



Wisley's Alpine Log

By Paul Cumbleton

2011: Log 01...26 Jan



Welcome to my first Log of 2011! The year has started as 2010 ended – cold and often cloudy with very poor light levels. But to bring some cheer, here is a selection of some of the colourful plants to be seen just now in the Alpine House. We have plenty of *Cyclamen* flowering, including this *C. alpinum*:



You will notice in the background some *Hepatica* and many of our Japanese selections are starting to flower. This one is 'Daishihou':



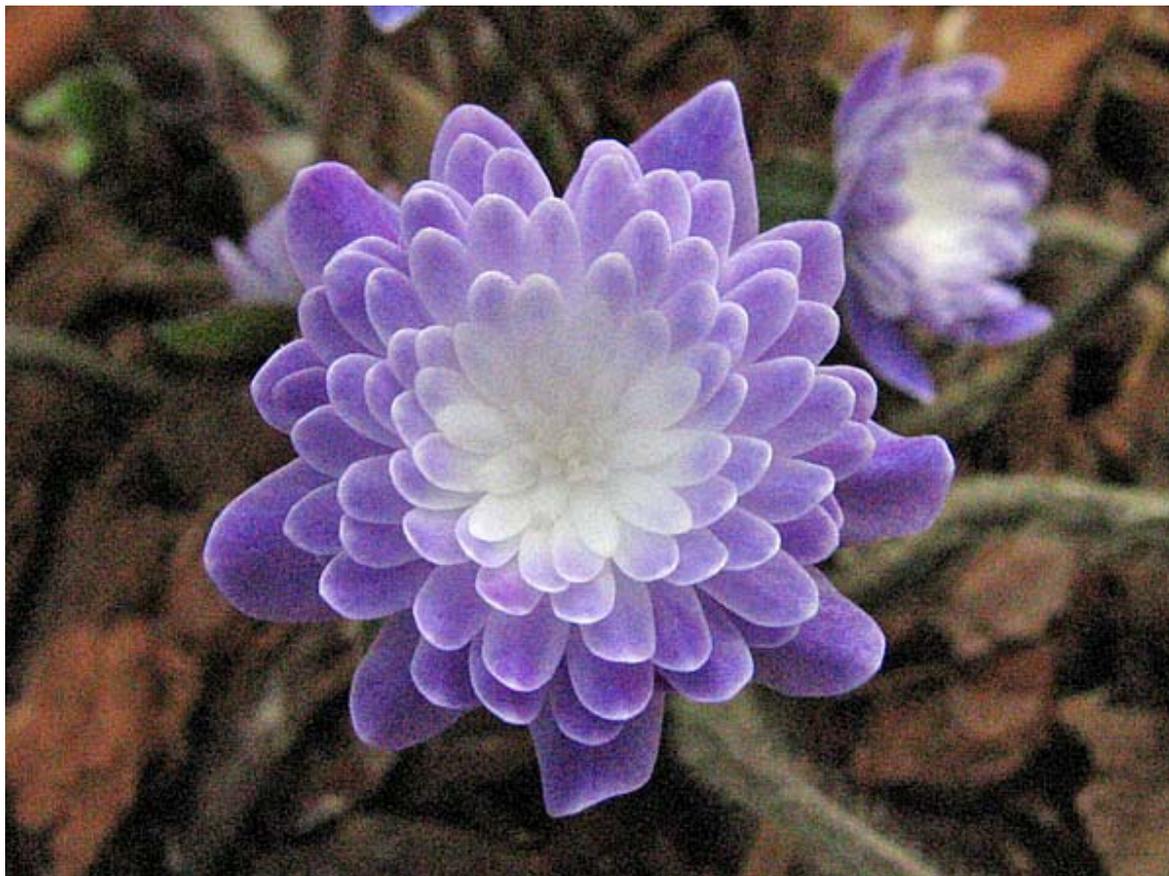
The next one is called 'Sansetsu':



These all came to us as young plants but they are slowly getting larger with more flowers each year. This one is 'Utyuu':



Finally another of the double-flowered forms, this time 'Seihou'



The graininess of this picture is an indication of the very poor light levels I referred to earlier, giving problems for photography as well as for our plants. My next choice to show is *Gymnospermium albertii*:



We have plenty of Crocus out at the moment, though often reluctant to open much without the sun. Here is a selection:



Crocus biflorus ssp. *isauricus*



Crocus imperati var *suaveolens* 'De Jager'



Crocus sieberi ssp. *atticus*



Crocus sieberi 'Albus'

Another bulb that always seems to flower very early for me is *Fritillaria striata*. I think it odd that this one fritillary flowers so much in advance of the others, most of which are not even through the gravel yet. I have tried starting to water it later than the others but it starts growing anyway before this even though dry. I am then afraid that without water the new growth will stall or roots fail to be made. So I have gone back to watering it at the same time as before and simply accept the earliness of its growth. This plant is grown in Seramis which it seems to like:



The first saxifrages are also now in flower and making their usual colourful splash, such as this *Saxifraga* 'Frederik Chopin'



Decidedly less colourful but intriguing are the flowers of this *Asarum hexalobum* var. *perfectum*:



The early irises are in bloom now. The smaller ones in this pot are *Iris hyrcana*, a collection by Janis Ruksans from the Talish mountains of Azerbaijan. The taller plant is clearly an interloper! (a form of *Iris reticulata*)



One more bulb to show – this time the small *Colchicum hungaricum*:



Finally, you can nearly always rely on a daisy of some sort to be flowering at any time of year. This is *Erigeron compositus*:

