



BULB LOG 12.....25<sup>th</sup> March 2009

I have just returned from the most wonderful trip to the USA where I had a great time and was extremely well looked after by the Members for the North American Rock Garden Society. My sincere thanks to all who helped make my trip so pleasant. I had a very full programme while I was there and I am still pretty tired so I will keep this bulb log a bit brief so I can catch up with some sleep.



**Fritillaria pudica** Colombia River Gorge OR



**Fritillaria pudica**

The first of my American pictures I will show you is this *Fritillaria pudica* (above) that we found on a visit to the Colombia River Gorge with Ed Alverson who generously was my driver for all the length of Oregon.

On the left is one of my own pots of *Fritillaria pudica* that is still just in flower how nice it is to have seen its relatives in their native habitat.



**Colours of Corydalis**

I make no excuses for showing so many pictures of the Corydalis in the garden in this bulb log. When I left to go to America a fortnight ago they were just pushing through the ground and now they are an explosion of colour all over the garden.



**Corydalis in the Garden**

For a number of years I have been working to get plantings of mixed colours of mostly Corydalis solida forms and now I am seeing the results with these fantastic displays.



### **Corydalis malkensis**

I think that these mixed colours are greatly lifted by the inclusion of white and as I do not have too many white forms of *C. solida* yet I use the beautiful *Corydalis malkensis*.

Even flowering sized tubers of *Corydalis malkensis* are not very big and unlike *C. solida* they do not increase by division but they are very obliging and seed around freely.

Some people claim that they can be invasive and weedy but I would never say that they are a problem as they flower in March and by mid May they have set seed and gone back under ground.



**Corydalis in the Garden**

As the Galanthus and Eranthis are going over the Corydalis are just coming into their full glory.



**Corydalis in the Garden**

This is almost the same view as above but under different light showing how the garden changes as the sun moves around or is hidden by clouds – notice there is less contrast in the way of shadows in this version.



**Corydalis in the Garden**

The majority of these plants are raised from the Penza forms of *Corydalis solida* introduced by Janis Ruksans some years ago. Over the years I have collected the seeds and raised many hundreds of tubers from the original forms I got and now I mostly let them self-seed into the garden.



**Corydalis 'George Baker' and seedlings**

The red form is *Corydalis* 'George Baker' and all the multi coloured flowers are self seeded. This shows clearly why this old cultivar should only be propagated by division to retain its name.



**Erythronium leaves**

You may have spotted these lovely dark Erythronium leaves pushing up through the Corydalis in the above picture.



### **Corydalis in Troughs**

To ensure that I have a pure stock of some of the cultivars like 'Beth Evans' and 'George Baker' I grow them in fish box troughs. I replant them every year and take care only to select the vegetatively increased tubers any small ones that may be seedlings are planted into the garden.



**Corydalis 'Craigton Red'**

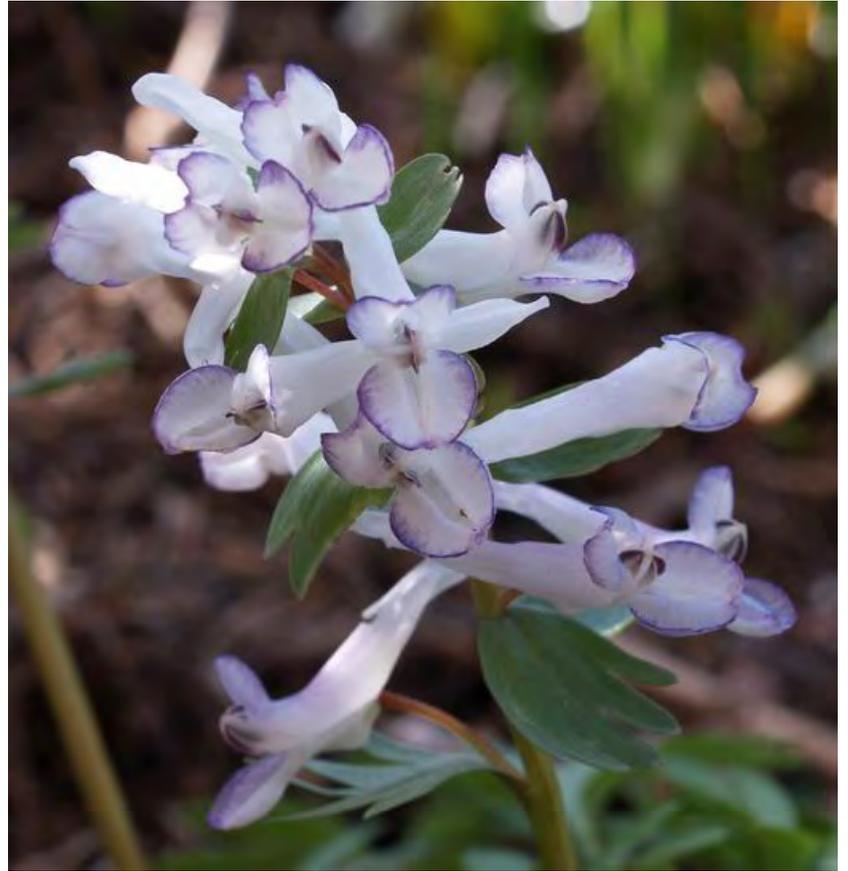
One selection that I have named is Corydalis 'Craigton Red' which has very good bright red flowers that are held well above the leaves on erect stems making it very attractive and distinctive.



