

## DAFFODIL LOVE FEST

Blessed by a late spring the daffodils have been smashing this year. Did you take home a plant from your day at Gloucester's Daffodil Festival? The wind was cold but the smiles of visitors were warm as they carried away their treasures I found a Celandine poppy at the Sassafras Farm booth.

The woodland spring bloom, *Stylophorum diphyllum*, has a yellow bloom and likes moist, moderately fertile, humus-rich soil in deep or partial shade. It becomes scorched in hot sun and I hope I don't have to move it several times before I find a "fit" in my less than ideal situation. The "diphyllum" refers to the two leaves just below the flower.

This is not the Celandine called Lesser Celandine, also a spring yellow bloomer, *Ranunculus ficaria* or Pilewort, a smooth perennial herb with simple heart-shaped glossy member of the buttercup family and has leaves that die down after flowering. R.f. albus has pale yellow flowers fading to white and dark bronze leaves. When the leaves die on this woodland plant don't plopp something on top of it.

Blank spots are to enjoyed.

Another Celandine is *Chelidonium majus*, also yellow flowered but tall, one to two feet. It is not native but imported from Europe. The wildflower manual says it is aggressive and poisonous to chickens. Since its saffron-colored sap resembles bile, it was thought to be a cure for liver disorders. This and the Lesser Celandine are similar but not closely related.

If you have a primrose path in a wooded area you may have noticed the small tents of the Mayapple unfurling. Even when what was once a path is strewn with downed trees, you can still enjoy the stirrings of spring and listen to the rat-a-tat of the woodpeckers. I had hoped to "improve" the small uncleared woods behind my house but with so many upended trees it is best left alone to collapse in its own.

## CABBAGES & KINGS

Last year when I dug up the grass along the driveway, I put in a gift of tiny daisy plants that have spread gently. They have a name in German, "anselumchen," little goose flowers. Then are good neighbors to ajuga and moss phlox. Never more than a few inches high, the inch-wide yellow-centered white daisy is slighter than the English daisy. *Bellis perennis*, will remind you of the daisies that once grew in lawns for small girls to weave into daisy chains. Now that lawns must be pure grass, small girls are bereft.

Master Gardener Herb Hotchner has an eclectic lawn. If it is green and can be mowed, it will do. Another Master Gardener, Jackie Partin shared a related item from the April Bay

Journal with me-for you. Americans manage more than 30 million acres of lawn and spend \$750million per year on grass seed. Among other staggering figures: Per hour of operation, small gas-powered engines used for yard care emit more hydrocarbons than a typical car. Mowers emit 10 times as much as mulch; trimmers, 21 times; and blowers a whopping 34 times as much! A 100 ft x 100 ft grass lawn uses 10,000 gallons of water per summer. Thirty percent of the water consumed on the East Coast goes to watering lawns.

Along with sunscreen and even a hat, gardeners need gloves. If you are tempted to work in your garden without gloves because those you have are so cumbersome, you may as well be wearing boxing gloves; try Foxgloves! I know, bad pun but neat gloves. Designed by a professional horticulturist, Foxgloves use tough modern fabrics that protect nails and hands which allowing you to plant the smallest sees.