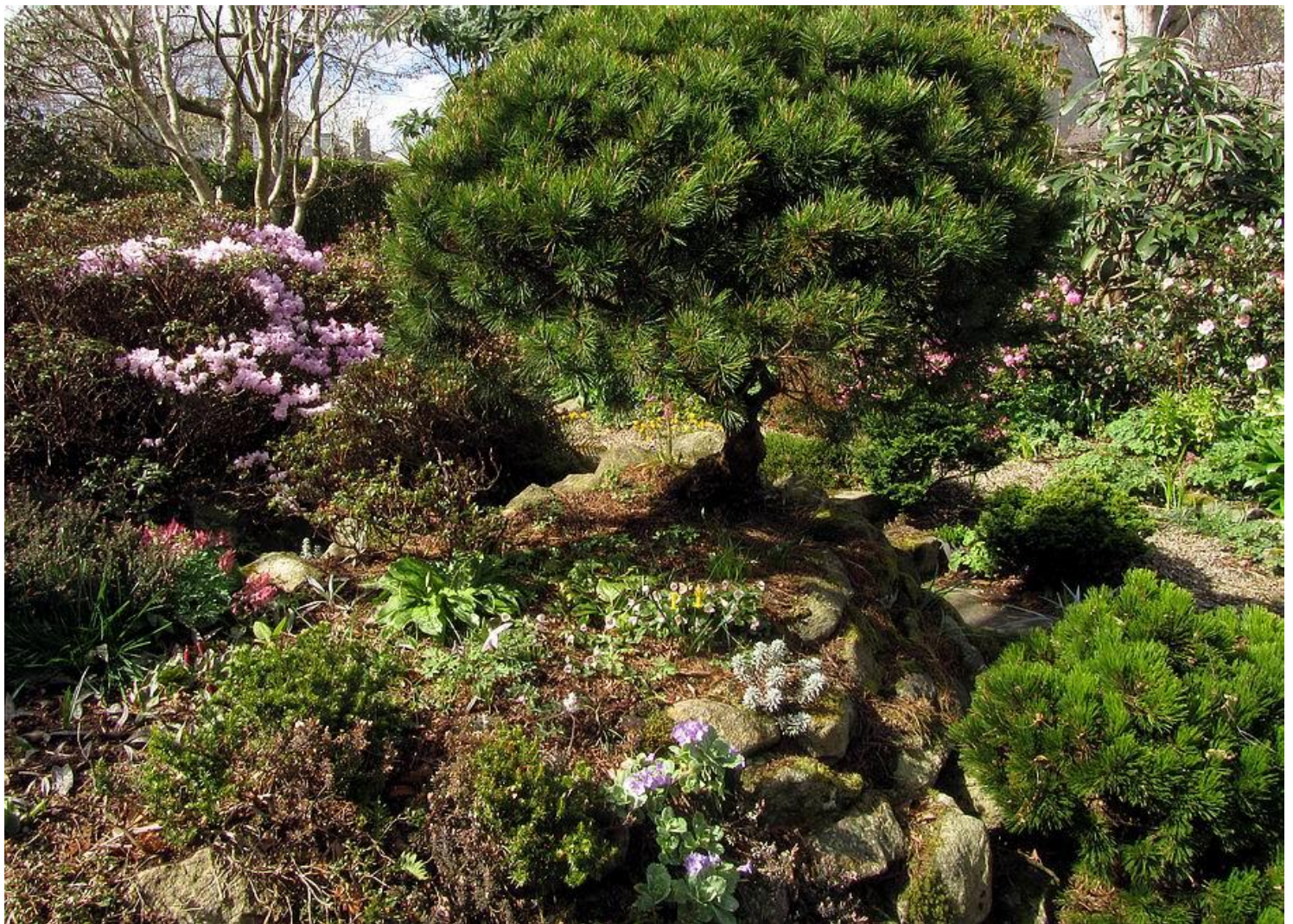




BULB LOG 15.....15th April 2015





We made some big changes to this raised bed in recent years when we removed some of the shrubs that had become too large as well as removing all the lower branches of the Pine, opening up the area underneath it for planting. Originally this bed, made in 1985, was intended for dwarf shrubs, mostly Ericaceous, along with dwarf bulbous



plants. As time passed by some shrubs took over the space so we decided to manage the situation to re-establish our original vision of a bed to feature some dwarf Ericaceous and bulbous plants that would benefit from being raised up so we could better see them.

The retaining wall is made up of rounded field stone and there is a gentle slope back from the base to the top giving us better planting opportunities for plants such as forms of **Primula marginata**.

Another form of **Primula marginata** leads your eye up to the planting of dwarf bulbs on the top of the bed.

Erythronium sibiricum, **Narcissus cyclamineus** and **Trillium rivale**.



Narcissus cyclamineus and Trillium rivale.

Last year I planted out this pot of *Trillium rivale* seedlings enmasse without disturbing them – keeping the different clones close together will help the cross fertilization and resulting seed set. Note all the seedlings in the foreground.



