



BULB LOG 08.....24<sup>th</sup> February 2021



*Eranthis pinnatifida*





The weather changed quickly in the middle of last week when a mild wet front moved over washing all the snow away overnight. Within a few days the cobble bed went from being covered in snow as seen above to being completely clear and in flower below.



**Cobble Bed**



The **Galanthus** and **Eranthis** grew under the snow with many more shoots and buds being visible by the time the snow melted and the ones that were there before the snow put on a good 2- 3 cms.



With plenty of water provided by the snow melt along with the mild temperature growth continued with the snowdrop growing by the day





**Eranthis hyemalis**



**Eranthis pinnatifida**

The *Eranthis pinnatifida* also continued growing under the blanket of snow and as it melted away the beautiful flowers emerged. On the left is a lovely pink selection from Soryo-Cho, Hiroshima that I raised from seed and the pink colouration has been passed on to a second generation pot of seedlings – I also raised the form on the right from seed originally sourced at Shimoyoshida, Chichibu-Shi, Saitama.





***Eranthis pinnatifida*, Soryo-Cho Hiroshima**

The soft pinkness of the flowers has been washed out by the exposure in this picture but the deep colouration can be seen in the leaves and the stems. I find this the most attractive of all the forms that I have seen. Notice that when growing well a secondary flower can grow below the primary one.



***Eranthis pinnatifida*, Shimoyoshida, Chichibu-Shi, Saitama** – this form has slightly smaller flowers but is still very appealing. Both of these are nicer to my eye than the first ones that I grew which was the one I see most often being grown in Europe.





Looking down on these two clones of **Eranthis pinnatifida** shows more clearly the difference in colour and size.



**Seedling ex Eranthis pinnatifida, Soryo-Cho Hiroshima.**

You could easily walk past this small plant in the garden and not notice it but if you are wondering what excited so many of us you just need to look closely at the colour and form within the flowers to see nature's beauty.





**Eranthis byunsanensis** is a close but distinct relative that grows in Korea – the clearest difference is that the nectaries, which are actually the true petals, towards the centre of the flower are green instead of yellow in *pinnatifida*. You can read more about these plants and other *Eranthis* in an article by Wim Boens in [International Rock Gardener 49](#)

I am often asked where seed or plants of these beauties can be acquired and while they are slowly being grown by more people they still remain scarce in cultivation.

