

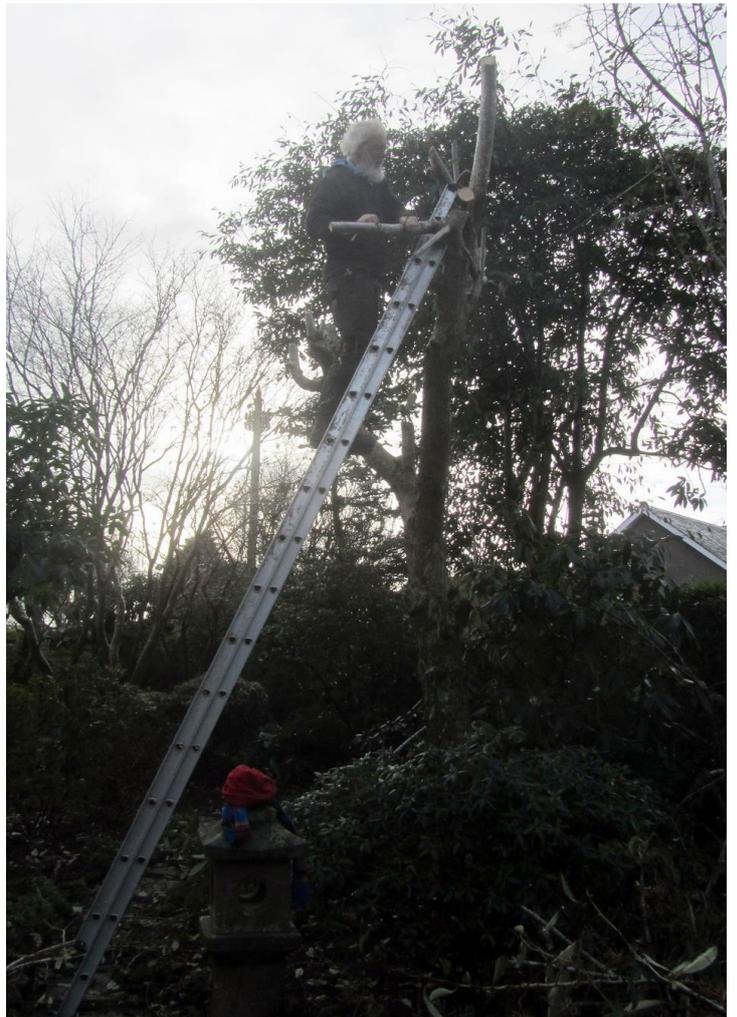


BULB LOG 04.....25th January 2017





The cover picture shows this **Narcissus bulbocodium x romieuxii** hybrid with twin flowers which is growing in the sand plunge. I occasionally get Narcissus with two flowers and in the past I got excited in the hope that I have a new form. It is my experience that this is not a fixed characteristic and while some forms are more inclined to have twin flowers I have never had a form that does it reliably every year.



Gardens go through phases as they mature- a new garden starts sparsely planted getting better by adding plants and most of us will add lots, believing the more the better and that is the case in the early phases of development - the garden then goes through a period when there is not much room to add more plants. Our garden is now in the phase where we can improve it by taking (plants) away.



This week with the help of my friend David Atkinson we took down two trees which had served their purpose for the best part of forty years and now were deemed to be casting too much shade and were no longer necessary. We have plenty other trees and large shrubs to retain the structure and the removal of these trees will improve the garden by allowing more light and moisture into the surrounding areas.



Chaos



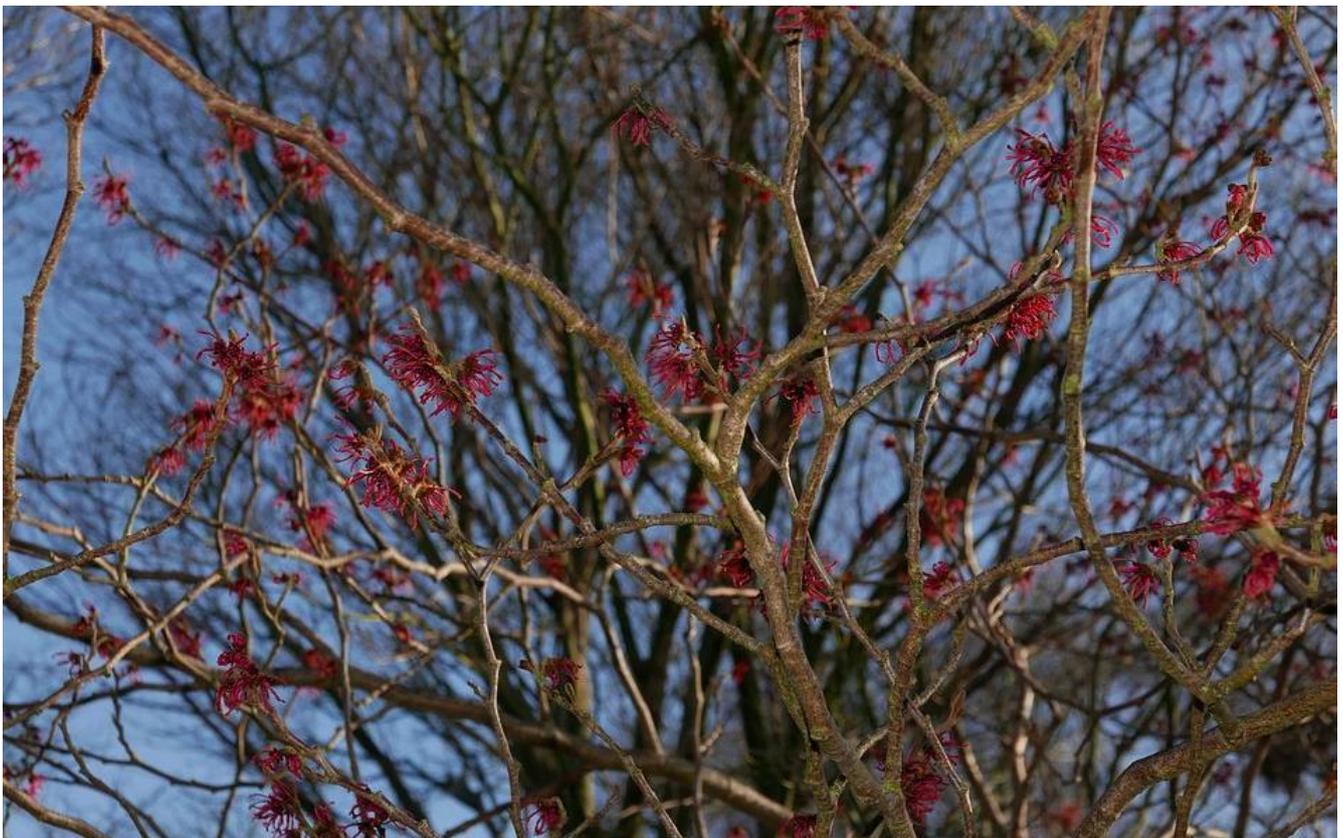
Forty years to grow from seed and a few hours to take down – The big logs will keep David warm next winter and I shredded all the brush wood which will be used as a mulch across the garden beds.



The stump is too big for me to attempt to remove so we cut it close to the ground and I will mound the soil over it.



Removing the tree will change the surrounding environments – in the foreground the rock garden was in full sun when we first built it, the best part of forty years ago but over the years the trees grew casting shade and so changing the type of plants that we could grow there. Now we have changed environment again it will be interesting to observe how the plants in this bed are affected.



The many Hamamelis hybrids and cultivars make great shrubs or small trees for the garden, will rarely ever outgrow their space, bring early colour and scent to the garden plus the leaves have brilliant autumn colours.



Hamamelis



Hamamelis



A few early Galanthus bring light into the winter garden and herald what is to come soon.



All sorts of promising shoots are now pushing through the recently applied mulch in the bulb bed.



Leaves of *Arum italicum* 'Marmoratum' along with some *Helleborus* buds add interest to a corner of the bulb bed.



Galanthus and a fat *Trillium* shoot also bring promise.



