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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 05.....31st January 2018





With back lighting from the low winter sun these snowdrops shine out against the background mulch of autumn leaves, grabbing my attention. There is also just enough warmth to encourage them to open their flowers. I am interested to know what temperature it needs to be for these flowers to open on the left it is 3.5C and the flowers are closed but at 6C that they started to reflex (below).



Snowdrop flowers opening in the sunshine when the temperature around the flowers rose to 6C.



A week is a long time in a garden especially in the late winter and spring when the early bulbs and related plants are emerging. Last week I showed this **Galanthus 'Glenorma'** lying flat frozen to the ground now the weather has turned it is back unscathed by that episode, just as well as it will have to endure many more freezing periods in the coming weeks and months. I never cease to be amazed at the speed of growth the bulbs put on in the milder periods – almost overnight they can go from just the smallest shoot peeking

through the ground to the flower buds emerging.



One of a number of clumps of **Galanthus woronowii** we have around the garden



Galanthus woronowii



Mixed planting of **Galanthus**

Click the link to join me in a new [Bulb Log Video Diary](#) as I walk around the garden viewing the snowdrops.



Anemone shoots

It seemed like there was plenty winter time left to tidy the garden but there are shoots appearing everywhere and suddenly tidying away last season's leaves and debris takes on a sense of urgency.



Seedling bulb shoots revealed as I lifted some of the fallen leaves.



Before (left) and after (below) clearing the shaded 'leg' of the rock garden – I found many signs of growth from germinating seeds to flower shoots as I lifted the leaves.



I use a leaf blower to blow away most of the leaves now I will get down to remove the rest by hand – it is when I am down close that I spot the new shoots and the weeds that need removing.



The rock garden as I move round clearing the fallen leaves – I think it might be time to split the large Haberlea in the top left.



The rock garden backs on to the erythronium plunge beds which are also now tidied and mulched.



As the temperature rises above 6C more snowdrops open their flowers and more shoots push through the ground.



We do grow some snowdrops in pots under glass as an insurance so we can build them up before risking them outside also it allows us to enjoy them where both the flowers and humans benefit from the slightly warmer temperatures and drier conditions under the glass.

**Galanthus
'Ramsay'**



Galanthus 'Maggi Young' - named by Ian Christie - is bulking up well in its second year from the single bulb Ian gave Maggi.

I am also noticing that the bigger bulbs are producing two scapes

Galanthus 'Maggi Young'





Galanthus 'Philippe Andrea Meyer'

