



BULB LOG 22.....1st June 2011



Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'

I have shown Corydalis 'Craigton Blue' many times over the years and had not meant to say too much this time around about this lovely hybrid between Corydalis omieana and C. flexuosa that I first discovered in our garden over ten years ago.

Allowing plants to self seed is an exciting way to garden as every year you can discover new plants some of which may prove better than their parents in either their beauty or grow ability.

The area above is full of Corydalis 'Craigton Blue' and as it is a fertile hybrid, its resulting seedlings.



Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'

The reason I am mentioning it this week is that I was watching the TV coverage of Chelsea last week when Carol Klein was showing a few of her favourite plants and one of those she chose was Corydalis 'Craigton Blue' displayed on the AGS Gold Medal winning display.



Carol Klein

Well I was pleased and proud that this fine plant was receiving this recognition; not that I can claim to have made the hybrid, the plants did that with the help of the bees but I did spot the hybrids as something different grew them on and distributed a number of very similar clones which I called Corydalis x 'Craigton Blue'. However one clone seems to have dominated and it now has assumed that name for itself. I have a number of F2 and F3 hybrids that I am assessing.

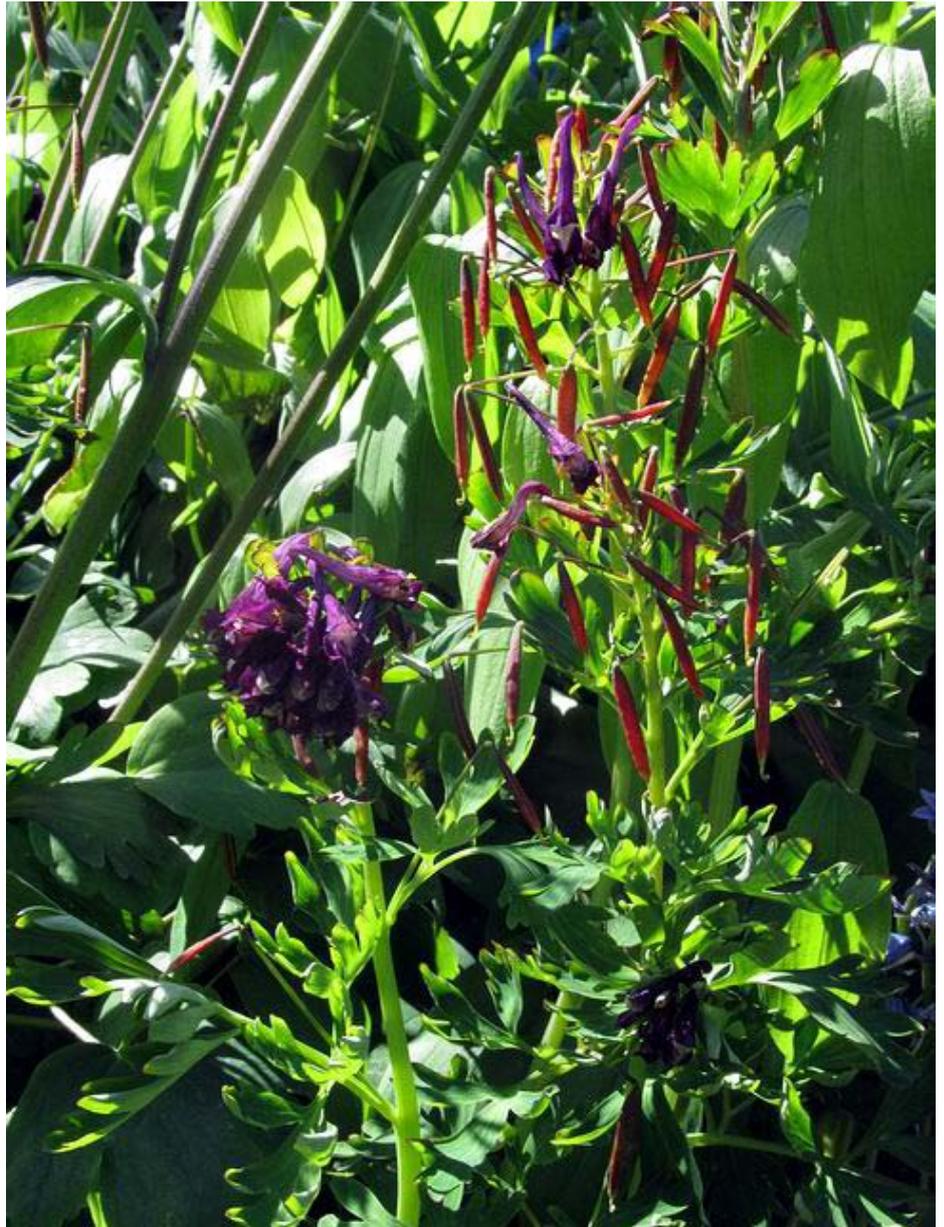


Corydalis mucronipetala

If there is one message that I will keep repeating as long as I have breath it is that you whenever possible should be growing your plants from seed and encouraging them to set seeds. How delighted I am to see some seed capsules appearing on *Corydalis mucronipetala* which has just flowered for the first time in our garden. I am checking them two or three times every day because corydalis seed capsules open very quickly often without any obvious signs of them being ripe. I sow *Corydalis* seed as soon as it is ripe placing the seed pot in an open frame.

Corydalis capitata

As *Corydalis mucronipetala* is very new to us and we have but one small plant I want to collect the seed in an attempt to maximize the germination; to this effect I will sow it immediately it is collected. Some plants produce lots of seed and *Corydalis capitata* is one of these so I am happy to let the seeds shed themselves and germinate wherever they find the conditions suitable. Plants can easily be lifted in their second or third year if they appear where I do not want them. Of the hundreds of seeds that *Corydalis capitata* will shed a relatively small proportion will grow on successfully. This scatter gun approach is one of nature's ways of ensuring continuation of a plant's genes. When rare plants are involved growers can often provide