



SRGC

# Bulb Log Diary

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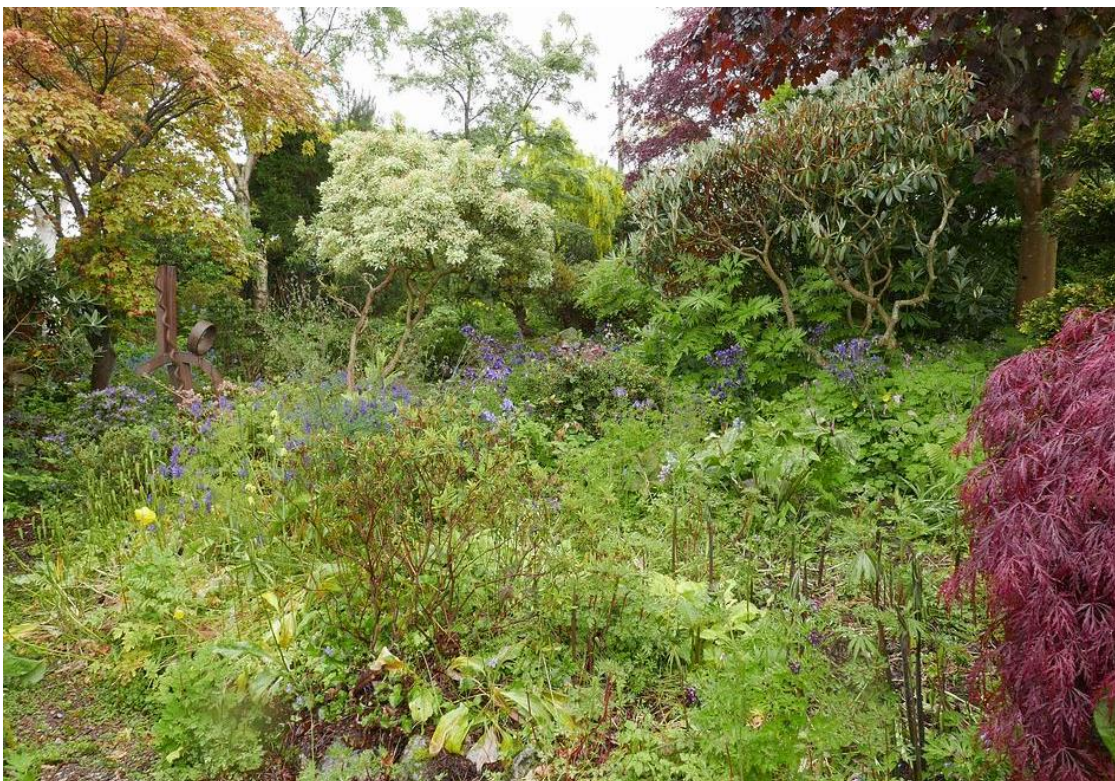
BULB LOG 24.....12<sup>th</sup> June 2019





### **Laburnum**

People often tell me how much they enjoy and have learned from reading the Bulb Log, which I greatly appreciate; but I am the person who has learned the most. The commitment to writing a weekly garden diary makes me walk round the garden looking for the inspiration and recording it in images from which I will select the content. Despite the unseasonably cold weather we are currently experiencing there is so much to observe in the garden just now and I have taken so many images, both video and still, that this is one of the weeks when I am spoiled for choice. In spite of the wealth of subjects I have opted to focus in on the two plants featured on the cover that caught my eye.

