



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 45.....8th November 2017





Now it is November we have to get used to the darker days with the sun staying low in the sky and accept how that affects the plants and this gardener. It is well known that many people in northern areas are affected by the much reduced therapeutic boost from the sunshine and I have found that sitting in front

of my SAD light for an hour a day makes a huge difference. Many of the trees starting shutting down in preparation to shedding their leaves long before the temperatures drop, they too respond to the reducing light levels then the cold brings the final curtain and the mass fall of leaves.



While some of the trees lost their leaves over a month ago these Acers I reaised from seed are only just starting to turn colour now showing that trees, like people, react in different ways to the low level sun and shorter days.



Typical autumn scenes are still to be found with colourful Hamamelis and Acer leaves in the more shaded sheltered areas of the garden and different types of fungi (below) ripening to shed their spores.





Clematis rehderiana

We grew *Clematis rehderiana* from seed collected by Alistair McKelvie and gave away most of the seedlings except this one which we planted out to climb up the side fence. Every winter we cut it back hard to the bare stems and every time it comes back more rampant than before. The growth starts in late spring/early summer with a long progression of flowers appearing starting in August and depending on the weather continuing into December. While it has taken over the canopy of the swing seat we can still enjoy relaxing in the bower. I have just found that a common name for this plant is 'nodding virgin's bower'!



Hypericum reptans



In these winter months I like to see how many flowers there are open in the garden, some are at, or coming to, the end of their season while some encouraged by the weather are flowering well outside their normal season. This informs us that plants respond to growing and weather conditions not to a calendar.

Pseudofumaria alba disregards all seasons and depending on the

weather can flower at any time of the year.



Cyananthus lobatus



Cyanthus microphyllus



Hesperantha coccinea



Hypericum



Papaver cambricum (Meconopsis cambrica)



Geranium sanguineum



Primula capitata

This is not the first time this group of *Primula capitata* seedlings has sent up an out of season flower.



While we tend to say the plants are going to sleep underground for the winter that is not the case, just under the surface the early spring growths are ready and waiting for the days to start extending and the temperatures to rise.



'Cousin It' as this grass growing in the slabs is known, needs a trim but behind it you will see Geranium robertianum still in flower and to the left of that a row of self-sown Fragaria in full flower.



Fragaria



We do grow *Fragaria vesca* which has much smaller flowers and berries so this self-sown colony may be of hybrid origin or it could equally well be from seeds deposited by birds. We had a good crop of berries in July/August and the plants just continue to produce flowers, due to the cold dark weather the berries will not ripen.

A white form of **Geranium robertianum** colonises the cobble covered bulb sand bed.



The growth in the troughs is also entering the winter state where the Saxifrages and other plants have to compete with the growth of mosses and liverworts.







Slab Bed



This *Erodium* species grown from seed ex-Spain, grows in the corner of one of the slab beds and has also produced a long succession of flowers since July or earlier.



While checking the 7cm pots in the bulb house I found that I still had two pots of *Crocus ochroleucus albus* so I carefully tipped one out to replant the corms into the new sand beds. I would not recommend disturbing bulbs in full growth but sometimes the best time is when you remember. The gritty/sandy potting mixtures that I use drops away very easily freeing up the corms and roots with minimal if any damage.



Crocus ochroleucus albus with the white throat beside the typical form of this species with a yellow throat which is clearly visible even when the flower is closed.



Also flowering in the sand bed is this lovely dark form of **Crocus mathewii** given the name '**Dream Dancer**'. Janis Ruksans suggests this may be a hybrid between *Crocus mathewii* and *Crocus pallasii* which from the looks of it seems very possible.





The latest sand bed

My pleasure from the bulb house sand beds continues to grow as do all the bulbs that I planted out there – it has become a garden under cover where we can enjoy the bulbs growing this way

through the dark winter months. I have considered adding some rocks to form more of a landscape in the sand beds but decided that would take away space for more bulbs. You may have noticed the fuzzy spot on this and the next few pictures – this was caused by a rain spot on the lens that was not noticeable until I enlarged the image on my laptop.





Sternbergia lutea, Crocus laevigatus and Cyclamen mirabile.



The lovely dark veined flowers of **Crocus goulimyii 'Sofia Agia' MJ9562** make it stand out from the rest of this species.



***Crocus goulimyii* 'Sofia Agia' MJ9562**



Crocus caspius



I have placed my pollinating brush beside this *Crocus caspius* to show the size it has grown to when its roots have the freedom of the sand to explore, compare that to the same species growing in a 7cm pot with the same brush shown below.

The flower is certainly taller and larger and I am interested to see how the

corms will compare at the end of the season.



Crocus caspius



Crocus longiflorus attracts the attentions of a bumble bee.



Narcissus romieuxii

Most of the first hoop petticoat Narcissus to flower in the autumn tend to have cream or white flowers so it is good to have this deep yellow form to add variety to the early flowering Narcissus. I hope it is not an aberration that it is flowering this early but that this clone that will continue to behave in this way.



Sand Bed

This corner of the 'U' shaped sand plunge, which is the longest established (2013), showing much leaf growth among which can be seen masses of flowers stems and buds rising.



It is not just the Saxifrages in the roughs that have to compete with the growth of mosses.....