



eNewsletter No. 45 July 2026

Northern NSW Branch

**Newsletters are sent out monthly
except for December and January**

Larger images are available from the editor on request

Eucalyptus pauciflora

Snow Gum

Small tree or mallee that is native to eastern Australia. It has smooth bark, shiny green lance-shaped to elliptical leaves, which hang vertically and are characterised by veins which follow the length of the leaf. Flower buds occur in clusters of between seven and fifteen opening to white flowers which mature into cup-shaped, conical or hemispherical fruit.

It is widespread and locally common in woodland in cold sites above 700 m altitude which includes the Northern Tablelands. The species is notable for its exceptional cold tolerance and its ecological importance in alpine environments. It is listed as Near Threatened due to pressures including climate change and bush fires. There are six subspecies with *ssp. niphophila* being the form which occurs in alpine areas and is distinguished by decorative patches of coloured bark.

E. pauciflora requires well-drained soil and does not tolerate poorly drained clay soils. Some natural hybridisation can occur with other eucalypt species.

Ref: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptus_pauciflora



Eucalyptus pauciflora - Snow Gum

Image: <https://aridsage.com.au/native-plants/eucalyptus-pauciflora/>

Join AGHS Northern NSW Branch

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/membership/>

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From the Chair:

Like many of our plants, our activities have been somewhat dormant over winter but as you will read in this newsletter, we have the AGM looming and Lynne Walker has details of the Camellia trip and talk next month with Dr Stephen Utick, co-founder of Camellia Ark Australia. Then, of course, we have the very important annual conference in Orange in September and I can assure you that Helen Oates and her team have been extremely busy. October will take us to four Walcha gardens. Details to follow.

Graham Wilson has been busy with the Armidale Tree Group applying for a grant to clean up Beadle Grove in Armidale and have it once again looking attractive and welcoming. More from him in this newsletter.

Cheers
Helen Wilson

Chair | Northern NSW Branch
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If you have a little time
why not listen to a wonderful Oral History interview
with our August speaker Dr Stephen Utick

Click on the link below

<https://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au/publications/dr-stephen-utick/>

Advocacy

Restoration of Beadle Grove

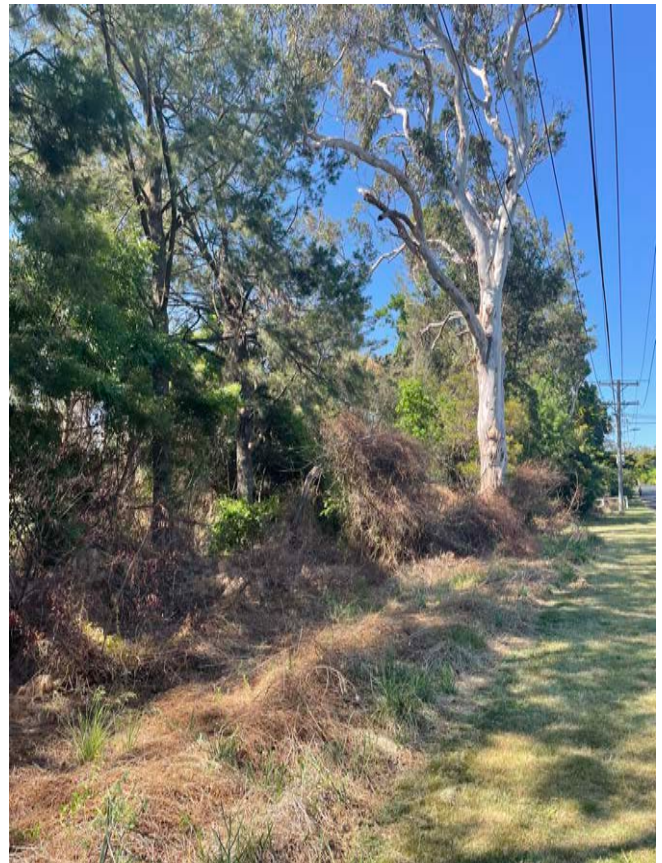
by Graham Wilson OAM

Our branch has worked with the Armidale Tree Group to have urgent maintenance completed at the Beadle Grove Reserve in Armidale. A petition was obtained from surrounding residents to be attached to an application by the Tree Group for a council grant to undertake restoration work.

Emeritus Professor Noel Beadle was the foundation Professor of Botany at the University of New England. He donated this two-acre reserve to Council and in 1989 Council granted the Armidale Tree Group permission to carry out tree planting at the site. Planning work was carried out by students undertaking a tree course at the Armidale College of TAFE and the intention was to create an Urban Forest.

The plan of the proposal for an Urban Forest was drawn by Phillip Hewitt and the plan is available at the Heritage Centre, University of New England Archives.

