



SRGC

----- Bulb Log Diary -----

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BULB LOG 16.....16th April 2014





Erythronium 'Craigton Cover Girl'



Do I need an excuse to show you more Erythroniums?

They are approaching the peak flowering period in our garden just now - that is when we have most in flower at the same time. The first, *Erythronium caucasicum* flowered months ago while others such as *Erythronium montanum* are not yet through the ground.

Erythronium 'Craigton Cover Girl' was the first hybrid that I named and I have had no regrets with this selection it regularly has two flowers per stem, occasionally more, they are a good pink with a yellow eye that also displays a red zig-zag pattern. There are a number of very similar hybrids to this one appearing in other gardens as well as ours, many now also being named so there should be plenty available soon to choose from. I do not think I will name another that is very similar to this form but I am watching a few with noticeably

darker pink flowers one of which has three flowers per stem – I just hope they will increase.



Erythronium revolutum

With so many Erythroniums now self-seeding every flower in the garden has to be carefully turned up to see what it is. Without DNA analysis it is sometimes difficult to tell if we have a species or hybrid but I am as sure as I can be that the next few pictures are Erythronium revolutum – above is an almost white form with just a very pale pink wash that is hardly discernable in the picture.



Erythronium revolutum

This is a pale pink form with cream rather than yellow pollen.



Erythronium revolutum white



Above is a mixed group of Erythroniums, all the pink ones are Erythronium revolutum but so is the white one in the middle of the group with two flowers on the stem. As the flowers age the tepals do develop a pink tinge especially towards the tips.

I first noticed this one a few years ago and it is I am sure, a pure white form of Erythronium revolutum. All the morphological characteristics indicate only that species is involved.

Key features are the shape of the filaments that connect the anthers to the flower –the way they broaden out towards the base is typical as is the stigma, petal shape and markings. To date this plant has not set seed, perhaps it is now mature enough to do so, nor has it shown any signs that it will bulk up by division.



Erythronium oregonum



Other plants of so called white E. revolutum that I have been shown have invariably turned out to be the closely related and equally attractive Erythronium oregonum.

The picture above shows the group and the variation in colour of the markings visible from the back of the flowers and on the left and below I show pictures of the very decorative interiors. Sadly all of the finest marked forms of this

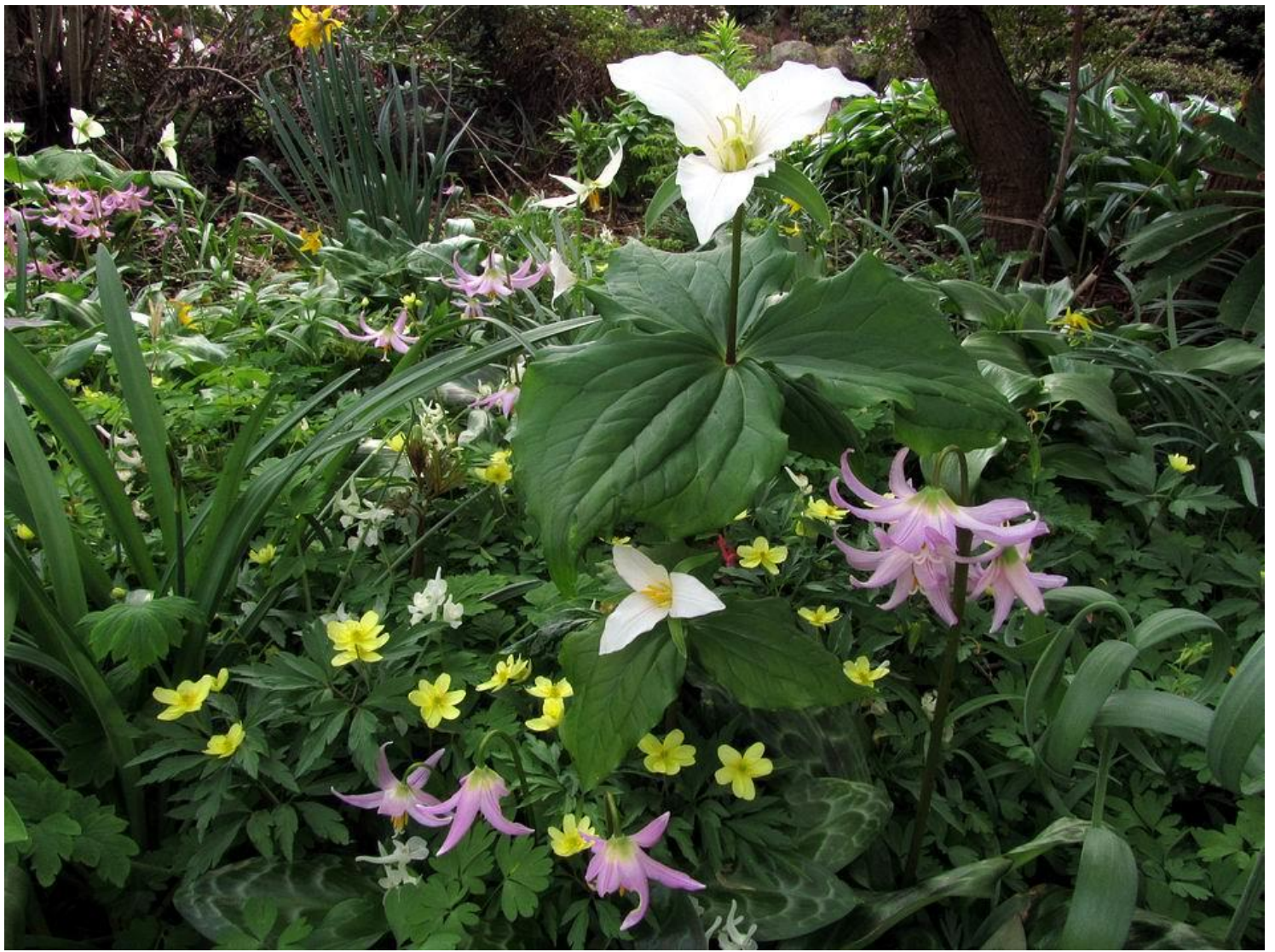
species we have do not show any encouraging signs of bulking up at any speed.