**Compact Red**

This is a compact red form that I have been assessing for a few years now. I was attracted to it as a self sown seedling by its short compact nature so I lifted a few tubers to see if it was genetically a compact form or if it was just struggling with the competition in the densely planted garden bed.

To my delight it has stayed very short and neat and I think because of this compact habit it will make a very good form for the show benches.



**Corydalis solida**

Here are two more interesting colour forms of *Corydalis solida* one a typical bi-coloured flower with pale lips and darker pink spur and another attractive white form with a violet picotee edging.



**A selection of *Corydalis solida* Penza form flowers**

Here are a number of flowers picked at random from one planting showing the typical variations that you will get if you raise these from seed.



### **Corydalis ornata**

Above and to the left are pictures of the very beautiful species *Corydalis ornata*.

This species also comes in a number of colour forms the least attractive of which is a dull purple blue.

The finest forms are of this clear stunning blue that makes it stand out as a quality plant.

I have another form that is not flowering this year because I let it get too dry last year is pure white with a blue line around the edges of the lips.

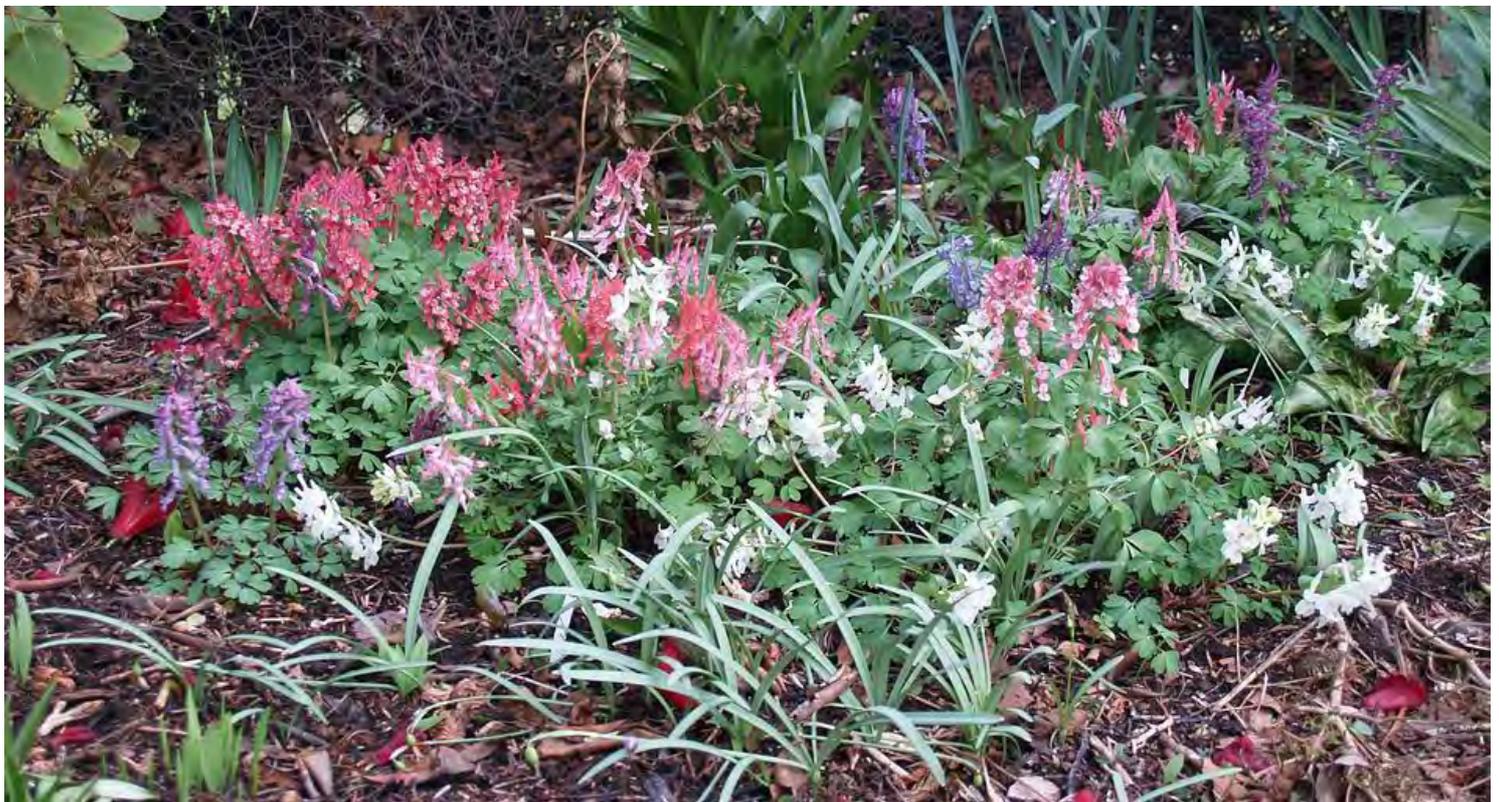
I really must be brave and plant some of this species in the garden before I kill it with kindness as is so often done with rare and expensive plants.





**Rhododendron elegantulum under planted with Corydalis.**

Corydalis grow very well underneath the larger Rhododendrons and can provide some great colour combinations as here, with the pale pink flowers of this R. elegantulum.



**A final last look at a few more Corydalis**

Enjoy.....I do.