

All Daffodils are Yellow, Right? Wrong!

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You mean all daffodils are NOT yellow? Sure they are, and the white ones are narcissus, right? No, but that is a common misconception. Narcissus is the botanical name and daffodil the common English name for exactly the same thing. I could never convince my mother-in-law of that, and eventually gave up trying.

Let's take a look at just the trumpet daffodils. All the colors in daffodils—yellow, white, pink, red, and orange, or some combination of them--can be found in trumpet daffodils. Trumpet daffodils are those daffodils with the cup as long as, or longer than, the petals. They are in Division 1 of the Daffodil Classification. As a group, the trumpets are early-blooming, though there are exceptions to everything. The famous, old 'King Alfred' registered in 1899 is the classic example of a trumpet daffodil—yellow petals and yellow cup. However, old 'King Alfred' was not the healthiest of growers, and these days you can order King Alfred-TYPE daffodils. Some suppliers of heirloom bulbs do list the real thing. But if you want the typical yellow daffodil, with much better form, try 'Arctic Gold', available by mail order. Others available at reasonable prices by mail order include 'Arrawannah', 'Banbridge', and 'Jumbo Gold'. Though less refined, 'Unsurpassable' is usually available from garden stores in the fall.

But why stick to yellow? Why not try some white ones? 'Mount Hood', which opens with a yellowish trumpet, is often available locally in the fall, but look in catalogs for 'Empress of Ireland', 'Panache' or 'Rashee' (pictured). 'Empress of Ireland' is a creamy white, but the others are really white. And 'Rashee' is a bit later than the others. These last three were bred by Guy Wilson in Northern Ireland. Mr. Wilson is famous for his white daffodils, and during his lifetime reigned supreme in this area.



For a good white and yellow trumpet daffodil, try 'Bravoure'. This has won all kinds of garden awards in Britain. It's a large flower, and will make a bold statement in your garden. Another, if you can find it listed anywhere, is 'Prologue'. This flower is one of the first to bloom in spring. 'POPS Legacy' (pictured) is an outstanding bi-color trumpet. Its interesting name comes from the fact that the seed came from Phil Phillips in New Zealand and was given to Bill Bender in Pennsylvania. So it was named to honor Mr. Phillips

legacy: Phillips Open Pollinated Seed, therefore 'POPS Legacy'.



You say you like pink and white daffodils? Well, then try 'Pink Silk' (pictured). This elegant flower is still pricey, but it's early and multiplies rapidly. Much less expensive is 'Boudoir'. And if your taste runs to yellow/pink flowers, then by all means try 'Lorikeet'. Newer and still quite expensive are 'American Dream', 'American Heritage', and 'American Shores'. These were bred in Oregon by Elise Havens. Mrs. Havens is the

daughter of the late Grant Mitsch, the pre-eminent American daffodil hybridizer.

Red and yellow trumpets, or more properly orange and yellow trumpet daffodils are still few and far between. The red coloring in daffodils comes from the poeticus daffodil which has white petals and a very short cup edged in deep red. By crossing the yellow trumpet species with the poeticus species, breeders developed flowers with yellow petals and orange or red cups. But it's taken a long time to get the color into cups the length of the petals. Some worth trying include 'King's Grove', 'Glenfarclas', and 'Jamboree'.

Reverse bi-color daffodils are intriguing. Most of them open all yellow, and then as the flower matures, the cup becomes whitish. They make a very attractive, changing picture in the garden.

'Honeybird' (pictured) is an older cultivar that blooms early and multiplies rapidly. 'Chiloquin' blooms later in the season. 'Pay Day' is another in this color combination, and has a white halo on the petals at the base of the trumpet.



Trumpet daffodils also come in miniature size, and if you like miniatures, look for the all yellow 'Wee Bee', 'Bagatelle', and 'Little Gem.' These are all quite similar, and generally easy to grow. There are a few white ones, notably 'Candlepower', but it is very scarce and more difficult to grow.

So there you have it: trumpet daffodils in all the daffodil colors and sizes. Why grow only yellow daffodils, when you can have such variety?