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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 38.....22nd September 2021



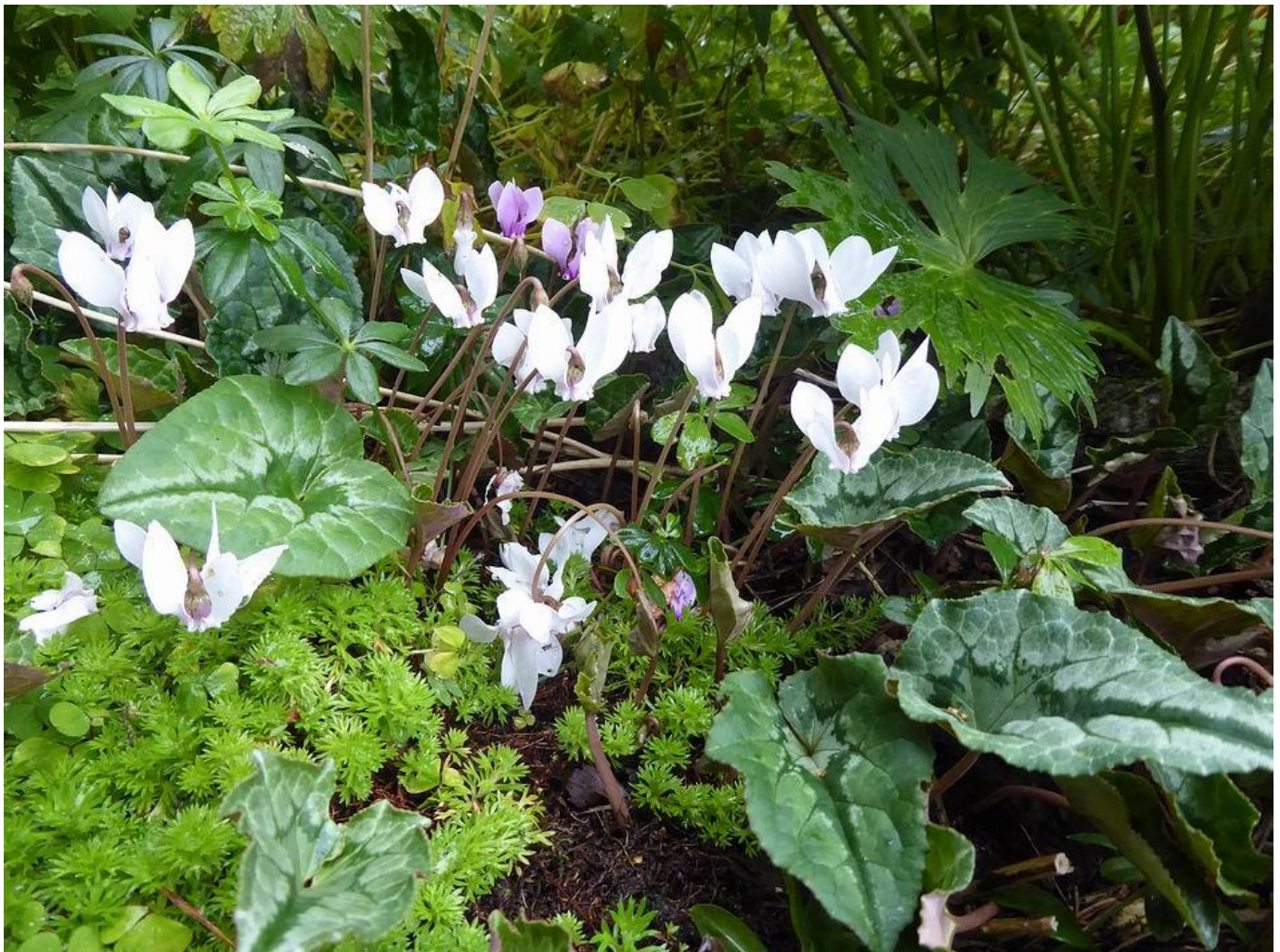
Cyclamen hederifolium



I am sure on occasions all of us have looked at other gardens, or pictures of them, with envy, particularly in regard to how well certain plants have established. I have often had *Cyclamen* envy especially when I see gardens displaying carpets of colour created by the mass flowering of *Cyclamen coum* in the late winter or **Cyclamen hederifolium** that is flowering right now.

