



SRGC

# Bulb Log Diary

ISSN 2514-6114

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BULB/LOG 22.....1<sup>st</sup> June 2022



Wild Garlic and Bluebells





My interest in plants started when, as a boy, I became interested in wild flowers and landscapes so it comes as no surprise that our garden, which has always been influenced by nature, gets wilder as it matures. I don't have to go to exotic wild places to get inspiration, I can find plenty of that in the scenes I see on my walks around the local area. The magnificent mixture of Wild Garlic and Blue Bells shown above is just a ten minute walk away and is a perfect illustration waiting to be interpreted in some way into our gardens right down to the wood pile beyond the flowers which provides habitat for a wide range of wildlife. Of course you may choose to use different plants in a garden setting but the informal planting style and use of wood could be scaled to fit the space in your garden.

I have been delighted and encouraged to see wild style gardening becoming adopted even to the extent that 'A Rewilding Britain Landscape' by Lulu Urquhart and Adam Hunt was awarded the best show garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. As more people become aware of the large proportion of green spaces within our towns and cities is made up by our gardens and their importance to the biodiversity. Here **Convallaria majalis** and **Galium oderatum** are growing in a natural way below Rhododendrons in our garden.







**Galium odoratum** forms a low growing green carpet studded with white flowers through which other plants grow.



**Veronica chamaedrys**





I love the simple beauty of the blue flowered **Veronica chamaedrys** growing among grasses and other plants on a stone dyke.



We have created very similar scenes, all be it with a different selection of plants, in our garden complete with the moss covered rocks and ferns.





The wild influence prevails in our garden where we adopt nature's dense planting style using a diverse range of plants from across the world.







We are equal opportunity gardeners happy to accept wild flowers, such as **Geranium robertainium**, provided they do not out-compete the other plants. Here the gentle Geranium is growing in the new bed beside the pond where I also grow some of my favourite smaller Trilliums and bulbs all of which have finished flowering. Now they are appreciating the light shade provided by the leaves of the geranium which also help retain moisture.



**Geranium robertainium**





I enjoy walking round the garden finding unusual plants such as this **Paris sp.**



All plants are wild plants somewhere and grow many less common ones such as **Lilium mackliniae** which rather than being challenged by growing with and through the masses, actually grow better.





I am less excited to spot the bright red Lily Beetle. I have found a few of these around this time over the last three years on exactly the same plants. I know it is widespread further south and has taken longer to reach us so I know that the handful I find and destroy each year is just them starting to get a hold in the colder north.



Other pests that appear at this time of year are **Aphids** shown here on a **Fritillaria camtschatensis Eurasian form**. We do not use chemicals preferring to leave nature to be the main control. The first sign of aphids coincides perfectly with the birds breeding season and I watch the birds collecting aphids to feed their young. In a garden with good biodiversity nature strives to achieve a balance and indeed the birds and other predators do control the aphids with a bit of help from me as after taking this picture I rubbed out this outbreak.