better conditions and ensure a much higher germination rate by growing them in pots. One warning: do not place *Corydalis* seeds, or any bulbous plants seeds, in a fridge immediately on harvesting them. Even though they appear ripe and have been shed from the plant they are still forming and need another six to eight weeks of warm conditions to fully mature- placing them into cold conditions can arrest that development.





Corydalis ??

The combination of allowing plants to self sow, sometimes accidentally, and having a label free policy in the garden beds sometimes leads to unknown plants appearing.

I cannot remember planting this Corydalis – but I may have done – or it could be a self sown seedling as it is in a bed with a number of other species.

I have been puzzling over it since I first noticed the glaucous blue leaves some weeks ago. It is growing near to *Corydalis pseudobarbisepala* which I know shed some seeds despite my best intentions to collect them.

I know there are people who like everything to be well organized with labels but I love the excitement of discovering unknown plants appearing in the garden and then having to work out what they might be whether we planted them or they have them sown themselves.

I may not have a long time to wait as it appears that there are flower buds at the end of a few of the stems.





Arisaema intermedium is running around in this bed by stolons.



Erythronium sibiricum seed pods



Erythronium sibericum seed pods

This year I am delighted to have a good seed set on our *Erythronium sibericum* and I noticed that the seed pods were just starting wrinkle and turn yellow indicating that the seeds were ready to part company with the parent plant.



Each seed capsule has three sections, each of which can have over twenty seeds in, the best I counted was 22, giving a possible total of over 60 seeds per stem. I sow *Erythronium sibericum* and all the 'dens-canis' relatives such as *E. japonicum* and *E. caucasicum* immediately they are ripe. Like the *Corydalis* I place the seed pots in an open frame so that they can remain moist over the summer months.



Allium

Over the last few years we have been adding to the number of Alliums we grow – here a number of the taller species provide flowering interest in one of the bulb beds extending the season well into the summer months.



Allium



Allium



Allium

Superficially they look very similar; tall stems with clusters of small purple flowers like pompoms on a stick but closer inspection reveals their subtle variations I have still to familiarize myself with their names. Amazingly their stems some of which stand a meter tall have survived the gale force winds that have ripped the leaves from and even felled fully mature trees around Scotland in recent weeks including a number in our neighbourhood.