Development of this site was made possible by the Armidale Tree Group, Greening Australia, Armidale Dumaresq Council and the Rotary Club of Australia (Central). Its establishment was a fine example of the way that the local council of the time worked with community organizations. Sadly, the Reserve has been neglected particularly after severe damage from the major snowstorm in August 2025.



Much of the overgrown vegetation is comprised of flammable species which neighbours complained constitute a fire hazard.

History of Narcissus

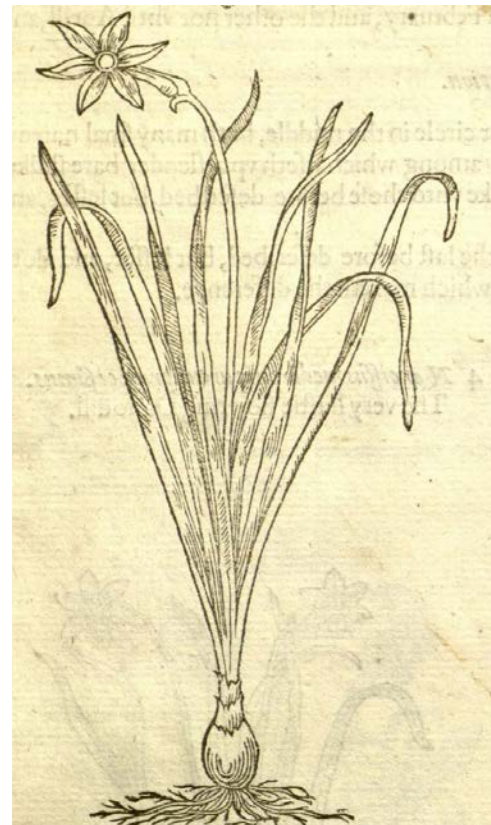
Text: M. Hitchcock

The *Narcissus* genus of plants belong to the Amaryllidaceae family. It includes the well known groups of plants called daffodils and jonquils. We are now coming into *Narcissus* season with many jonquils already out and daffodils beginning to reveal their very colourful flowers. The genus has a long prehistory with early specimens going back over 20 million years originating in Spain, Portugal and neighbouring regions. From there they spread out to other parts of the world with travellers who promoted their possible medicinal qualities as well as their beauty. They were known to the ancient Greeks who named them after a mythical youth.

Roman soldiers and settlers transported bulbs throughout their empire, including to Britain. The Romans incorrectly believed the daffodil's sap had medicinal qualities and antiseptic properties, frequently using it to treat wounds and placing bulbs in graves as symbols of remembrance. By the 10th Century they had been taken to the Far East. During the Middle Ages, the flower transitioned into European monastery gardens, where herbalists cultivated them for folk medicine. Today, we know the plant is toxic and unsafe to ingest, but this early cultivation caused the bulb to easily naturalize across various climates.

Over centuries, daffodils escaped gardens and naturalized beautifully across landscapes, thriving especially in damp European grasslands. By the 16th and 18th centuries, Iberian varieties were actively being bred in Central Europe. Today the centre of *Narcissus* bulb production is in the Netherlands which imported *Narcissus hispanicus* in the 16th century.

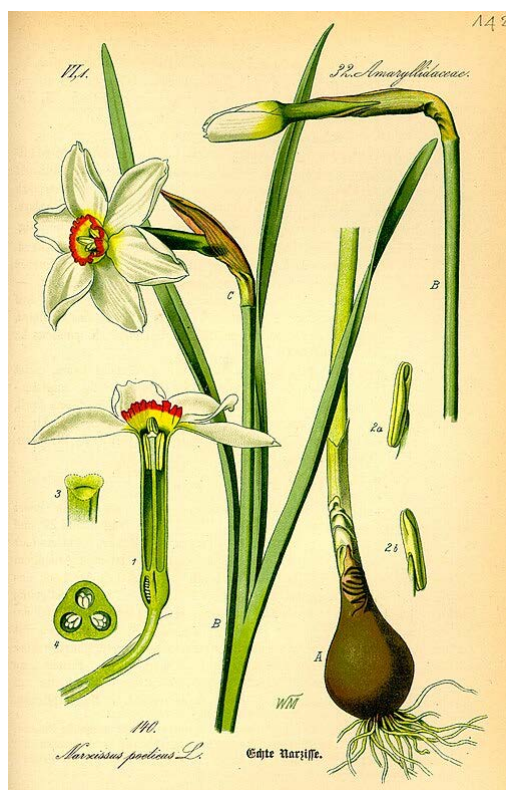
In the 19th century, dedicated hybridizers like eccentric Scotsman Peter Barr, as well as clergyman William Herbert (known as "The Dean"), began breeding thousands of new shapes, sizes, and colors. This boom in popularity necessitated official standardization, leading the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to hold its first daffodil conference in 1884. By 1908, the RHS established a classification system that has since expanded into 13 divisions for different species and cultivars.



