



BULB LOG 26.....30th June 2010



Nomocharis pardanthina

This is the only *Nomocharis* that is flowering size this year as I had to remove a lot of virus infected plants. With all the seedlings I have coming on I hope to be back in the position of having have lots of healthy flowering sized bulbs in a few years.





Lilium sp

I cannot remember what this species is so I will need to try and key it out when I have time.

There is a closer view of the flower below and as always any suggestions from you of the name will be very welcome.



Lilium sp



Lilium szovitsianum

This one I do remember I raised from SRGC Seed exchange seed as *Lilium szovitsianum*. I know this name was superseded or sunk into *Lilium monadelphum* – it just takes me time to catch up.



Lilium szovitsianum



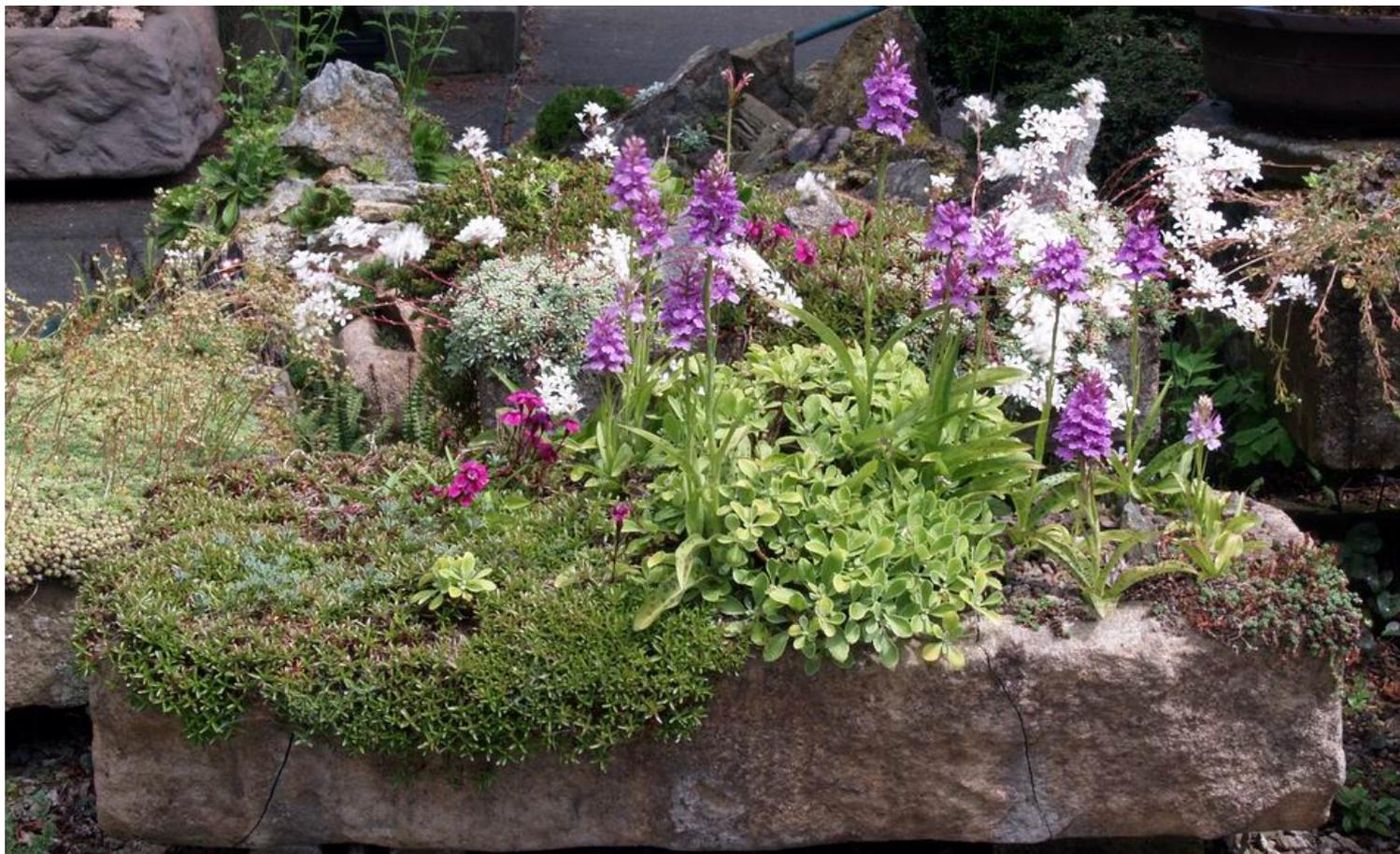
Ledbouria cooperi LEG 270

When I was given a bulb of this lovely form of *Ledbouria cooperi* I was told that it was hardy and I had to plant it in the garden - indeed the clump it was lifted from was growing outside in Southern Sweden. However I have kept it in a pot until it produces an offset which from the extra leaves I can tell it now doing and then I will plant one into a trough or raised bed.



