

## = Taxonomy of Narcissus =

The taxonomy of *Narcissus* is complex, and still not fully resolved. Known to the ancients, the genus name appears in Graeco @-@ Roman literature, although their interest was as much medicinal as botanical. It is unclear which species the ancients were familiar with. Although frequently mentioned in Mediaeval and Renaissance texts it was not formally described till the work of Linnaeus in 1753. By 1789 it had been grouped into a family ( *Narcissi* ) but shortly thereafter this was renamed *Amaryllideae*, from which comes the modern placement within *Amaryllidaceae*, although for a while it was considered part of *Liliaceae*.

Many of the species now considered to be *Narcissus* were in separate genera during the nineteenth century, and the situation was further confused by the inclusion of many cultivated varieties. By 1875 the current circumscription was relatively settled. By 2004 phylogenetic studies had allowed the place of *Narcissus* within its fairly large family to be established, nested within a series of subfamilies ( *Amaryllidoideae* ) and tribes ( *Narcisseae* ). It shares its position in the latter tribe with *Sternbergia*.

The infrageneric classification has been even more complex and many schemes of subgenera, sections, subsections and series have been proposed, although all had certain similarities. Most authorities now consider there to be 10 ? 11 sections based on phylogenetic evidence. The problems have largely arisen from the diversity of the wild species, frequent natural hybridisation and extensive cultivation with escape and subsequent naturalisation. The number of species has varied anywhere from 16 to nearly 160, but is probably around 50 ? 60.

The genus appeared some time in the Late Oligocene to Early Miocene eras, around 24 million years ago, in the Iberian peninsula. While the exact origin of the word *Narcissus* is unknown it is frequently linked to its fragrance which was thought to be narcotic, and to the legend of the youth of that name who fell in love with his reflection. In the English language the common name *Daffodil* appears to be derived from the *Asphodel* with which it was commonly compared.

## = = History = =

Genus valde intricatum et numerosissimis dubiis oppressum

A genus that is very complex and burdened with numerous uncertainties

## = = = Early = = =

*Narcissus* was first described by Theophrastus ( ?????????, c 371 - c 287 BC ) in his *Historia Plantarum* ( Greek : ????? ????????? ) as ?????????, referring to *N. poeticus*, but comparing it to *Asphodelus* ( ????????? ). Theophrastus' description was frequently referred to at length by later authors writing in Latin such as Pliny the Elder ( Gaius Plinius Secundus, 23 AD ? 79 AD ) from whom came the Latin form *narcissus* ( see also Culture ). Pliny's account comes to us in his *Natural History* ( Latin : *Naturalis Historia* ). Like his contemporaries, his interests were as much therapeutic as botanical. Another much cited Greek authority was Dioscorides ( ?????????, 40 AD ? 90 AD ) in his *De Materia Medica* ( Greek : ????? ????????? ). Both authors were to remain influential till at least the Renaissance, given that their descriptions went beyond the merely botanical, to the therapeutic ( see also Antiquity ).

An early European reference is found in the work of Albert Magnus ( c . 1200 ? 1280 ), who noted in his *De vegetabilibus et plantis* the similarity to the leek. William Turner in his *A New Herball* ( 1551 ) cites all three extensively in his description of the plant and its properties. It was to remain to Linnaeus in 1753 to formally describe and name *Narcissus* as a genus in his *Species Plantarum*, at which time there were six known species ( *N. poeticus*, *N. pseudonarcissus*, *N. bulbocodium*, *N. serotinus*, *N. jonquilla* and *N. tazetta* ). At that time, Linnaeus loosely grouped it together with 50 other genera into his *Hexandria monogynia*.