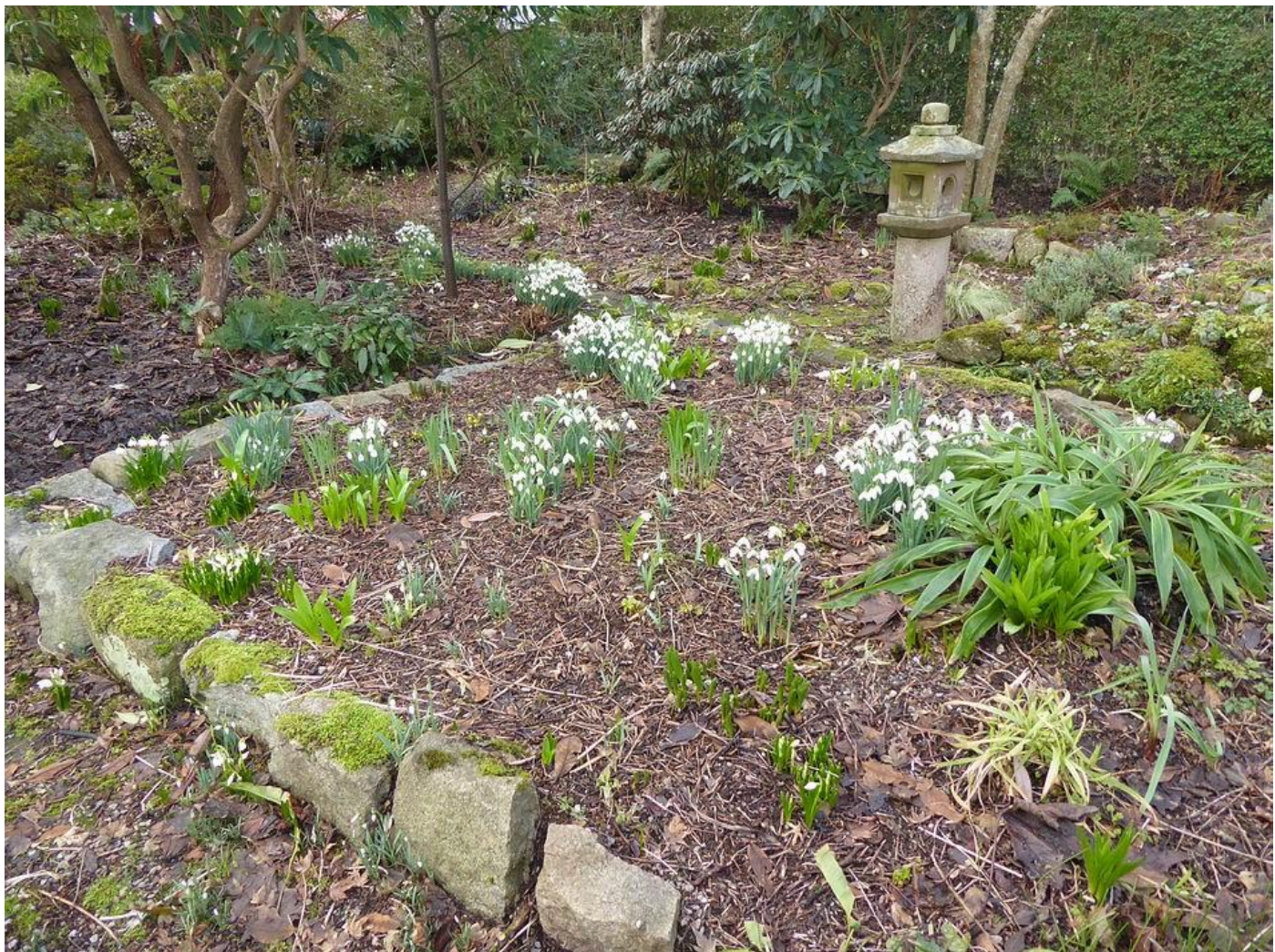


Over 20 years ago we bought at great expense our very first *Eranthis pinnatifida* when the tuber arrived it was packed in moss to keep it moist and the tuber was so small that it took me about 10 minutes to find it among the small amount of moss.

The tubers are never that big but these were tiny; probably just first year seedlings however we grew it on and after a few years we got our first ***Eranthis pinnatifida*** flower, **left**, which I carefully self-pollinated resulting in some seed. Many years later when sharing seed around the world was much easier than regulations make it today a friend in Japan, that I swapped seed with, sent me these different forms which flowered in the third year after sowing. Now while fresh seed germinates well I have found that getting a good seed set is not that straight forward. As soon as I see the white pollen appearing I am out with my paint brush cross pollinating but a good fertilisation and seed set is dependent on the weather and I cannot control that. I have tried growing them in the bulb house to protect them but if

anything they disliked that even more so I reverted to leaving them out side where they grew best but seed set is still hit and miss. If all the flowering plants we have were successful we would have plenty seed to share around but most years I just get enough seed to maintain and slowly build up our own stocks –last year three fat seed pods on the pink form disappeared overnight –something must have eaten them it could have been a slug, a mouse or a bird so I will try and find a way to protect them from that this year. The small colony we have growing in a bed did set some seed which I allowed to scatter naturally as I am trying to build a self-seeding colony there.





The rapid snow melt in the milder air acted like a starting pistol for the mass growth and flowering in the garden.



As if from nowhere clumps of snowdrops are now appearing.





Singly planted bulbs soon form clumps like this pushing through the mulch of fallen leaves which also serve to improve the soil as they break down.



***Galanthus plicatus* seedlings.**



For two days we had dry weather and some very welcome sunshine which allowed the snowdrops to open their flowers and me to get on with lifting the last of the leaves and preparing the beds for the imminent growths that will push through from their winter hibernation.



**Galanthus and Eranthis** enjoying the sunshine for the first time this year.





**Cyclamen coum** have made this sand bed, now becoming the moss bed, their home; seeding around and the first into flower among the smaller bulbs we grow here.