For many years we struggled to establish *Cyclamen*

coum until I sowed seeds into a small sand bed where I am pleased that it is growing and self-seeding quite well.



We have better success with **Cyclamen hederifolium** but it has not formed the colourful expanses that I see in other gardens, where I am told the seeds are mostly distributed by ants.



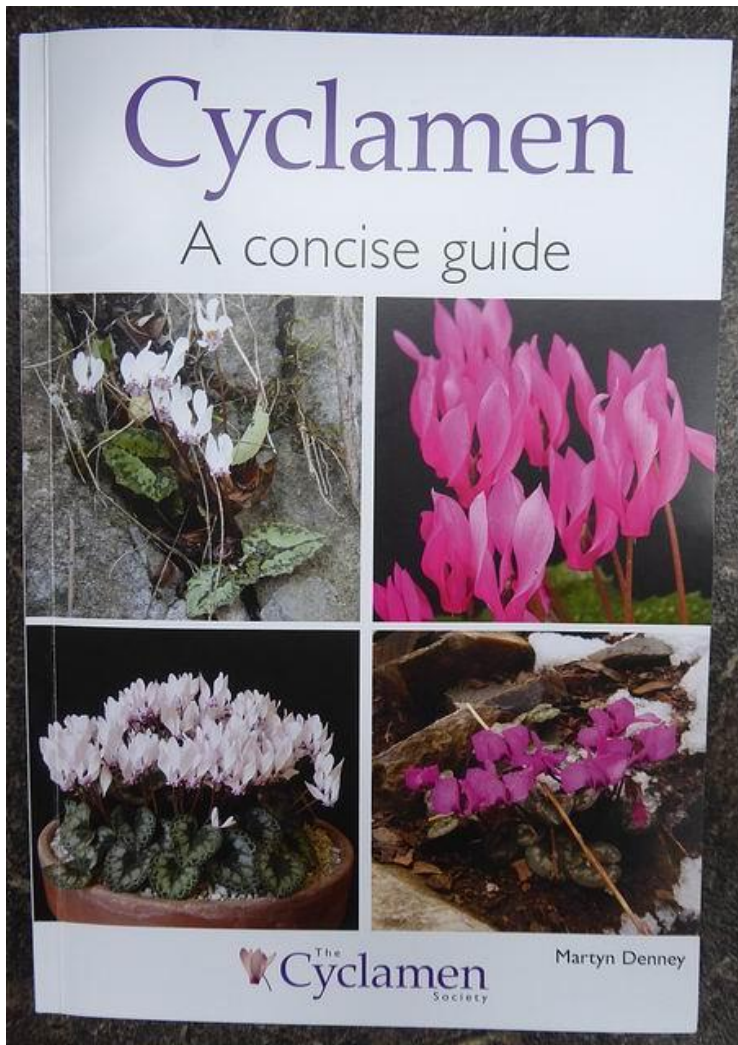
We have no ants in our garden so it is up to us to spread the seeds of **Cyclamen hederifolium** so over the years I have scattered them around so when we walk around the garden we keep coming across flowering clusters of seedlings that have matured into nice plants however we do not have the large mass displays I have seen elsewhere.

