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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 11.....13th March 2019



Erythronium dens-canis



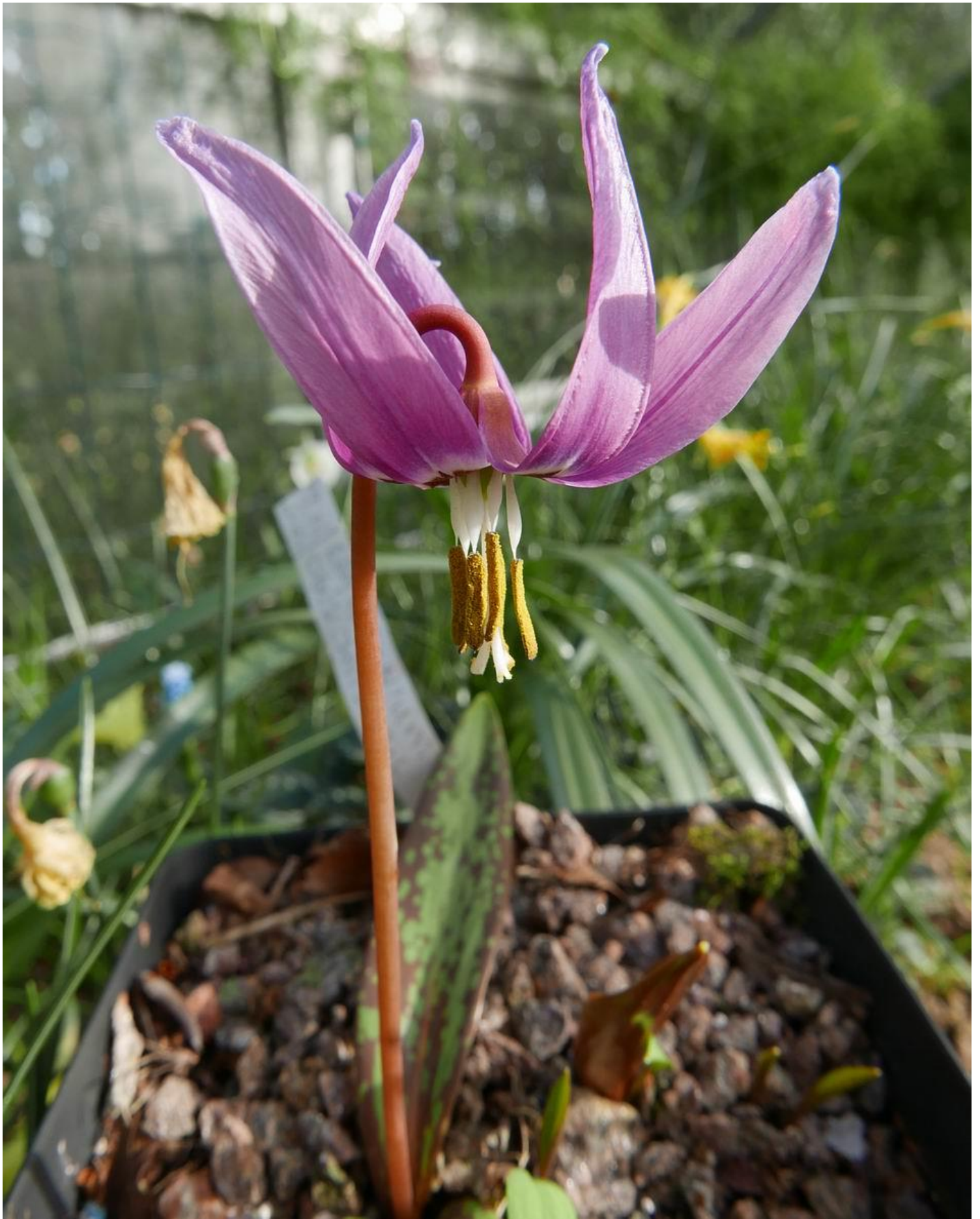
Erythronium dens-canis

Every so often when I am going travelling I have to prepare a Bulb Log in advance so that it can be uploaded and available by mid-day on Wednesday - this is one of these as I will be in Bath to give a talk. These dark flowered and dark marked leaved forms of Erythronium dens-canis are always the first of this species to flower for us. They are among a number of bulbs I raised from seed which are growing in a plunge basket; the others which are not showing yet always flower later.



