



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 07.....17th February 2021



Snow Report



Like many others we were hit by winter this week - starting last Wednesday as I loaded the Bulb Log heavy snow was falling - quickly covering the garden in a deepening white blanket.



I tried capturing the snow fall through the windows in these first three pictures as it was too wild to venture out.



Well landscaped troughs, built up well above the rim with large rocks, look much more attractive even when covered in snow.

The snow came in waves, blowing in from the east on strong winds and during the breaks between snow I went out to take some pictures. The pictures appear this week in chronological order showing the deepening snow levels building up over a couple of days of snow storms.





Snow covered bonsai trees.



A few weeks ago I showed how a light dusting of snow made the rock landscapes in the troughs and slab beds more dramatic in appearance now they are disappearing under mounds of snow but still they look attractive.



Snow mounds up on the troughs.





Bonsai



View across the slab beds and trough area towards the rest of the garden.



Bulb houses with ever more snow.



In the brighter moments the greens stand out against the whiteness of the snow.



Snow is the ideal cover for the pots in this frame: the white blanket serves to insulate them from the worst effect of the deep frosts, down to -14°C , that we recorded in the garden - 60 miles west in Braemar it was -23°C .



When the snow stopped we got a brief period with blue sky and sunshine before more showers came in.



Blue sky, sunshine and snow over the troughs and slab beds makes for an attractive if wintery scene.

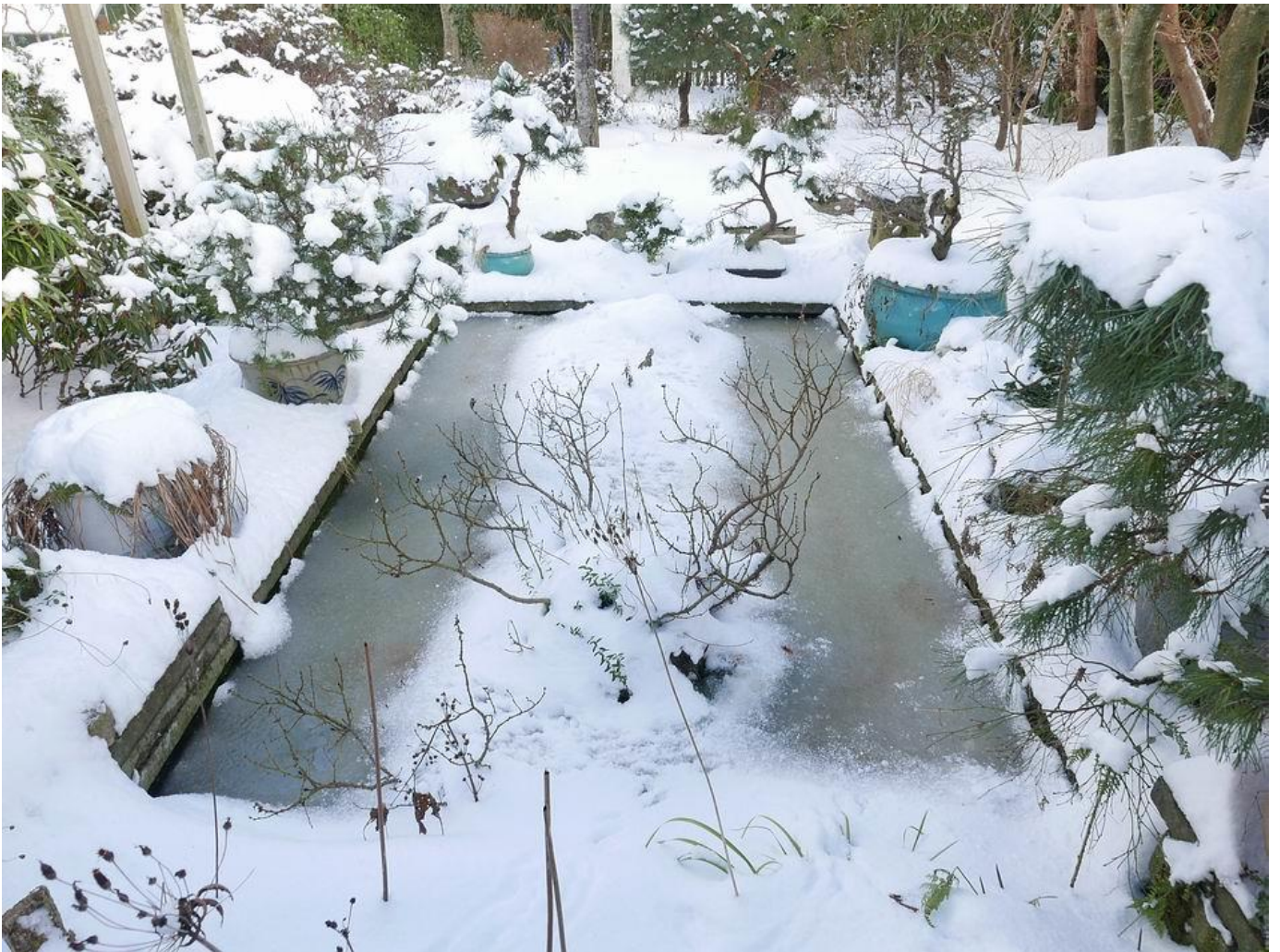


The Erythronium plunge has become a white canvas; a nice contrast to the riot of colour that will be on display in a few months' time.



Trees





The pond and islands covered in ice and snow.





The beautiful bark is one just of the decorative features of this large **Rhododendron thomsonii**. Above my head it is covered with fat flower buds that will not need much of a rise in temperatures to encourage them to open.



As the snow got deeper and the worst of the cold was moving away it was time to clear the bulb house roofs.





Because of the weight it is important to prevent too much snow building up on the glass roofs – if it becomes too heavy there is the danger of a collapse and that would not be a good situation to be in.



Now the snow seems to have passed I clear the roofs to allow the light and warmth in to the plants which have all been frozen into the sand and plunges.



The mid-day temperature is minus 6.3 but in the past week we have had freezing conditions down as far as -14C in our garden and we just have to hope the plants come through. So much depends on the amount of moisture in the sand, compost and the plant cells- if they are on the dry side plants can survive much better. We can only wait and hope. It has been a relatively short cold period so hopefully there is not much loss or damage - I will be reporting any long term damage in future Bulb Logs. While I do not heat these houses I have soil warming cables at the bottom of the sand beds and the main

plunges but the sand still freezes on top and the pots also freeze I just aim to stop too severe freezing at the base of the bulbs. Every year I need to check that all the thermostat settings are good and the switches work - ideally the cables should come on when the temperature towards the bottom of the plunges falls below freezing and should switch off again when it goes +1. During the first night of severe cold a thermostat stuck and one set of cables did not come on until I adjusted it in the morning. All the growth of the bulbs in the bulb houses including the snowdrops collapsed flat as water was frozen but gradually as the thaw set in they have lifted themselves back up again – I am hopeful that we will not lose any of them because of the cold.

There are some overflow plants and seedlings in pots and a small sand bed in this bulb house that were not protected by a cable so I am interested to see if they have been damaged. These include *Tropaeolum tricolor* and I know the foliage is frost hardy down to these levels but it will be interesting to see how the tubers, which were on the dry side, survive. I also have another pot of this I forgot about sitting exposed outside so I can do a direct comparison.



***Tropaeolum tricolor* and mixed Narcissus**



In Scotland we have more than 400 words and expressions for snow, according to a project to compile a Scots thesaurus. Academics have officially logged 421 terms - including "snaw" (snow), "sneel" (to begin to rain or snow) and "skelf" (a large snowflake).....