Cyclamen hederifolium

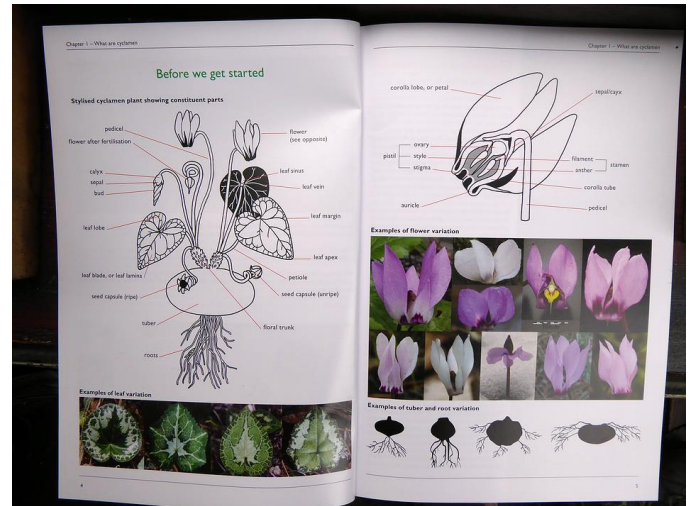
If we don't collect and scatter the ripe seed it just spills out of the capsule germinating right on top of the parent corm where it will not grow well as it struggles to compete not only with the parent plant but also all the other seeds. Over the coming weeks I will be watching for such seeds germinating so I can carefully lift and replant them in more favourable conditions where they can grow to maturity.



Cyclamen seeds germinating



[The Cyclamen Society](#) has just published a new 140 page soft covered book compiled and written by Martyn Denney.



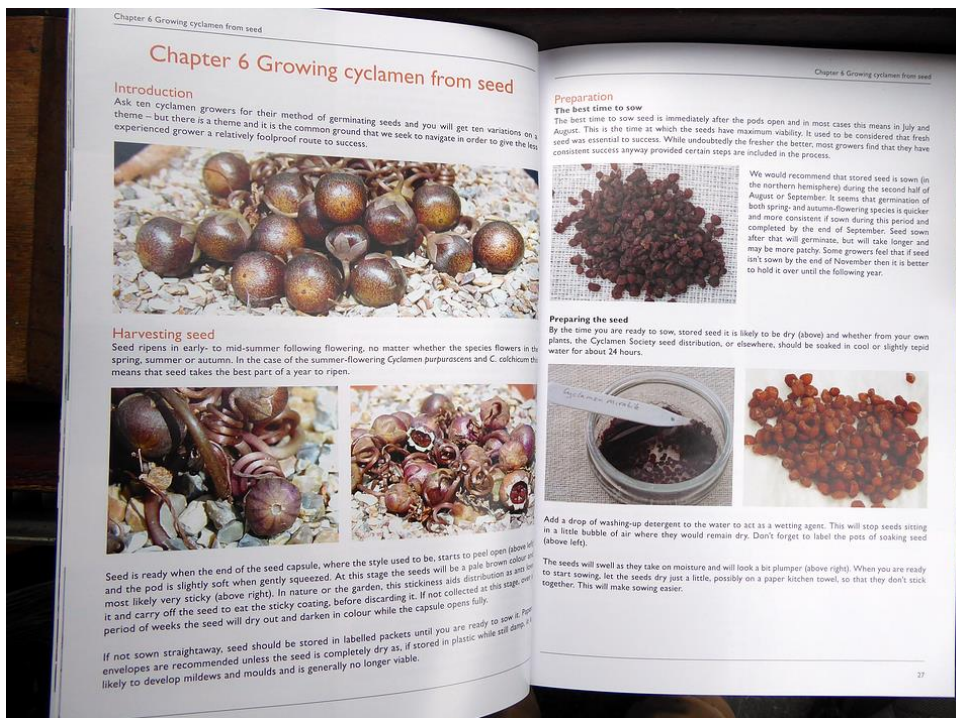
The reader is first given a brief botany guide, naming the above and below ground parts of the Cyclamen plant and there is a map of the natural distribution of the plants.

The next chapter covers Florist's cyclamen which through many years has become a widely grown popular house plant. A number of cultivars are mass produced and these widely available pot plants will often be people's first introduction to growing cyclamen. Having been introduced to growing these fascinating plants the

Guide now takes you on the next step of growing them in conservatories or green houses whereby following the guidance provided should deliver success.

