



BULB LOG 04.....15th April 2026





The advancement of Spring is, as always, fast moving -so much has changed since I published the last Bulb Log.

Where I walk in the local woods the snow drops have flowered then gone over. This is the same area that I have shown before, and almost certainly will again, where there is a glorious mass flowering of bluebells and wild garlic which seed about so freely.



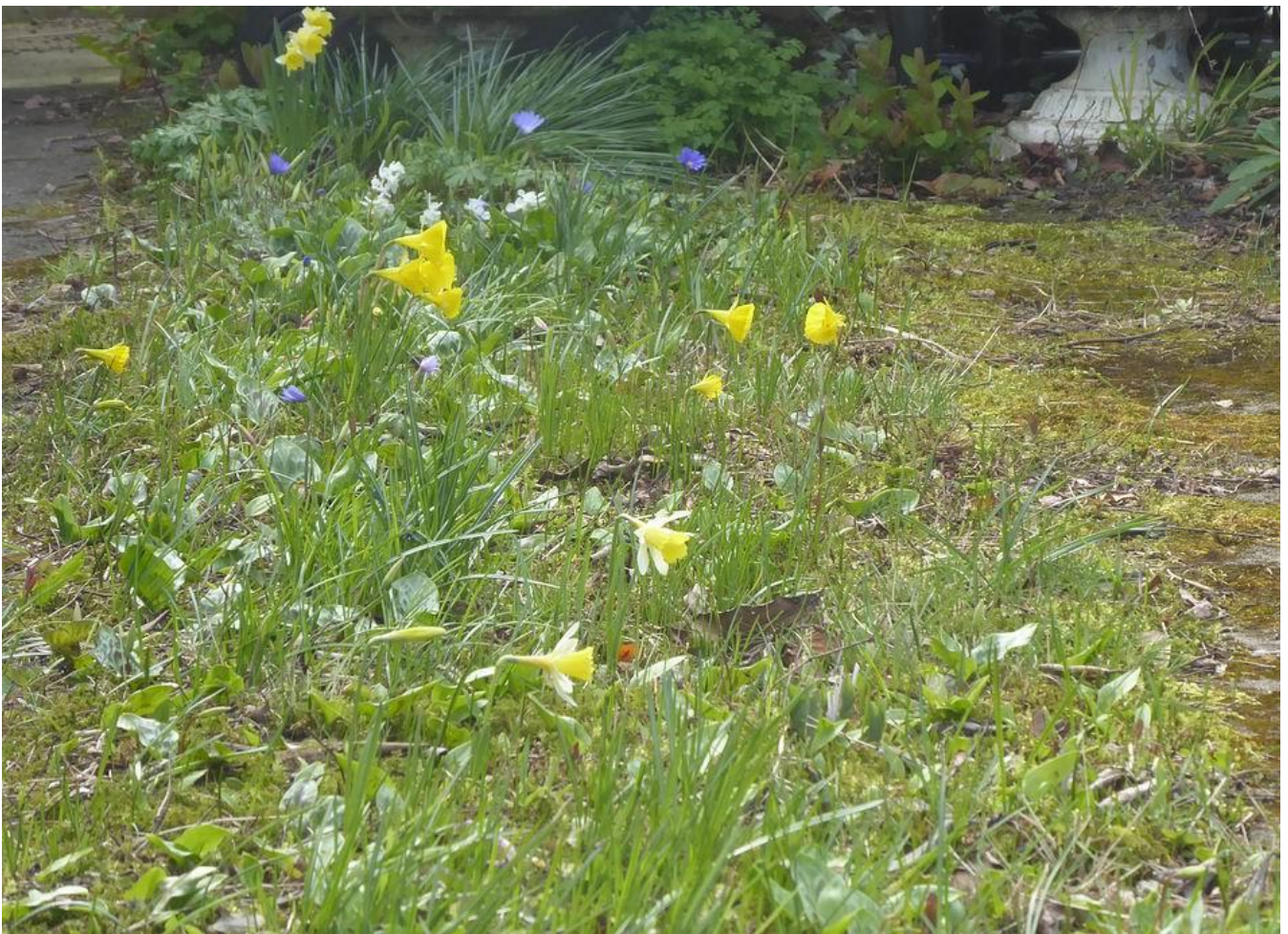
I see no evidence that these Snowdrops are seeding - they look to be spread by division undertaken by the gardeners that maintain this part of the estate. If compared to seeding, clumping is a poor strategy for bulbs as without the intervention of gardeners, they would weaken as they get more congested every year whereas seedlings can and will move around finding new territory.