Fritillaria camschatensis and *Lilium macklinae* Nagaland

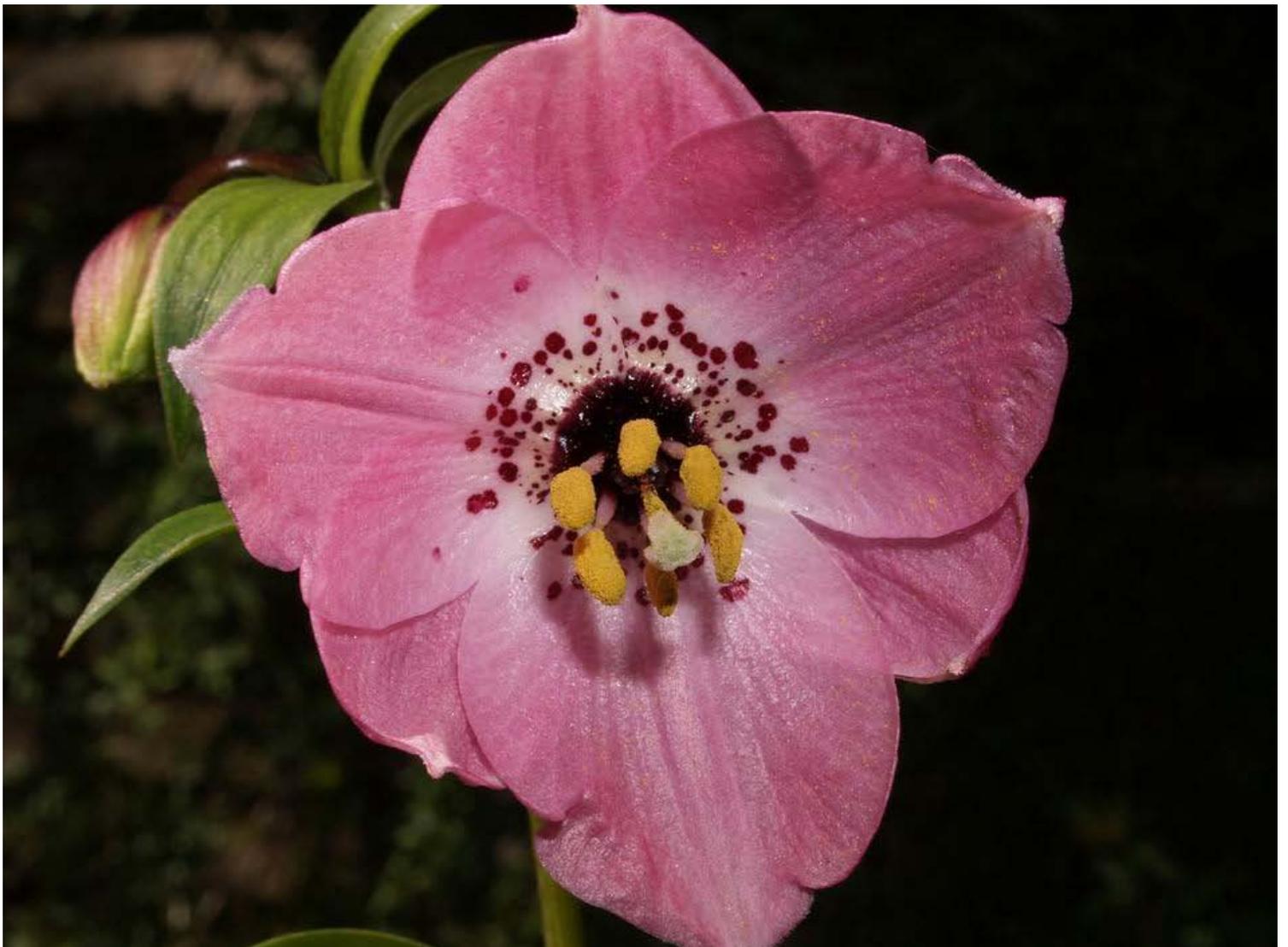


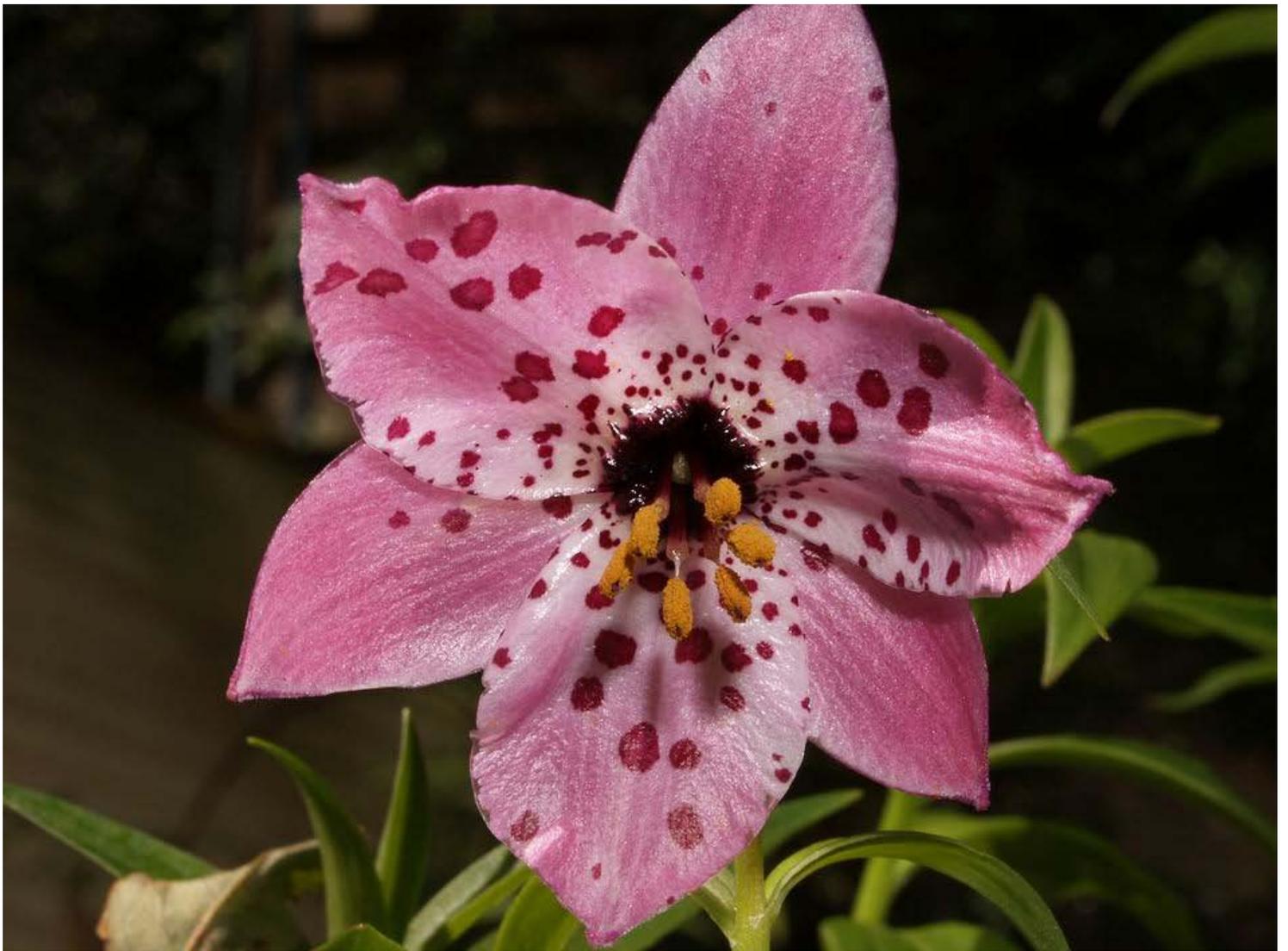
***Lilium macklinae* Nagaland**

This lovely dark form of *Lilium macklinae* was relatively recently introduced from Nagaland. It is a lovely variation to the normal white form and this is our first flowering of it. The *Nomocharis* are also flowering now and I show a few variations and a close up below to finish off this week's Bulb Log.



Nomocharis





I did intend to use the picture below at the start of this week's bulb log but my spell checker, that is, Maggi, does not like spiders and may not have checked through my words if she saw this beautiful wee spider. I am not sure if I made things worse or not when I told her it jumped, was eating a fly and that I found it in our kitchen!!!