Erythronium dens-canis

The shoots of some of the later flowering ones can just be seen just poking through the ground here.



Erythronium dens-canis

Some years ago I received some seed of the most eastern known range of *Erythronium dens-canis* and it brought a new variation to all the other forms I have grown or seen before namely that the pollen was a yellow/brown colour and not the dark purple that I had come to believe was typical. This adds to my belief that we should always be cautious about being definitive in either the characteristics of a species or of its distribution in the wild as both are defined by our own or collective experiences so we need to keep an open mind to new discoveries..



Erythronium caucasicum

Of all the *Erythronium caucasicum* we grow, the majority of which I have raised from seed, none have increased by forming secondary growths from the bulb at any speed in fact some have remained as a single growth for many years. I am pleased to see this plant has now given rise to three flowering stems so I can hope that if I keep raising them from seed that I may eventually raise a clone that will increase in this way.



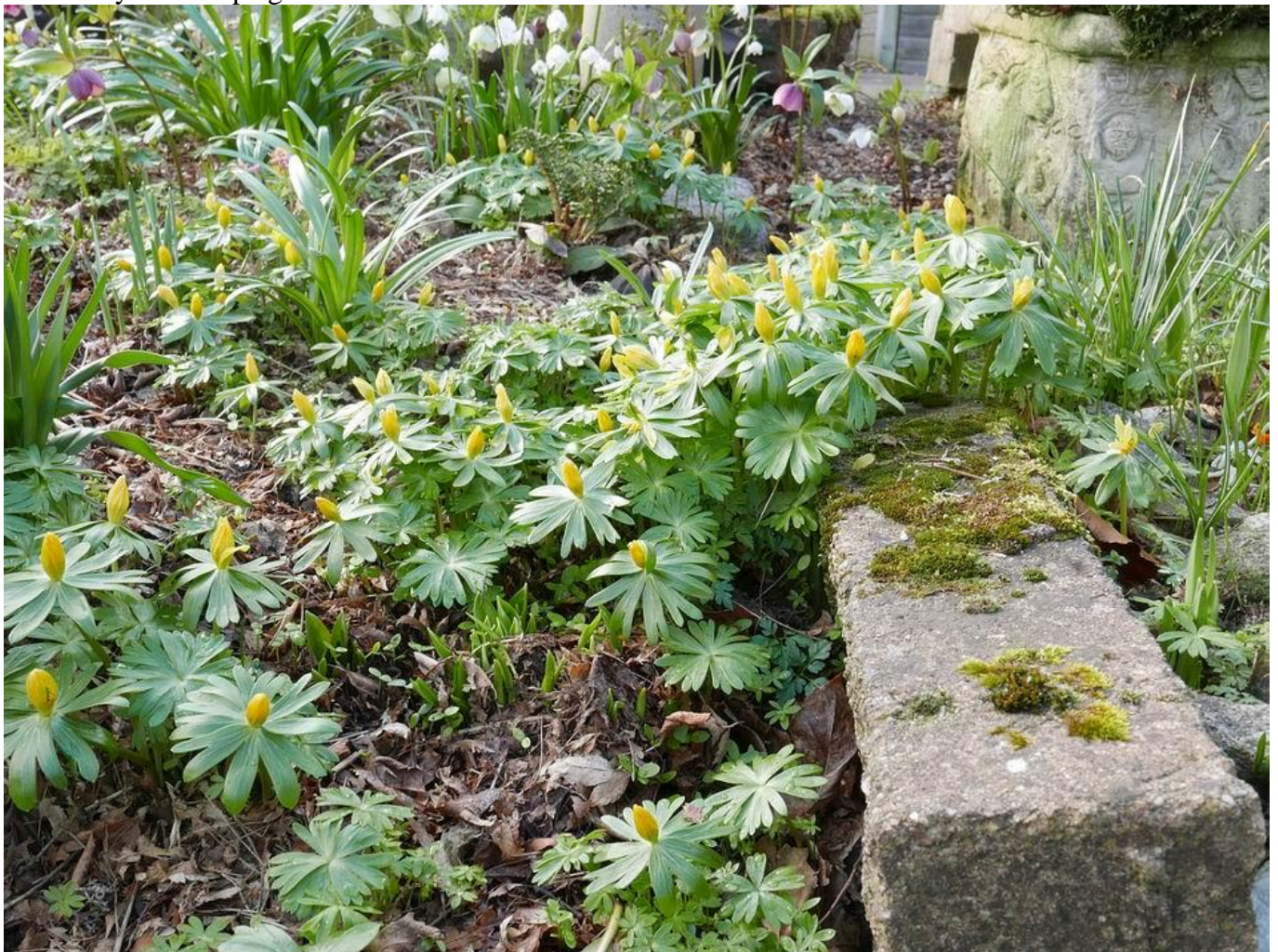
Erythronium caucasicum



I had to post another picture of this **Erythronium dens-canis** where the strong light shines through the leaves highlighting the contrasting pattern of colours.



The weather had reset to a more seasonal average with cold days and frosty nights and the pictures above and below of ***Eranthis hyemalis*** were taken just a few hours apart showing how the plant seems to collapse in the freezing conditions only to rise up again as the frost lifts.





A similar sequence is displayed in these two pictures of **Corydalis malkensis** also taken just a few hours apart.



Corydalis malkensis



Galanthus 'Craigton Twin' is a *Galanthus plicatus* hybrid the largest bulbs of which regularly have two flowers per stem while the stems of the smaller bulbs have the more normal single flower.