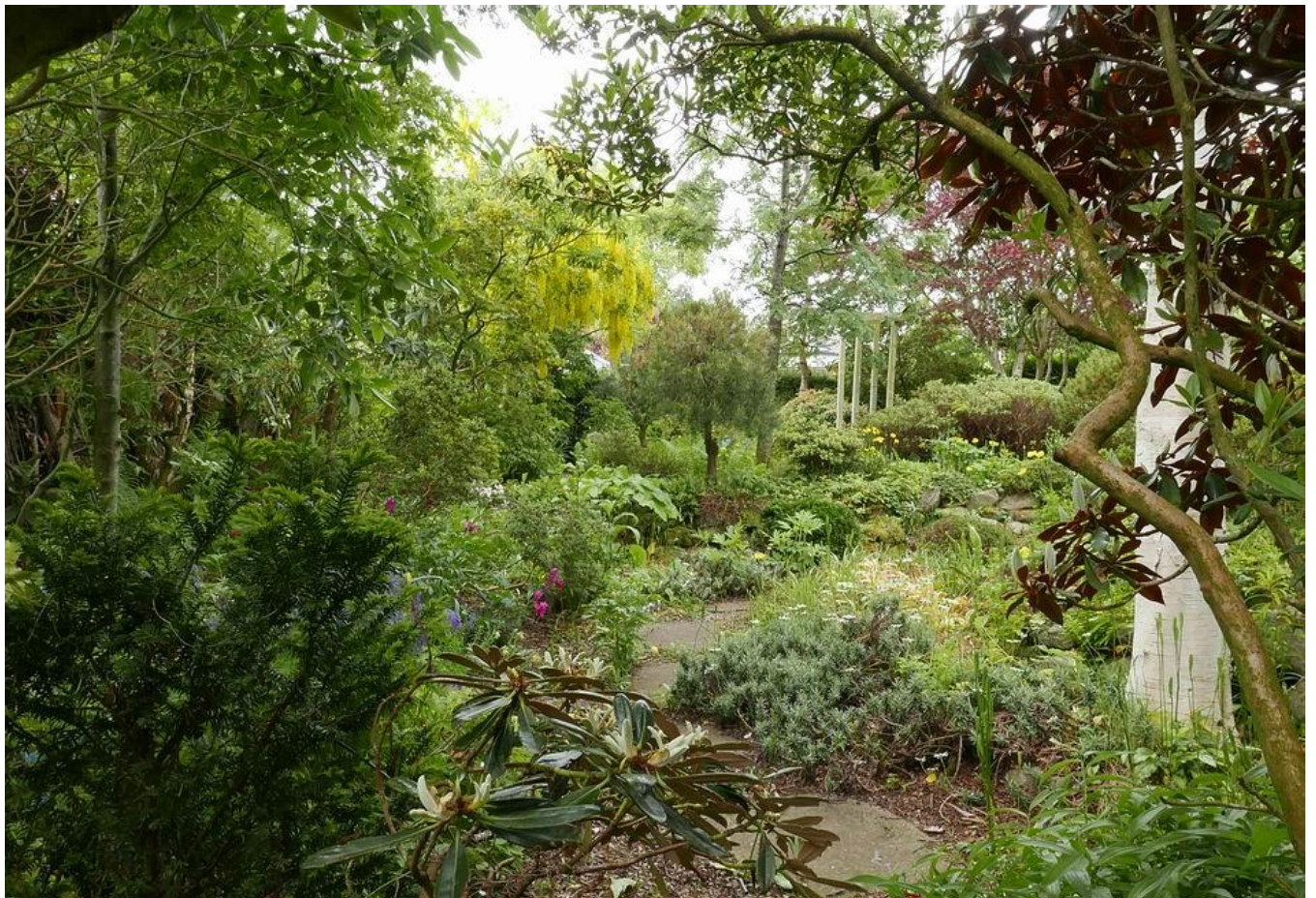


Let me start with the Laburnum which, with its long racemes of yellow flowers, is looking stunning just now and it catches your eye from many positions in the garden. You should never be able to see everything from a single position in the garden but you should get tantalising glimpses drawing you to move towards a subject. For much of the year this tree sits quietly in the background just waiting for its season in the limelight then it becomes the centre of attention. While all plants stand as