Erythronium oregonum



Mixed planting



Trillium ovatum, Erythronium revolutum and others



Trillium grandiflorum

Trillium grandiflorum

Having cross pollinated the white form of *Trillium grandiflorum* with its beautiful roseum form the resulting seedlings include a lot of pink plants as shown above and on the right.



Self-sown *Trillium ovatum* and *Muscari* growing in the gravel.



Trillium chloropetalum

Trilliums also seed freely around our garden including this one which I think to be a form or perhaps hybrid of *Trillium chloropetalum*.



Trillium rivale with *Erythronium sibiricum*.



Erythronium sibiricum

I have been trying to grow this species for some 30 years with varying degrees of success. Initially we were given a single bulb which we grew in a pot – the trouble was that the flower kept opening before the stem elongated resulting in the flower opening underground and by the time the stem pushed it into the light it had already faded. I did overcome that by keeping the pot in a fridge then bringing the plant into the kitchen where it flowered reasonably well but I wanted it in the garden. Eventually we acquired some seed which, when first raised, behaved in a similar way but we did manage to get it to flower and set seed – we have repeated this process over several generations now with each generation becoming more tolerant of our growing conditions. As well as the obvious variations in how a plant looks each seedling has a variation in what growing conditions it can tolerate. By raising from seed the ones that cannot grow in our conditions do not survive - those that grow can adapt to our garden and each subsequent generation becomes further adapted to our garden. The result is that after many years and to my great delight we now have many forms of *Erythronium sibiricum* growing very happily and flowering normally.



Erythronium sibiricum variations



Erythronium sibiricum

Another batch of seedlings have wider petals and plain green leaves – each of these is an individual clone.



I cannot emphasise enough how important it is to continually raise your plants from seed. Recently a few growers have told me they do not bother to raise bulbs from seed because the form they have increases well by division or bulbils. With any kind of vegetative increase you do not get a new young vigorous bulb but a clone of the original bulb – so if that bulb was originally raised fifty years ago your offset is also fifty with any problems that might bring. Old clones pick up diseases including virus in their life which are passed on through vegetative increase while seed raised