I planted another pot of seed raised **Trillium rivale** further along the same bed – it also is surrounded by germinating seedlings. See and hear more of these in the [Bulb Log video diary supplements](#).



Above is a mesh basket of seedlings, which is not plunged at the moment, where some are flowering size displaying the variations you can get from seedlings. I intend to split this basket and plant most of the individuals around the garden although I may grow the two best marked ones on in pots for a few years to see how they increase as clones. The best time to split them is when they are in flower then it is easy to select the clones I want.



Trillium hibbersonii seedlings

The same is true for *Trillium hibbersonii* seedlings – this week I split this pot of seedlings for the first time since I sowed them. This is part of a two pot trial where I split the seed into two; sowing half deep, at around 5cms, while I surface sowed the other half with just the normal covering of gravel over the seed. Both pots have produced a similar germination rate but there are more flowering sized ones in those that were sown deep – these are the ones I have pictured. My trial shows you will get good germination sowing trillium seed with either surface or deep sowing but I would choose to sow them deeply as they develop to flowering size quicker. Fresh seed is always better and if you have dried seed, soak them overnight in water before sowing.

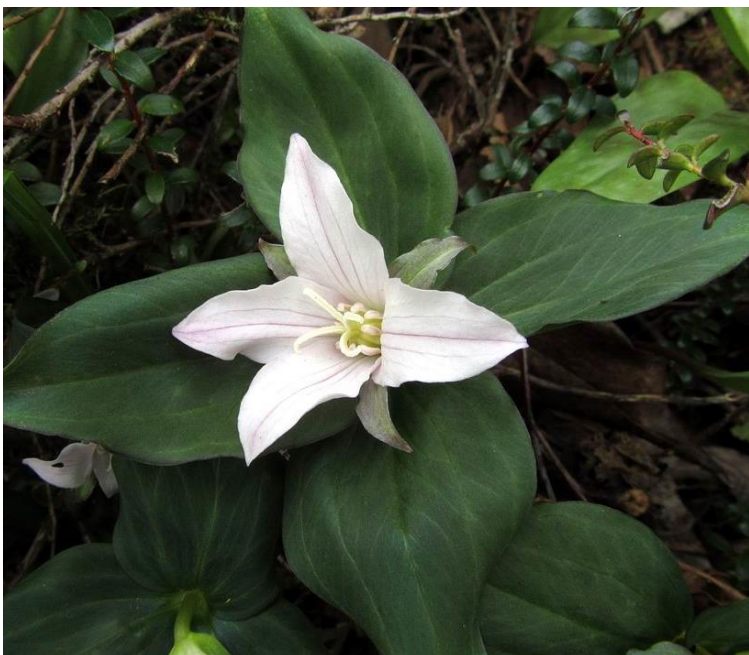


The reason this is the best time to replant Trilliums is that the roots you see have served their primary task of supplying the growth you see with moisture and nutrition - soon new roots will start to emerge that the plant needs next spring. Handling trilliums later in the year will cause damage to the new emerging roots and that is why so often it is written that trilliums sulk for a year after they have been split or divided. While handling trilliums now

may cause slight damage to the current root system it matters less as they have already served their main purpose rather than splitting them later when damaging the new roots that emerge soon will severely inhibit next season's growth and flowering potential. I apply this same regime for all our Trilliums - splitting as flowers fade.



The same **Trillium hibbersonii** seedlings now planted out and well watered into the raised bed not far from where I have some of the *Trillium rivale*.



Trillium hibbersonii often produces extra petals – four is quite common and the bottom right flower has six – I do not find this an attractive feature, much preferring the true form with just three.



Trillium rivale with Corydalis, Dicentra and Erythronium.



This *Erythronium revolutum* hybrid with good dark pink flowers and attractively marked leaves is one of several that I am assessing.



I like the fact that it has darker pink flowers with a strong dark red 'M' mark in the centre as well as nice leaves – what I am looking for is a form with these features that will increase quickly forming clumps. [See more of these in the Bulb Log video diary supplements.](#)



Erythronium oregonum

These leaves with the dramatic pattern are a group of Erythronium oregonum plants that I raised from seed many years ago, unfortunately they do not divide so the only way to increase them is by seed.



The Erythronium plunge bed on the right, the rock garden bed on the left and the Corydalis and Hepatica planting.



Erythronium hendersonii is always among the first of the North American species to flower.



Over the years I have raised **Erythronium sibiricum** from seed, both from our own garden and from other sources. I have often speculated that it was not a single species but a group of closely related species and now that some work is being done a number of new taxa are being described within this complex. I now understand this is **Erythronium krylovii** – I have not seen the official description but the differences that I note are the shape of the style, the distinct tricolor of the flower and plain green leaves also it flowers some two weeks ahead of other *Erythronium sibiricum* in our garden.