Narcissus serotinus, John Gerard "The Herball"



Narcissus features in the first botanical garden in Germany owned by the Prince-Bishop of Eichstätt in Bavaria and recorded in Hortus Eistettensis (1613) complete with the above drawing.



N. poeticus. Thomé: *Flora von Deutschland, Österreich und der Schweiz* (1885)^[2] 1. Longitudinal section, 2. Anthers, 3. Stigma, 4. Cross section of ovary

Image: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcissus_\(plant\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcissus_(plant))

The Rev. George Herbert Engleheart is often credited as the father of the modern daffodil. He registered 720 new daffodil varieties between 1882 and 1923, although only around 30 are still commercially available. The *N. poeticus* species is the most well known.

Ref: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/history/gardens-landscapes/history-of-daffodils>

Narcissus are herbaceous perennials which die back after flowering to an underground storage bulb. They have a central leafless flower stem surrounded by several green or blue-green, narrow, strap-shaped leaves which photosynthesise, producing sugars that feed the bulb for the next season. They may produce a single flower or an umbel (spray) of flowers on each stalk. The bulb lies dormant from summer to winter and may be drawn further down into the soil by contractile roots.

The trumpet-shaped flowers are bisexual and sometimes fragrant. They are pollinated by insects. There are 'daffodil' and 'paperwhite' forms. As well as reproducing through bulb division, the flowers can set seed which is dispersed when the seed capsule dries out. Breeders use seeds to develop new species while most garden narcissus reproduce underground with 'offsets' forming clumps. The clumps can be dug up after several years in early summer and the new bulbs separated.

Leaves need to die back naturally in order to produce a healthy flower for the next season. Do not braid or tie them back.

Caring for Daffodils

Apply a low-nitrogen, high-potassium fertilizer (like a flowering plant liquid feed or bulb booster) when shoots first emerge or when flowers are open to support strong root and bloom development. Once the flowers fade and turn papery, snip off the dead flower head right below the bloom. This stops the plant from wasting energy making seeds. Leave foliage intact for at least 6 weeks after flowering so the plant can photosynthesize and store energy for next year's growth. You can cut the foliage back only when it turns yellow and withers naturally.

Some Native Species of Narcissus

Text and images: : <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

	<i>Narcissus obsoletus</i>	Native to the Mediterranean littoral from north Africa and the Iberian peninsula, east to Israel.		<i>Narcissus serotinus</i>	Autumn flowering Native to Portugal, Spain, and Morocco.
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	<i>Narcissus calcicola</i>	Endemic to Portugal		<i>Narcissus rupicola</i>	Portugal, Spain, Morocco
	<i>Narcissus bulbocodium</i> Hoop Petticoat	France, Spain		<i>Narcissus cantabricus</i>	Spain, NW Africa
	<i>Narcissus hedreanthus</i>	Spain Flowers in December		<i>Narcissus obesus</i>	Spain, Portugal, Morocco
	<i>Narcissus lusitanicus</i>	Portugal		<i>Narcissus triandrus</i>	France, Spain, Portugal Angel's Tears
	<i>Narcissus cuatrecasasii</i>	Spain, Morocco		<i>Narcissus jonquilla</i>	Spain, Portugal but now naturalised across the Medierranean.
	<i>Narcissus poeticus</i>	Central Europe		<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	Western Europe
	<i>Narcissus tazetta</i>	Mediterranean basin, Middle East		<i>Narcissus papyraceus</i> Frequently grown as a house plant, often forced to flower at Christmas.	Native to the Mediterranean region, from Greece to Portugal plus Morocco and Algeria. Naturalized in the Azores, Corsica, Texas, California and Louisiana.

Daffodils in Britain

Text and images: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-inspiration/people-making-a-difference/david-willis>

For a time daffodils fell from favour in English gardens, not fitting well with the fashion for formal Victorian bedding schemes but then during the 19th century, there was a surge in interest in rediscovering old varieties and breeding new hybrids. Plant hunters brought them to the UK and breeders started to create thousands of new varieties. Daffodil fever took hold.

These days many of the 32,000 names in the Daffodil register are no longer in cultivation but a few dedicated people have made it their mission to preserve the history, the and the stories of these special plants. There are six National Collections of narcissus, overseen by Plant Heritage.



Caroline Thomson holds her family's daffodils in The National Heritage Collection of *Narcissus* Backhouse cultivars at **Backhouse Rossie** in Fife. Her ancestor, William Backhouse was one of the early pioneers of daffodil hybridization, raising three important daffodils: *Narcissus* 'Emperor', *N.* 'Empress' and *N.* 'Weardale Perfection'



'Weardale Perfection' is a bi-coloured daffodil boasting a 12.5cm- diameter flower atop a 60cm stem. William died in 1869 before he could see the bloom from the final-stage of his hybridisation, but his son Charles named it 'Weardale Perfection'.



