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Bulb Log Diary

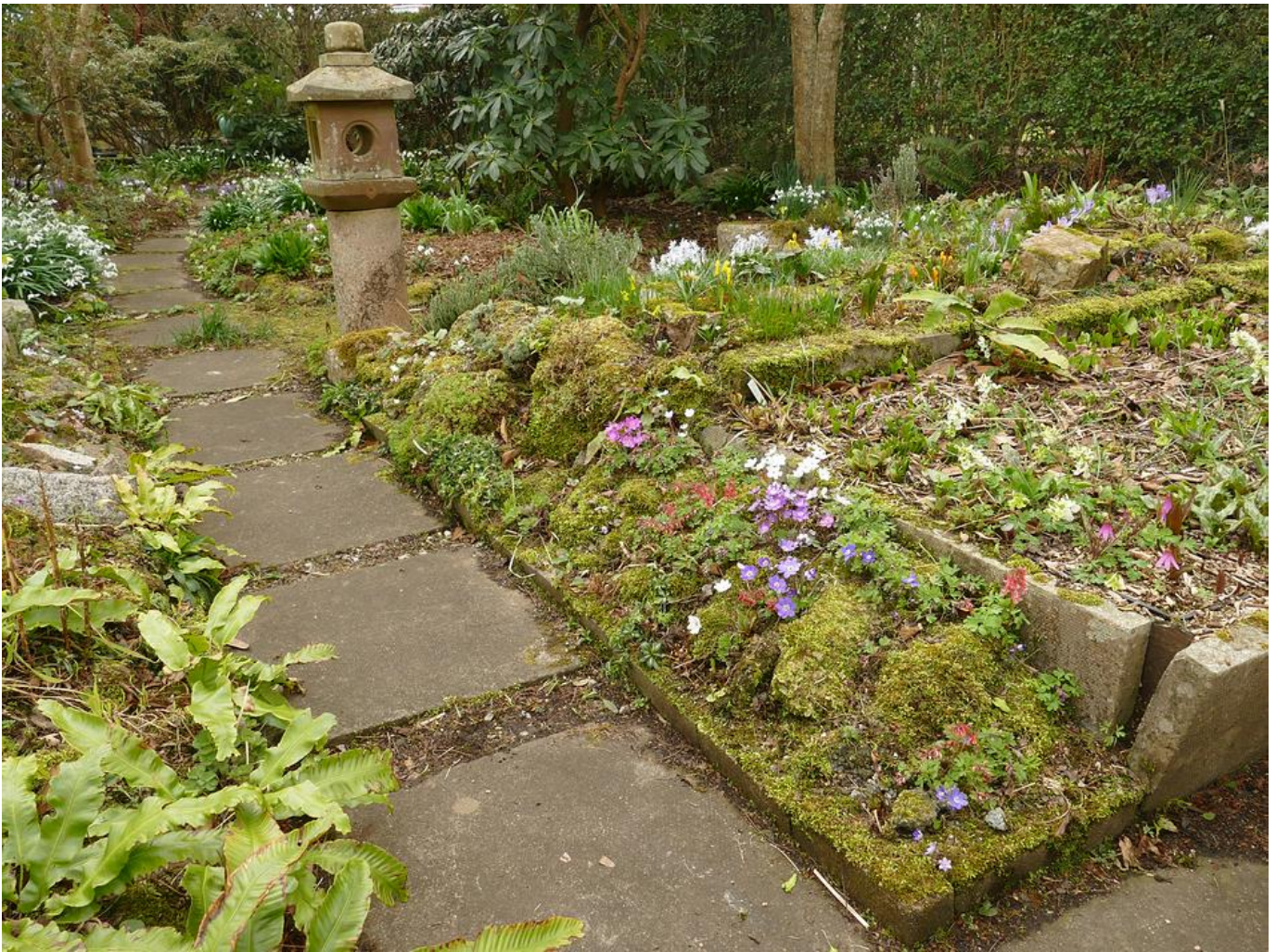
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BULB LOG 12.....24th March 2021



Hepatica nobilis



Gardens are a blend of habitat and time. The gardener needs the patience to enjoy the often slow process of watching plants grow and establish. To me there is no such thing as an instant garden; you can build an instant display but you have to become part of nature and grow slowly with a garden. We have created many small and

micro habitats within the wider garden habitat which itself sits within a series of ever larger habitats which increase in area all the way up from a small area to that of the planet Earth.

