



Autumn Leaves

The old meets the new as the bright red leaves fallen from an Acer contrast beautifully with the fresh new leaves appearing on a self sown *Corydalis flexuosa* hybrid. To me autumn is not just the end of one growing season but

also the start of a new one as so many of the bulbs I grow burst into flower and leaf.



Colchicum coustourierii

I am sure that *Colchicum coustourierii* would be hardy outside but I suspect that the flowers would become battered by the mixture of driving wind, rain and snow we have experienced recently.

It is also quite a small plant and would be eaten by slugs so I keep it under the protection of the bulb house.

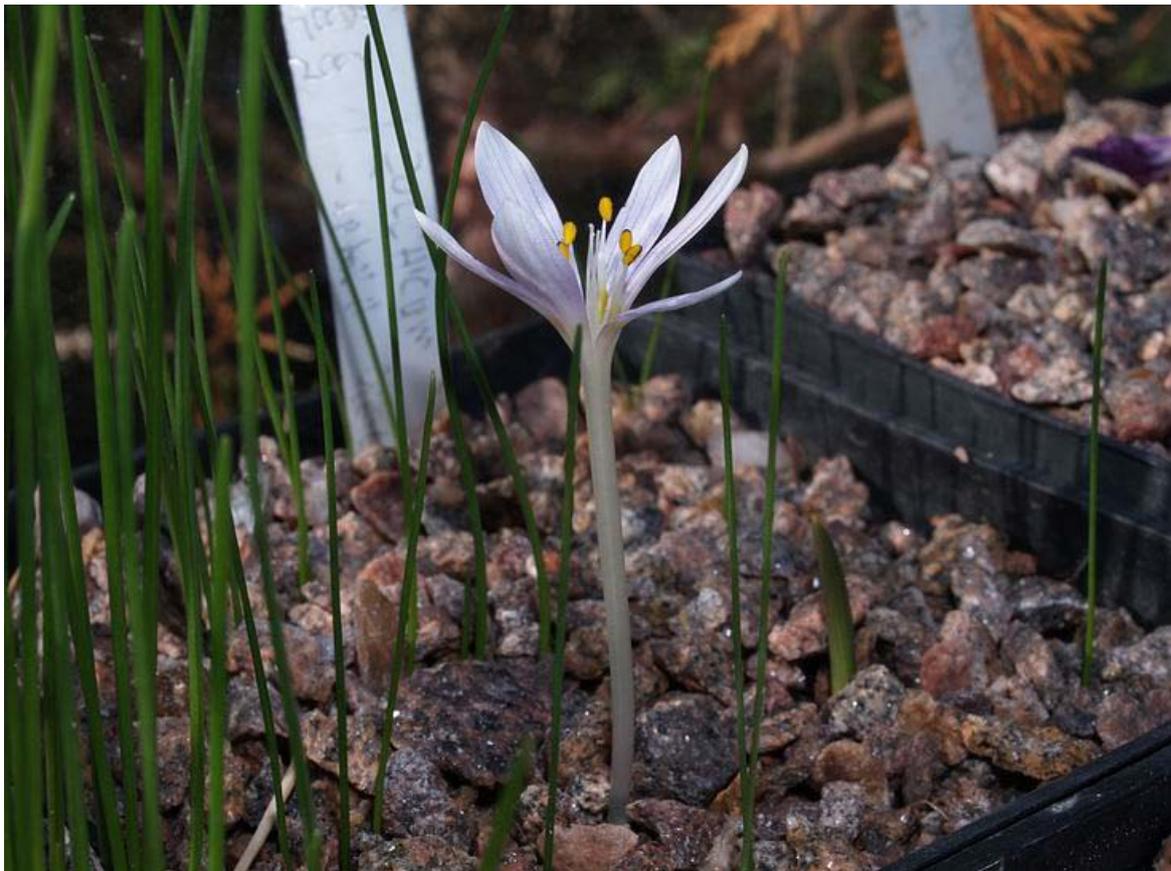


Colchicum coustourierii



Colchicum cupanii

Colchicum coustourierii is very similar to Colchicum cupanii and you can compare the two flowers in the above pictures which are both to the same scale.



Colchicum cupanii

I have just one flower on the Colchicum cupanii at the moment although there are several more still come.

This Bulb log is being written as I prepare to leave for Vancouver and I always like to look around to see what I may miss when I am away and to spot the jobs that I should do before I go.

Also my time is short so I will keep my comments brief and leave the pictures to speak for themselves where appropriate.



Crocus banaticus

Crocus banaticus is probably the most distinctive of all the genus crocus, with the three inner floral segments being so much shorter than the outer three. It comes in a number of colour variations of blue/violet as well as some pure white forms which I have never managed to establish in our garden.



Crocus banaticus

I find the normal colour forms grow well in both the garden and in pots provided they do not get too hot or completely dry in the summer.