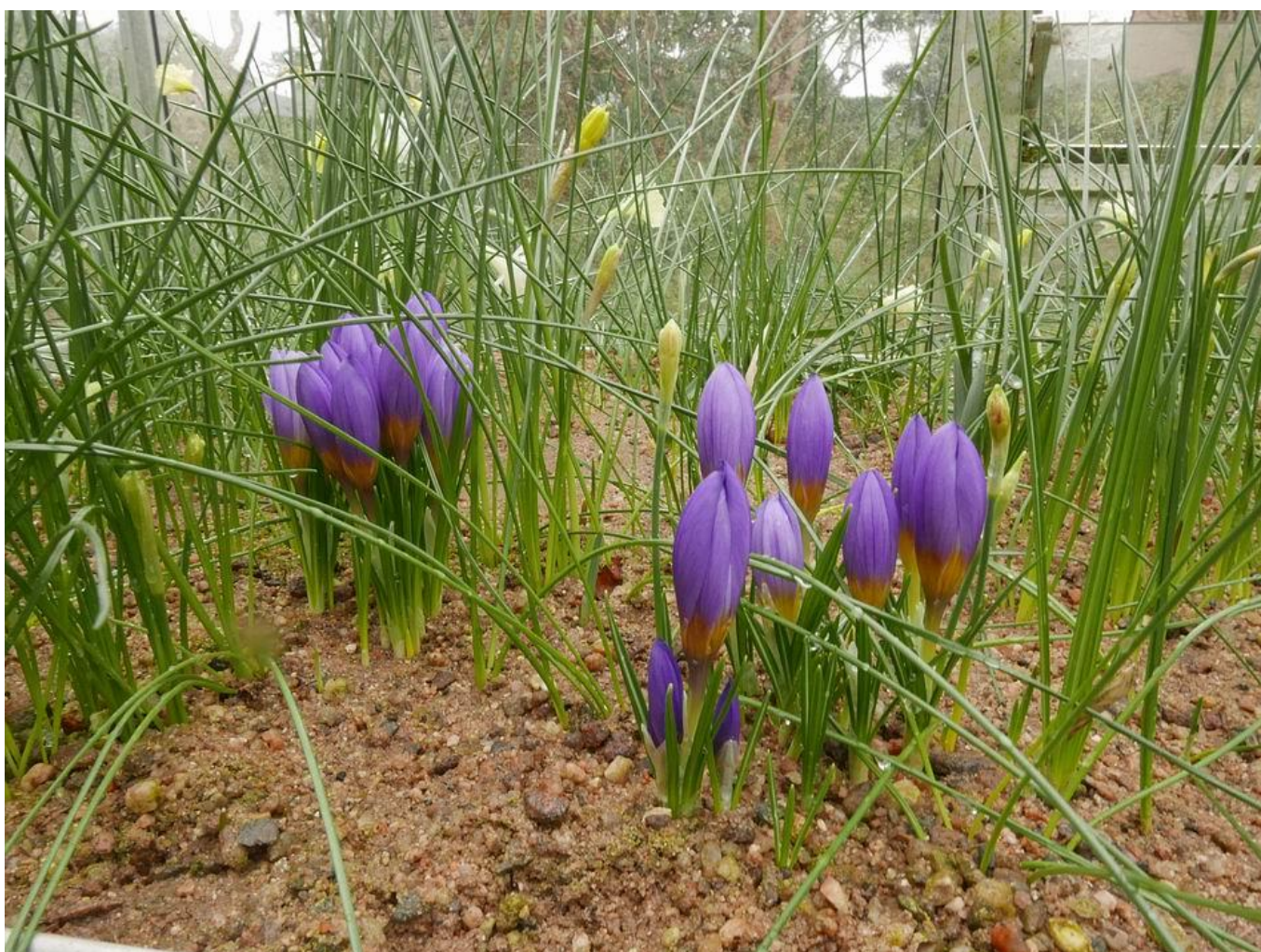


**Cyclamen coum**





The first of the crocus flower in the garden such as **Crocus abantensis** are always among the first to appear.



In the bulb house **Crocus atticus** flowers have sprung up in the sand beds along with all the Narcissus.





As I predicted this week I had to get out with the watering cans and water the bulb house sand To each can of water I added a half strength liquid tomato type plant food which I will continue to do as long as I am using the watering cans.



I never get tired of looking at all the hoop petticoat **Narcissus seedlings** there are so many variations such as this specimen with a large white open rolled back corona with protruding anthers and style.





Many of the plants that we originally received as **Narcissus romieuxii** may well have been naturally occurring hybrids which when they are brought together in a small glasshouse with other forms and species cross freely producing the wide variation of flowers that we see; most of which are fertile.



**Narcissus romieuxii** seedling





**Narcissus romieuxii seedling**



**Narcissus bulbocodium seedling on the left with the upward facing Narcissus romieuxii rifanus on the right.**





**Sand bed**



The bulbs growing in pots such as *Narcissus romieuxii* 'Craigton Clumper' were also watered and fed this week.





I will finish with a picture taken earlier in the week of the snowdrops appearing as the snow melted away.

Kelly Jones in USA has now completed the [Bulb Log Index](#) to include 2020 - once again I extend grateful thanks to Kelly for having taken on the task of indexing from Len Rhind in Canada – now as Kelly stands down I am delighted to announce that Tristan Hatton-Ellis from Wales has come forward and volunteered to continue the valuable task.

I will leave you with this link to the latest [Bulb Log Video Dairy Supplement](#) .....