



BULB LOG 07.....12th February 2014



Galanthus 'Craigton Twin'

Mature bulbs of Galanthus 'Craigton Twin' have robust short stems that bear two flowers - offsets have only a single flower in their first year of flowering but if grown well will have two flowers per stem from then on. I also like the wide leaves with turned back edges indicating that this plant has Galanthus plicatus in its parentage.



Corydalis malkensis and Galanthus woronowii

We can see the garden really waking up as many bulbs are starting to flower including the first Corydalis malkensis that has self-seeded next to a small clump of Galanthus woronowii.



Corydalis solida

Another early riser this Corydalis solida has also self-seeded. It is hard to believe that we will get off with such a mild winter – we can have severe cold and snow in February, March and April so we are a long way from being safe from winter's grasp. Aberdeen is considered a cold city, even in Scotland, but that is not because we get extremes of cold but the number of months the cold weather can stay with us. Locally our climate is often described as four months of bad weather followed by winter.



Crocus abantensis

A group of *Crocus abantensis* in a raised bed are just waiting for the temperature to rise enough to trigger them to open. Even when the sun does shine it is still very low in the sky resulting in the Crocuses staying firmly shut. You may have noticed a few blue slug pellets that I have scattered around the Crocus – I would prefer not to use them but the slug population has thrived so much in this moderate winter that without some measure to control them these flowers would be grazed away.



Iris 'Katharine Hodgkin'

Unlike the Crocus, Iris 'Katharine Hodgkin' flowers seem to open whatever the temperature is - here they share a shady bed with *Haberlea rhodopensis*



Crocus sieberi atticus

We have grown this form of *Crocus sieberi atticus* in our garden for years it is one of the best, forming great clumps that I like to divide every three to five years – this clump should be divided this year if I remember.



A nice combination of Snowdrops coming through a carpet of *Corydalis flexuosa* and *C. hybrid* leaves.



Galanthus 'S. Arnott'

It is nice that bulbs should increase forming clumps in the garden but I really do not like clumps especially when the flowers cannot display as individuals. Ideally I would like to split all clumps every other year- a task that is simply not possible with the number of bulbs we grow – however I do try and get round as many as I can. I split this clump a few years ago and I reckon it will be fine for another year.



More Galanthus pushing through a lovely mulch from our compost heap.



Galanthus 'Madeline'

One of the yellow drops still in a pot is Galanthus 'Madeline' I have to admit to having quite a few snowdrops growing in pots as I build up their numbers. The ultimate aim is to then release them into the garden minus their label. I do not like labels in the open garden and will have to rely on the plants uniqueness to be able to identify it. If I cannot tell one snow drop from another without a label then perhaps it is not worthy of a separate name and you just have a collection of labels. There are many very distinctive drops out there that do stand out and I like the thread in

the forum where the 'Drop fiends' are listing [Galanthus that are truly easy to recognise](#) but on the other hand there are a lot that are simply not worthy of the name. Am I worried about this? No - anything that gets otherwise sane people on their knees in the mud and snow looking at and enjoying bulbs is OK in my view. Time will be the great 'sorter- outer' as only those truly good and recognisable plants will still be around in ten, twenty, or more years' time.



I have some of the smaller **Galanthus** growing well (and unlabelled) in sand beds, like these yellow ones that can dwindle away in other garden bed. Like many other bulbs they grow well in the sand and it is easy to lift and split them every year.



Galanthus 'Seagull'

Galanthus 'Seagull' is among the ones we have still in pots and at this stage it looks nice and compact.



Galanthus 'Wasp' on the other hand emerged some weeks ago and has grown quite tall in our poor light. I would like to point out that I am not the one in this household who is guilty of buying snowdrop bulbs –now, seed on the otherhand.....☺



***Galanthus alpinus* seed germinating**

Last year we got some damp packed *Galanthus* seeds- it was a bit worrying as many had moulds on the surface- when we got them however I sowed them 3 to 4 cms deep and placed them in the open seed frame. Nothing happened in spring of 2013 but now there is some germination in all the pots. Again I had to apply a few slug pellets as the young seedlings were getting grazed down to the ground as soon as they emerged. I have also moved them under glass.



***Galanthus krasnovii* seed germinating**



Galanthus lagodechianus seed germinating – look carefully they are there.



