



SRGC

# Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 12.....21<sup>st</sup> March 2018





Winter is reluctant to release us from its grip as this week it came back for another freezing bite - again it was accompanied by gale force winds which are the most challenging to the frozen plants.



The cover picture shows a group of **Narcissus hispanicus**, raised from garden seed, which has been unaffected by the weather.

The first of the **Eranthis hyemalis** flowers to open would have held good for another week perhaps but the frost and wind has pushed them over. As these flowers age their ability to open and close diminishes making them more vulnerable to freezing and winds but I do expect that they will have served their

purpose and seed will be set. The slightly younger flowers in the background still have the ability to close and so have better survived this weather episode – also the seedlings in the foreground seem damaged.



The Narcissus in the bulb houses provide us with flowers from around October until May and so extends our gardening to a full twelve months of the year – even as the freezing winds blast the garden I can find some shelter and colour under glass.



**Narcissus  
cantabricus  
var. clusii**

It is difficult to choose favourites but among the hoop petticoats Narcissus cantabricus with its crystalline white corona is right up there.

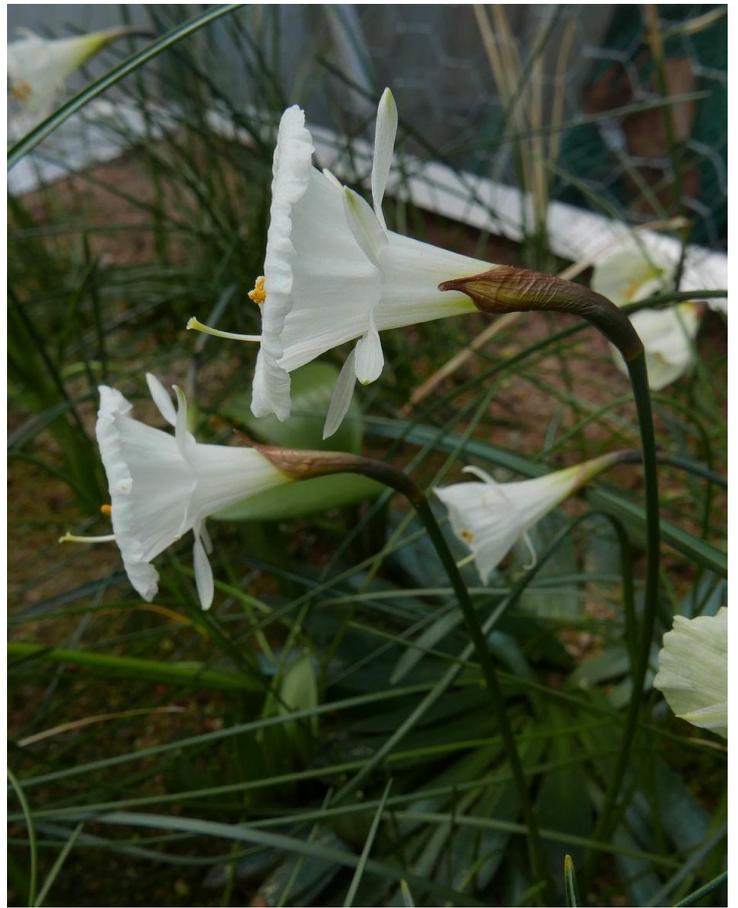
Below you will see that the flowers have a slight cream tinge as they unfurl but turn white as they open.





Another form of *Narcissus cantabricus* with more petunioide flowers.





**Narcissus albidus**

It is my belief that trying to classify the hoop petticoat Narcissus is an almost impossible task – these plants are promiscuous also they do not stick to the taxonomic rules and reading the various papers and books to which I have access shows how many different opinions there are. The flowers on this page are raised from *Narcissus albidus* some with a rolled back flange to the corona while others, see below, have a more funnel shaped corona.



**Narcissus albidus** with flared and funnel shaped corona.



**Narcissus romieuxii var. rifanus** has upwards facing flowers with exserted style and stamens.



**Narcissus bulbocodium hybrid.**

Grown in the close proximity of the bulb houses the promiscuity of these plants becomes very clear and unless I take great care to control the pollination the majority of the seed raised bulbs are hybrids such as this deep yellow one.



The eleven cm pot plunge.



**Fritillaria stenanthera**

*Fritillaria stenanthera* is always the first of this genus to flower.



Moving from the pots in the bulb house to the former Fritillaria house where I now grow everything planted directly into the sand beds - with great success.