Erythronium krylovii



Erythronium krylovii



Erythronium sibiricum

Here is one of the first flowers on *Erythronium sibiricum* just emerging so you can compare the difference in flower colours also the style of *Erythronium krylovii* seems less obviously divided than it is in *Erythronium sibiricum*.



Narcissus bulbocodium is one of many plants self seeding around the gravel bed [See more of in the Bulb Log video diary supplements.](#)



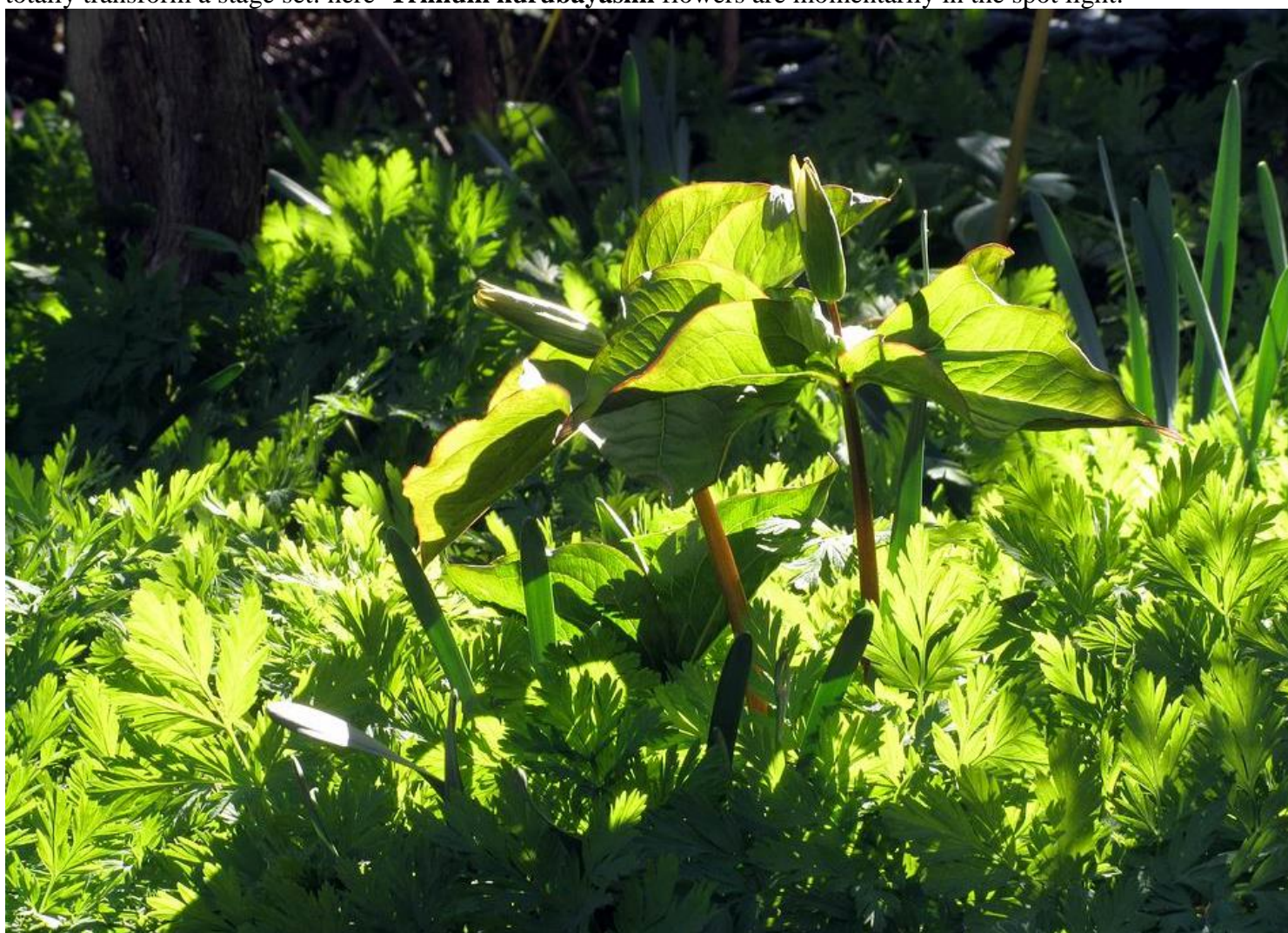
It is not only bulbous plants that are in flower here some Saxifrages light up one of the raised beds, landscaped with a mix of pink granite and broken concrete blocks.



Mixed plantings are a big feature in our garden with plants growing in supportive communities, in this example **Trillium and Erythronium** feature at the moment.



I recently wrote of the importance of changing light and how it changes the garden just like good lighting can totally transform a stage set: here **Trillium kurubayashii** flowers are momentarily in the spot light.



Even more dramatic lighting on this Trillium rising through Dicentra leaves is my final image this week.....

See and hear more in the [Bulb Log video diary supplements](#).