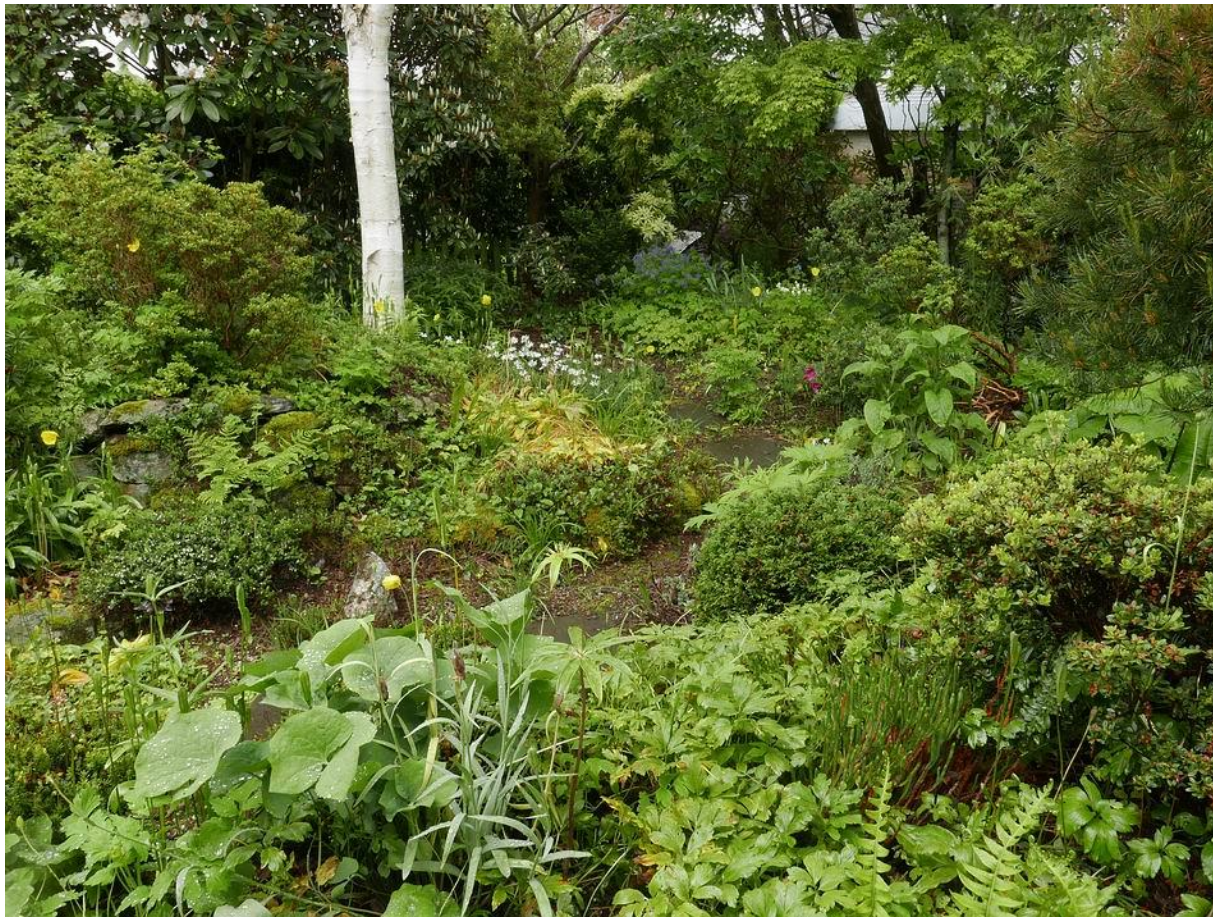
individual components within the garden they also need to combine together as part of the wider landscape.



We have lots of trees, some may think too many for the size of the garden, but they give the garden the feel of being a landscape and the atmosphere that I am seeking more than any of the other smaller plants. Molly needs to look up and to her left to see the Laburnum from here.



If I am looking in the right direction I can see the bright yellow flowers of the Laburnum from most of the garden.



The previous picture was taken from the top eastern corner of the garden, shown left, and from there I will make my way, drawn towards the bright yellow spectacle. There are no straight paths in the garden - while you can view features from a single point if you want to get to another section you are lead to walk around the curving paths passing many other features on route.



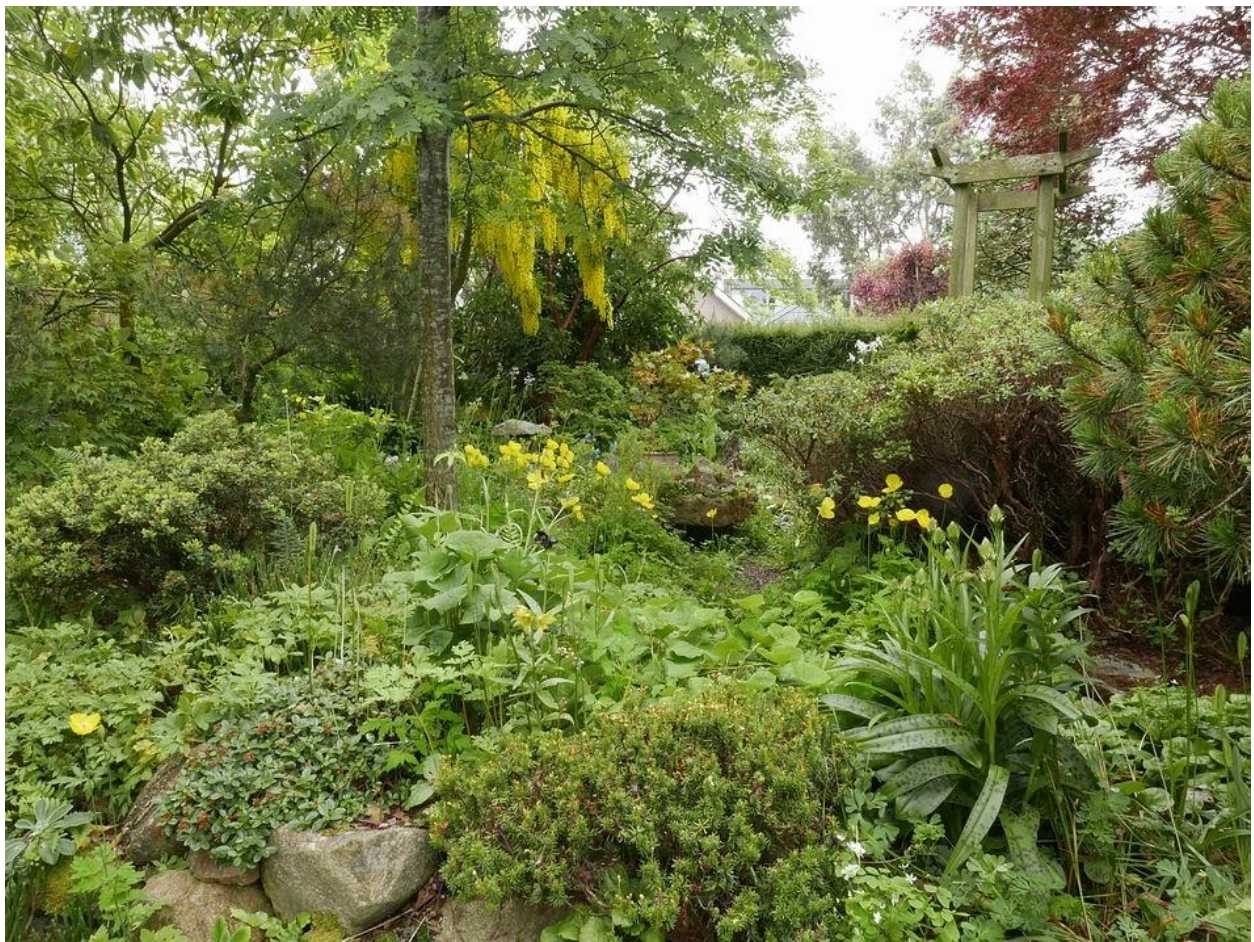
Looking in the opposite direction from the previous picture I can see the Laburnum but need to walk around the end of the wall, up a few steps and round another few beds to get there.



As I walk I pause to enjoy many colonies of self-seeding plants such as these **Camassia leichtlinii alba**, which interestingly comes true from seed, Aquilegia hybrids and if you look carefully there is even a red leaved Acer seedling lurking there – it is now three years old and I will need to lift it soon.

As I meander round the paths I find that some flowers and leaves continue to add colour and decoration to the garden even after they have served their function to the plants such as these yellowing Colchicum leaves and Rhododendron decorum flowers fallen to the ground.





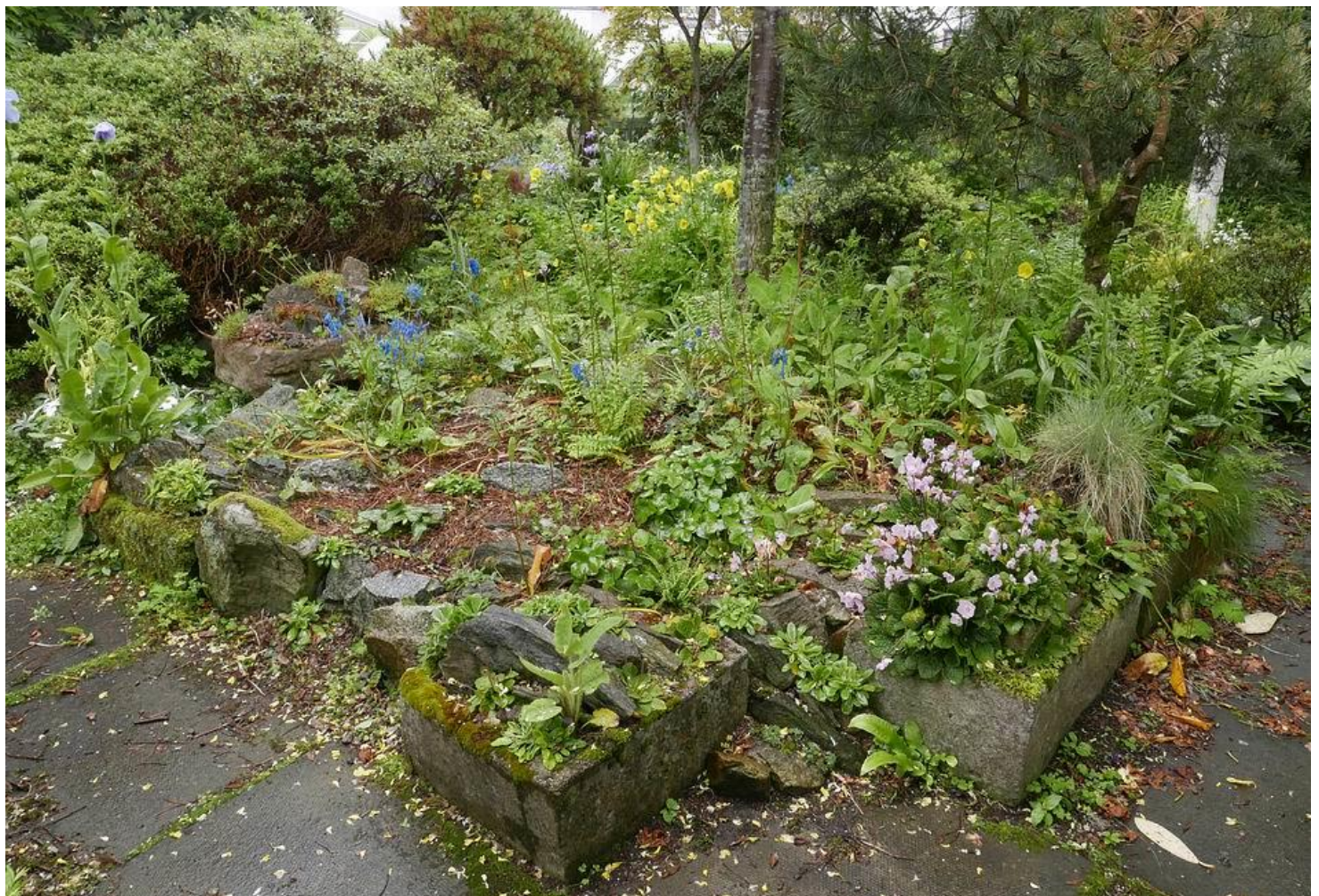
Once more I can view the area I am heading towards from the lower section of the garden across the raised wall and the new bed towards the Laburnum while the picture below is taken from beside the trough which can be seen in the centre middle distance of this picture.