The next chapter describes the species that are expected to do well in some, if not all gardens, of the United Kingdom and the same list would also apply to any who share a similar climate type. A number of good illustrations show a selection of hardy species of cyclamen growing in a range of garden habitats.

The chapter on pests and diseases may seem daunting or off putting but while it is useful to see detailed pictures of the range of pests that may infest your plants you are reassured 'don't panic': you may only encounter a few of these pests and diseases if any, and if you are unlucky then some prevention and control options are included.



My favourite method of getting plants, including bulbs, is growing them from seed and that is the topic of the next chapter.

I have read many descriptions of how to grow cyclamen from seed, some sound overly complicated, but the method described here is a simple one and following it will deliver a good rate of germination leading to mature plants.

The Cyclamen Society holds shows and should you want to become an exhibitor there is a short chapter taking you through the methods and preparation required to successfully present your plants.



The main part of this book is given over to a guide of the species and I find that the author has successfully distilled the many pages that could or have been written on each species down to the essential information on the plant, its habitat and how to cultivate the forms and cultivars available to gardeners. I also like the mixture of excellent pictures showing each species in the wild as well as in cultivation.

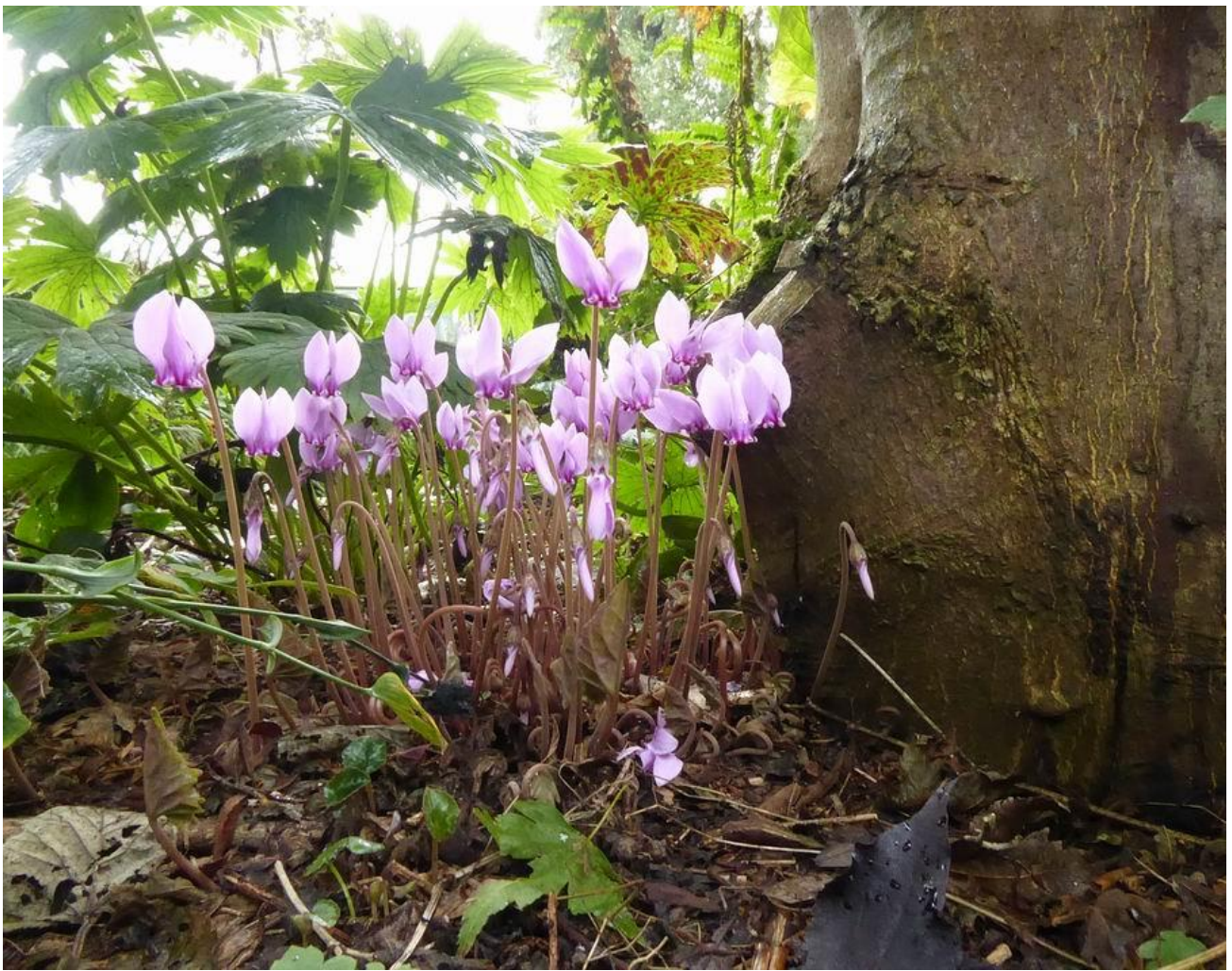


The Cyclamen Society has been involved in many valuable field studies and research reports which have greatly extended our understanding of these plants. This knowledge may also help towards the conservation of the species in the wild which is discussed in another chapter.

Over the years a number of books have been written on Cyclamen, some are listed at the end of the book.

I will certainly be referring to this book which, true to the description 'A Concise Guide' will be a valuable resource to beginner and expert alike providing all the information needed to grow cyclamen. At just £5.00 it should not just be on your book shelf but it would be an excellent present, that costs little more than the cost