National Narcissus collection at Brodie Castle

Brodie Castle's daffodils set the grounds ablaze in bright yellow hues in spring. Between 1899 and 1942, Major Ian Brodie, the 24th Laird of Brodie, became one of the most influential figures in the history of the daffodil thanks to his fascination with hybridisation. He raised tens of thousands of daffodils in the walled garden at the Morayshire estate. The daffodil register database has 414 records of hybrids bred by The Brodie of Brodie. He gave many away to friends, breeders and nurserymen – naming just over 180 varieties himself. Brodie Castle & Estate, which is cared for by the National Trust for Scotland, has around 110 of these in the current National Collection. Not all were bred by Ian Brodie, but he would have known them all. Some are cultivars that he himself bred, some were raised by others he used for breeding, and others were bred from his creations by other breeders. Most of the daffodils are named after Highland place names – such as Elgin, Dalvey, Findhorn and Invergorden. Others are named after places he visited during his wartime service, like Askelon, Gallipoli and Red Sea.



Croft 16

Former RHS staff Duncan and Kate Donald are the collection holders of pre-1930 daffodils at Croft 16 daffodils and take care of them from their home in Ross-shire. The pair have decades of horticultural experience between them and have worked on collecting, studying and researching veteran *Narcissus* hybrids since the early 1980s. They look after the National Plant Collection® of pre-1930 daffodils at their Scottish home.

A gentle reminder
The Fruits of Orange

24 - 27 September 2026
Orange, New South Wales



Book now

<https://events.humanitix.com/46th-aghs-conference-orange>

2026 AGHS Garden Event
“A Day With Camellias”
Sunday 23rd August

The Australian Garden History Society Northern NSW Branch invites you to enjoy a great day out focussing on gardening and particularly camellias.



The event includes a fascinating lecture with world renowned camellia-expert **Dr Stephen Utick** as our speaker.

Stephen is co-founder of Camellia Ark.

He speaks internationally on this project which aims to conserve Australia's rarest Camellias.

The day includes a morning visit by bus to a **magnificent country garden** out of Armidale renowned for its stunning trees, perennials and flowering shrubs including over 170 camellias with blooms of splendid size and colour.

Lunch will be provided before the bus returns to Armidale where Stephen will deliver a lecture on Camellia Ark Australia and the significance of camellias to garden history.

Where: The Armidale School, Gate 7, Chapel St for bus trip. Bus leaves at 9.30am
Then later, TAS Hoskins Centre for the presentation at 3.00pm

Cost: **Full day is \$115 per person** for return bus, light lunch, speaker and a glass of wine and snacks after the talk.

Please note, travel to this garden is by bus only as part of the day package.
Private cars will not be able to gain access.

Lecture Only option: \$45 per person for Stephen's talk in the afternoon at the TAS Hoskins Centre at 3.00pm followed by light refreshments.

Try Booking link for payment:

Full day \$115.00: <https://www.trybooking.com/DNYNW>

Lecture only \$45.00: <https://www.trybooking.com/DNYOM>

Calendar of Events

Date 2026	Event	Notes
July Sunday 26th	AGM	U3A 3.15 Committee Meeting 4.00 NNSW Branch AGM Video presentations - University of Newcastle Living History project, Cintra House and the Scott Sisters of Ash Island Dinner to follow at the Newie.
August Sunday 23rd See poster on previous page for full details	<i>'A Day with Camellias'</i> Bus leaves Gate 7 TAS in Chapel St at 9.30am Returns to TAS at 3.00pm for lecture Bus only No private cars	Winter Speaker Program Visit to magnificent country garden featuring 170+ camellias as well as a large range of trees and shrubs. Lecture by world renowned camellia expert Dr Steven Utick on the Camellia Ark Project. Cost: \$115.00 Full day including bus, lunch, lecture and refreshments afterwards. Lecture only: \$45.00 including refreshments. TryBooking link for payment: Full day: https://www.trybooking.com/DNYNW Lecture only: https://www.trybooking.com/DNYOM
September Friday 25th to Sunday 28th	AGHS Annual Conference	Civic Theatre, Orange NSW Registrations opened 13th April See link for registrations on previous page.
October Sunday 18th	On the Road to Walcha	We will be visiting four Walcha gardens. Details to come.
December Saturday 5th	Annual Celebration Lunch	Peterson's Winery

Inquiries and ideas - please send to Lynne Walker (Events Co-ordinator)
gardenwalker@bigpond.com



Don't miss our amazing
'A Day with Camellias'
on Sunday 23rd August

Camellias galore in this
stunning country garden

International Camellia
expert Dr Stephen Utick
will speak about the
Camellia Ark Project

Images: Lynne Walker

