



BULB LOG 17.....28th April 2010



Week 17 of the year is always one of the peak times in our garden when I am busy taking hundreds of photographs. So much is in flower just now that I have taken over 500 pictures in the last two days. The cold winter held many of the early flowering bulbs back a few weeks so that a lot of them are still in flower as the Erythroniums and Trilliums start to come into flower giving us a compressed intense flowering.



I will concentrate on sharing some of the fritillaries this week as many of them will go over quickly especially those in the Frit house.



Fritillaria affinis tristulis

The wonderful reptilian petals of *Fritillaria affinis tristulis* always fascinate me with their rich grape “bloom” dark colour with a striking yellow highlight along their crinkly edge - all this going on over whorls of glaucous green leaves make it a very handsome and showy frit.



Fritillaria amana EKB1034

The group of plants that we knew as *Fritillaria hermonis amana* has recently been split up and this form I believe, a very fine elegant form of the species selected by E K Balls, is *Fritillaria amana*. I have a lot of forms that came under the general name lumped as *F. hermonis amana* and I find it difficult to separate all of them into the new species – I suspect that some of my plants raised from our own seed are possibly hybrids between the two.



Fritillaria acmopetala wendelboi

Fritillaria acmopetala wendelboi is also a beautiful frit whose name commemorates another great plantsman, Per Wendelbo, who had a great knowledge and a passion for bulbs. *Fritillaria acmopetala* along with the *Fritillaria hermonis amana* group are among the most prolific producers of rice grain sized bulbils and I have a theory that if you grow a collection of *Fritillaria* for long enough, no matter what you started with they will eventually all turn into one of those species!!!



Fritillaria bithynica

Like most of the frits I am showing this week *Fritillaria bithynica* is readily available and easy to grow which in my view makes them even better plants than some of the rare plants that are often difficult to grow in cultivation.



Fritillaria argolica

These are two seedlings from the same capsule of my pot of *Fritillaria argolica* and they show the variation that can be found in this species which can also lead to confusion when trying to identify species.



Fritillaria erhartii

Note the green tips to the petals on *Fritillaria erhartii* making a nice highlight – the brown tips on the leaves are the result of sun scorch when we were away to the Edinburgh Show for the weekend. This picture also shows the small clusters of silver hair like structures that you will find to a greater or lesser degree on all *Fritillaria* flowers.



Fritillaria grandiflora

I will stick to calling this *Fritillaria grandiflora* and not *F. kotschyana* *grandiflora*. I am sure there has been some confusion along the line because to me this plant is so distinct that I do not see it can be just a sub species of *kotschyana*.



Fritillaria graeca

There are lots of closely related taxa in the world of fritillaries which are variously lumped under one species or split into separate species by the different authorities. To keep things simple I view them as groups- one of these is the *Fritillaria graeca* group and the next two pictures below show other members of this group.



Fritillaria guссichiae



Fritillaria thessala

Both of these are often listed as subspecies of *F. graeca*.



Fritillaria sibiryani



Fritillaria sibiryani

Fritillaria sibiryani is a distinctive and attractive species.



Fritillaria montana

There are a whole lot of plants that fall into the *Fritillaria montana* group - it seems to be another one of these complexes of variable yet botanically similar plants that we desperately need an authoritative book on this popular genus to help growers sort them out.



Fritillaria whitallii

There can be quite a lot of variation in the flowers of *Fritillaria whitallii* but luckily they are always easy to identify from any other species.



Fritillaria meleagroides

These are two forms of *Fritillaria meleagroides*; the one on the right was raised from seed collected from the left hand plant and again shows that you will get variation in seedlings. While all these frits have been grown under cold glasshouse conditions we also grow all of them successfully in the open garden.



Bulb frame

A number are also grown in pots kept in an open frame like the one above.



Fritillaria tubiformis



Fritillaria moggridgei

Last week I explained the difference between the pale yellowish forms of *Fritillaria tubiformis* and *F. moggridgei* and now these pictures illustrate it much better.



Fritillaria moggridgei



Fritillaria tortifolia



**Fritillaria
tortifolia &
cirrhosa**

It is always worth looking inside of your frits as many of them hide their most dramatic display there.

Obviously these stunning interiors are to attract pollinators in to fertilise the flowers.



Fritillaria meleagris

There is no Fritillaria in the world that is better than *F. meleagris* and we have masses of it all over the garden. I happily leave them to naturalise and often help them with their seed dispersal by collecting a handful when it is ripe and scattering it as I walk around the garden.



Fritillaria imperialis

Well named as it is the most stately and imperial of the genus, is *Fritillaria imperialis*. It comes in many named forms or you can raise it from seed and enjoy the variations of colour. I find that bulbs do not flower every year when left in the garden but they form good clumps and I usually get some flowers from each clump.



Fritillaria imperialis

Their pendant flowers also hide the best display for the pollinators and those willing to look.



Tiny Bee

I am not the only one attracted to the flowers as I found a number of these tiny bees gorging in the tulips.