



BULB LOG 28.....10th July 2013



Orchids have self-seeded into many of our troughs, especially the old established ones.

One of the smallest troughs at just 25cms wide is looking very nice with the cascading Saxifraga flower stems covered in white flowers. This has been planted for around five years and illustrates that you can make a rock garden on any scale.



Saxifraga brunonis produces more runners than any other saxifrage that I am aware of - they are especially attractive when the light is coming from behind making the red runners glow - contrasting beautifully with the pale green rosettes. It will have masses of small yellow flowers later in the summer.





A new flowering for us is another yellow saxifrage given to us by a friend. From reading Malcolm McGregor's wonderful book on Saxifrages I see a very similar plant (shown there as *Saxifraga* sp. CLD990) which Malcolm suggests is possibly *S. sediformis* – he notes that the flowers of that species are zygomorphix (bilaterally symmetrical) rather than rotationally symmetrical.





The rosettes are monocarpic but are replaced by a cluster of new ones forming around the base.



You can see the Saxifrage in the foreground growing happily in this broken concrete block landscape.



A nice compact Hypericum (whose name I can never remember) self-seeds gently around on a raised bed.



Focus is so important in all photographs and for many years we have had to rely on the autofocus systems on our cameras both SLR and Compacts but that has its limitations. The picture on the left is how the autofocus saw the

scene focusing on the area of higher contrast in the background and leaving the central subject of the orchid out of focus. The compact camera I use, Canon Power Shot SX210IS, allows me to focus manually which I did in the right hand image where the orchid is in sharp focus while the background is soft.



These two pictures further illustrate the same issue while the Meconopsis are sharp in the above image it is spoiled by the distracting out of focus Tulipa in the middle of the foreground. The eye is drawn away from the subject towards the Meconopsis on the left hand side while below these same poppies initially draw your eye which then quickly moves towards the sharp image of Tulipa sprengerii.





A few *Arisaema wilsonii* flowers peek out through their large leaves while a whole lot more are hiding below.





Arisaema ciliatum



We rely on many herbaceous plants to bring summer colour to the bulb beds. Our cool wet summers do not suit many of the summer flowering bulbs.



An attractive combination of *Digitalis*, *Lilium martagon* and *Dactylorhiza* flowers in front of the beautiful cinnamon coloured bark of *Rhododendron thomsonii*



Similar combinations are repeated all around the garden.





Nomocharis, *Lilium mackliniae* and *Dactylorhiza* enjoy their moment in a bed that is full of *Trillium*.



Daisy flowers seem to be plentiful at this time of year and we have many *Celmisia* which are wonderful - displaying their dramatic foliage all year round but their flowers are just as striking for a short period during the summer.



Pacific Coast Iris hybrids from seed, are flowering.



Iris siberica has flowered at the end of May in some years but this year they did not open until the end of June.

We are actually getting some summer weather this year - the sun is shining and the ground is dry so I am having to water some of the troughs for the first time in about three years. Also for the first time in three years the ground is dry enough for me to be able to lift and split the *Erythroniums* in the plunge beds. I like to do this at least every two years so it is long overdue but in recent summers it was simply too wet and many of the bulbs that I did try and lift were already making new roots. I am off now to get on with the *Erythroniums* and will share some of the images with you next week but before I go I will leave you with a picture of *Corydalis mairei*, below, showing both the flowers and seed pods full of seed. It is not the most decorative of this group with rather small flowers but it does look good in a woodland setting where it can seed around.



Corydalis mairei



Last picture for this week is Miss Lily my canine companion- now I am off into the garden.....