



BULB LOG 49..... 7th December 2005



Garden looking south

It is not the best time of year in the garden with the sun above, at its highest point for the day, not even half way up the trees. A very wet few weeks have made it difficult for us to get the leaves lifted so they are still lying everywhere. I do not mind this as I believe that leaving them lying a bit longer and letting them get well soaked helps the break down process so that we get nice leaf mould quickly. I will get them lifted as soon as we get a few dry days to let the ground get dry and then the leaves will not be quite so wet.

Tropaeolum on conifer

Other parts of the garden are just as bad and needing attention. *Tropaeolum speciosum* has a good hold of this conifer and if I do not remove it for the winter it will permanently damage the conifer's foliage. In mild winters the *Tropaeolum* can stay evergreen but if we get some good frosts it will retreat underground to its strange long swollen roots. These roots love to spread through cool, moist, humus rich soils just like ours and this along with self seeding every where, makes this plant quite a nuisance even if a very beautiful one.





Arisaema berries

Looking around the garden my eye is continually lured to the still bright shiny red Arisaema berries. Still no takers for these attractive fruits they are only dispersing slightly because the core that they are attached to has rotted away.



Frit seeds and Arum leaf

Our ancient ancestors celebrated the mid winter as a time of death and renewal as the sun sunk to its lowest point before starting to rise again. The same cycle can be observed in the garden with the dead seed heads on this *Fritillaria camtschatensis* and the first new leaf emerging on an Arum.



Liver wort

My garden walk continued around to the seed frames where I found yet another task that I have fallen behind with – keeping the seed pots free of weeds, mosses and liverwort. These fascinating plants not only reproduce by spores but also by the most efficient plantlets contained in the splash pots all over their surface. One drop of rain scoring a direct hit on one of these splash pots will splatter tens of plantlets around all the surrounding seed pots. There is no point placing nice clean newly sown seed pots close to any that have liverwort on them as it will quickly spread. The only effective way to keep it under control is the laborious task of removing it by hand which will take me some hours on a dry winters day during which time I can rue the fact that I did not attend to it sooner before it got such a hold.



Crocus leaves

Some of the autumn flowering Crocus are now sending up their leaves. To minimise the effects of slug attacks I need to keep these clear of the leaves fallen from the trees which provide excellent cover for the slugs to lurk about in.



**Cyclamen coum
silver leaves**

In the corner of a seed pot is a nice silver leaved form of Cyclamen coum. Cyclamen coum has never thrived when planted out in our garden I do not know if it is our climate or our acid soil. It survives but it never makes such a show as I have seen in the pictures from other gardens on the forum pages.



Narcissus romieuxii mesatlanticus

Back under glass the Narcissus will be the main flowering bulb for the next few months as more are coming into flower daily. It is such a pity that there are not any shows when the hoop petticoats are at their peak of flowering; if there were, they would be much more widely grown as I cannot see anybody resisting their charm.



Narcissus cantabricus

I got these as *Narcissus cantabricus foliosus* but I suspect that they are not true cantabricus but have crossed with *N. romieuxii*; they are still a nice pot full. It is a good time to remind you if your narcissus are not flowering like these then you are most likely not feeding and watering them enough in the winter months – when they are in growth. With the milder weather this week I have given all the pots with fine growth like this one a good watering and as the flowers fade I will apply some sulphate of potash.

Narcissus romieuxii seedling

Another of the hundreds of *Narcissus romieuxii* seedlings that I grow is just opening. It is quite a bit more yellow than many and I just love the way the corona unfurls going through this flattened stage before forming its fully developed fluted, conical trumpet.





Over head view

Meanwhile I am disturbed by a noise over head that is not rain or falling leaves!