

The Daffodil in Spain



7 June 2020

Last Winter, I received a phone call from my Daffodil-friend Brian Duncan. He asked me if I would like to join him on a trip to Spain, to look for **Daffodils** in their natural habitat.

Of course I wanted to join him and his party! As long as it was not in April, because then the Daffodils in the Netherlands are in bloom. But no, it was in February, to the South of Spain, around Malaga. From there on we would drive up to Madrid in about ten days. Also, if I could rent a car there?

Brian always says he wants me to come along just for fun, and he does, but another reason is his wife Betty. She no longer approves of him going off to Spain to drive a car there. Mr Duncan is well into his 80s, so Betty makes a good point when she only lets him go if he can find a driver at least thirty years younger than him.

But all is well: there is nothing I like more than accompanying Brian on trips like these, as I think that there is no other man alive that can show you around Spain the way Brian can. He has been there over thirty times and can tell you everything you need to know about the wild Daffodils there.

I have been getting a lot of questions about what we have seen in Spain, so therefore I am sending you this newsletter about Spanish Daffodils.



Narcissus bujei (synonym *N. confusus*)

This Daffodil looks a lot like a miniature edition of the today's yellow trumpet Daffodil. This seems to be incorrect: they say that the modern yellow trumpet Daffodil is bred from the French *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*.

We were too early to see her in full bloom, these were the first flowers we saw after a long search. *Narcissus bujei* looks a lot like the *Narcissus pumilus* we grown on our nursery and that is available in the Fluwel web shop.



Narcissus bulbocodium

It really is the most beautiful thing there is, seeing all those small Daffodils in road sides, ditches, on hills, and every other part of nature that has never been disturbed by humans before. Just North of the city Andujar, known for its olives, the Daffodils are all around you. The Bulbocodium Daffodil blooms everywhere in the same way we have Dandelions.

In the Fluwel web shop we sell [Mary Poppins](#). She is a descendant of this species.



Narcissus cantabricus

A shining white hoop-skirted Daffodil, the first cantabricus we encountered, was spotted from the car. We were driving with 50 kilometers per hour and it was nearly dark, but this Daffodil has such a stunning white colour that she cannot be missed even in the darkest of times.

Unfortunately she is unfit for the Dutch climate. She blooms in Winter, which can make her freeze. You can find them in the most Southern part of Spain and in a few places along the Northern coast of Morocco: she really likes a warm climate. It won't be long until you can find beautiful seedlings for sale that are more fit for Dutch weather.



Narcissus cerrolazae

This was a completely new name for me, I had never heard of her before: *Narcissus cerrolazae*. It turned out that up until a few years ago she was called *Narcissus jonquilla* var *henriquisii*.

In the Netherlands we say that nothing is as changeable as the weather, but the British botanists are also steady competitors for that title. Especially when it comes to naming the multi-flowered, yellow, scented Daffodil that we see so many of in Spain, the gentlemen just cannot seem to agree. I don't think the Daffodil herself cares about what her name is: she just finds a nice, comfortable spot and keeps on being pretty.



Narcissus fernandesii

This Daffodil also provides for a lot of bickering between botanists when it comes to her name. Is she henriquisii, fernandesii or cordubensis? Or maybe even a different type of cerrolazae?

I have to admit that I don't really care about the semantics of it all, I just think that she is one of the most beautiful jonquilla types around. We have a large party of them on our web site under the name **fernandesii**. I expect her to appear in a lot of gardens all over Europe in the coming years, as there are only two things this Daffodil does: Grow quickly and bloom plentifully.



Narcissus assoanus

The next one is tiny but beautiful and can be found in large areas of the South of Spain: *Narcissus assoanus*. She is a reliable Daffodil that grows well, but she is slightly too small to really bring life to a large garden. I do however feel that she would be beautiful in a rock garden. Her descendants **Desert Bells** and **Vireo** are daffodils that have a bit more presence in the garden than their ancestor.



Narcissus gaditanus

In Spain, we have seen some Daffodils that you really can't get around, they are simply everywhere. You can't go on a hike without stepping on one. That description doesn't apply to *Narcissus gaditanus*: to find her you really have to search for her.

She can be found on grassy rock formations and there she is then hidden behind a large pool of grass, minding her own business. The best part of this is that it brings so much joy when you actually do find her.



Narcissus incurvicervicus

Another one of Mother Nature: *Narcissus incurvicervicus*. She is not a real species, but what we call a 'hybrid': a descendant of two different species. In her case, her parents are *Narcissus triandrus* and *Narcissus fernandesii*. In the next photo you see her blooming between her parents.



Narcissus incurvicervicus with her parents: the white *Narcissus triandrus* on the left and the yellow *Narcissus fernandesii* in the middle above.



Narcissus litigiosus

Seeing *Narcissus litigiosus* was a complete surprise. She is a rare, natural hybrid of *Narcissus cantabricus* and *Narcissus triandrus*. As a daffodil hybridizer it is the ultimate goal to find a Daffodil like her, but here Mother Nature shows us that she knows best after all.



Narcissus tazetta pannizianus on a steep mountainside. The little white dots on the green are the *pannizianus*, the larger white dots are bird droppings.



Narcissus tazetta pannizianus

Her flower resembles *Narcissus papyraceus*, but her behaviour is entirely different. The *papyraceus* is easily found in fields and along road sides, but to find *Narcissus tazetta pannizianus* you have to risk your life on steep mountain sides. Incredible how they manage to survive in places like that.



Narcissus christopheri (syn *koshinomurae*)

Finding christopheri is special: she is a rare flower. She is the bastard child of an affair between [Narcissus fernandesii](#) and *Narcissus pannizianus*. As if that doesn't make her difficult enough to find she also blooms on barely climbable mountain sides. But with some effort and ignoring the 'please don't go there' and 'be careful's, I have managed to photograph her high on a mountain.



Narcissus tazetta papyraceus

Narcissus papyraceus is largely known as the 'Paperwhite Daffodil'. This is one of the most beautiful Daffodils we have seen in Spain. We were lucky: she was in full bloom and was growing like a beautiful weed in fields and alongside ditches, showing off her amazing, snowy-white flowers. We have seen thousands.



Narcissus rupicola

To find rupicola, you have to go places where you don't expect anything remotely close to beautiful to grow. On places with very little green and lots of rock you have to start climbing, and then you have to pay attention: she can be found in the smallest cracks, squashed between rocks. We were slightly too early to find a lot of rupicola's as it was still ice cold high in the mountains, but after an extensive search we found this one in a rare sunny spot.



Narcissus triandrus subsp. pallidulus

This is a lovely, modest Daffodil. The combination of her slightly mournful posture, pretty shape and fresh colour make her one of the most beautiful Spanish Daffodils. *Narcissus triandrus* is the mother of the legendary **Daffodil Thalia**.

All other Daffodil cultivars of the group Triandrus Daffodils are descendants of this Daffodil. But mother would rather stay in Spain: she doesn't really like the Dutch climate much. Her children however can be found all over the world.



Narcissus fosteri

Last but not least a special, pretty Daffodil that is the result of a crossing between *Narcissus triandrus* and *Narcissus bulbocodium*. In places where these Daffodils grow together she can be found regularly. As they come from seed they are all just slightly different from one another. This large tuft truly is unique: you rarely, if ever, see her this beautiful.