



Crocus civijicii flowers

I think that *Crocus civijicii* has the nicest yellow flowers of any crocus and it is a very desirable species. I know from reading the Crocus threads on the Forum that many of you have recently purchased this species but have been



disappointed to discover that you have been sent *Crocus angustifolius* instead. This mix up can be traced back to a Dutch grower who innocently thought he was growing the real thing and supplied many other nurseries with stock. The Dutch trade take this kind of mistake very seriously and one of their Committees has identified this slip-up and it will be corrected but it will take time, there will still be a number of wrongly named corms in the system. I have highlighted several times in previous bulb logs how easy it is to get labels mixed up or for stock to be contaminated by seeds or small offset bulbs and that is on the small scale of our own collection so we should not

be too critical of those who are growing on a much larger scale. We have such a lot to thank the Dutch bulb trade for as they have done so much work in growing, breeding, supplying and researching bulbs for hundreds of years.

Crocus civijicii is a rare plant which does not increase very quickly by division and so has to be raised from seed which means it is always likely to be in short supply and expensive to buy.



Getting some seed from one of the seed exchanges is your best source and even then we are reliant on the person donating the correctly named seed.

I have a few plants of *Crocus civijicii* planted in the garden where it grows well enough but I always keep at least two pots full in an open frame so that I can move them under cover when they are in flower. Under the cover of the bulb house I can then make sure that the flowers are not damaged by weather and also fertilise them with my paint brush and that along with the slightly warmer conditions gives me the best chance of a good seed set. This is the same picture as the one above except this one was taken using flash to show the difference it makes to the colour. The one above taken

in natural light best represents the colour that your eye will see and especially shows the colour variation with the yellow at the tips being more saturated giving an almost two tone effect which fades as the flower matures.



Crocus gargaricus* and *civijicii

One more picture to compare both the colour and flower size between *Crocus gargaricus* on the left and *civijicii* on the right.



Bulbs in prop house

The bulbs are really getting into top gear now and every day I see big advances in growth. This relatively small plunge, that used to be the mist unit, holds an amazing 160 7cm square plastic pots each of which can hold as many as 39 flowering stems of Narcissus shows that you do not need a lot of space to have a good range of bulbs and a fabulous spring display. Bearing in mind what I was saying above about the misnamed crocus I have been going around looking at all my pots and confirming where best I can that they match what it says on the label – it is important that we all do this. I have been paying particular attention to trying to sort out and confirming the labels on the Narcissus. This can be a big problem as many are so very similar add to this that many are raised from my own seeds and could be hybrids it is not easy. I have made a number of yellow labels with 'OK' written on to place in all the pots I can confirm others will be marked either mixed or unidentified.



Narcissus 'Don Stead'

One I can always be sure of because it is so distinct is Narcissus 'Don Stead' a hybrid between *N. bulbocodium* and *cantabricus*



Narcissus from Don Stead

This is another bulb that I got from the late Don Stead which I suspect may be a form or a hybrid of *N. romieuxii*. Whatever its parentage may be it is another very good dwarf Narcissus with good deep yellow flowers.



***Narcissus romieuxii* JWB8913**

The deepest yellow of all the forms of *Narcissus romieuxii* that I grow, with the exception of the previous one from Don Stead is *Narcissus romieuxii* JWB8913. I only received one bulb of this many years ago so I do not know how variable the original introduction was or where exactly it was collected. I must make some enquiries so that I can add that to my records.



Narcissus romieuxii JCA805

These almost petuniode flowers, above and left are typical of many selections that can be made from that wonderful collection, *Narcissus romieuxii* JCA805.

This introduction has provided us with thousands of beautiful forms and crosses of the very variable *Narcissus romieuxii* from the Atlas Mountains.



Narcissus 'Atlas Gold'

I can also confirm this pot of *Narcissus* 'Atlas Gold' with its yellow flowers as being correctly named and labelled – this is also a selection from JCA805.





Narcissus romieuxii x mesatlanticus SF151

Another good free flowering and vigorous selection to look out for is this bulb that I received as *N. romieuxii* x *mesatlanticus* with the number SF151.



Narcissus romieuxii (X's)

This form of *N. romieuxii* came in directly from Don Stead to me with (X's) on the packet –I have no idea what it refers to but it is also a nice free flowering form.



Narcissus romieuxii rifanus

I am as certain as I can be from the descriptions that this is *Narcissus romieuxii rifanus* with its slightly upward facing flowers, very exserted style and anthers which are also slightly scattered and not held in a tight bunch as in other varieties.



Narcissus 'Craigton Gem'

'Craigton Gem' is one of my own named forms raised from home collected seeds and while I have no record of the parents I am certain that at least one of its parents is *N. romieuxii rifanus*.

It increases well and will flower freely every year as long as you fulfil its requirements for plenty water and potassium when it is growing.

I will be adding the potassium supplement in the next few weeks so watch this space.



This detailed picture shows **Narcissus romieuxii 'Craigton Gem'** with a split corona. This is the first time I have seen this abnormality in this plant and there are a number of flowers like that in some of the other types as well. I put this down to some damage at an early stage of bud development most likely caused by the environmental conditions during the past year. I do not expect not to happen every year.