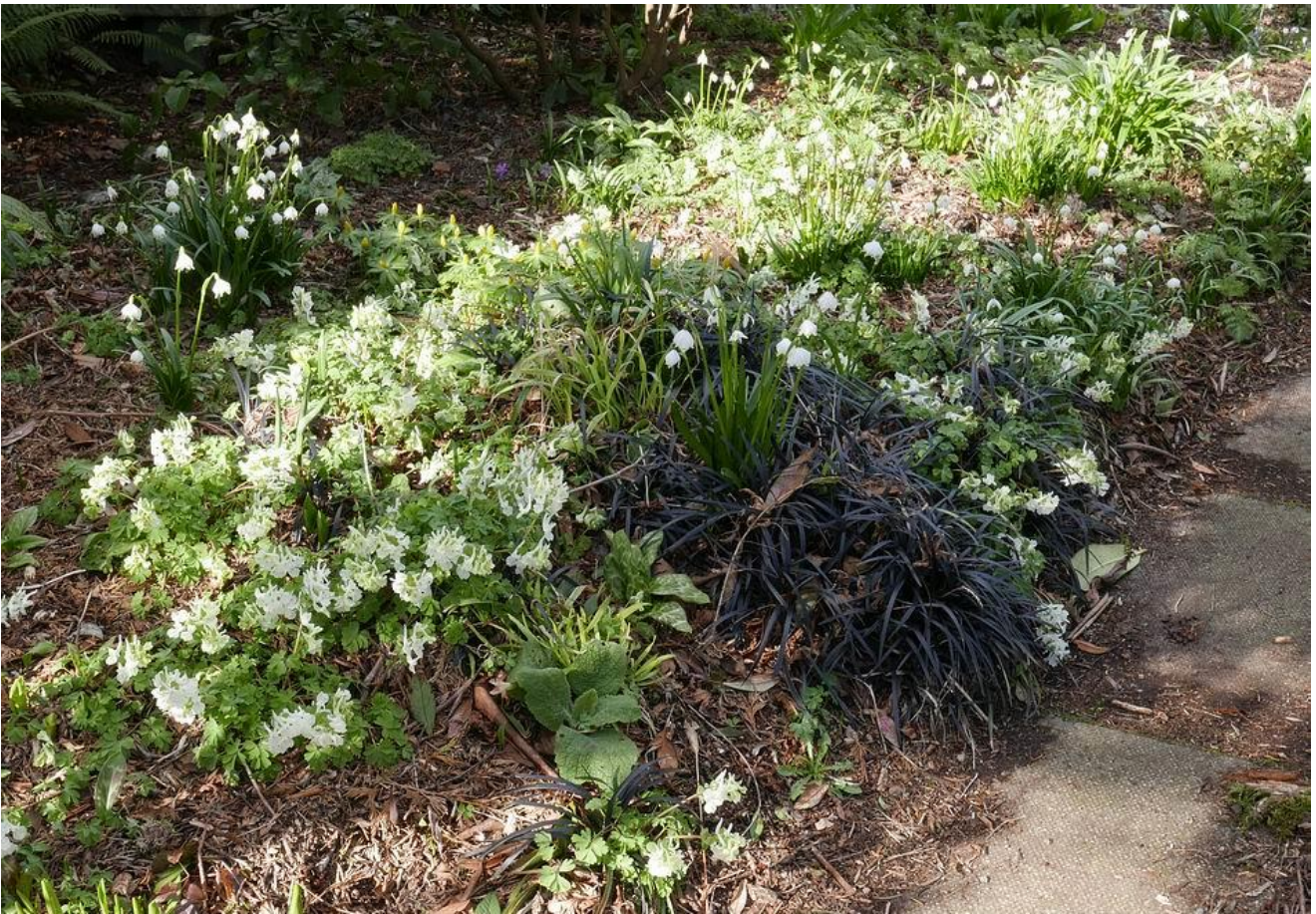




The red/bronze coloured foliage of *Anemone ranunculoides* is so well camouflaged when it first emerges that you have to look very carefully to see it – now the leaves are exposed to the light they will gradually turn green as the chlorophyll develops.



Various yellow flowered Crocus are scattered across the garden bringing a seasonal harmony by forming a colour link across the various different beds.



Similarly I encourage waves of creamy white coloured **Corydalis malkensis** to flow around the garden by scattering the seed when it ripens in May, just before the whole plant disappears back underground until next year leaving the space for other plants to also thrive.