of sending a birthday card, to any friend. It is available from the publication pages of the [Cyclamen Society web site](http://www.cyclamensociety.org.uk).



I am no expert on cyclamen - in the past we used to grow some in pots but now I tend to rely on the ones that will survive in the garden, such as **Cyclamen hederifolium**, and even then I mostly just scatter the seeds in suitable garden habitats resulting in plants such as this example, growing at the base of a tree.



The stems of pollinated flowers coil pulling the seed capsule down on top of the corm where it will take around ten months for the seeds to mature before being shed.



This non flowering **Cyclamen hederifolium** seedling established in the gravel, has produced its leaves which depending on our weather could remain green into July or beyond next year .



As the pictures illustrate **Cyclamen hederifolium** is happy growing along with other plants – here its flowers push through some Roscoea leaves which in turn made good use of the space after earlier flowering bulbs and plants had their turn in the limelight.



Cyclamen hederifolium



Cyclamen hederifolium



We are slowly building up a population of **Cyclamen purpurascens** and the coiling stems seen on this plant indicate that we should get seed to continue that increase.



Cyclamen purpurascens is among the first to flower with most of its beautifully scented flowers appearing in late summer but it will continue to flower sporadically though the autumn.



Cyclamen hederifolium flowers with a supporting cast of **Colchicum**.



Colchicum and Roscoe

The Colchicum flowers are held aloft not on a stem but on a part of the flower called floral tube – this makes the plant susceptible to falling over, especially in wind or heavy rain.



Colchicum



We have Colchicum planted in many positions around the garden; all considered to take account of the foliage that will grow slowly though the winter reaching its full size in the late spring.



Many plants will not take well to growing right at the base of trees but it is a good place to plant Colchicum.



Colchicum speciosum album



In an attempt to mimic those I have seen growing in a natural habitat I like to plant **Colchicum** bulbs out singly like in this recently replanted area.