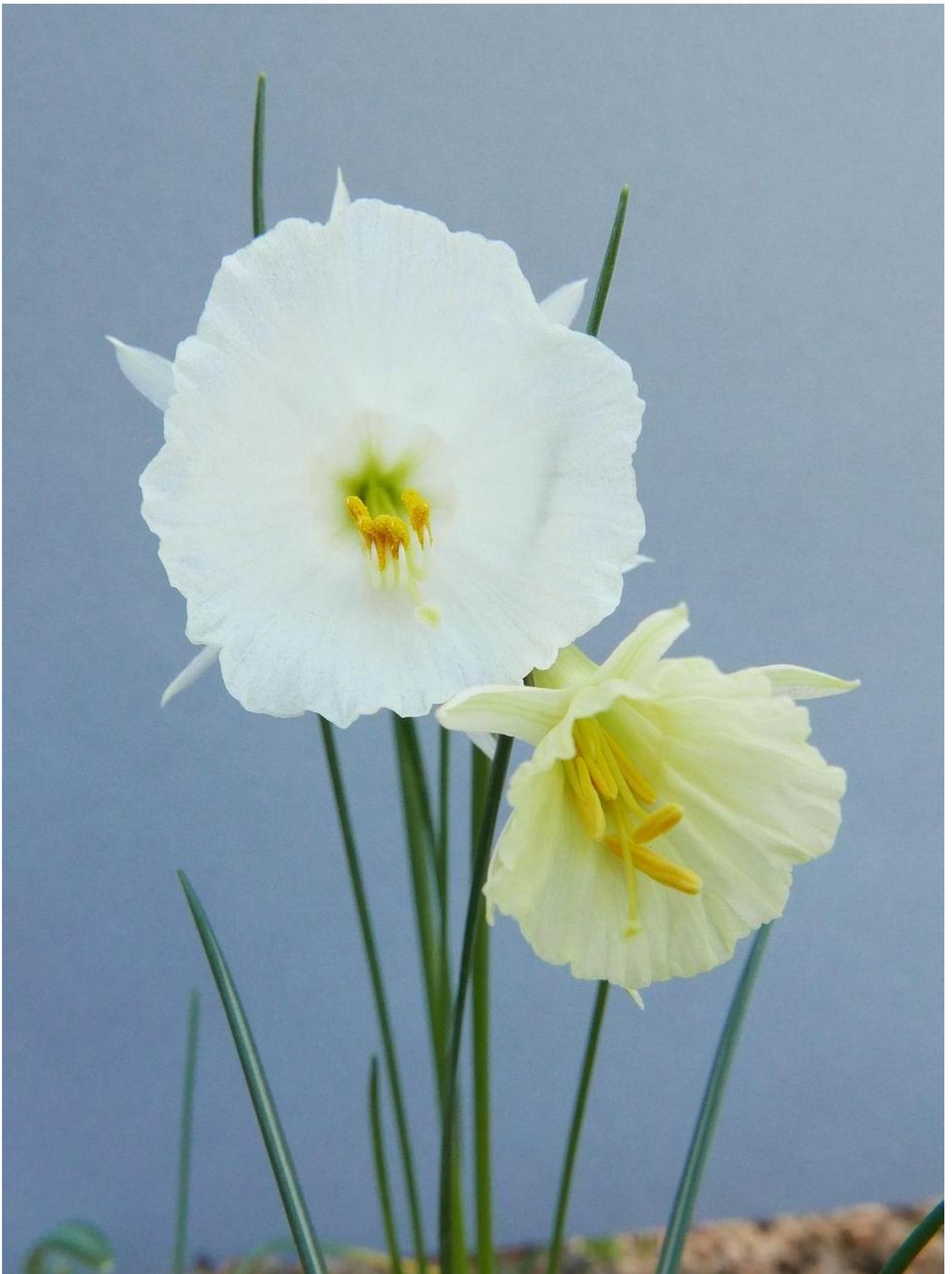
Last year we received a few bulbs of 'P.A.M' and currently it is among the snowdrops enjoying the protection of the glasshouse - when (if) it increases to more than five bulbs I will try some outside.

Not all snowdrops take to the conditions in our cold wet garden so we are cautious with new introductions however it can be the case that you can kill them quicker in a pot than you can planting them directly into the garden.



Galanthus 'Glenorma' and Narcissus 'Craigton Clanger'

While we have some snowdrops it is the wee daffodils that are currently the predominant flower in the bulb houses.



The next series of images are all from the most recently converted sandbeds where I randomly planted narcissus bulbs all raised from our own open pollinated seed so there is a wide variation to be found.



Narcissus seedlings





These two are from the same bulb but I noticed something different about the style.



Narcissus usually have a single stigma but here the style has split into two branches with two stigmatic surfaces. I suspect this to be an aberration and that it will revert to the normal style next year but it does show how species are not fixed but continually evolving through genetic mutations like this, especially if they are fixed and offer an advantage such as in the production of seed.



Deep yellow seedling



Two different pale yellow seedlings one with a widely flared, almost flat, corona.



This one has a pale conical corona.



Crocus chrysanthus



Due to the cold dull days the left hand flower withered before it got the conditions to open.



For years I have tried without much success to establish **Cyclamen coum** in the garden. Some of the original plants raised from collected seed have hung on for tens of years without ever growing much or setting seed then when I built this sand bed in 2008 I received and sowed **Cyclamen coum** seed in with the sand and now I have a self-seeding colony. There are a few lessons to be learned from this: first don't give up on the first attempt, second don't repeat the same mistake - try it in a different position or a different

substrate. Here I have manipulated the habitat enough by growing in sand to allow the plants to grow happily. A third lesson is that now I am getting self-seedlings each generation of which is becoming more adapted to our growing conditions and in time I may find that their offspring will have become acclimatised to grow elsewhere in our garden.