Corydalis malkensis

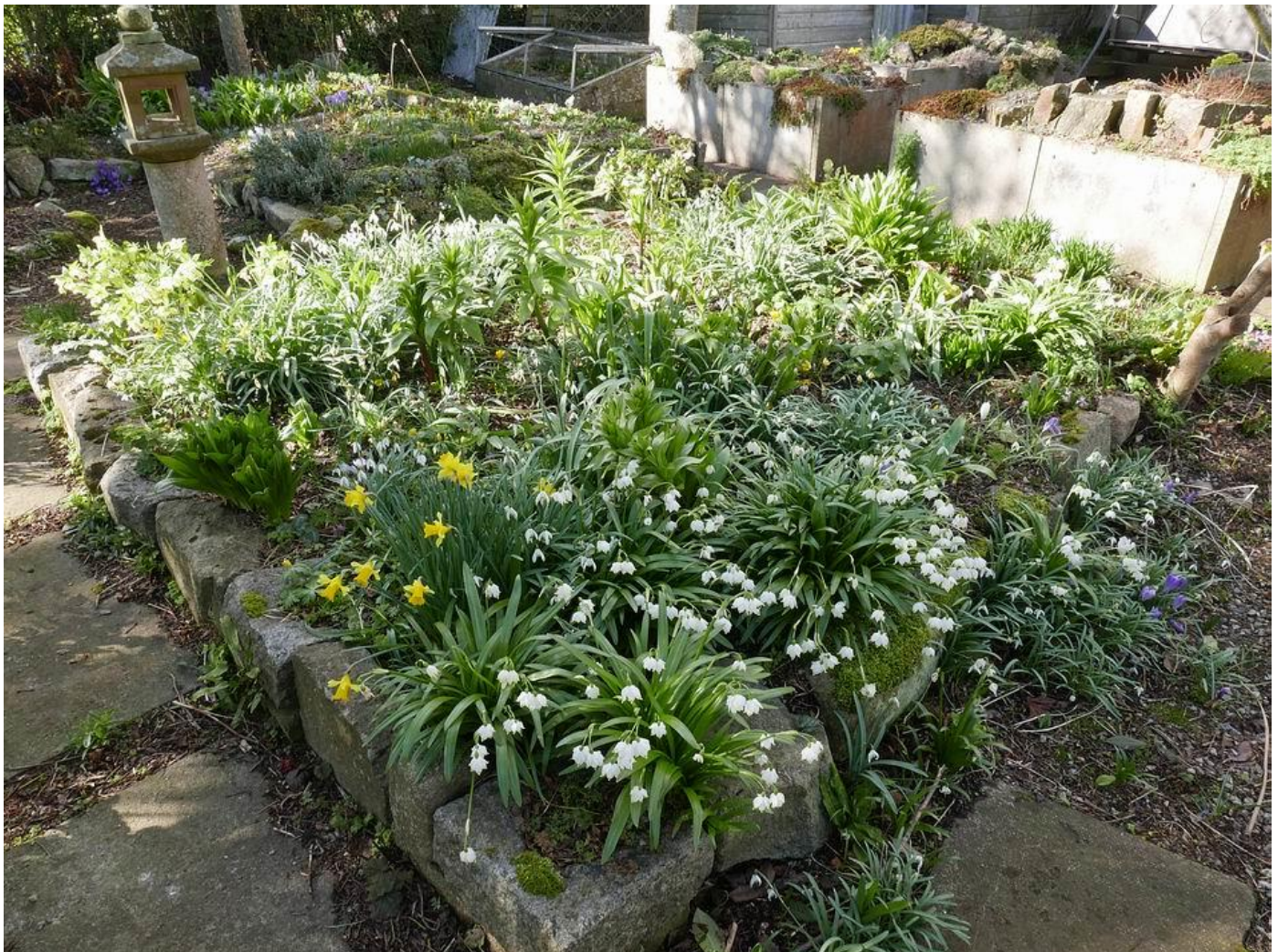


Two views showing how the early colour is developing in the new bed by the pond with **Narcissus cyclamineus**, **Hepatica nobilis**, **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'** with **Erythronium caucasicum** in the wider view below.





Here more yellow Crocus continue the pattern this time being joined by the yellow buds showing colour on *Erythronium tuolumnense*.



The first of the *Galanthus* flowers in the bulb bed are now going over but the white is being replaced by the *Leucojum* flowers which as they open that bit later will last for a while longer.



Sand Plunge

The extensive growth of foliage in the 'U' shaped sand plunge bed reflects the big increase by division of the bulbs since I planted them and also highlights the need for me to go in this summer to reduce the numbers. Despite the lax growth caused by the competition there are still plenty more flowers stems in bud pushing upwards which will flower in coming weeks.

The first flowers are opening on the *Tropaeolum tricolorum* climbing up the back wall and will soon be joined by those of *Tropaeolum azureum*.





The growth of *Hermodactylus tuberosus* is big and strong enough to rise up through the tangled green mass.





The pale pink flowers of **Fritillaria stenantha** along with a white **Orinthogalum** species from Turkey.