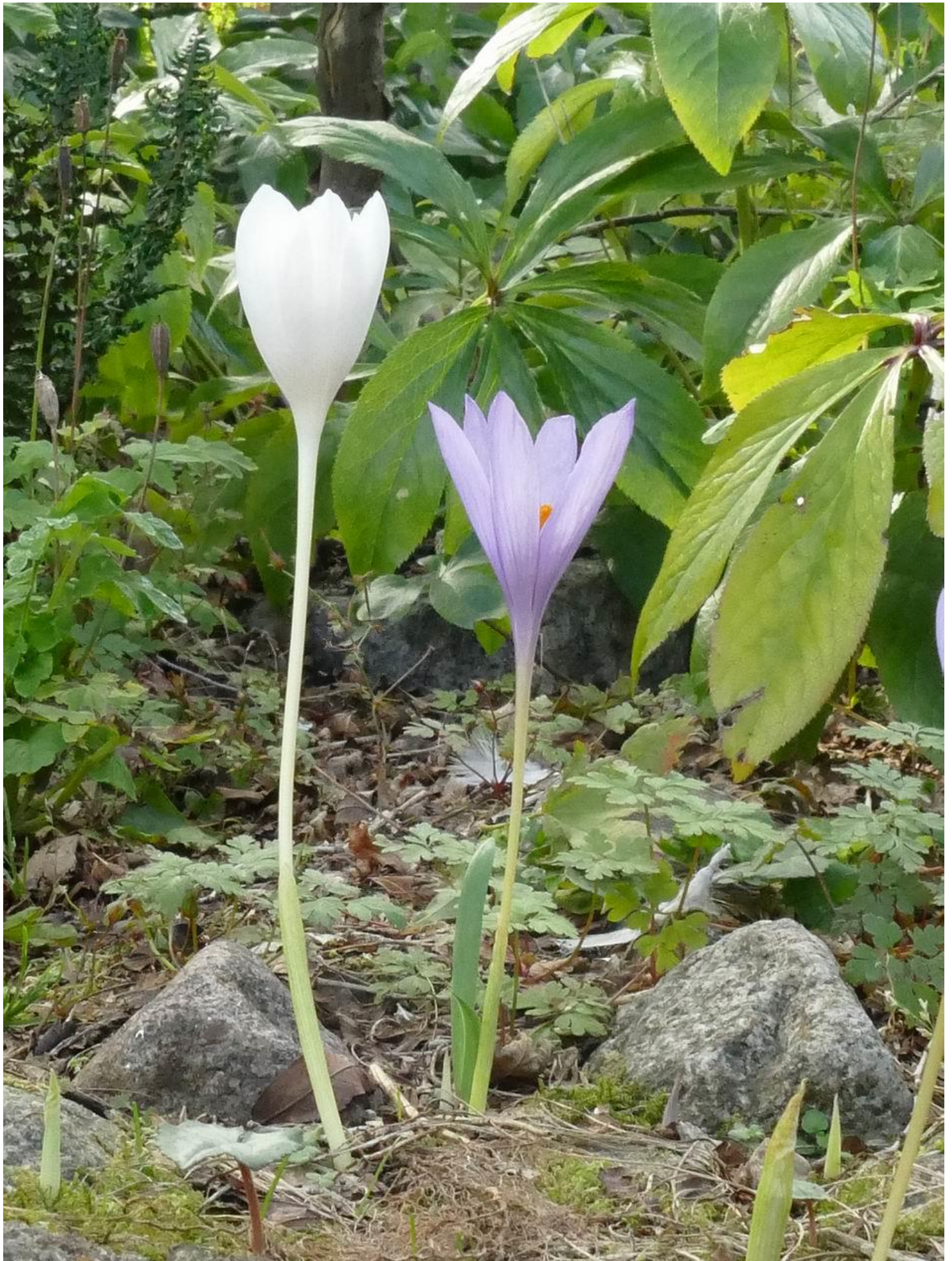
This is also the season of the autumn flowering crocus flowers such as **Crocus vallicola** and **Crocus nudiflorus albus** which are delighting us in the garden.



Crocus vallicola



***Crocus speciosus* hybrids**



Crocus speciosus in two colour forms – like the colchicums, the crocus flowers are raised up on a floral tube and may only last a few days but as the surrounding shoots show weather permitting we will have a constant display for a number of weeks and through the next sequence of pictures.



Mixed Crocus





***Crocus speciosus* garden hybrids**





Cyclamen hederifolium

I will leave you this week with a reminder you can acquire the book 'Cyclamen, A Concise Guide', from the [Cyclamen Society web site](#) plus a link to the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#) looking at the autumn bulbs...