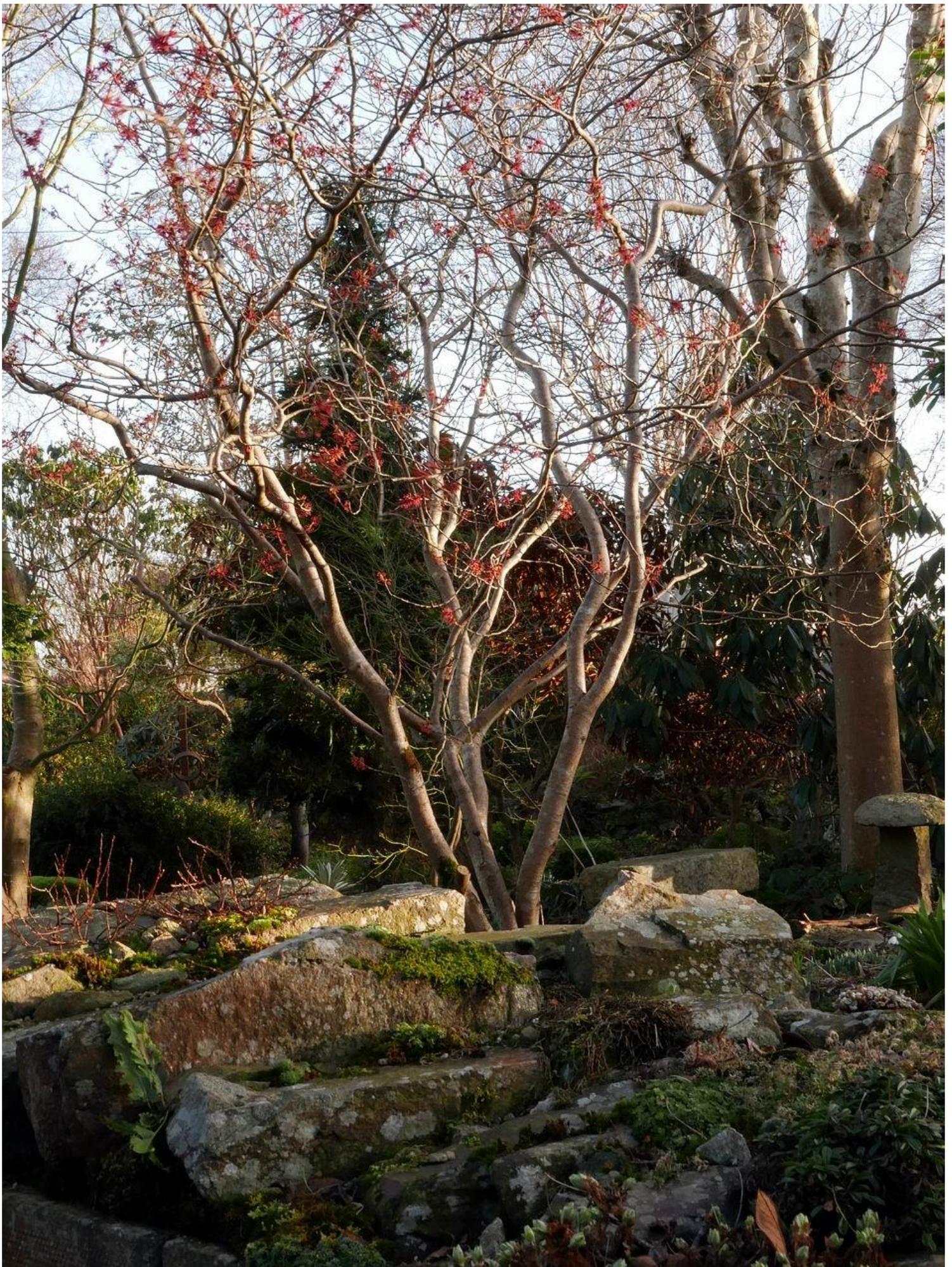
Cyclamen coum



Check back to last week to see how quickly *Eranthis pinnatifida* is growing.



Also the group of *Eranthis hyemalis* that featured on last week's cover as downward facing green buds have now turned upwards and are displaying their true colours.



Hamamelis is showing colour.

I have loaded a second new [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#) showing some of the Narcissus flowering in the bulb house sand beds.