



BULB LOG 14.....2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014



**Ipheion**



Above from the left is a seedling, Ipheion uniflorum then 'Charlotte Bishop, 'Rolf Fiedler', Alberto Castillo' and another seedling. I love the colour variation that you can get when raising plants from seed and I especially like mixing them up so the colours can complement and contrast with each other. There is always plenty of Ipheion seed available in the seed exchanges and once you have some you will be able to collect and grow your own seeds.



### **Ipheion 'Alberto Castillo'**

The pure white Ipheion 'Alberto Castillo' is perfectly hardy and self seeds in our garden – above it is growing with self sown Corydalis seedlings of various colours which are the off spring of the brick red Corydalis 'George Baker' the original group of which can be seen just behind and on the right of the Ipheion.



The mixed colour theme continues in the bulb house with Muscari, Tecophilaea, Corydalis, Narcissus and Tropaeolum.



Another view of the left hand plunge in the bulb house shows how the scene changes as the season progresses. Up until now this plunge was dominated by Crocus, the leaves of which are obvious when you look – now it is a lovely mixture of plants. At this stage watering has to be done carefully, as some plants like the late flowering Narcissus, need plenty water to allow them to grow while the early flowering Crocus need lower levels of moisture as their growth rate slows down.



**Narcissus 'Angel Whisper'**

Narcissus triandrus and its hybrids are among the late flowering daffodils like this beautiful delicate Narcissus 'Angel Whisper'.



Above another mixture of later flowering bulbs includes Fritillaria, Tulipa, Narcissus and Ipheion.

### **Narcissus cordubensis SF 47**

Many of the late flowering Narcissus belong to the Jonquilla group such as the beautifully scented *Narcissus cordubensis* SF47 shown here. The first Narcissus can start flowering for us as early as September and the last can still be in flower in July showing that there is much more to these plants that many think of as simply spring flowering bulbs.

The first and last to flower are both hoop petticoat types *Narcissus romieuxii* forms/hybrids being the first and *Narcissus bulbocodium* being the ones that can flower into July.



Corydalis 'George Baker' and Narcissus bulbocodium growing in a narrow bed between the front hedge and an ivy covered wall.



Mixed seedlings of **Corydalis solida** are a wonderful way to introduce colour into your garden early in the year. While they will tolerate many conditions I find they grow best in a cool moisture retentive humus rich soil.



Corydalis fit perfectly into the sequence in our beds as they come into flower just after early bulbs such as Crocus, Eranthis and Galanthus have finished flowering – depending on the weather there can be some overlap then they disappear back underground sometime around the middle of May leaving the space for other plants to flourish.