Crocus banaticus

I have included my hand to let you see how large the flowers of *Crocus banaticus* can be when they are growing well. This group is growing completely in the open on the rock garden.



Crocus kotschyanus before

These before and after pictures of *Crocus kotschyanus* are to remind you to be vigilant in removing the remains of the spent flowers before they become infected with moulds.



Crocus kotschyanus after

With the old flowers removed. I am resisting calling them 'dead flowers' as to me that term has implications that they have gone before their time but hopefully these flowers have been fertilized by the many hoverflies and I will be rewarded with plenty of seed next spring.



Crocus medius



Crocus medius

I love the colour contrast seen in the flowers of *Crocus medius* between the lovely bright orange stigma, the golden yellow pollen and the blue petals.



Crocus laevigatus

The very first flowers have just appeared on one of my many pots of *Crocus laevigatus* - a species that will flower on and off all the way through the winter.



Ornithogalum species

So many bulbs now have substantial leaf growth which require to replace the moisture they lose through transpiration so it is vital that you do not let them dry out. On the other hand neither do you want them to be sitting too wet especially when hard frosts are forecast – this is the balancing act that is required to grow many bulbs successfully. Too much water when they are sitting cold can cause them to rot off while too little water when they are trying to grow will cause many of them to break down into several smaller bulbs.



Getting the watering correct is especially important for the winter flowering Narcissus such as this pot of **Narcissus romieuxii**. If you look at the distortion of the pot you can see that the bulbs are already starting to expand and it is vital that you water them well while they go through their maximum growth phase.



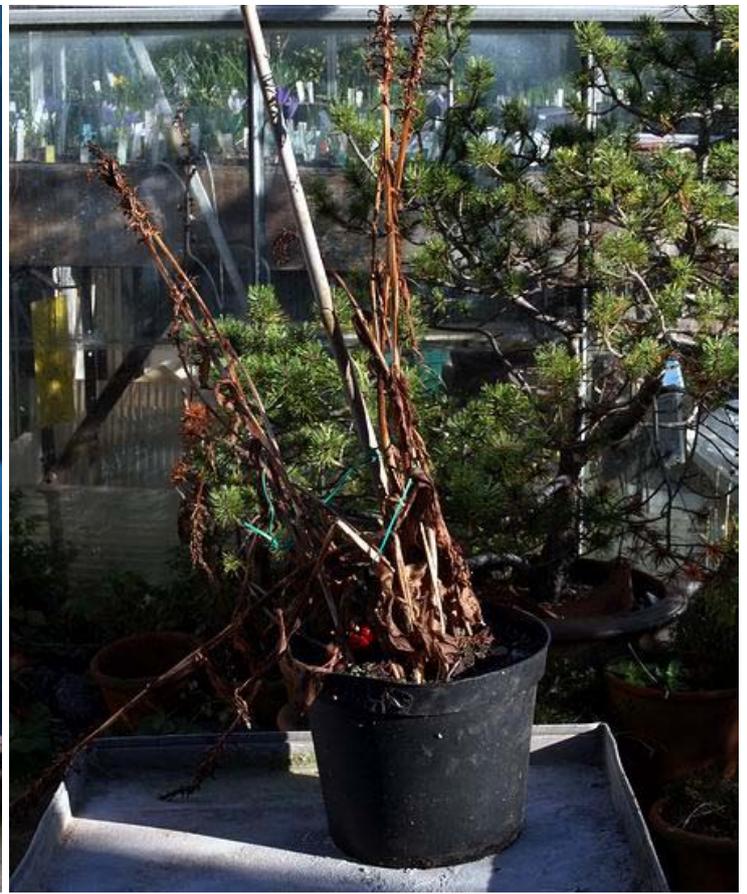
Sternbergia forms

For the last few years, because they are in such an advanced stage of growth I have been starting to feed the Sternbergias with extra potash at this time of year – I will do that when I return.



Trough

Now for a couple of updates – I planted this trough up with Androsace cuttings and now I have removed the fleece cover you can see that all but one of the cuttings have successfully rooted. I accidentally broke the stem on the one that failed resulting in me not being able to get it in good contact with the sand so the roots could not form.



Dactylorhiza

Also back in Bulb log 31 I demonstrated how I removed the new tubers from these Dactylorhiza and then replanted the stem and old tubers back into a pot. Now that the top growth has died back completely I have tipped it out to show you the results.



Dactylorhiza tubers second crop

Above you can see the stems and old tubers have produced a good second crop of small tubers. Normally I would leave them undisturbed in the pot until next summer when their growth dies back but I wanted to illustrate the results at this stage. I have replanted them minus the stems but still attached to the remains of the old tubers as some of the reserves will still be passed to the new young tubers.



Bulb house

A final look at the Crocus in the bulb house before I leave.



The emerging cyclamen leaves contrasting with the red Acer another very autumnal scene in our garden where old leaves enhance the display of new leaves.

Next week's bulb log will be late appearing as I do not arrive home until Wednesday night.