In the wild fields it is daffodil time, there are a few clumps of Snowdrops around the fields and woods most likely dumped out as garden waste by irresponsible people, The Daffodils are leftovers from when they were grown as a commercial crop in these fields over sixty years ago. They would have been selected cultivars favoured for the cut flower market which tend not to form seed and indeed despite extensive searching I have never seen any seed forming.



Once again they are mostly growing in clumps with only a few signs that occasional seeding possibly occurs.



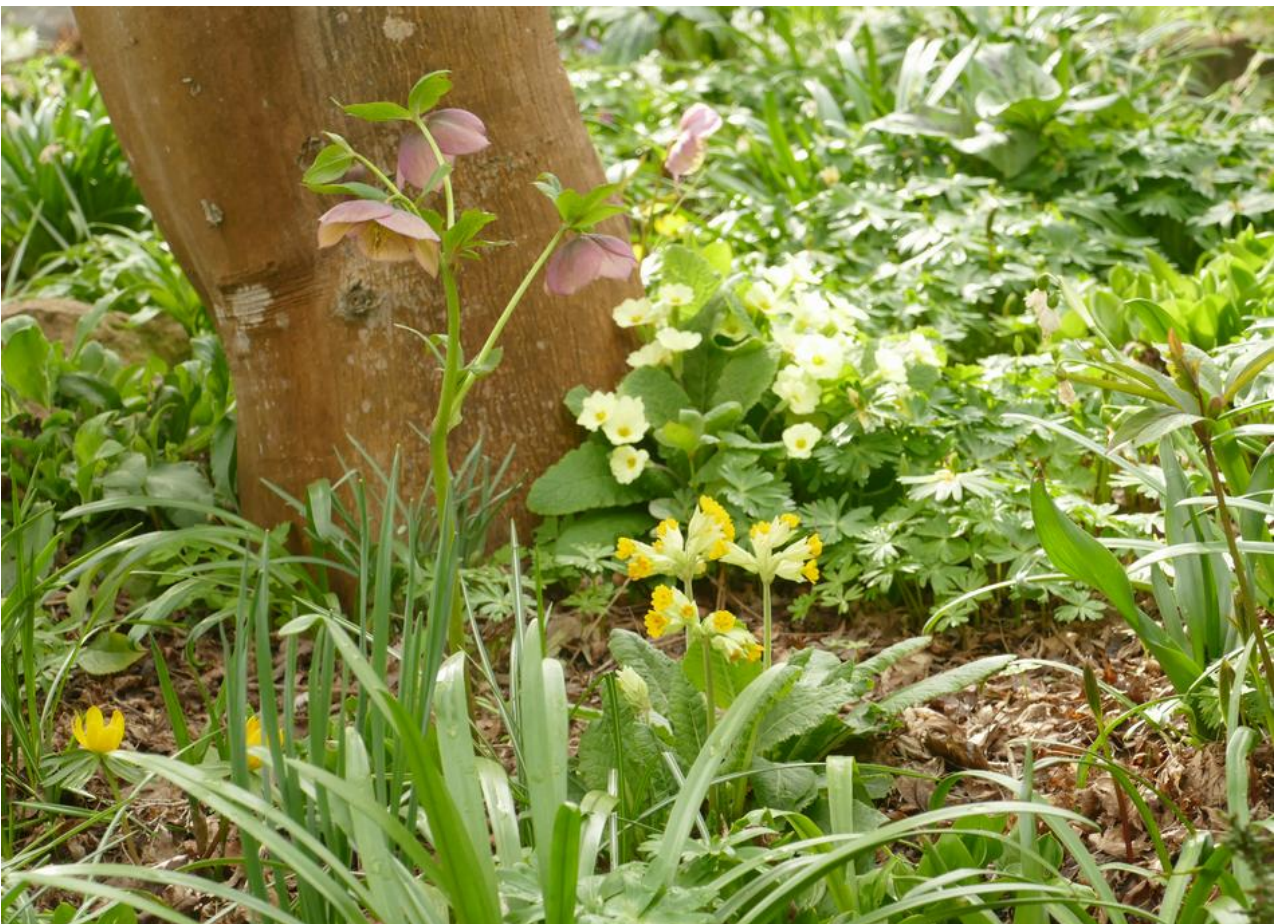
Back home on the front drive, it is a different story, as regular readers will know I seek and encourage bulbs that will self-seed and everything growing in the drives has grown from seed. Originally, I scattered some seeds and since then I have left the plants to seed themselves with only some help spreading it out along the gravel area of the drive.