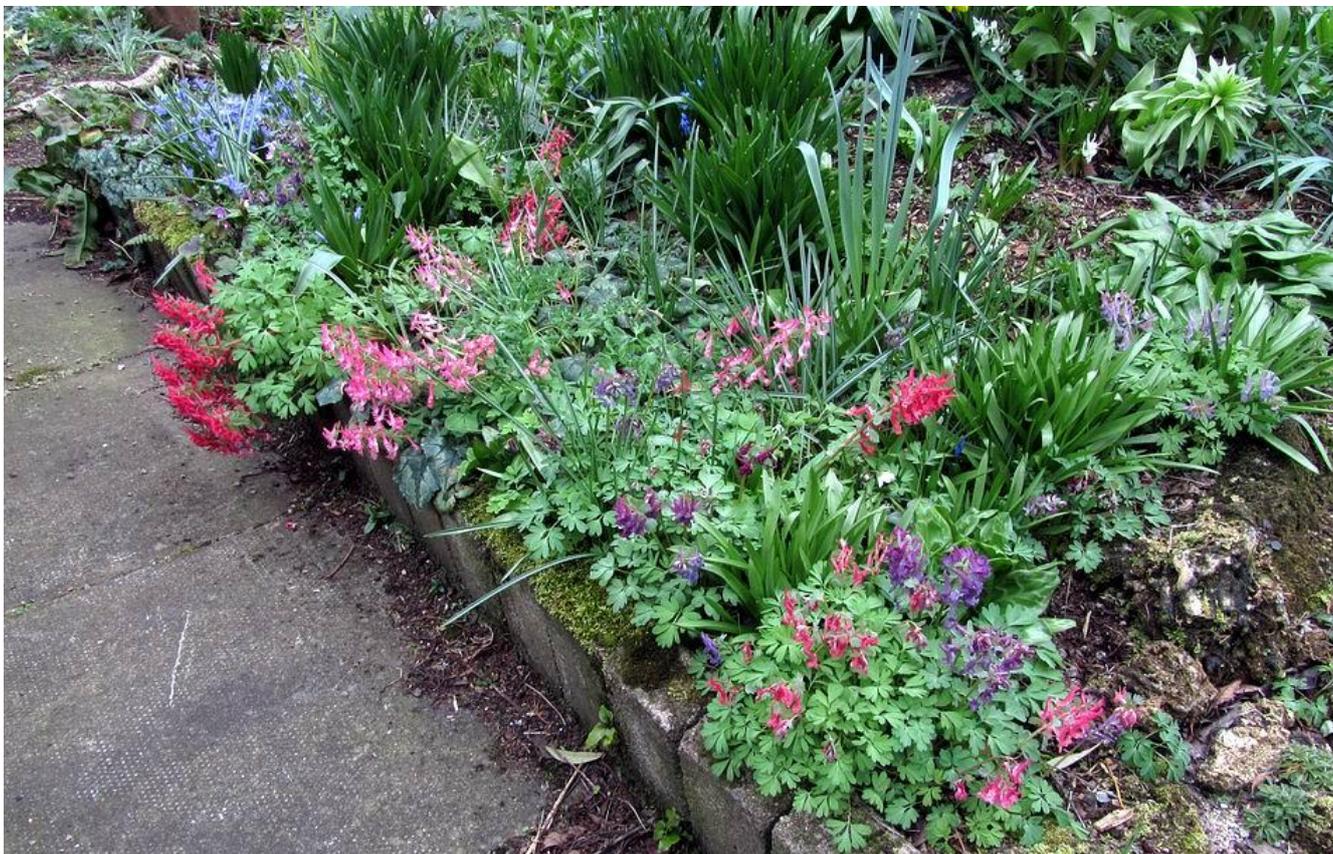
Once again raising your bulbs from seed will give you variations which will include the lovely bi-colour forms.



*Corydalis malkensis*, *Corydalis solida* with some late snowdrop flowers in the background.



*Corydalis* also grow well in the sand beds.



Earlier this bed featured Crocus, Cyclamen and Hepatica now the feature plant is Corydalis.



Two Erythronium hybrids are clumping up nicely - I will lift and divide them this year which will allow me to grow some in a plunge basket to see how quickly they will bulk up when replanted every year. I have lots of Erythronium hybrids that I am assessing before deciding if any should be named – the properties that I am looking for are decorative leaves, both these clumps meet that requirement, good colour to the flowers with distinct markings and that they do increase reasonably well so they can be distributed. I have shown the flowers in previous years but will update you when they open.



**Erythronium oregonum**

This is a pale coloured form of Erythronium oregonum with pale pollen and a yellowish tint to the flower it is often called the sulphur form. (Try not to notice the chewed Cyclamen leaves in the background!)





The dark patterned leaves here are another Erythronium hybrid adding to an interesting mixture of foliage types along with Corydalis and parsley.



The line of stones about 1/3 of the way from the top of this picture marks the edge of the bed everything growing in the gravel area below has self seeded. Allowing plants to self seed in this way is a wonderful way of gardening that brings all sorts of surprises.



### **Ranunculus ficaria**

Not all plants are welcome in our garden even though they are very beautiful – one of those is *Ranunculus ficaria* which came in with a small clump of Snowdrops we were given. I love seeing this plant in full flower in wild areas where it forms great carpets of bright yellow and once you observe the plant you quickly understand how it can colonise such a large area. There are a mass of bulbils all around the plant at ground level – these would be easily distributed by foraging birds or other animals such as the gardener. I carefully lifted this plant with a good amount of the surface soil to ensure that I got all the bulbils (I hope). The picture below shows just how many plants you could make from this single clump – each of the tiny bulbils if left can and will make a new plant.





**Rhododendron pachysanthum**



The last images for this week are of one of the many rhododendrons that are now blooming in the garden, Rhododendron pachysanthum has beautiful flowers for about three weeks of the year and superb decorative foliage for fifty two.....