

The NARCISSUS FLOWER

Issue Date: 01.09.11



The Isle of Man Post Office is pleased to present a set of stamps featuring the Narcissus flower commonly known as the Daffodil. The issue is released to coincide with our attendance at the 27th Asian International Stamp Exhibition Wuxi, Jiangsu, China which takes place in November 2011. The stamps form part of a collection of issues from a number of countries depicting Chinese Flora.

Daffodils are as well loved in the Isle of Man as they are right across the British Isles. Every Island garden shows its rich drifts of cream and gold to welcome the sun in spring. The flowers are to be seen growing in yellow masses in the Island's beautiful wooded glens, and landowners have planted thousands of bulbs along roadside hedgerows.

The English wild daffodil *Narcissus pseudo-narcissus* is seldom seen in the wild in the Isle of Man, but two other varieties have naturalised themselves successfully. The dainty scented *Narcissus minor* is called the 'Manx Jonquil' and can be seen widely, especially in the north of the Island. What could be an easier souvenir for a mariner to carry than a pocketful of seeds or a handful of bulbs from foreign parts? In view of the Island's long seafaring tradition, it has been suggested that *Narcissus minor* was probably brought home by a Manx sailor direct from the Iberian peninsula.

The old cultivar *Narcissus telemonius plenus* 'Van Sion', which in England was first recorded in the seventeenth century, has become so common in Mann that it is referred to as the 'wild daffodil'. It is a curious bloom, sometimes with just the trumpet doubled, sometimes with a complete double ruff of shaggy petals, and occasionally with green streaks in the yellow. 'Van Sion' has been around long enough to acquire folklore and its own name in Manx Gaelic, lus y ghuy – the 'goose plant'. It is said to be unlucky to pick the flowers and bring them indoors before the goslings are hatched. A variation on this, according to the late Dr Larch Garrad, one of the Island's best known botanists and author of "The Manx Garden", was that the bad luck ceased on May Eve.


Narcissus 'Butter and Eggs', another double daffodil first recorded in England in 1777, has been identified here, as has the more brightly coloured *Narcissus* 'Raggedy Ann'. A rare sub-species of *Narcissus poeticus*, the pheasant's eye narcissus, has been identified by the Royal Horticultural Society from a site at Glenboogie near Peel, on the west coast, as *Narcissus poeticus* ssp. *radiiflorus* var. *exertus*.

In the 1890s Miss A. M. Crellin of Orrisdale, in the north of the Island, was a noted breeder of daffodils and received an award from the Society.


William Wordsworth's most famous poem about daffodils titled *I wandered lonely as a Cloud*, was composed in 1804, two years after he saw the flowers while walking by Ullswater on a stormy day with Dorothy, his sister. His inspiration for the poem came from an account written by Dorothy, where she describes how the daffodils 'tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind, that blew upon them over the lake.'

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<p><i>I wandered lonely as a cloud That floats on high o'er vales and hills, When all at once I saw a crowd, A host, of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees, Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.</i></p> <p><i>Continuous as the stars that shine And twinkle on the milky way, They stretched in never-ending line Along the margin of a bay: Ten thousand saw I at a glance, Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.</i></p> <p><i>The waves beside them danced, but they Out-did the sparkling leaves in glee; A poet could not be but gay, In such a jocund company! I gazed - and gazed - but little thought What wealth the show to me had brought:</i></p> <p><i>For oft, when on my couch I lie In vacant or in pensive mood, They flash upon that inward eye Which is the bliss of solitude; And then my heart with pleasure fills, And dances with the daffodils.</i></p>	
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Our attractive sheetlet for this issue incorporates the mint (or 'CTO') set

<p>PRODUCTS AVAILABLE</p> <p>Mint/CTO Set - £1.00 Presentation Pack - £1.75 First Day Cover - £1.70 Sheetlet (single set) - £1.00</p> 	<p>CUSTOMER SERVICES</p> <p>Phone: +44 (0)1624 698430 Fax: +44 (0)1624 698434 Web: www.iomstamps.com Email: stamps@iompost.com</p> <p>Office hours: Monday - Friday 8.30am to 5pm GMT</p>	<p>TECHNICAL DETAILS</p> <p>Design – Yang Xiaomei Text – Valerie Cottle Printer - Cartor Stamp Size – 42 x 28mm Colours - 4 Process - Offset Lithography Perforations - 13 per 2cm Paper - 102gms PVA gummed Format - 3 setenent pairs or Sheetlet of 6 stamps</p> <p>Date of Issue: 1st September 2011</p>
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For press or commercial enquiries please contact Maxine or Dot for further information:

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