



BULB LOG 09.....2<sup>nd</sup> March 2011



Spring arrives in Aberdeen - at least for just now that is, as we could still be plunged back into the depths of winter for a month or two yet. Clear blue skies mean cold frosty mornings but then the sun gets to work warming the air and the ground and the bulbs respond. I will let most of the pictures speak for themselves as I share with you some of the views of emerging bulbs all around the garden



**Iris reticulata**



## **New sand bed**

For a number of years this area under a bird feeding table has just become a dumping ground for odd pots without a home. Since I have such a lot of sand and with the success that my previous sand bed has been for growing bulbs I decided to create another one here. The Iris are just plunged in pots for just now but I will plant up this bed with bulbs over the course of this year.



## **Crocus**

The crocus have responded to the sudden warmth and have shot up and opened their flowers in double quick time.



**Crocus herbertii**

Formally known as *Crocus gargaricus herbertii* this form that spreads by stolons has been reclassified as a separate species. Although the flowers of the two look identical DNA work has shown that they are not that closely related and the non-stolon forming one remains *Crocus gargaricus* while this one, which is most commonly found in cultivation, becomes *C. herbertii*. There are slight differences in the corm tunics that would also support this separation. This group of egg yolk yellow blooms are in the cold shade and so remain tightly closed while the group across in the sunny side of the bed have opened their faces to the sunshine.



**Crocus herbertii**



**Crocus sieberi atticus**

Crocus sieberi atticus is one of the best growers in our garden where it clumps up well and needs to be divided every five years or so.



**Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus tommasinianus**

All around the garden there are a number of forms of the variable *Crocus tommasinianus* another great *Crocus* for the open garden.



**Crocus vernus**

These are the large Dutch selections of *Crocus vernus* which are like giants when compared to some of the forms of this species that we grow.



**Eranthis hyemalis**

A group of *Eranthis hyemalis* near the new sand bed also enjoy the warmth from the sunshine.



**Eranthis hyemalis**

When left to their own devices this plant will seed around forming bigger and bigger groups and the best way to spread them around is to lift a small group of seedlings towards the end of their growing season and carefully plant them in another area.



**Eranthis x tubergenia  
'Guinea Gold'**

These are my stock boxes of 'Guinea Gold'. Growing them in these polystyrene fish boxes means that I can easily replant them into fresh compost each year and so they increase quicker than they would in the garden.

I started off many years ago with a single tuber which I grew in a pot until I had enough to spread out in a box and now we have two full boxes. Also each year I have been able to place a few around the garden. This year at repotting time I am going to plant one whole box out around the garden and split the other box into two.

The picture below shows the flowers from a single tuber that I planted out last year.