Narcissus bulbocodium seeding around the drive.



It is the same in the back garden where seeding is encouraged but that does not stop some bulbs clumping. The problem with clumps is to keep them flowering and healthy they need to be lifted and divided every so often or flowering will diminish and eventually they will compete themselves into oblivion. That is not an easy task to carry out without damaging other plants in our densely planted garden.



Primula veris and **Primula vulgaris** that I grew from seed collected locally. Now they are planted out I hope they will seed around. Because of the intense competition in our very full garden I will collect then sow a few seeds in pots to give them a head start. I will then prick the seedlings out directly into the garden.



Primula veris



Primula vulgaris



As I write the Eranthis flowers have also gone over these are '**Guinea Gold**' so do not set seed but most of the others we grow seed around readily.



Non seeding Eranthis '**Guinea Gold**' in the foreground with prolific seeder **Corydalis malkensis** in the blue pot with a tree behind.



Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'. I am sure you can spot the subtle difference between this hybrid form and the species shown below.



Eranthis hyemalis



This is the only **Narcissus cyclamineus** that we have that forms a clump all be it slowly. It was a random seedling and has never offered up any seeds so I wonder if it is a polyploid. Most of this species that is scattered across the garden seed around nicely.



Also complying with the ethos of our garden and seeding around is **Erythronium caucasicum**. Don't be fooled by some of the leaves in the foreground which are seedlings of *Erythronium revolutum*.



Largely due to the weather I have only just got round to doing the final clear of leaves from this part of the slab path and as I lifted the still damp leaves I found masses of *Erythronium* seedlings germinating on this 'stoney ground'. Of course, they will not be able to grow there but these are only a small number of seeds shed the majority of them fell on fertile ground. I scooped them gently off the slabs with the leaves and scattered them on the adjacent bed where perhaps a few will take hold.



Those that fall on the gravel surrounding the slabs grow away in great numbers to the extent this has become the *Erythronium* path as you will see in forthcoming Bulb Logs where we literally have to step from slab to slab over hundreds, if not thousands, of *Erythroniums*.



Plants tend to commandeer the paths in our garden, and we are largely happy to let them. Here a gravel side path is becoming another Erythronium planting, round the corner the same path is being colonised by Eranthis hyemalis.



Even nearer the house where we try and keep the paths more open the gravel sections of the paths are being taken over by Corydalis, Crocus, Anemone and all sorts of other non-bulbous plants. I love the way the plants use the gravel strips to move from one bed to another. Seedlings are constantly seeking out new opportunities as they spread around randomly always seeking fresh ground rather than clumping, and exhausting the ground immediately around them, much to their own detriment.



Corydalis malkensis and solida seeding around in the Erythronium plunge are among the plants that bring interest to this area before the Erythronium get going.