That trough can now be seen on the right edge of this picture.



This new bed by the pond was started in 2017: see [Bulb Log 2817](#) for my initial report.



As I walk around the new bed by the pond I am again diverted from my objective of focusing on just two plants as my attention is drawn to focus on some of the plants currently in flower.

This is one of the excellent *Cypripedium* hybrids that have been developed in recent years bringing these previously scarce and illusive plants to our gardens. We were given a number of plants last summer to try out in the garden and so far they have proved successful.



I planted out several seedlings of *Corydalis mucronopetala* that I raised from seed collected in the garden so there is always the possibility that they may have hybridised. They are stunning plants which hopefully given time will seed around forming a self-sustaining colony across this bed.





**Corydalis  
mucronopetala  
seedling**



The pink forms of **Ramonda myconi** continue to put on a display of flowers spilling out from the trough that forms part of the edge and into the adjacent part of this bed.



You can approach this area with the Laburnum another way where you are directed through a wooden gateway. I have often been asked why I have not clothed the wooden structure in flowering climbers but I want it to give the feeling that you are leaving one area and entering another and indeed as you walk through it you are leaving the more wooded area of the garden and entering the open area around the pond.



As you approach to walk through the gateway it perfectly frames the Laburnum with its cascading yellow trusses.



Looking back from the opposite direction it is the gate that is framed by the multiple trunks of the Laburnum.



I cannot remember the name of the plant with large leaves growing at the base of the Laburnum. It has a cluster of small white flowers on a stem that rises from the centre of the leaves so it is very much grown as a foliage plant please. Please remind me if you know what it is?



The laburnum sits beside and over hangs part of the pond which was laid out as part of the original garden design as a more formal area but has evolved like much of the garden as nature plays its part.





While checking back my records I came across this image of the pond, complete with fish and fountain, looking very bare and formal in its early incarnation so I took a similar view as it is today in its more wild state to compare.





I designed the surround to the pond to be a display place for plants in containers and other decorative features such as this imitation Japanese lantern I made from two Aberdeen granite paving slabs and a block drilled and carved.

To complement the bonsai trees I also assembled some 'viewing stones' or mini mountain landscapes using volcanic rocks I found in Scotland. The intention was the rocks were the main feature – you could say this is the purest form of rock gardening which after thirty plus years is now adorned with the growth of some moss – I have kept the gravel clear.