Galanthus woronowii



Galanthus 'Diggory'



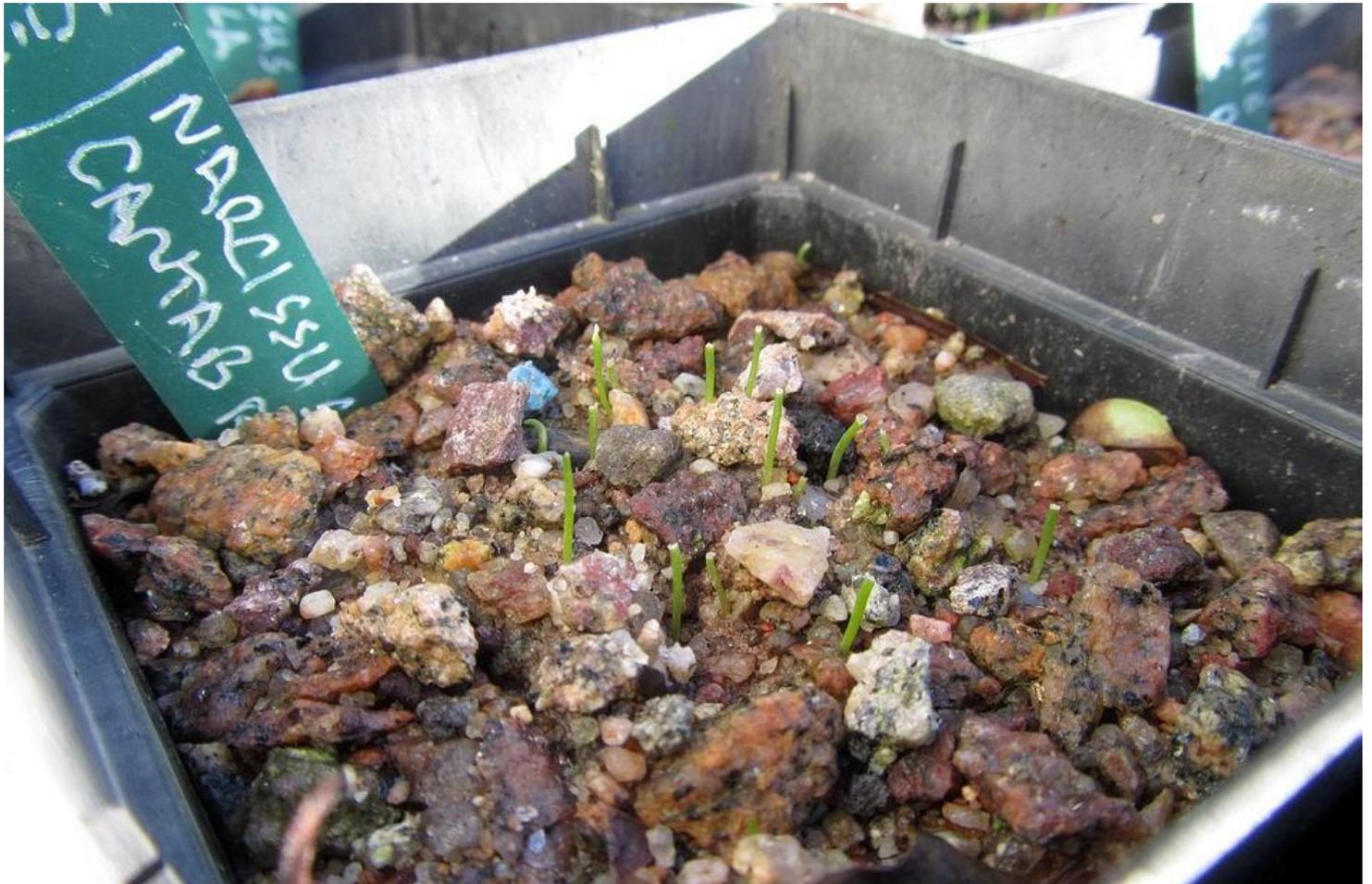
Galanthus in bulb bed

This is how I like to see spread out and mixed around in a bed – one or two are starting to form clumps that I will split either this year or next.



Leucojum vernum

Snow flakes, *Leucojum vernum*, are also appearing and show slight variations when raised from seed.



Narcissus cantabricus seed germinating

Sown deep in October this pot of *Narcissus cantabricus* is germinating and was also being grazed off by slugs in search of some fresh winter greens. Now moved under glass for protection the seedlings can grow on and I will feed with a very dilute tomato-type fertiliser each time I water.



Narcissus cantabricus

Narcissus cantabricus is pure white including the filaments and style with occasional green streaks on the petals and the base of the tube.



Eranthis pinnatifida

On the left is the original pot we have raised from a single tiny tuber bought in at great expense some years ago; on the right is a pot of seedlings raised from seed collected from our original plant. I always move the plant from its outside frame where it spends most of the year into the bulb house while it is in flower to encourage seed set I also carefully pollinate the plant with a paint brush. Obviously these plants are self-compatible but now I have a number of seedlings to cross pollinate I expect to get even better fertility.....