



BULB LOG 30..... 24th July 2012



Our oldest Westie, Poppy, died peacefully in her bed last Sunday 15th she was 15 ½ years old – this is her enjoying the sunshine just about a year ago.



The 'bulb bed' continues to produce colour- the rampant growth has responded so well to the plentiful moisture.



Chance combinations are always the best like this juxtaposition of *Primula florindae* and a *Digitalis* hybrid.



In the same bed is another of the foxglove hybrids this one a lovely dark pink.



Flower selection

It is difficult to capture in a still picture the colourful effect of viewing this bed as the eye darts from colour to colour refocusing on the different flowers as it goes. The only way I could capture something near to the effect was to pluck one of each of the flowers and create a still life.

Can you identify them all?

Cardiocrinum giganteum

The flowers of the *Cardiocrinum giganteum* have gone over now. Normally I would expect them to last a bit longer than they did; their life undoubtedly shortened by the cold wet weather.

However it is still a magnificent specimen with its tiered leaves which gradually get smaller from the bottom to the top of the stem, resembling one of the pagodas found near its homeland.





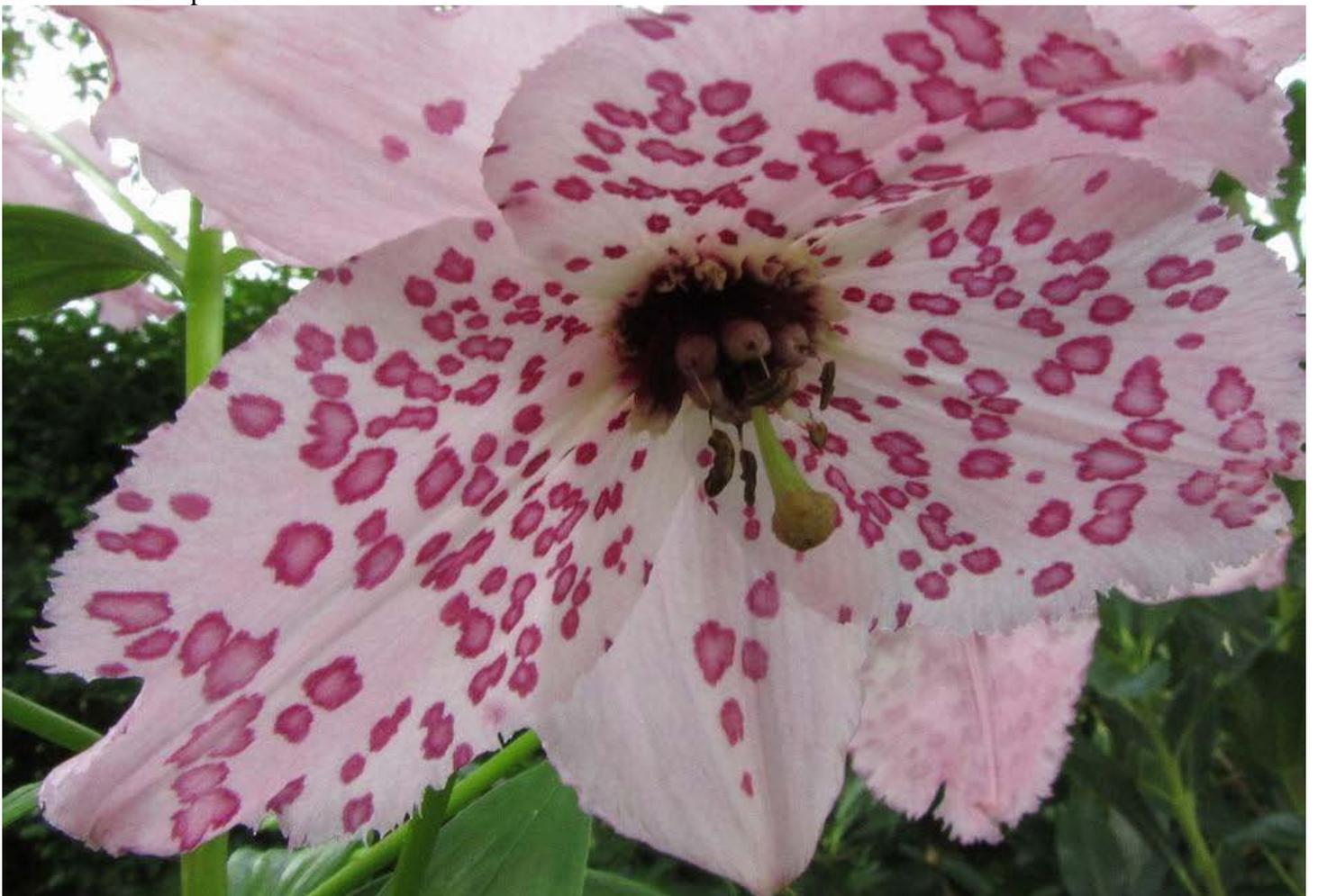
Nomocharis, Lily and me

Directly across the path from the Cardiocrinum this Nomocharis is in competition trying to match the height of the giant lily. While it is taller than me and wee Lily it does not quite match the height of the Cardiocrinum.



Nomocharis

This is most likely to be *Nomocharis pardanthina* – it certainly fits in with the key botanical characteristics attributed to that species.





Cyananthus microphylla flowering through *Hypericum reptans* in a raised bed.



Allium prattii



The original introduction of this plant to our garden was from seed given to us by Roy Lancaster around twenty years ago and all the *Allium prattii* we have are self sown from the original seedlings planted out as a clump. They are not long lived bulbs in our garden - mature bulbs do not last more than three to five years but as long as I leave them to seed we always have some around.



Here are seedlings just germinating in the gravel typically I find that most bulb seed will germinate at the same time the parent plants are coming into flower.



Another delightful species flowering now is the beautifully coloured **Allium sikkimense**.





Arisaema candidissimum

Over recent years our plants of this lovely aroid have dwindled. On a recent visit a friend asked if the bulb of *Arisaema candidissimum* he had generously given us had flowered and I had to answer that I could not remember where I had planted it but I would know when it appears.