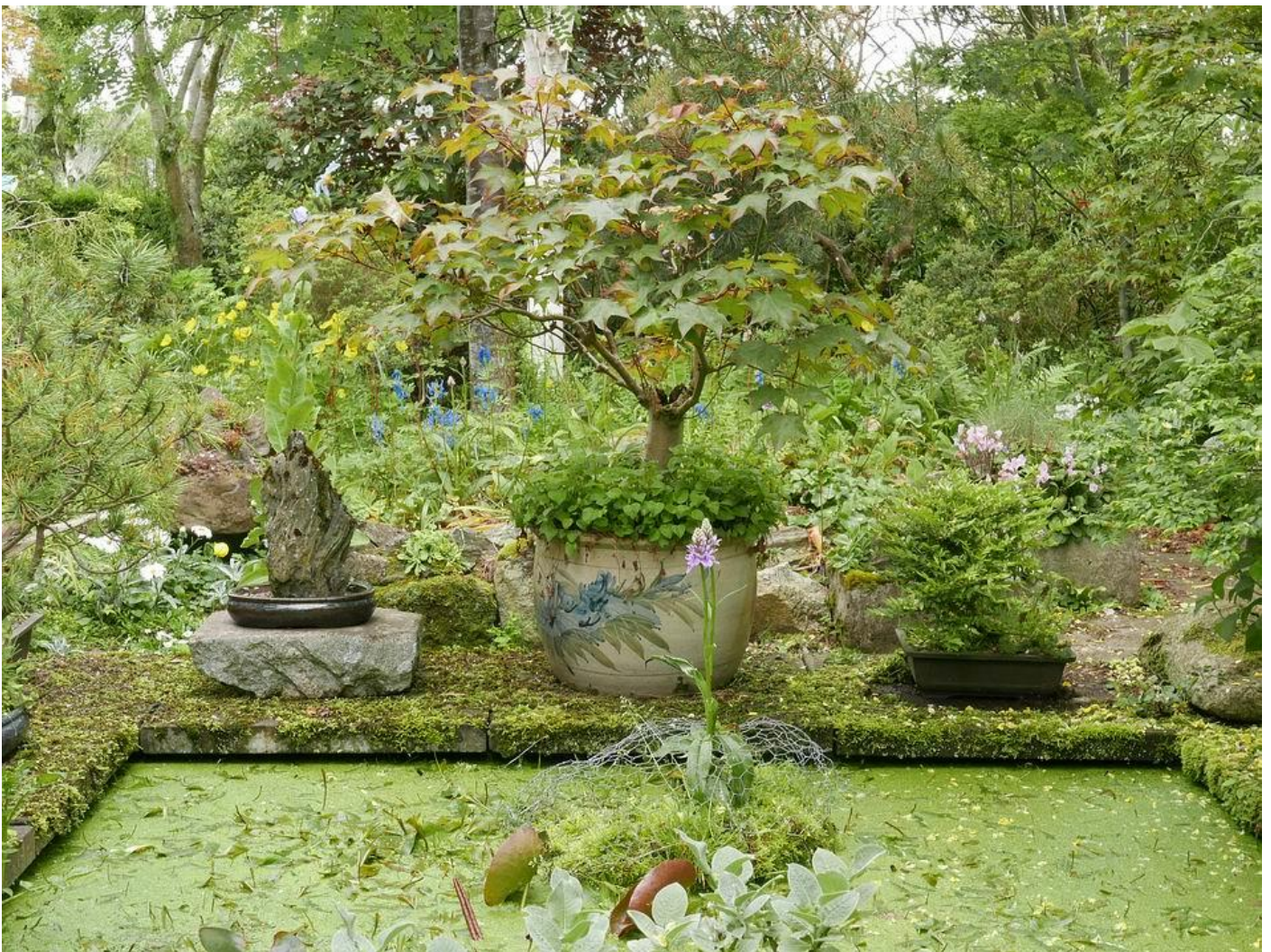




Apart from the feature stones there is nothing but 6mm granite gravel in these containers but that has not deterred various plants seeding in - it is my choice whether they are removed or left to grow.



Along with other plants this one has become the home to a number of *Dactylorhiza* orchids and a Yew tree.



I have been interested in developing the habitats within the pond and surrounding area for some years now such as the Pinguicula Island. I do not like having the wire mesh but for now it is necessary to prevent the birds stripping the moss from the rock - which they did earlier this year removing many of the Pinguicula. There are still a few Pinguicula left but the other plant that has seeded into the moss and is forming a colony with many seedlings is the Dactylorhiza.

I will work to re-build the colony of Pinguicula on the rock plus I have plans to create another habitat by placing a trough into the pond.





There is plenty of space in the pond for me to place a semi-submerged trough.



Now we catch sight of the other plant featured on the cover - a form of ***Iris sibirica*** growing in a pot.



While not as tall as the Laburnum, *Iris sibirica* is tall enough to be seen from some other areas of the garden.



***Iris sibirica***



***Iris sibirica***

With the beautiful Japanese style representation of gold fish we could not resist buying this pot about fifteen years ago– in addition to the Iris it is planted with some ferns and grasses.



*Iris sibirica*



The *Salix lanata* is growing in a pot in the same way as I intend to place a trough and behind that is the area where I lifted some of the surrounding slabs to create a marginal habitat which is well established after just a few years.

The Primula are among a number of plants that are thriving in this marginal bed beside the pond.





The beauty of the Laburnum is obvious but what I cannot share here is the scent of lemons and the buzz of the many bees that pervades the air as you stand beside it. Please click the link to join me in a walk round the garden in the rain in the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#).....