One small habitat that I reworked in 2013 is the narrow strip between the path and the wall of the *Erythronium* plunge seen at the front right of the picture above.



***Hepatica nobilis*
and
*Corydalis solida***

Previously we grew some dwarf shrubs here but they had become straggly and not very interesting so in 2013 I pulled the shrubs out and, using broken up concrete blocks, built a crevice style landscape sloping up towards the top side of the plunge which I planted up with some small *Hepatica nobilis* and *Corydalis solida* seedlings. At first it looked raw but from past experience I knew that time and nature would play their part to create something that I find rather special.



The concrete has become covered in moss and the original seedlings I planted have in turn shed their seeds into the moss giving rise to a second generation of *Hepatica* and *Corydalis* plants that are now also flowering.



A range of colour forms of **Hepatica nobilis** flower first quickly followed by the colours **Corydalis solidia** which grow up to over top the Hepatica for a short time before the Corydalis shed their seed and die down as quickly as they came to allow the leaves of the Hepatica plants full access to the light.





The original plants of **Hepatica nobilis** have a range of colours from white through reds to violet and they have now grown to a good size producing lovely clusters of their attractive flowers.

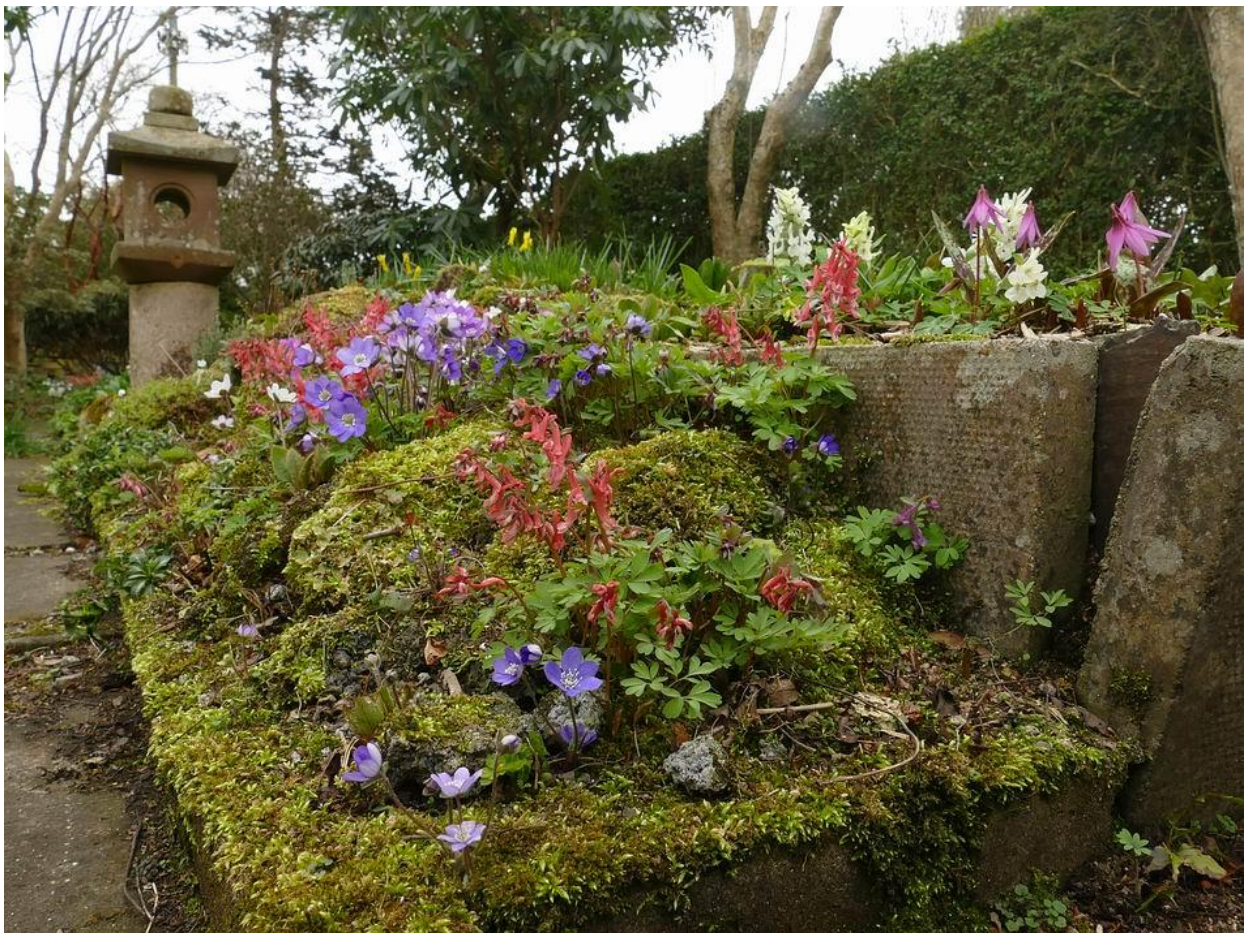




Hepatica nobilis



I find it fascinating observing where the self sown seeds germinate and establish such as this second generation seedling growing between the joint of the moss covered bricks that form the edge of the narrow bed.



Other plants including *Meconopsis* have seeded into this area extending the period of flowering interest.



The overall habitat that we set out to create in the garden was that of a woodland edge which in nature is recognised to be a habitat that supports a very wide diversity of life. I feel satisfied that we have achieved our aim and as I write I am delighted to be able to watch, from my work table, Blackcaps, Siskin, Treecreepers, Goldcrest, Wren, Goldfinch, Chaffinch, Great Tits, Blue Tits, Coal Tits, Longtail Tits among other woodland birds that also recognise and regularly visit our garden as a woodland habitat.



Hepatica transsilvanica has chosen to move to the edge of this bed where its flowers look very natural hanging over the rock edge taking in the sunshine.



Snowdrops and Crocus provide so much colour at this time of year - the white is a seedling from the **Crocus vernus** group and the yellow is **Crocus herbertii**.