I had a nice surprise this week when I spotted this lovely flower appearing through some *Pseudofumaria alba* and *Primula florindae*.

I am not a record keeper and tend to plant things and forget where I put them.

I just love the surprises I get when I rediscover plants appearing all around the garden every year.



Eucomis schijffii

Eucomis schijffii reminds me of Jim Archibald who first introduced it to me and that reminds me to tell you of our new website www.srgc.net. There you will not only see our new-look home page with all the features of the previous site but a wealth of new information, freely accessible, including hundreds of back issues of our journal 'The Rock Garden' and the Archibald Archive where we have a growing resource including all the seed lists he ever distributed and much much more.



Fritillaria bulbs



Healthy and dead *Fritillaria* bulbs

The continuing bad weather has meant that I am now on to re-potting the *Fritillaria* having completed most of the other genera. I can say that it has been a very good year for the *Narcissus* with good sized bulbs predominating also the majority of *Crocus* species have grown well so now I can start to assess the *Fritillaria*. As is so often the case a single pot can give mixed results with both this healthy bulb and a dead one coming out of the same pot: it is very difficult to explain exactly why this should be.



Fritillaria stenanthera bulbs

Typically *Fritillaria* bulbs are made up of two basic scales joined at the base but *Fritillaria stenanthera* bulbs differ in having one scale that wraps around to form the bulbous shape. When growing well a small offset appears which after another year's good growth should separate from the parent as a flowering sized bulb. *Fritillaria* bulbs completely replace themselves every year with the old passing all its food reserve into the new one that forms at the base of the stem.



Here I have a mass of juvenile **Fritillaria rhodkanakis** bulbs that will need at least two more years' good growth before I see a flower.



Fritillaria chitralensis seed.

Earlier in the year I predicted that due to the cold wet weather during flowering we would get a poor seed set and that has proved to be an understatement. I have never experienced such a poor seed set on the bulbs as we have this year – even the five promising fat seed pods that developed on *Fritillaria chitralensis* have yielded a disappointing result. These are all the seeds that came from the five pods and the majority of these are not fertile. However for now the sun is shining so this is a brief bulb log as I am now off outside.....