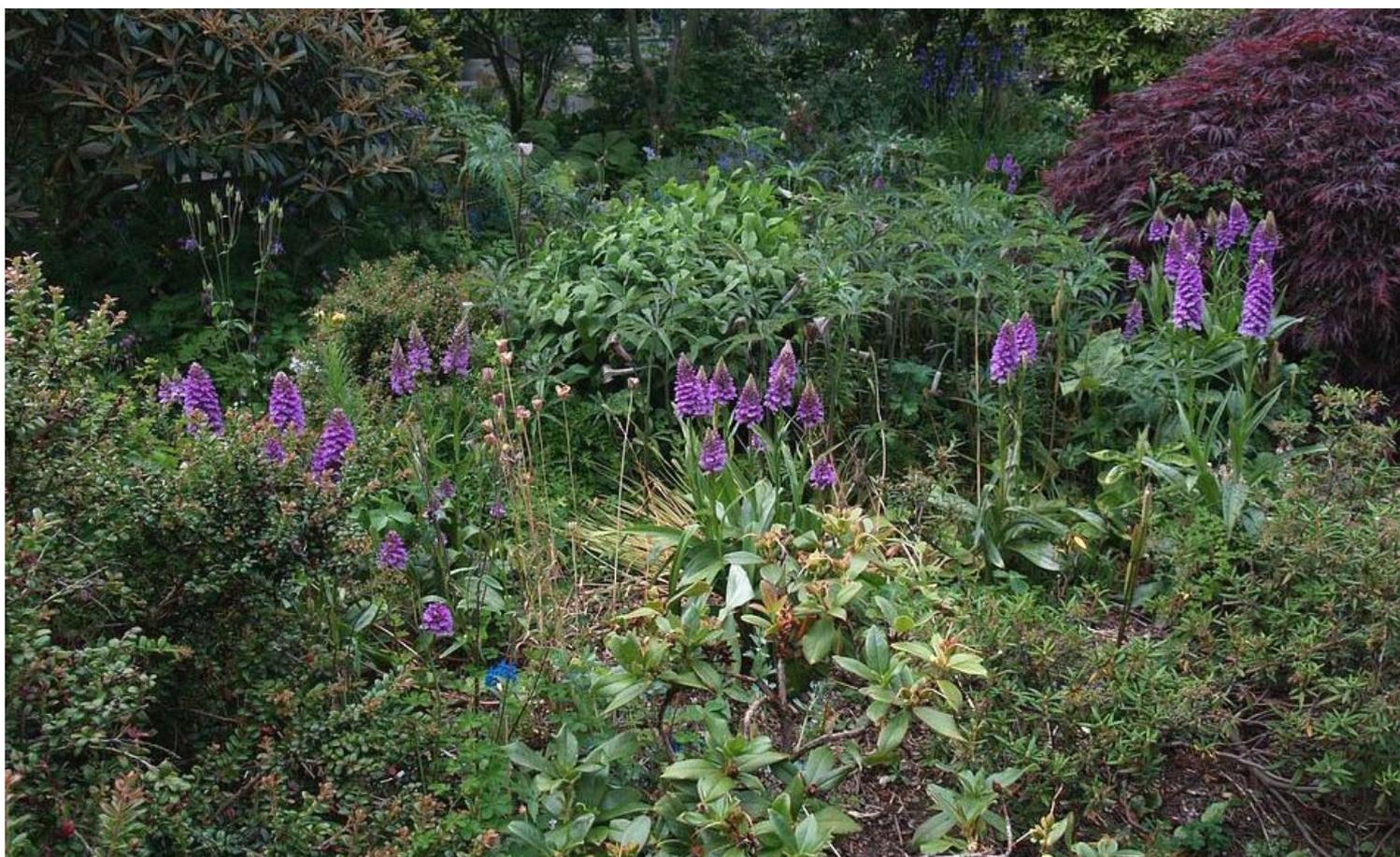
Rhodohypoxis baurei

The *Rhodohypoxis* come from a similar area in South Africa to the *Ledbouria* and they are fully cold hardy so long as they are not wet when they are subjected to frost. I grow most of mine in small troughs that I can lift under cover to dry out for the winter.



Troughs

I commonly find *Dactylorhiza* seedlings in my troughs, in fact I encourage them by scattering the seeds when they are ripe around the troughs. Once they reach flowering size I can remove some of them to spread around the garden where they will grow much more vigorously than they will in a trough.



***Dactylorhiza* in spring bed**

Here are a number of *Dactylorhiza* planted in one of the spring beds to provide summer interest when the early bulbs have gone to rest – these were removed from a trough a few years ago.



Dactylorhiza flower spikes

We have quite a range of colour forms from light to dark pink/purple and the shape of the flowers spike varies – this is especially noticeable before all the flowers on a stem have opened.



Dactylorhiza

Another area where *Corydalis solidia* types along with *Erythronium*, *Trillium*, etc provided the early interest: now those species are going into their summer rest period we need something like *Dactylorhiza* to fill the space.



Dactylorhiza 'Madame Butterfly'

I have not tried to put a species name to any of these orchids because it is my belief that they are all hybrids.

I do have two that I can apply cultivar names to and one of these is the increasingly scarce Dactylorhiza 'Madame Butterfly'. I was given a small off set of this about a year ago and I split it last August planting the biggest bulb that you can see flowering here on its own and the two smaller bulbs were planted together. I will split it again late this year before it goes fully dormant in an attempt to speed up the rate of increase.

The friend that gave me this plant has now lost it so my first spare will go back to her. It is like borrowing plants where I get a bulb for a few years and then return it.

Another orchid that I received in just this way was Dactylorhiza 'Eskimo Nell'. Again the friend that gave me it in the first instance lost his and I was in the happy position to return it with some interest as I had a few to spare.



Dactylorhiza 'Eskimo Nell'