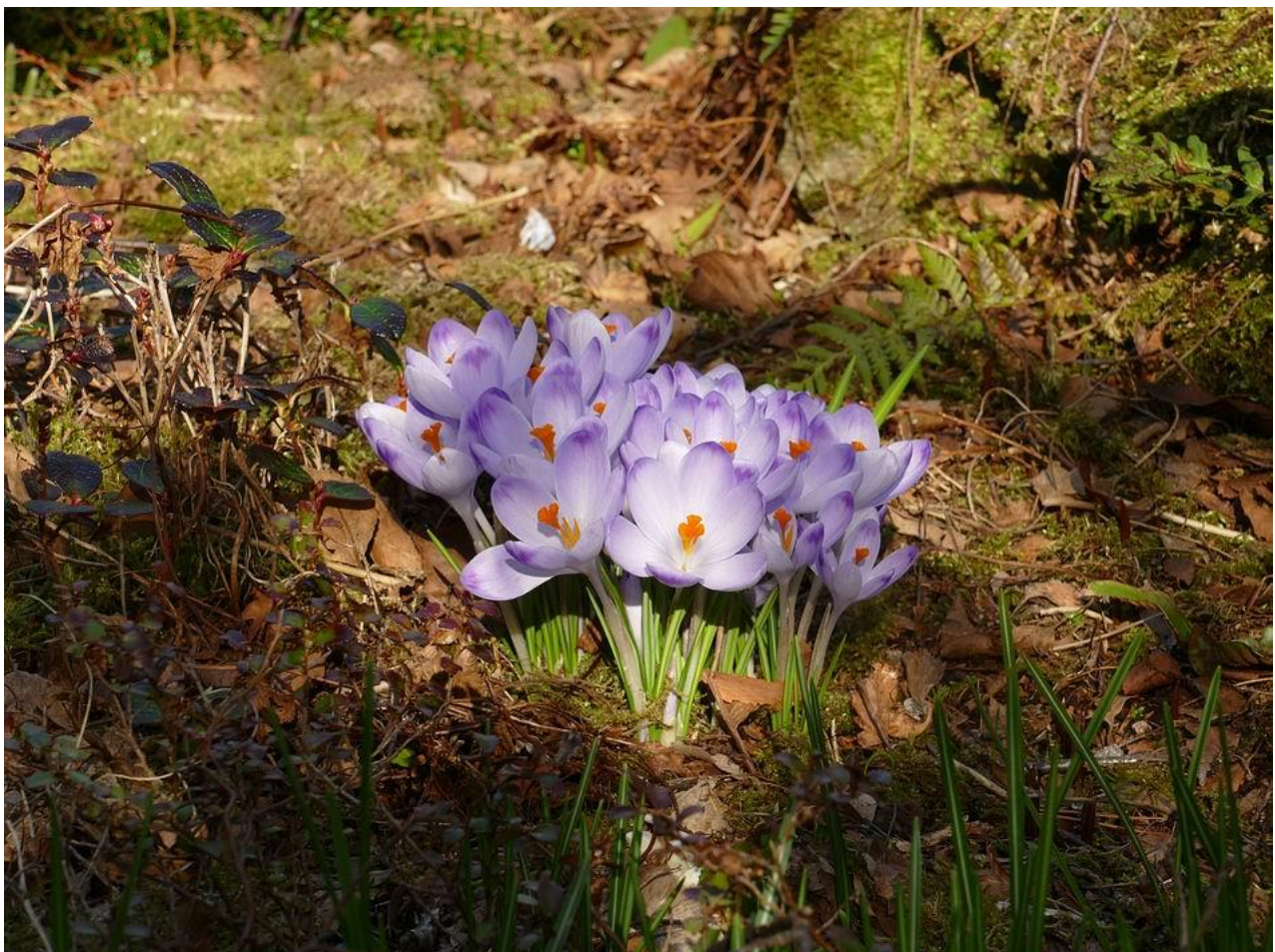
Crocus and **Scoliopus halli** growing through **Adoxa moschatellina** a low growing plant that forms a short green ground covering carpet that is compatible to allowing other plants, even small ones such as Scoliopus halli, to grow up unhindered.



In a shadier part of the garden the season is extended by a few weeks as the flowers open later here than in the more open parts of the garden.



