



SRGC

## ----- Bulb Log Diary -----

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BULB LOG 33.....14<sup>th</sup> August 2013

The raised slab beds and troughs are all looking lush with the season's growth - some, like *Hypericum reptans* and *Cyananthus*, (above) I featured last week. My style in the garden, including the raised beds and troughs, is for a semi natural planting in the sense that plants are not isolated from each other - I want them to grow in communities. Of equal importance is my aim for them to self-seed – I want plants of all ages from seedlings to mature specimens as is seen in wild populations and the easiest way to achieve that is to provide suitable growing conditions and not to collect all the seed. There are two plants of *Potentilla pulvinaris* in this picture one is the original plant and the other a self-sown seeding a few years old but look again more closely.

## **Potentilla pulvinaris seedlings**

In this close up you will see a number of first year seedlings of *Potentilla pulvinaris* successfully establishing themselves. The sharp eyed among you may also notice an *Androsace* and a parsley(!) seedling. This is just the sort of effect that I want to achieve. Of course I do have to step in if things get too crowded. I may move some of the *Potentilla* seedlings and I suspect the parsley will end up floating on a bowl of soup when it gets a wee bit bigger.



**Gaultheria pyroloides, Gaultheria depressa and Allium wallichii**

No matter what size of plants or bed in the garden we encourage self-seeding provided the plants will grow in harmony and none dominate to the extent of killing its neighbours. Here the two *Gaultherias* have grown through

each other forming a community and the Allium has self-seeded in. This is a great combination as *G. pyroloides* has wonderful foliage but rarely fruits while *G. depressa* has plenty of white fruits but not such decorative foliage then, in a few weeks' time, the allium flowers will sit high above the low growing shrubs.



***Gaultheria pyroloides* and *Gultheria depressa* with berries**



### **Propagation house**

I have now assembled the propagation house plunge (complete with warming cable and drainage system as I showed in the new bulb house plunges a few weeks ago) and it is filled with sand waiting for the pots.



Complete with mostly 7cm square plastic pots with two rows of 8cm pots gives me space for 262 pots.



So what will happen underneath on the lower levels? I have four trays below: one I have left as it is without any holes, it will take the bucket to collect the drainage water as I showed in the bulb house. I have made drainage holes in the other three, one has a sheet of capillary matting, the next one has a layer of sharp sand and the end one has the same layer of sand but also has a mist unit.



I have added polycarbonate walls to the two shelves with sand both to contain the mist when it is operating and also to retain humidity and warmth for propagating cuttings. I also added a warming cable under the sand in the mist unit. My intention is that I will run the mist unit for summer cuttings and can use the next two sections to help wean the cuttings off the mist when they are rooted and potted - first in the closed sand bed then on the open capillary matting before going outside to fully harden off.



I rewired the electrics giving me the mist unit control, a two outlet mains socket and a four outlet bar wired through the thermostat on the far right to control all the heating cables in the plunges old and new. All my outside electrics are protected by a leakage to earth trip switch



Flowering in the garden is this ‘Corydalis species’ collected by Alastair McKelvie on one of his trips to the Himalaya I have no idea what species it is or even if it is a true Corydalis after the reclassification of this family.

We have grown it for many years where it self-seeds around under the Rhododendrons and into the cool bulb beds.

It is a tall plant reaching nearly a metre tall with several clusters of small yellow flowers branching at the top of the scape.

Perhaps the most decorative feature is the finely cut fern like foliage. If anyone has any idea what it may be I would love to know.





**Eucomis autumnalis amaryllidifolia JJA3.330.050**



**Eucomis schijffii JJA 3.230.800**

We grow these Eucomis in pots and keep dry all winter – I am not sure that they would survive in our garden.



We give the same treatment to our troughs of **Rhodohypoxis baurei** - they spend the winter in the glasshouse.



A few flowers have appeared in the hot dry bed at the base of our south facing kitchen wall.



Bright and garish and some would say the colours clash but I love the colour combination of this Romulea and the red Lapeirousia.





Some autumn flowering climbers include **Tropaeolum speciosum** and **Codonopsis greywilsonii** below.





Work in the garden continues at a pace - along with all the major projects in the bulb houses and the front garden we also have to keep up with the routine tasks such as hedge cutting and summer pruning of the trees and shrubs.

With so many trees and shrubs we produce masses of trimmings all of which are shredded, composted and returned to the soil so we return the goodness to the garden every year to be recycled by nature.

With all the additional work we have undertaken this year we have not had the time to repot all the bulbs and now time is running out before we start them off with the first watering in a few weeks' time.....

