



BULB LOG 276th July 2011



Arisaema nepenthoides

The opening shot this week is of the striking stems and seed head on *Arisaema nepenthoides*, one of my favourites of this attractive genus. As the season advances the berries will start to colour up and by the time they are ripe they will be bright red. They germinate well as the picture of a pot of seedlings sown in autumn of 2009 shows, you could not cram any more in. Around three weeks ago I noticed this pot had flopped due to lack of water so I placed it into a shallow tray of water. There has been water in the tray all this time and the plants are growing really strongly so maybe sitting with their bases in water is a good way to grow certain pots of seedlings. I will plant them out into the garden when they go dormant this year.



***Arisaema nepenthoides* seedlings sown autumn 2009**

Arisaema flavum

Always the last of the *Arisaema* to appear and flower in our garden is the tiny flowered *Arisaema flavum* – the flower is only 1-2 cms from the top of the stem to the top of the flower.





Crocus pelistericus

Crocus pelistericus is the only species I grow that pushes its seeds up on such a tall stem and it does it remarkably quickly. The stem goes from nothing to almost the length of a pencil, pushing the seed capsule from underground to 15cms above ground as it opens to reveal the precious contents. I suspect that Crocus scardicus does the same but I have never been lucky enough to get any seed set on our plants in over thirty years of growing it.



Crocus pelistericus seeds



Erythronium seeds

Plenty of other bulbs are setting seeds such as the *Erythronium revolutum* above.



Seat

One of the seats in the garden where we can sit and contemplate and think which of the many tasks we should do first. My two main interests of gardening and art are similar in many ways one being that you never finish learning both in the theory and the practice and to that ends I am back to Art School all this week to do another master class on printmaking. As that is taking up most of my time this week I will leave the pictures to speak for themselves with just a few words



Lilium martagon album



Lilium martagon album and Codonopsis cardiophylla



Dactylorhiza

On the left is Dactylorhiza 'Eskimo Nell' the beautiful white form that contrasts well with all the purple forms that we have. Both of these clumps are well spaced out because they were split up last year.



Dactylorhiza

The Dactylorhiza really are the dominant flowering plant all around the garden just now.



Fritillaria house

You can see that there is not much happening in the Frit house as everything is dormant with just some seed to collect from the ripe pods.



Roscoea purpurea

Roscoea purpurea seeds around as you can see from the mass of seedlings appearing from where the seed pods fell last year.





Roscoea alpina

This is the true *Roscoea alpina*, not the pink form of *Roscoea scillifolia* that so often masquerades under that name in many of the seed exchanges.





Roscoea scillifolia

So often seed of Roscoe scillifolia is what you get when you ask for R. alpina from the various seed exchanges. It is the fact that seed exchanges rely on the donors to verify the seed they are donating- so if you are growing these roscoe please take the time to check they are true to type.



Roscoea scillifolia



Roscoea cautleyoides

This is a seedling and I am not sure if it is true *roscoea cautleyoides* or a hybrid with *R. humeana*.



Roscoea humeana

If I were asked to pick out a favourite species I would go for *Roscoea humeana* and if I were to narrow it down further it would be the stunning white form seen in the pictures below that close out this week's bulb log.



Roscoea humeana alba



Roscoea humeana alba

The plants produce a progression of flowers over about four weeks with new ones replacing the fading ones. Hopefully each flower will be fertilised and produce some seed but they do not come true from seed. The largest majority of the seedlings will be the more typical purple colour with less than 5% turning out white. Sometimes none are white but it is well worth growing them on and collecting the seeds from the second generation because it may be that these seeds produce a higher ratio of whites,

I love the delicacy of the purest white flowers and am fascinated by the way they turn translucent during periods of rain as seen in the last two pictures below.