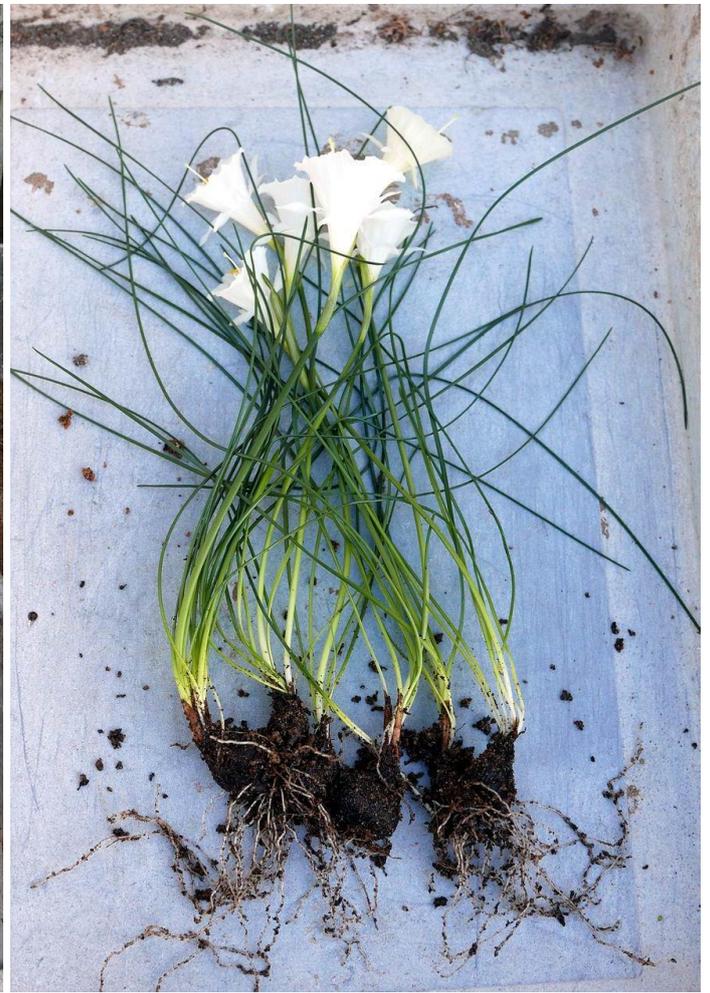
Crocus laevigatus



Well-chewed reticulate Iris are a disappointment that we have to live with – especially in the mild winters – the slugs and snails even chew off the tops of the buds as they push through as you will see in the right hand image.



Narcissus 'Cedric Morris'



Narcissus seedlings.

When I have mixed pots of seedlings and I want to separate out the different clones the only way I have found to do it accurately is either to plant all the bulbs individually in pots when dormant or to tip them out carefully when they are in full flower as I have done here.

With our gravelly compost it is easy to separate the bulbs out with minimal damage to the roots.

There are two, possibly three, clones in this pot that I think have outstanding characteristics and now I want to assess them further, mainly to see how quickly they will increase.

The other clone, top left in this picture, I planted into the sand plunge.



The pot at the front left is the one shown above before I split them out.



I have increased this pot of *Narcissus romieuxii* subsp. *albidus* var. *zianicus* col. Blanchard vegetatively since I was first given some bulbs many years ago and it has always had mixed colours. I am not sure if that mix was contained in the original collection or if, as happens, seedlings had got into the collection before I received it. Whatever, a lot of the hybrid seedlings I have raised involve these forms.



Another original collection I still maintain is **Narcissus romieuxii JCA 805** a collection that gave rise to a huge number of this species we have in cultivation. One of the many forms within JCA 805 is the very flat faced type as shown above.



Narcissus romieuxii



This is a good seedling I raised from **Narcissus romieuxii** and while it does display many of the characteristics it was open pollinated so I cannot be 100 percent sure that it has not hybridised.



There are many more shoots appearing in the pots in the bulb house such as these seed raised forms which are one of the selections I named from **Tecophilaea cyanocrocus**.



Fritillaria stenantha is among the first of this genus to break through the ground every year.



***Hyacinthella*(?) sp. seedling**



There are many more pots of Narcissus full of buds so there are many more pictures to come.



I will leave you with some more lovely hoop petticoat Narcissus hybrids.....