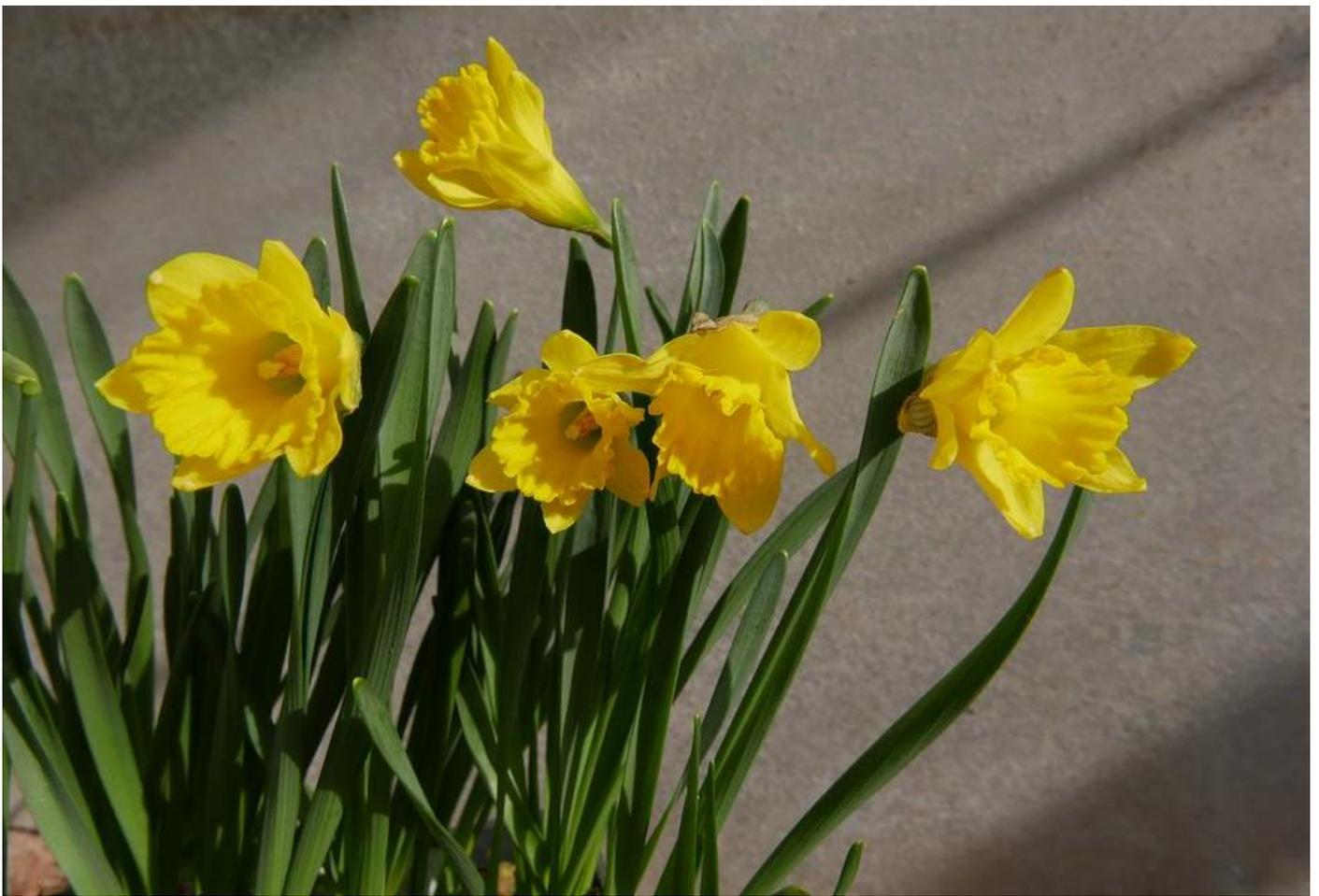




**Sand bed**



This pot of *Narcissus asturiensis* grows in an open frame - you may detect from the self-sown *Eranthis* seedlings it has not been re-potted for a few years however it will get done this summer when I will also plant some of the spare bulbs out into a raised bed.