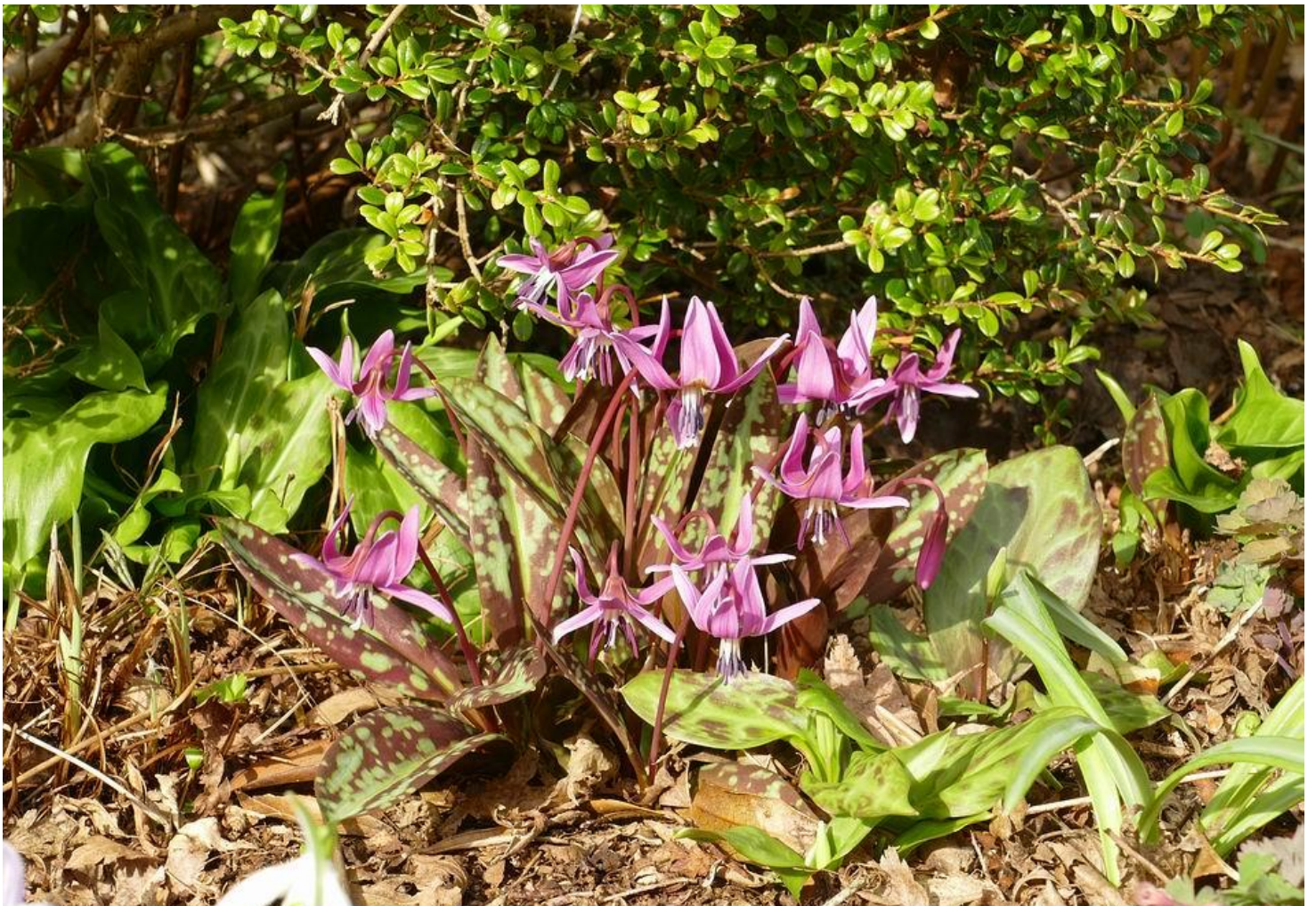
Even within one area there can be many other micro habitats to take advantage of such as here where I planted bulbs among the crevices of the wall.



Crocus heuffelianus flowers put on their full display as they catch a shaft of sunshine.



Crocus tommasinianus



Erythronium dens-canis



Erythronium dens-canis



Erythronium caucasicum



Erythronium caucasicum



Towards the front of this picture, a stem's length from the **Erythronium caucasicum**, you will notice two clusters of seedlings that are growing where previous years seed capsules bent over and deposited their seeds. Those on the left are in their second year and the ones on the right which are starting to show markings are in their third year of growth – the thin grass like leaves from last year's seeds are just starting to appear.



In addition to the many white **Erythronium caucasicum** we have a few plants of this lovely pink form which I would love to be able to increase – the first seedling to flower that arose from pollinating this plant with a normal white form has just flowered with the bud being palest pink when it appeared but it faded to white as the flower opened so I will need to do more work to achieve a pink population in the garden.



Have you ever noticed that the slugs, snails, mice etc. always seem to chew on the rarer plants in your garden or is it just that we are more sensitive to them being disfigured in this way?



Trillium ovatum maculosum: this patterned leaf form always flowers well before the type of the species and it is also much smaller in stature. Seedlings from the original plant we raised display varying degrees of the characteristic dark blotches on the leaves.



This colourful mix includes **Erythronium caucasicum**, **Narcissus cyclamineus** and **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'**.



While the flowers of the *Eranthis* in sunnier parts of the garden are over those in the shadier parts are in full bloom.



Erythronium tuolumnense is among the first of the Western North American species to flower.