Narcissus romieuxii 'Craigton Clumper'

'Craigton Clumper' is another form I raised that I have selected more for its health and vigour than anything else.



Narcissus albidus occidentalis

I have been trying to work out both from reading the books and studying our flowers what exactly Narcissus albidus is and this is the nearest I think you can get : why it is not just called N. cantabricus I do not understand.



Narcissus albidus occidentalis flowers

It is a stunningly beautiful plant and among my favourites, especially this form with its long elegant crystalline white trumpets. One feature I did observe that seems to separate it out is that the petals have a twist through at least 90 degrees. It should be noted that the style and filaments are the same brilliant white as the rest of the flower.



**Narcissus romieuxii
subsp. albidus
var ziannicus**

This bulb that I got as *Narcissus romieuxii albidus ziannicus* just adds to my confusion.

While superficially similar to the plant above it differs in that the colour of the style and filaments are darker than corona also there is no significant twisting of the petals.

Narcissus ziannicus

Many of these *Narcissus* can be found with different versions of the names above and from reading Blanchard's book I think that *Narcissus romieuxii subsp. albidus* would be synonymous with *Narcissus albidus* although Blanchard also admits some confusion.

However as you can see from the above pictures the bulbs I have received under these various names appear different and this is also the case with this sturdy form called simply ***Narcissus ziannicus***.

It has the very desirable feature of sturdy stems that hold the substantial flowers firmly erect unlike some of the others forms which have weaker stems with a great tendency to flop over when drawn up in poor light conditions.





Narcissus ziannicus flowers

It is because of these desirable features that have used this form a lot both as a seed parent and a pollen parent



Narcissus sp. ex Morocco

This wee beauty came from Brian Duncan last year and as you can see it flowers on a very short stem and has very few leaves perhaps just one per flower. Like a diminutive *N. romieuxii* and *N. hedreanthus* also comes to mind but I do not know if that grows in Morocco where this plant originated.



Narcissus hispanicus* subsp. *perez-chiscanoi

I have had a pot of *Narcissus perez-chiscanoi* growing in an outside frame for a number of years. In 2002 I cross pollinated it with *N. cyclamineus* and these are the flowers from that seed.

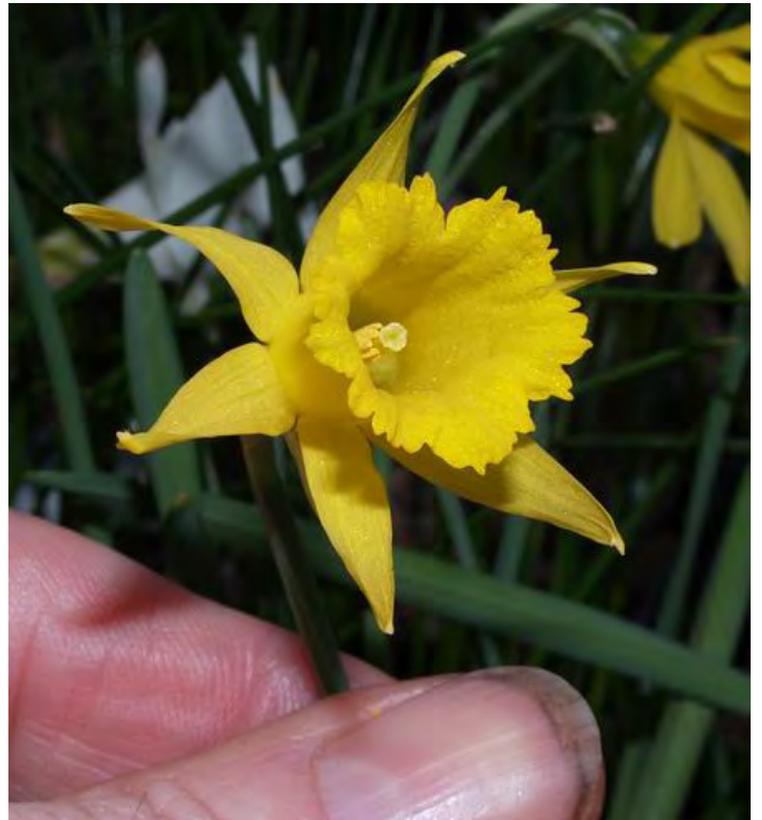


Narcissus hispanicus* subsp. *perez-chiscanoi* x *N. cyclamineus

I think you can see the *N. cyclamineus* influence in the flower in the foreground that has reflexed petals. It is less clear if the other flowers are hybrids as well but they are all smaller than the seed parent. They are very variable as you can see below there are ten flowering and each is distinctly different.



Narcissus hispanicus* subsp. *perez-chiscanoi* x *N. cyclamineus



I think they are all nice flowers some have short tubby coronas while others are long and narrow – all have wide flared and lobed coronas making them very appealing.

I will continue working my way through all the pots of *Narcissus* confirming to the best of my knowledge that they have not got mixed up or contaminated and are true to the name on the label the enjoyable side is this process certainly makes you look in detail at your plants.