**Fritillaria camschatensis** Alaskan forms are a slightly different shape and tend to have more green in the flowers.



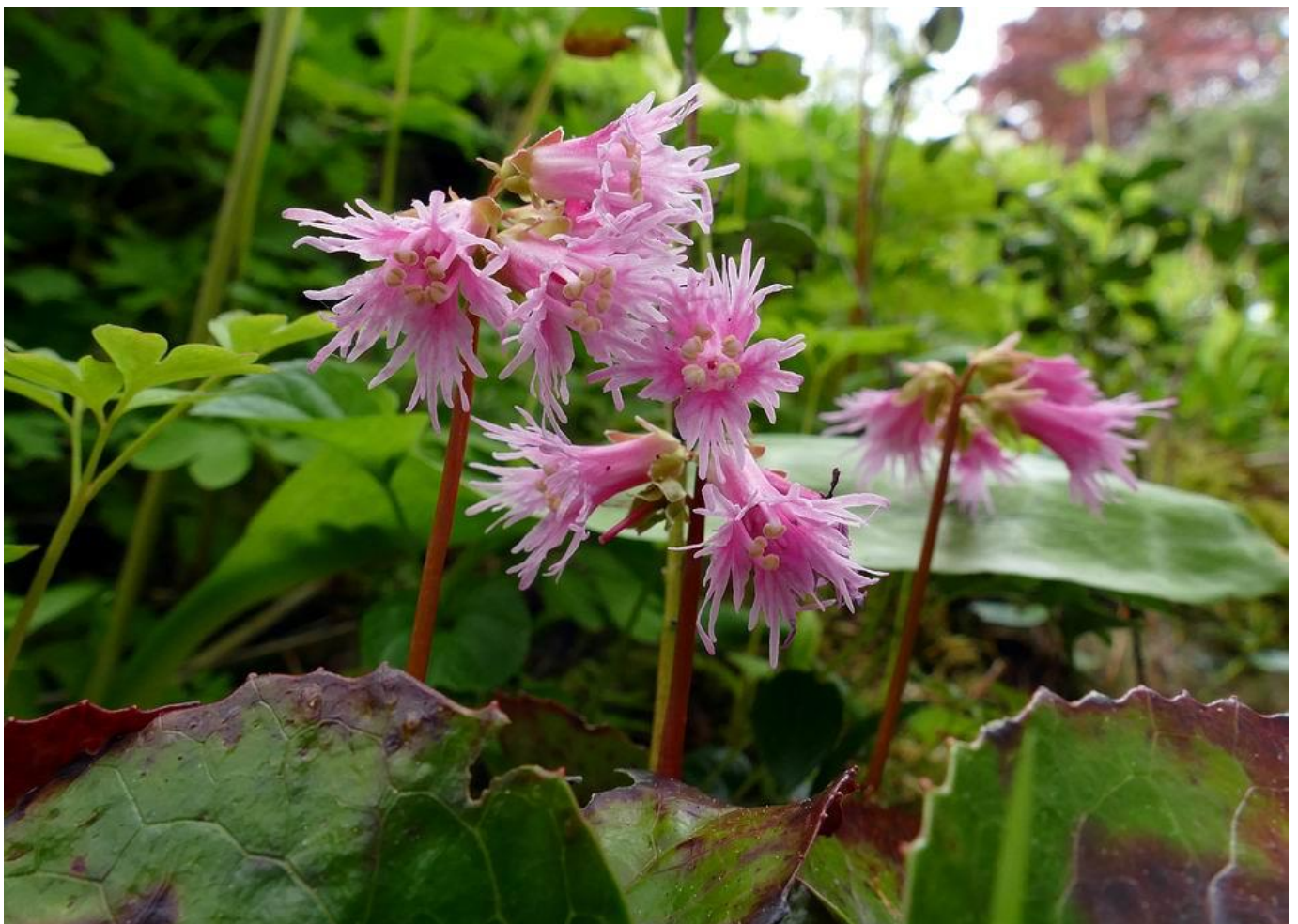
I had not noticed the pointed shoots appearing so it was only this week that I spotted the well advanced growth of **Arisaema wilsonii** peeking through the dense planting.





***Shortia soldanelloides***

I should correct my statement 'we grow plants' because plants grow themselves - as gardeners we need to find conditions and a habitat that are compatible for the plants.







