

Welcome to February!



Springtime = Daffodils!

It's not too early to start thinking about Spring, even though snow is still a possibility here on the west coast in February. One of the most cheerful flowers, daffodils can brighten up even the darkest of days during late winter or early Spring. Easily the most popular garden bulbs grown throughout North America, daffodils are often referred to as *Narcissus*, their scientific name. They are also commonly known as jonquils, but technically, jonquils are a specific type of daffodil. Did you know, this showy flower, a relative to amaryllis, gets its scientific name from a Greek myth about a vain youth named Narcissus, who spent all his time looking at his face in a pool of cave water? The gods eventually changed him into a daffodil, fated forever to sit by a pool nodding at its reflection.

Not an entirely bad fate!

Daffodils are particularly popular with gardeners because they are so easy to grow. Here on the west coast, our mild climate often has these flowers popping up as early as January. What could be a bonus, the blooms and their bulbs are toxic, which means squirrels usually leave them alone.

They do well in most soils with little or no care. When they multiply into large clumps, simply dig them up, divide the smaller bulbs and replant them for even more spring color. If you are short of space, these bulbs also do well in a pot.

There are thousands of different daffodil varieties available. To keep them straight, botanists have separated daffodils into 12 different categories based on the shape and characteristics of their flowers.

The most popular daffodil is the trumpet narcissus, named for its long horn-like center, commonly called the 'cup'. There are many other favorites with smaller cups, double blooms, or more than one flower per stem. The extensive variety makes daffodils suitable for a wide range of locations, - in a rock garden...among trees, shrubs and ground covers...as borders...in containers...and naturalized in clumps in grassy areas.

Yellow is the most popular daffodil flower color, but you'll also find them in many other colors, including white, red, green, pink and cream.

After blooming, daffodils require little care. It's important to remove the old blossoms and let the plants continue to grow. Don't cut the leaves until they turn completely yellow- they feed the bulb so it can produce next years' bloom.

So, enjoy your Spring color, even if it seems early!

by Cheryl Fiddis



Helleborus in late winter/early spring might beat your daffodils! Mine do!

☺ We love to have members share their 'secrets' and 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: The 2015 dues are due!

If you haven't done so yet, please visit Anne at the membership desk to pay your 2015 dues or to join up – still only \$12 per year. Members share various gardening interests and enjoy monthly guest speakers, plus are entitled to discounts of regularly priced items at GardenWorks and other garden centres, simply by presenting their membership cards. Meetings start at 7 pm at the Burnaby Village Museum, - Main Building, 2nd floor. Easy to get to with ample parking and refreshments are served! All are welcome! Please join us!

The Lovely Beautyberry Bush



I was lucky enough recently, to receive a lovely Beautyberry bush from a neighbour whose house was coming down, free subject to digging and transporting the bush, actually more like a tree, across the street to my yard. Not knowing the name of the bush, and my neighbour gifting the bush could not remember, when digging we found and took a painted rock with a partial name and date painted on it. My BRAGS pal and neighbour Susan, promptly identified the bush. Not familiar with a Beautyberry, I quickly googled to learn more prior to finding the perfect spot for planting. I learned that Beautyberry is a deciduous shrub noted for its brightly colored, tightly clustered berries that remain on the bush well into winter. Other common names are American beautyberry and American mulberry. My bush as I write this article in January, while bare of leaves, is still covered with berries.

Fast-growing deciduous shrubs, Beautyberries grow 4 to 8 feet tall and wide. Planting suggestions say to plant them in a natural woodland setting under tall shade trees or as an informal hedge along the perimeter of a property. Beautyberries have small, lavender-pink, lilac-like flowers in spring, followed by vivid purple or white berries in fall. The berries attract birds, as well as provide winter color. Although the berries are edible, they aren't the most desired food of birds and often hang on the bush into late winter. The foliage turns an attractive yellow in fall.

The site should have light shade and very well-drained soil, and planting is recommended in spring or fall. The hole should only be as deep as the rootball and two to three times as wide. Fill the hole half full with soil, then water it well to settle the soil and eliminate air pockets. Let the water drain, then fill the remainder of hole with soil and water thoroughly.

Beautyberries prefer at least an inch of rain (or equivalent watering) each week, although they can endure short periods of drought. Beautyberry generally doesn't need pruning; the shrub has an open form, and branches naturally hang down when weighted with berries. And a bonus: Beautyberry generally has few pest problems.

My Beautyberry has been potted up for the winter and once the spring arrives, we'll see how it has survived the move. Then the perfect spot will be chosen!



~ Cheryl Fiddis

Claim To Fame... ★

For those of you who subscribe to Our Canada magazine, the January 2015 issue has an 2 page article by your editor. It is about a stamp collection introduced at age 9, and lessons learned from that stamp collection. This magazine is by subscription only, so if you know someone who subscribes, be sure to read it!

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Speakers

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David Forsyth
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Upcoming Meetings



February 4, 2015

Our guest will be Ken Knechtel from RedBarn Plants, giving a timely talk on "Vegetables". Many BRAGS members will remember Ken from his involvement with the Eagles Estate.



March 4, 2015

Chris Jennings will give us our March presentation. Many of you will know Chris from the Rhododendron Festival and the Shade Gardens Society.



April 1, 2015

Karen June Myskiw will talk on "Habitat Gardens for Butterflies, Birds, Bees". Karen is a designer and educator whose passions integrate practices of ecological gardening, preparing local foods, art-making, global travel and writing.

JardinsDesigns is her consulting practice with a focus on the seamless integration of indoor and outdoor living rooms to create an atmosphere of wellness.

If you have any suggestions for future speakers, Bev Glover would love to hear from you!

Rhodofest 2015! Sunday May 3rd!

Save the date! Your Rhodofest team will be counting on you to volunteer to make this another successful year!

BRAGS Picnic June 2015!

Date TBA! Thanks to Bev Glover who has offered to host our 2015 picnic at her home and garden. The date will be in June and will be advised at a later date. Stay tuned!



Out & About Etc...

Customer Appreciation Day, February 19, 2015

Be sure to mark the date for GardenWorks 15% savings all day. Time to buy those seeds for spring planting!