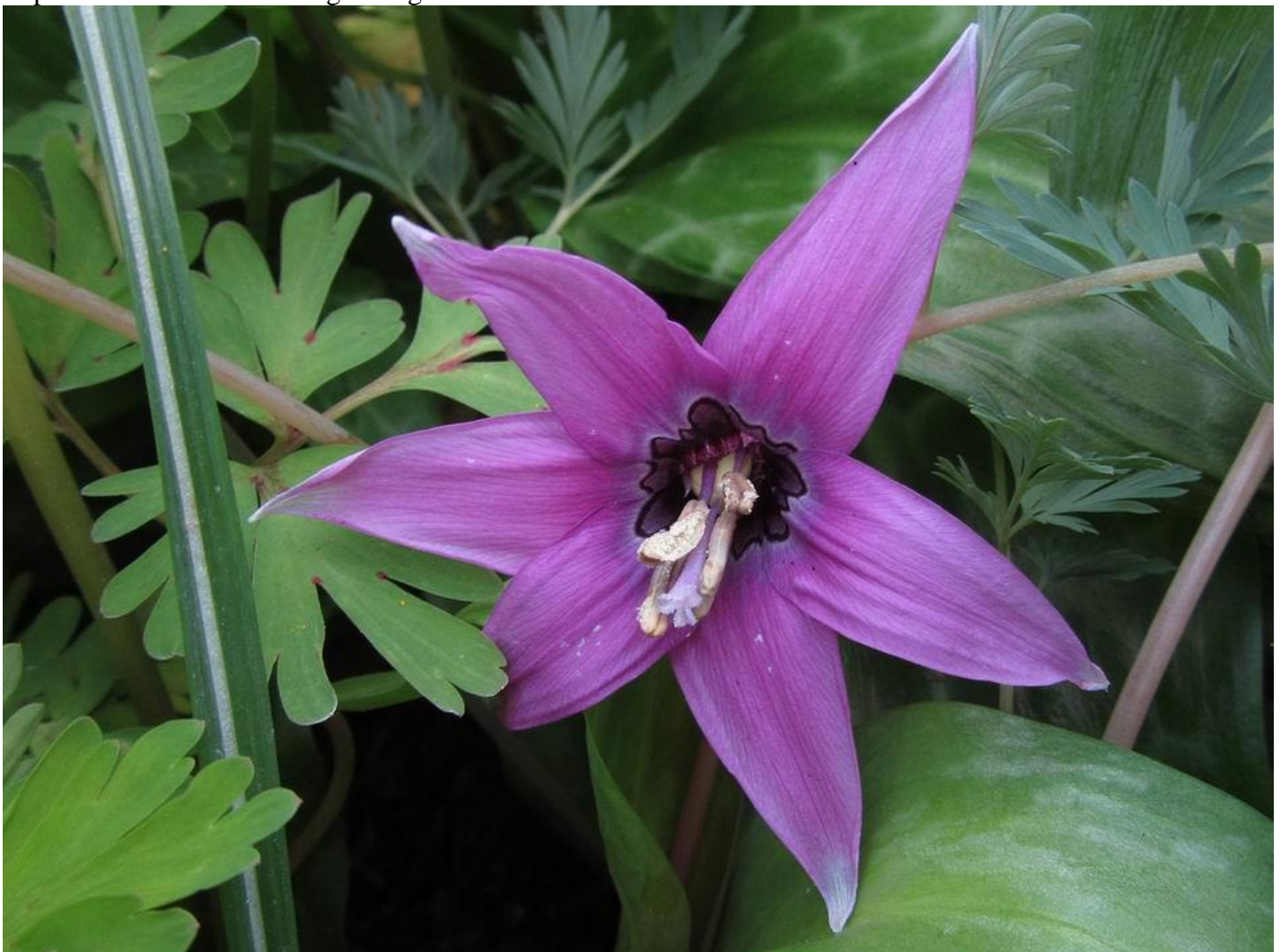
Erythronium sibiricum seed germinating

bulbs are healthy and vigorous. It is essential to secure our plants in cultivation that is why we must regularly raise them from seed. Ok, you cannot preserve a clone in this way but old clones can go down with disease or simply become tired and loose vigour while the seed line can continue to give us new healthy garden plants.



Erythronium japonicum

I have been raising *Erythronium japonicum* from seed since I first got the plant, not because it was difficult to grow and flower normally in our garden but to be able to enjoy the wide variation of markings and also to achieve a stock of plants more suited to our growing conditions.



Erythronium japonicum



Erythronium americanum 'Craigton Flower'
A free flowering seed raised form of *Erythronium americanum*.



Erythronium grandiflorum showing two of the pollen colour variations.



Erythronium hendersonii



We have never raised a true form of *Erythronium hendersonii* that increases very quickly by off-setting, although several hybrids have occurred that do form clumps. Seed has been the main form of increase which also gives us the variation in colour and markings.



Erythronium klamathense



Erythronium klamathense is perhaps the smallest species we grow – even at full maturity it is less than 15cm tall. Mature bulbs can have three yellow centred white flowers per stem which turn pink as they start to fade.



Erythronium klamathense



***Sanguinaria canadensis* Multiplex**

A few weeks ago I showed a picture of this trough when the galanthus was in full flower now it is the turn of the original occupant, the double form of *Sanguinaria canadensis*, to flower. They grow very happily together except I did have to part the Galanthus leaves a wee bit to fully reveal the flowers before taking the picture— next time I split replant this trough I think I will remove some of the snowdrops to rectify this issue.





Primula vulgaris, Anemone x lipsiensis, Erythronium and Rhododendron



Last picture of this week is another view over Erythroniums with the promise of more to come –
Do I need an excuse.....