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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 04.....27th January 2021



Narcissus bulbocodium



The weather this week has prevented me from doing anything much in the outside garden except a quick walk around but I have been spending some time looking at the wee daffodils, especially the many forms of the *Narcissus bulbocodium*, that are coming into flower in the bulb houses.

Most of the flowers, including the filaments and style, are varying shades of yellow and I especially like those with the strong colour because they stand out against the mass of creamy white flowers we have had up to now.



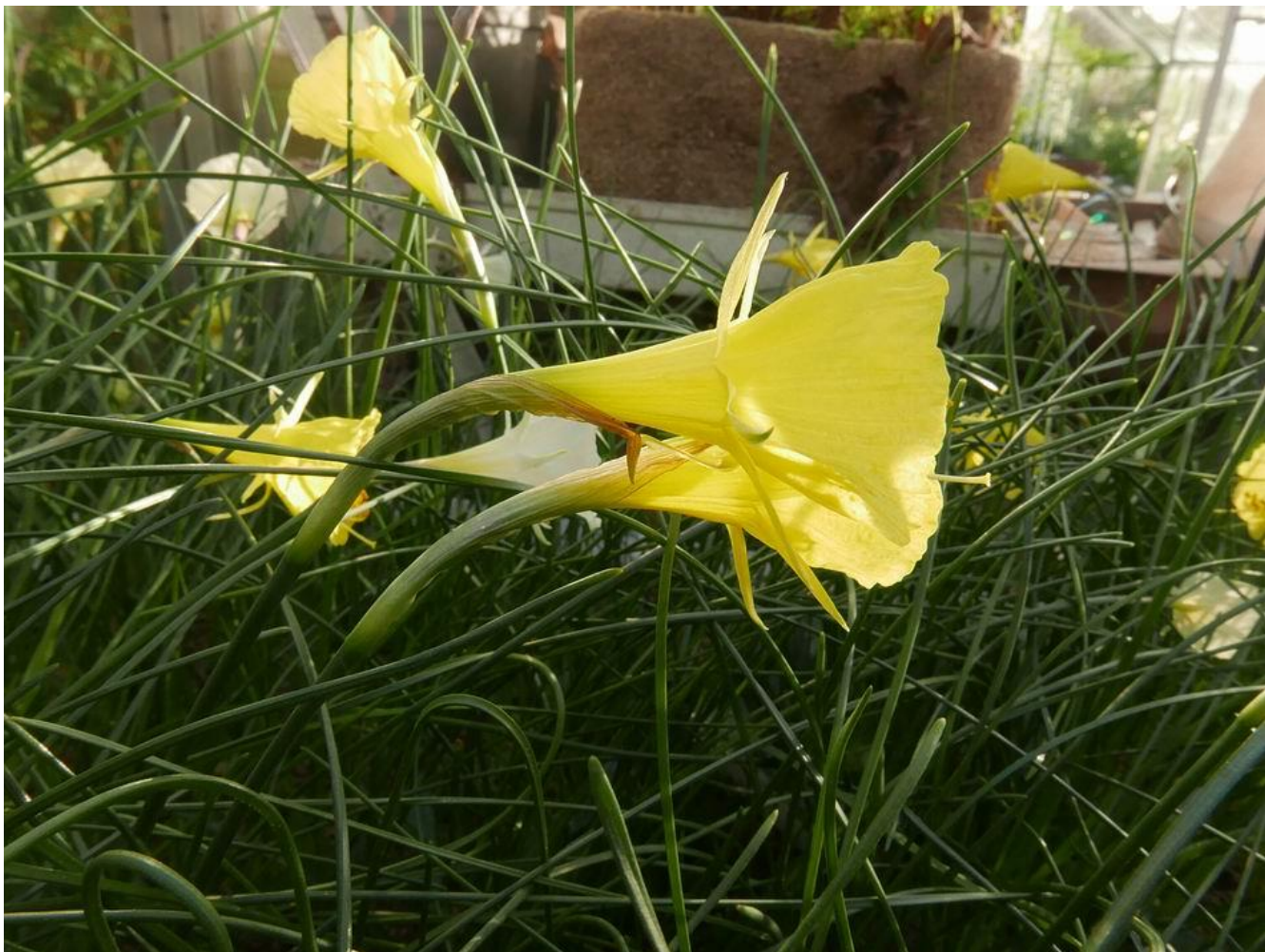
Growing the bulbs in the sand beds makes it more difficult to compose pictures without including lots of foliage.



The number of subspecies, forms and varieties of **Narcissus bulbocodium** that have been described shows just how variable this plant can be even in its native habitats of the Iberian Peninsula and North Africa where there are also many natural hybrids found. In cultivation it also crosses freely with many of the many other species we grow in close proximity.



As well as noticing the variation of yellow look at the different shapes of the corona. **Narcissus bulbocodium**.



Narcissus bulbocodium



Narcissus seedlings



Narcissus romieuxii and hybrids.



Narcissus romieuxii



We also grow a wide variation of plants that we received under the name *Narcissus romieuxii* but the more I study them the more I am convinced that many are hybrids. To be honest I am more interested in observing and enjoying the many variations than I am about worrying what names I should apply to them. Sometimes we can get so tied up worrying about a plant's name that we forget to enjoy the details of the flowers. Nomenclature is a human attempt to bring order by classifying plants while all the plants want to do is to pass their genes on to the

next generation. Look carefully at the next sequence of images and you will start to appreciate the many variations that can occur when you raise from seed which is so much nicer and more interesting than having a lot of a single clone.





Narcissus romieuxii



Narcissus romieuxii



Narcissus romieuxii



Narcissus romieuxii



Narcissus romieuxii

I like the forms where the style and stamens are exerted, often extending well beyond the corona.



Narcissus romieuxii



Superficially a group of seedlings may look the same but as I look closely at the details I find many subtle variations.



Narcissus bulbocodium seedlings



Narcissus seedlings





I find the starry effect of the widely spread petals of these seedlings very appealing.





Sometimes a seedling displays vigour and characteristics that make it stand out and I have named a few of the best of these; such as **Narcissus 'Craigton Chorister'**



***Crocus youngiorum* Rukšāns & Zetterlund**

We were honoured when in 2018 Jānis Rukšāns and Henrik Zetterlund named a new species of *Crocus* after us. You can read the full description in the [International Rock Gardener 102](#). This week we have ourselves flowered it for the first time.



Crocus youngiorum

For a few weeks the flower bud of *Crocus youngiorum* has been slowly extending but would never get the warmth needed for the flower to open in the cold bulb house so I brought it into the kitchen window where it quickly opened revealing ripe pollen. I don't know if it will be self-fertile or if the pollen will grow in the cold but in hope of seed I carefully transferred some pollen onto the stigma before taking the plant back out to the bulb house.



I was interested to find that the flower remained open when back in the cold even when it was dark this picture was taken the next day when it was freezing.



A few images now of the winter garden taken as I take the long way back to the house.





The garden is not without flowers: a number of snowdrops are pushing through the frozen mulch of fallen leaves.





I will leave you with one more image of **Crocus youngiorum** showing the beautiful feathered markings on the reverse of the flowers.....