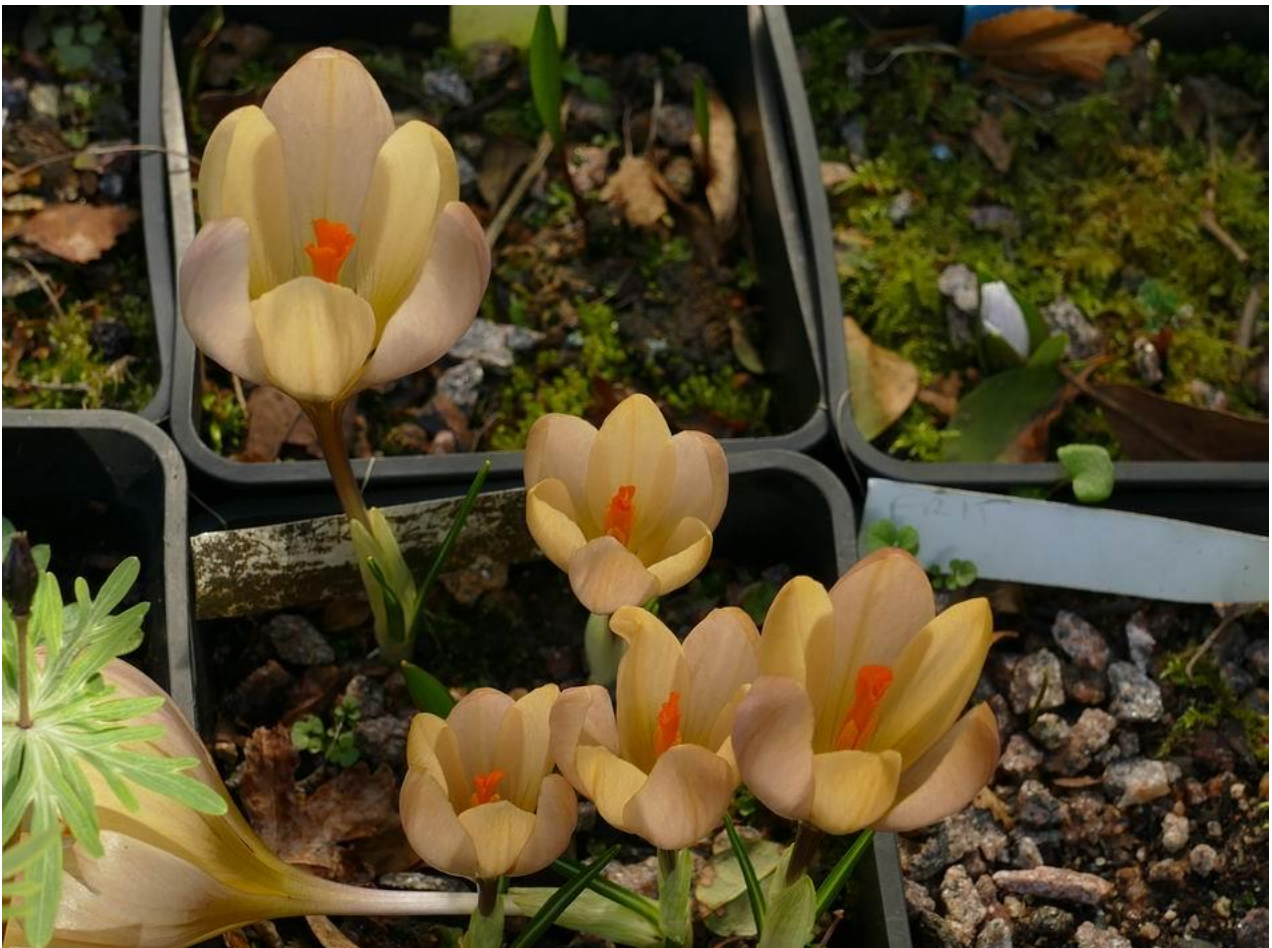
Erythronium tuolumense



Fritillaria stenantha* and *Corydalis nudicaulis

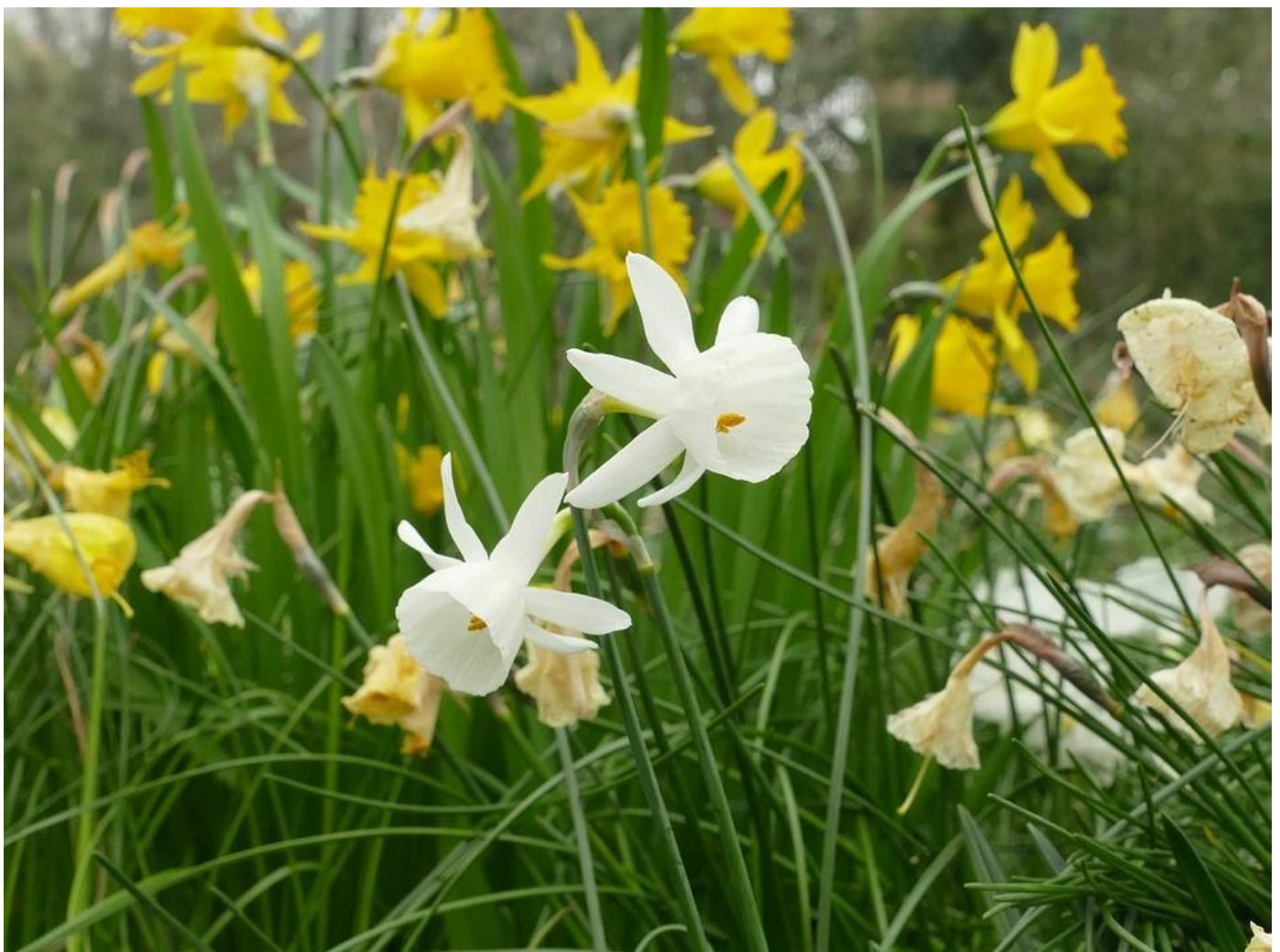


This self sown **Crocus seedling** appeared in a pot of *Fritillaria* a number of years ago and when repotting I have kept them together - I speculate that it is a hybrid between *Crocus veluchensis* and *Crocus civijicii* both of which we grow in this frame and which flower simultaneously. It is not my favourite colour, it is a bit muddy, but when it is backlit as above or when you look down into the open flowers, below, then it is rather attractive.





Plenty of flowers are appearing in the bulb houses such as **Narcissus jacetanus** and **Narcissus x susannae**.



Narcissus x susannae



The scent of **Hermodactylus tuberosus** spills out of the bulb house, welcoming me as I approach.



I will leave you this week with these Muscari and Narcissus rupicola flowers with a hint of the snowdrops still flowering in the garden beyond the glass and a link to the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#).....