***Narcissus asturiensis***



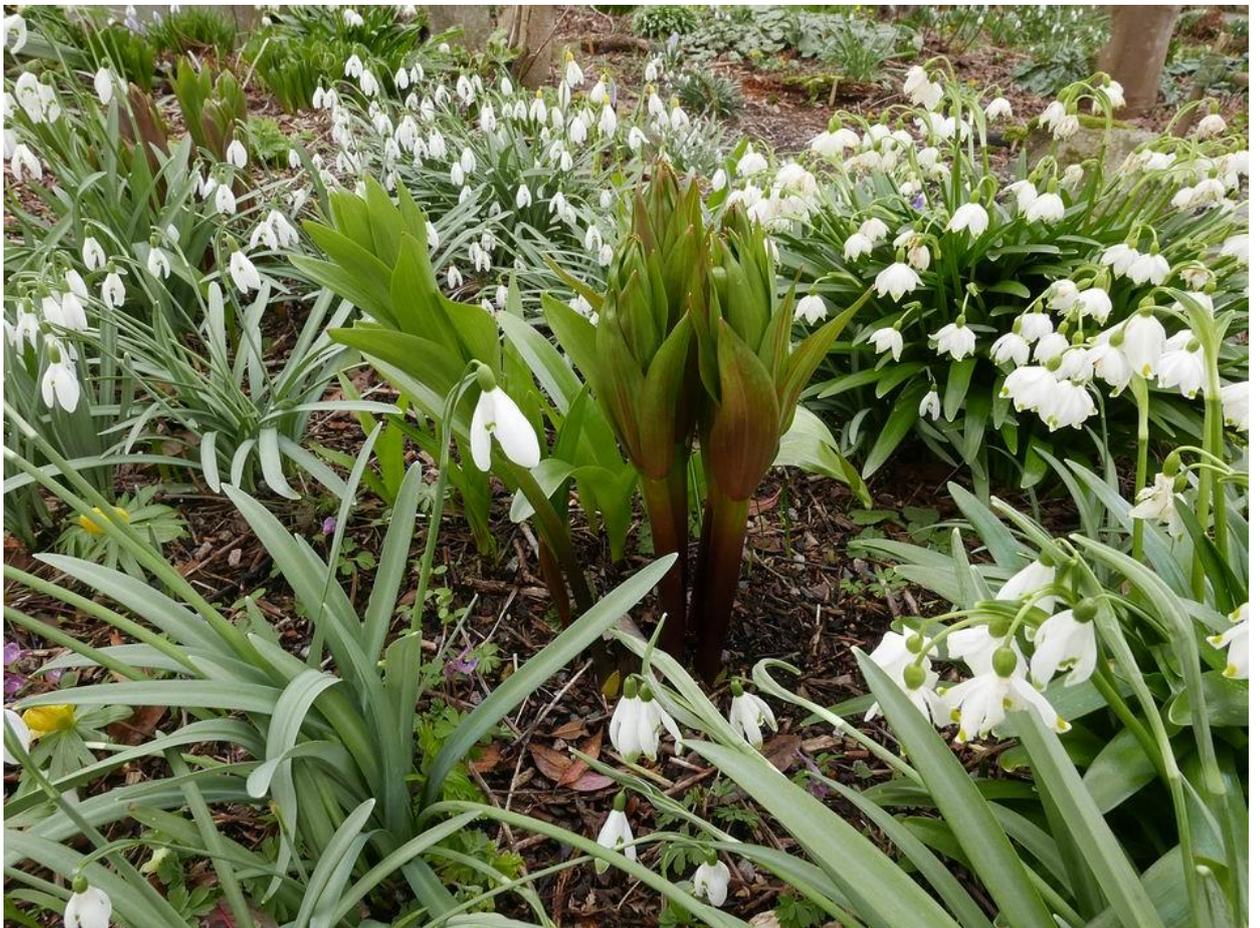
Bulb bed with *Narcissus hispanicus*, *Leucojum vernum*, *Galanthus*, *Corydalis*, *Eranthis*, etc.



**Bub bed**

**Fritillaria imperialis** is a big bulb and under most garden conditions will take few years to get back to flowering size - the thickness and redness of the stems are an indication of those that will flower.

To help build the bulbs I scatter some N-P-K, 7-7-7 Growmore around the base of the stem now – in addition this clump would be better lifted this summer, replanting the bulbs further apart.





**Leucojum vernum var. carpathicum**



**Leucojum  
vernum var.  
carpathicum**

Leucojum  
vernum var.  
carpathicum is  
generally  
distinguished as  
having yellow  
tips to the floral  
segments -  
however this  
form has  
greeny/yellow  
tips but the  
ovaries are  
yellow.



### **Trillium ovatum var. maculosum**

The patterned leaf form of *Trillium ovatum* has suffered at the hands of the fierce winds but continues to flower regardless –I am hopeful I will still get seed to set. It is often stated that we should grow woodland species in shade or semi-shade because they cannot take full sun. Well from that point of view, Scotland is in shade! Our sunshine is rarely if ever strong enough to harm the leaves of these plants however the other factor of evolving in a woodland habitat is that the leaves are accustomed to wind that is moderated by the trees so while they do not need shelter from sun we do need to try and give them shelter from strong winds.



Undeterred by the cold *Trillium nivale* and *Trillium ovatum* var. *maculosum* seedlings are germinating as the parents come into flower.



**Iris 'Katharine Hodgkin'**



**Iris 'Katharine Hodgkin'**



View looking across the Erythronium plunge with the rock garden bed to the right towards the bulb bed and garden.



**Erythronium caucasicum**

A number of Erythronium caucasicum across the garden are in bud but it has not been warm enough for the flowers to open – some years the early ones never get to open in our garden.



All over the garden the growths of Erythroniums are pushing up through the ground as they wake from their annual rest – in most years the peak flowering is from the middle of April to the middle of May.

I will be giving talks and walks at the Erythronium Festival being held again at Inverewe Gardens from 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> April.



I will leave you this week with Erythronium dens canis flower buds showing colour....

Also click the link to join me in my latest garden walk in this [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#).