *Solidago rugosa* 'Fireworks'; blazing star or *Liatris*; purple coneflower or *Echinacea purpurea*; feverfew or *Tanacetum*; stargazer lily.

Ornamental Grasses: Ravenna grass; Korean feather reed grass; little bluestem; sand lovegrass; Indiangrass; Canada wildrye.

Sources: Karma Larsen and Felicia Benes, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum

Come Walk **"In The Garden"**
Columbus NE
Tuesday, July 8 — 4:30-8:00 PM

Saint Bonaventure Catholic Church's
Garden Tour

Five Gardens and a "Razzle Dazzle" Raffle

Advanced tickets—\$7.00

**Tickets available in Columbus at Tooley Drug,
Wilkes, Earl May, HyVee, Barbara Jean's, and St
Bon's Parish office (15th St. and 18th Ave) Or
by calling Kay Miller, 402-564-8710
Or Mike Pilakowski, 402-564-5110**

(Sorry, No children due to water hazard)

Flower Pots along
Wisner's main street are
planted with an array of
red flowers. Master Gardener,
Beverly McClure sent her local
CHIC's organization information
about the **CELEBRATE
NEBRASKA...GROW
BIG RED!**

**UNL Extension - Help
Keep Nebraska Beautiful
Celebrate 50
Years in 2014!**



CHIC volunteers their time and money each summer to bring a bit of beauty to the Wisner downtown area.

<http://www.knb.org/>

America's #1 Hobby

By Jane Jensen , Pierce County Master Gardener

Fanfare, please. America's number one hobby is, yes, gardening!

Warm weather and green growing things get folks in the mood to plant and putter in the yard and garden. You see it everywhere: plant sales, packets of seeds, piles of compost and mulch and started plants of all kinds. People of all ages can enjoy gardening. This was brought to mind a few years back when I saw an old man in overalls looking over all the tomato plants on the shelf. He used a walker, was bent and very gray-haired, but by golly he was going to pick out the best tomato. Children can enjoy gardening at a very young age.

Coming in a close second is bird watching. Gardens and birds really go hand in hand. There are so many garden things that enhance birding. Trees and shrubs provide habitat/shelter for birds. Flowers can provide food for birds. Water features like ponds and fountains provide twofold enjoyment: lovely sound while relaxing in the garden and water for birds. It has been proven that moving or spraying water is a great way to attract birds.



Photo from Sandhill Crane Migration website



Photo from LDS Blogs website

Many flowers, like coneflowers, are super attractive to birds and also butterflies. The pretty flowers and greenery of my Tartarian Honeysuckle provides both garden pleasure and tiny berries in late summer for smaller birds like finches and sparrows. I've heard that dill, parsley and basal draw butterflies, those flying flowers of the garden.

Just before a generous rain I planted several packages of a cottage garden mix. Included were cosmos, delphinium, marigold, larkspur, forget-me-nots and zinnia. I'm hoping for a burst of many colors and heights in a relatively small space. Hopefully they'll take over, eliminating at least in a small space, the one green thing all gardeners frown on: weeds!

The Garden Cafe

By Beverly McClure , Cuming County Master Gardener

In reference to the Garden Café at the 2014 Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener Plant Fair, maybe there were a few things that could be improved upon, but the food service volunteers were extremely happy to finally have a kitchen in which to work. We planned, we shopped, we cooked, we checked our lists, loaded our cars and drove to the Ag Complex.

Being able to use the back door which was close to parking, made loading and unloading a whole lot easier. The kitchen was clean and spacious. We had hot water and a hand washing sink, lots of counter space, refrigerators and a sunny window for plenty of light. We thought at first that we might have to serve from the small concession window. However, a wall divider was pulled out to partition off the dining room and we were able to use the larger window above the main counter. Everyone likes to eat as well as shop for plants. Continuing the Garden Café in the future will be a good thing.

Thank you to everyone that brought a card table and table decorations.

Banana Kale Smoothie

<http://food.unl.edu/>

I always thought green smoothies were something other people drank!

Then, bringing home a big bundle of kale from the Farmers Market, I decided to experiment.