There are a number of Fritillaria growing in a sand bed that are not going to flower this year which causes me to wonder if I should be giving them more feeding. I switched to growing more in sand beds partly to cut back on the amount of re-potting I have to do but also because I like to be challenged by changes. For years I grew bulbs in pots and had worked out a watering and feeding regime that in our conditions gave me good growth and flowers most years. It is now a challenge to work out what is the best regime for the Fritillaria in sand beds. To start with this week I scattered a small amount of 7-

7-7, N-P-K fertiliser around the Fritillaria growths this is in addition to adding dilute liquid feed to the watering cans. One other thought I have is that last year we had a very hot period and the sudden rise in the bulb house temperature which caused many bulbs to retreat underground earlier than they would in a more typical season reducing the length of the fritillaries growing season.



Sometimes I spot a fleeting moment showing that nature invented projection long before humans ever thought about it. This image of Crocus and Galanthus was projected onto a pot, not by direct sunlight but by light briefly reflected from a window -

luckily I had my camera to capture it because it disappeared quickly.



Corydalis solida

The early waves of colour have been dominated by the white of Galanthus and Leucojum now there will be a transition as the creamy white Corydalis malkensis is being joined by the hot bright colours of Corydalis solida.



This garden scene rounds off this week's Bulb Log I will be back home in plenty time for next week.....