**Eranthis x tubergenia 'Guinea Gold'**

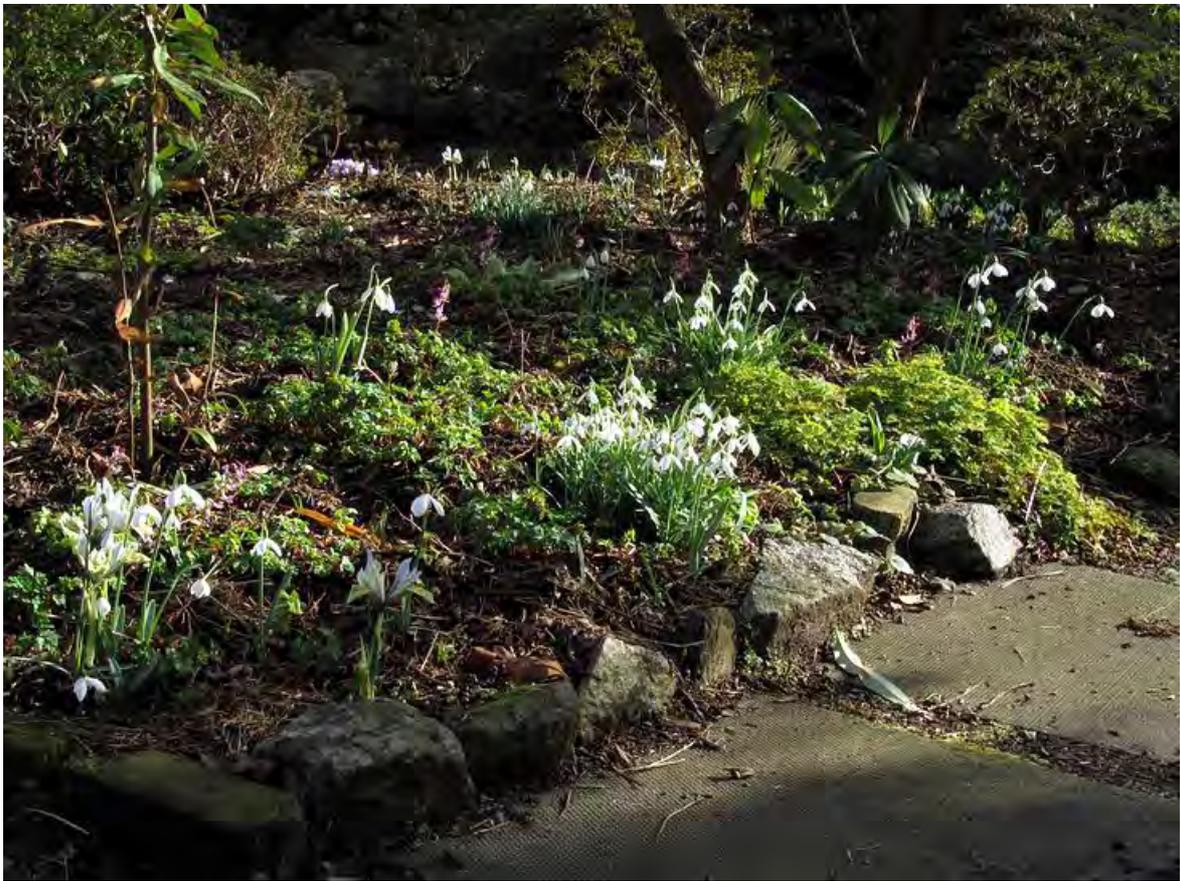


**Eranthis and Galanthus**

Above and below show more Eranthis and Galanthus just coming out.



**Eranthis and Galanthus**



**Snow drops**

We are reading on the Forum that the snowdrops down in the south are going over now and that white fever is starting to settle down again until next year. However if the drop fiends care to migrate north they could start the season all over again as most of our Galanthus are only just coming out now.



**Galanthus**

Don't ask me their names – I just enjoy them and their variation as I do all flowers.



**Galanthus and Leucojum**

This bed is dominated by the Galanthus and Leucojum just now but in a few weeks or a month depending on the weather it will turn pink and purple as the Corydalis emerge from their slumber.



**Galanthus and Crocus**

I just love the mixed groupings of bulbs of all kinds flowering together in their garden communities.



***Galanthus* 'Sam Arnott'**

*Galanthus* 'Sam Arnott' is a very good form that has been around for a very long time and is one to use as a standard to compare how good the many new cultivars are. How many of them will be around after 50 years?



***Leucojum vernalis***



**Hellebore**

It is not just the bulbs that are flowering just now here is one of the first Hellebores to open its flowers – it is a lovely soft yellow.



**Rhododendron 'Cilpinense'**

Rhododendron 'Cilpinense', the old hybrid between *RR. ciliatum* and *moupinense*, is always the first hybrid to flower in our garden. Most years its flowers will get frosted and some years they never get to open as they get frosted in the bud but when the flowers do open it is a great beauty and well worth the risk.



**Rhododendron 'Cilpinense'**

The bush itself is fully hardy it is just the flowers that are susceptible to being burnt by frosts and if we get to enjoy it undamaged for one year in five I think it is well worth the risk.



**Erythronium caucasicum**

The first Erythronium of the year is always *Erythronium caucasicum*. Like a white form of *E. dens canis* but with yellow pollen in place of the dark violet pollen of *dens canis* it is slow to increase vegetatively and needs to be raised from seed if you want to establish a colony.



**Erythronium caucasicum**



**Puddock**

It is not just the flowers that have been attracted out by the warm sunshine a puddock (Scottish for frog) makes its way across the garden to the pond in the hope of finding a mate.