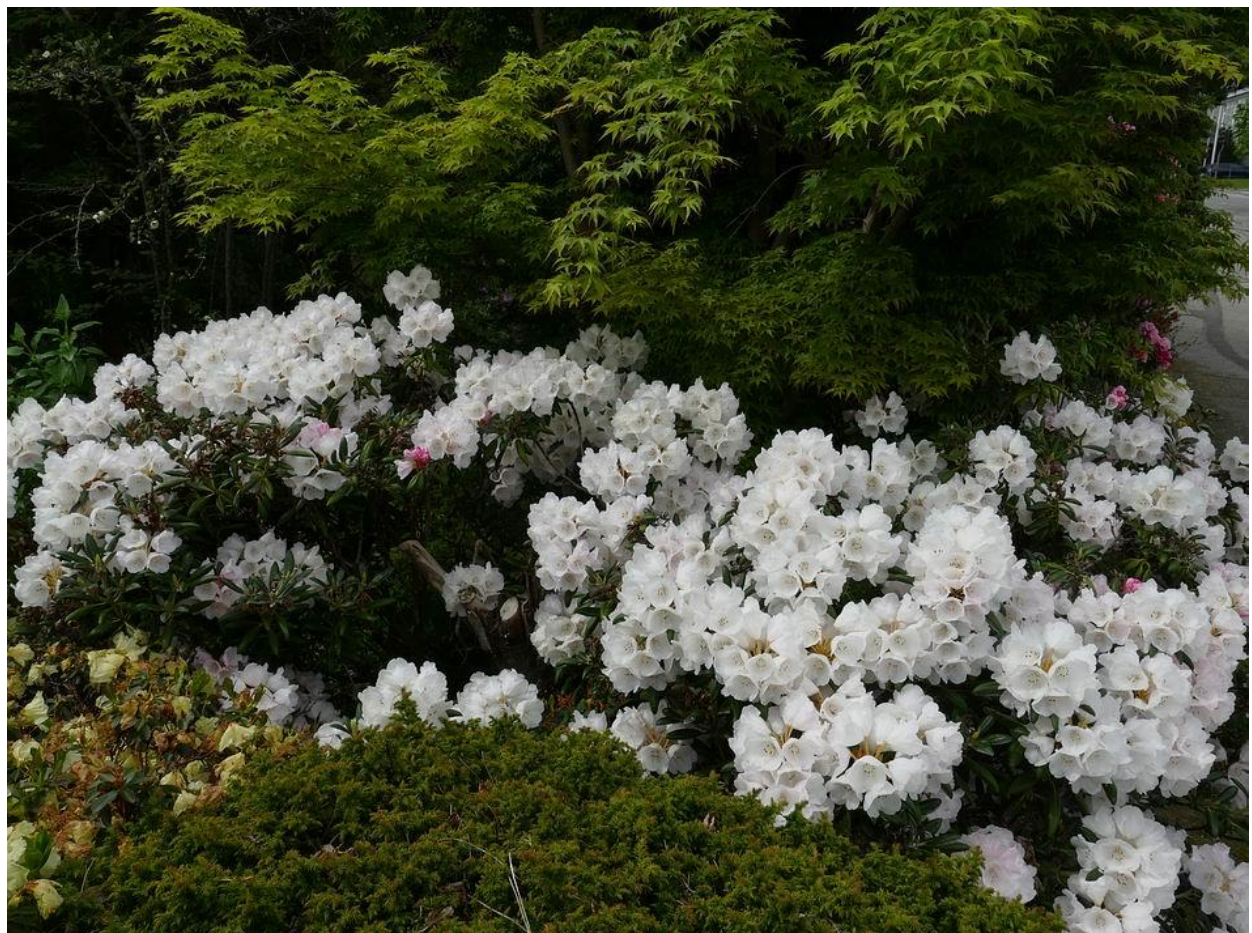
**Haberlea rhodopensis** grows well in a number of habitats in our garden such as planted between the rocks of a vertical wall and in the shaded side of the rock garden bed below.







***Ramonda nathaliae*** also thrives in a rocky crevice type habitat.



***Rhododendron yakushimanum***





*Rhododendron yakushimanum* hybrid 'Vintage Rose'



*Rhododendron* 'Vintage Rose'





There is interest at every level of the garden from the ground to sky where the pink flowers of *Sorbus cashmiriana* look down at me.







The landscape of the garden is enhanced by trees and shrubs including Acers and Rhododendrons.



**Rhododendron fortunei**





Last weekend we went to the SRGC, Aberdeen Show and as it was our first outing since lockdown we supported the excellent [Ardfean Nursery](#) with a bit of retail therapy, coming home with a selection of plants.



I wash away as much of the nursery compost as possible from bought in plants. With the plant upright I hold the root ball in my hand swishing it around in a bucket of water. This removes the compost mix which works well for nursery use, but may not be suited to your garden conditions, as well as releasing the roots to their full length so they can be planted deep down into the moist soils.





Sometimes when washing the compost from the roots you see that even a small plant can sometimes be split into more than one bit making a planting look more established like with this **Delosperma congestum** newly planted in to a crevice.



Crevice bed



This **Erigeron scopulinus** has grown from a crevice spreading out across a solid rock where it is producing most flowers. It reminds me of a scene I pictured, last week at Aberdeen beach shown below. I am sure that the Chelsea Show garden 'A Rewilding Britain Landscape' that received this year's award for best garden will raise a some eyebrows as people question what is a garden? I



I have seen many a Chelsea show garden full of expensive hard landscaping and sculptural elements that I would question as realistic or relevant and I am delighted to see plants in a wild setting winning through.



**Bellis perennis**

As to what is a garden? Your garden can be anything you want it to be - but in my opinion interpreting and working with nature is the most rewarding way for the gardener and the environment.....