Corydalis malkensis and Corydalis solida

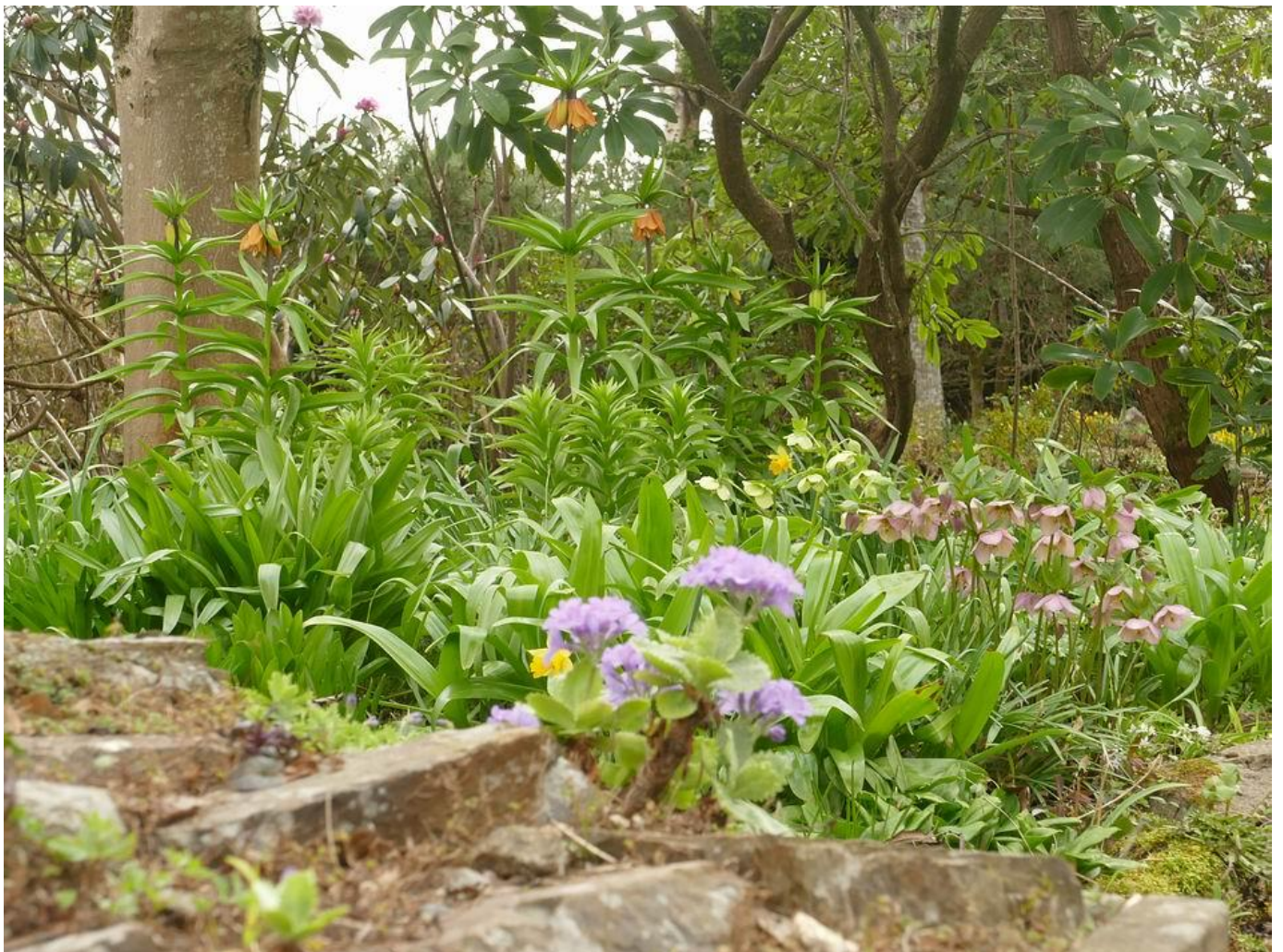


Every part of the garden is an experimental habitat. It has been interesting to observe how this small area has fared during last years hot dry season. It is informative to witness that the best Hepatica are mostly, not the original seedlings I planted out, but are the second generation that seeded themselves in and around the moss covered concrete. In the changing climate we have to adapt, learning which plants and habitat combinations will tolerate the changes.





This is one of the original seedlings of **Hepatica nobilis** I planted out.



Fritillaria imperialis rise up majestically beyond a **Primula marginata** growing in a slab bed.



Despite the robustness of their stems these plants have not evolved to withstand the strong winds we can get at this time of year. The whorls of leaves, caught by the wind, blew the stems to thirty degrees from the ground but the plants survive.



The many trees and shrubs we grow are an essential component in the garden; apart from the great decorative value they bring they also help to filter and protect plants from the worst of the winds shading the ground to minimise the evaporation rate.



Rhododendron thomsonii and Rhododendron pachysanthum and below a wider view.





A few images to update what is flowering in the Bulb house sand beds, with Fritillaria Narcissus and Muscari.



The huge amount of leaf growth is a good sign that the bulbs are growing and, with the help of the Potassium supplement I applied a month ago, next years' flower buds should be developing nicely.



Without the structure provided by the trees and shrubs, most of which we also raised from seed, our garden would not be the same. It would look very different and there would not be such a range of diverse habitats for the plants to seed around and exploit.



Rhododendron uvariifolium



If I can only give you one bit of advice then grow as many of your plants from seed as you can and use as many native plants as possible.....