## = = = Modern = = =

It was de Jussieu in 1789 who first formally created a 'family' ( *Narcissi* ), as the seventh 'Ordo' ( Order ) of the third class ( *Stamina epigyna* ) of Monocots in which *Narcissus* and 15 other genera were placed . The use of the term Ordo at that time was closer to what we now understand as Family , rather than Order . The family has undergone much reorganisation since then , but in 1805 it was renamed after a different genus in the family , *Amaryllis* , as ' *Amaryllideae* ' by Jaume St.-Hilaire and has retained that association since . Jaume St.-Hilaire divided the family into two unnamed sections and recognised five species of *Narcissus* , omitting *N. serotinus* .

De Candolle brought together Linnaeus ' genera and Jussieu 's families into a systematic taxonomy for the first time , but included *Narcissus* ( together with *Amaryllis* ) in the *Liliaceae* in his *Flore française* ( 1805 @-@ 1815 ) rather than *Amaryllidaceae* , a family he had not yet recognised . Shortly thereafter he separated the ' *Amaryllidées* ' from ' *Liliacées* ' ( 1813 ) , though attributing the term to Brown 's ' *Amaryllideae* ' in the latter 's *Prodromus* ( 1810 ) rather than St.-Hilaire 's ' *Amaryllidées* ' . He also provided the text to the first four volumes of Redouté illustrations in the latter 's *Les liliacées* between 1805 and 1808 ( see illustration here of *N. candidissimus* ) .

Historically both wide and narrow interpretations of the genus have been proposed . In the nineteenth century genus splitting was common , favouring the narrow view . Haworth ( 1831 ) using a narrow view treated many species as separate genera , as did Salisbury ( 1866 ) . These authors listed various species in related genera such as *Queltia* ( hybrids ) , *Ajax* ( = *Pseudonarcissus* ) and *Hermione* ( = *Tazettae* ) , sixteen in all in Haworth 's classification . In contrast , Herbert ( 1837 ) took a very wide view reducing Harworth 's sixteen genera to six . Herbert , treating the *Amaryllidaceae* as an ' order ' as was common then , considered the *narcissi* to be a suborder , the *Narcisseae* , the six genera being *Corbularia* , *Ajax* , *Ganymedes* , *Queltia* , *Narcissus* and *Hermione* and his relatively narrow circumscription of *Narcissus* having only three species . Later Spach ( 1846 ) took an even wider view bringing most of Harworth 's genera into the genus *Narcissus* , but as separate subgenera . By the time that Baker ( 1875 ) wrote his monograph all of the genera with one exception were included as *Narcissus* . The exception was the monotypic group *Tapeinanthus* which various subsequent authors have chosen to either exclude ( e.g. Cullen 1986 ) or include ( e.g. Webb 1978 , 1980 ) . Today it is nearly always included .

The eventual position of *Narcissus* within the *Amaryllidaceae* family only became settled in the twenty @-@ first century with the advent of phylogenetic analysis and the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group system . The genus *Narcissus* belongs to the *Narcisseae* tribe , one of 13 within the *Amaryllidoideae* subfamily of the *Amaryllidaceae* . It is one of two sister clades corresponding to genera in the *Narcisseae* , being distinguished from *Sternbergia* by the presence of a paraperigonium , and is monophyletic .

= = Subdivision = =

The infrageneric phylogeny of *Narcissus* still remains relatively unsettled . The taxonomy has proved very complex and difficult to resolve , particularly for the *Pseudonarcissus* group . This is due to a number of factors , including the diversity of the wild species , the ease with which natural hybridisation occurs , and extensive cultivation and breeding accompanied by escape and naturalisation .

De Candolle , in the first systematic taxonomy of *Narcissus* , arranged the species into named groups , and those names ( *Faux @-@ Narcisse* or *Pseudonarcissus* , *Poétiques* , *Tazettes* , *Bulbocodiens* , *Jonquilles* ) have largely endured for the various subdivisions since and bear his name . The evolution of classification was confused by including many unknown or garden varieties , until Baker ( 1875 ) made the important distinction of excluding all specimens except the wild species from his system . He then grouped all of the earlier related genera as sections under one genus , *Narcissus* , the exception being the monotypic *Tapeinanthus* . Consequently , the number of accepted species has varied widely .