Dactylorhiza 'Eskimo Nell'

To help the increase and to try and keep these scarce forms healthy I lift them every second year just after the flowers have faded. I remove the new bulbs from the growing stem and plant them into another bed. I then replant that season's growing stem back into the ground with some added leaf mould and water it well – this always results in the production of more small bulbs before the onset of winter.



Dactylorhiza 'Eskimo Nell' flowers

It is well worth the extra effort to increase this lovely white form – the only one I know of in general cultivation.



Dactylorhiza clump

The treatment for the general Dactylorhiza is to allow them to form clumps and then split them before the competition becomes too intense and the size of the flowers starts to diminish. It is often when the clumps get too congested and individual bulbs are in direct competition with each other that they can become dry, a bit starved and under stress that they succumb to the various fungal and bacterial diseases that have blighted these beautiful plants in recent years. By applying this practice and continually moving the orchids on and replanting them we have largely avoided this plague for many years now.



Dactylorhiza - This is a box of stems that I planted into a deep fish box two years ago after I had removed and replanted the new bulbs. Now these in turn need to be planted out – I will wait until the flowers fade and start the process again – watch the bulb log where I will again record this process.



Dactylorhiza

We really do have them all over the garden as they work so well sharing the ground and taking over from the early flowering bulbs without ever coming into conflict.



Dactylorhiza

It is well worth getting up close and looking at each individual flower rather than just seeing them as a spike of flowers. You will be well rewarded by the perfect little orchid flowers that first attracted my interest in the Scottish mountains over fifty years ago.



Dactylorhiza flowers

A group photograph of a small selection shows that while many are seed raised they have a very similar parentage. The biggest noticeable difference is not so much in the flowers but the dark spots and markings on the leaves.

I leave you with the picture below of yet more of these wonderful plants in a raised bed.