Here's the recipe I developed. I think it tastes refreshing and minty. And ... I'm now drinking green smoothies!

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup skim milk
- 1 cup nonfat vanilla Greek yogurt
- 1 large kale leaf, torn into pieces and without thick pieces of the rib (about 1/2 cup)
- 1 ripe banana
- Approximately 4 to 6 cubes (smaller ice cubes work better)

Directions:

Add milk, then yogurt to blender.

Next, toss in the kale.

Break banana into chunks and add to mixture.

Place the ice cubes on top. *NOTE: If you've never made a smoothie with ice in your blender, check your blender instruction book or look for your manual online on the manufacturer's website to determine if there are specific guidelines for adding ice to your blender. Some blenders may not be strong enough to break down ice cubes.*

Begin blending, starting out on a lower speed and then increasing speed.

Puree until smooth.

Enjoy immediately.

Makes 1 very large or 2 medium smoothies.



Youth have the opportunity to test their Horticulture knowledge by participating in Contests.



As part of the 22nd annual Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener plant fair Saturday, April 26th, a youth horticulture plant identification contest was held. Area youth were invited to participate in the competition. A total of nine youth participated with two in the junior division, three in the intermediate division, and four in the senior division. Each contestant was asked to identify 44 plants. Sarah Perrigan of Norfolk placed first in the junior division with Rachael Thomas of Stanton placing second. In the intermediate division, Dana Goodrich of North Loop finished in first place with Hailey Walmsley of Norfolk placing second and Laura Jane Perrigan of Norfolk placing third. Katharine Schudel of North Loup placed first in the senior division with Shalyn Miller of Madison placing second and Katherine Perrigan and Elizabeth Perrigan of Norfolk tying for third. Wayne Ohnesorg, UNL Extension Educator and Master Gardener coordinator presented the awards. Thank you to Jim Laycock of Mulch N More, the Master Gardener Plant Booth, Wayne Ohnesorg, and Don Liedman for providing plants for the contest.

First row: Sarah Perrigan and Rachael Thomas
 Second row: Hailey Walmsley, Shalyn Miller, Katherine Perrigan, Elizabeth Perrigan, Laura Jane Perrigan, and Dana Goodrich
 Third row: Wayne Ohnesorg and Katharine Schudel



On June 18, a competition was held for 4-H youth, their parents, and Master Gardeners to test their horticultural identification knowledge at Phyllis and Wyman McCain's acreage southwest of Norfolk. A total of three youth participated with only Stanton County represented. Tying for first place were Rachael Thomas and Lydia Hilbers. Placing second was Emalee Hilbers. In the Master Gardener division, Marjorie Jansen of Norfolk placed first with Vicki Wagner of Dodge coming in a very close second. Master Gardener, Wyman McCain, shared his knowledge of fruit trees. A special thank you goes to Phyllis and Wyman for hosting and to Don Liedman and Jim Laycock for helping with the event.





The Green Patch Contributors



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Master Gardeners are people who love plants,
gardening, landscaping, and teaching others.



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We're on the web at

<http://madison.unl.edu/mastergardenerhome>

What is It?? By Wayne Ohnesorg, Extension Educator

Someone is going to have to dethrone Tammy Furstenau as she has correctly identified the April *What is it?* as white-lined sphinx moth caterpillar (*Hyles lineata*).

As mentioned before, the caterpillars feed on many weedy plant species. The adults are active around dusk and are sometimes mistaken for humming birds.



I took this picture this past April from a couple of live specimens someone found in their house. I get these or other closely related species brought in to me in the fall and spring (occasionally during winter) when wood burning starts for heating homes.

If you think you know, you can give me a call at (402) 370-4044 or shoot me an email (wohnesorg2@unl.edu). The first person to contact me with the correct answer will be awarded one (1) training hour. Everyone that submits an answer will be entered into an end of the year drawing for a free Extension Circular such as the *Landscape Diagnostic Guide for Problems Affecting Woody Ornamentals and Herbaceous Perennials*. For every *What is it?* column you provide an answer for you will receive one entry. This offer is available for both the Platte County and Northeast Nebraska Master Gardener groups.

