



SRGC

---- Bulb Log Diary ----

Pictures and text © Ian Young

BULB LOG 10.....11th March 2015





Trillium ovatum maculosum

I had a pleasant surprise this week when on returning home from walking the dogs my eye was drawn towards something white and jewel-like appearing at the edge of a Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'. On looking I was delighted to see the beautiful flowers and foliage of *Trillium ovatum maculosum*. My first thought was 'wow, that is early' but as is often the case our minds do not always reflect the reality and on checking my records it was in flower on 25th February last year. There is no sign of any of our other forms of *Trillium ovatum* making an appearance yet, they always flower later in the season. Last year was the first time we had flowered this plant (raised from seed) and I am pleased to

see that it has increased to two flowering stems. I must look around for signs of the other seedlings planted out in the same bed - also try to locate where I put the pot of seed we got from this plant last year to see if there are any signs of germination.



If you were wondering what the lovely yellow flower beside the Trillium is it is **Crocus herbertii** – here is a group growing in the back garden.



Trillium cuneatum

Many of the Trilliums come into growth early in the year with buds and foliage in evidence on *Trillium cuneatum*, *Trillium grandiflorum* and *Trillium kurabayashii*.



Trillium grandiflorum



Trillium kurabayashii



Erythronium caucasicum

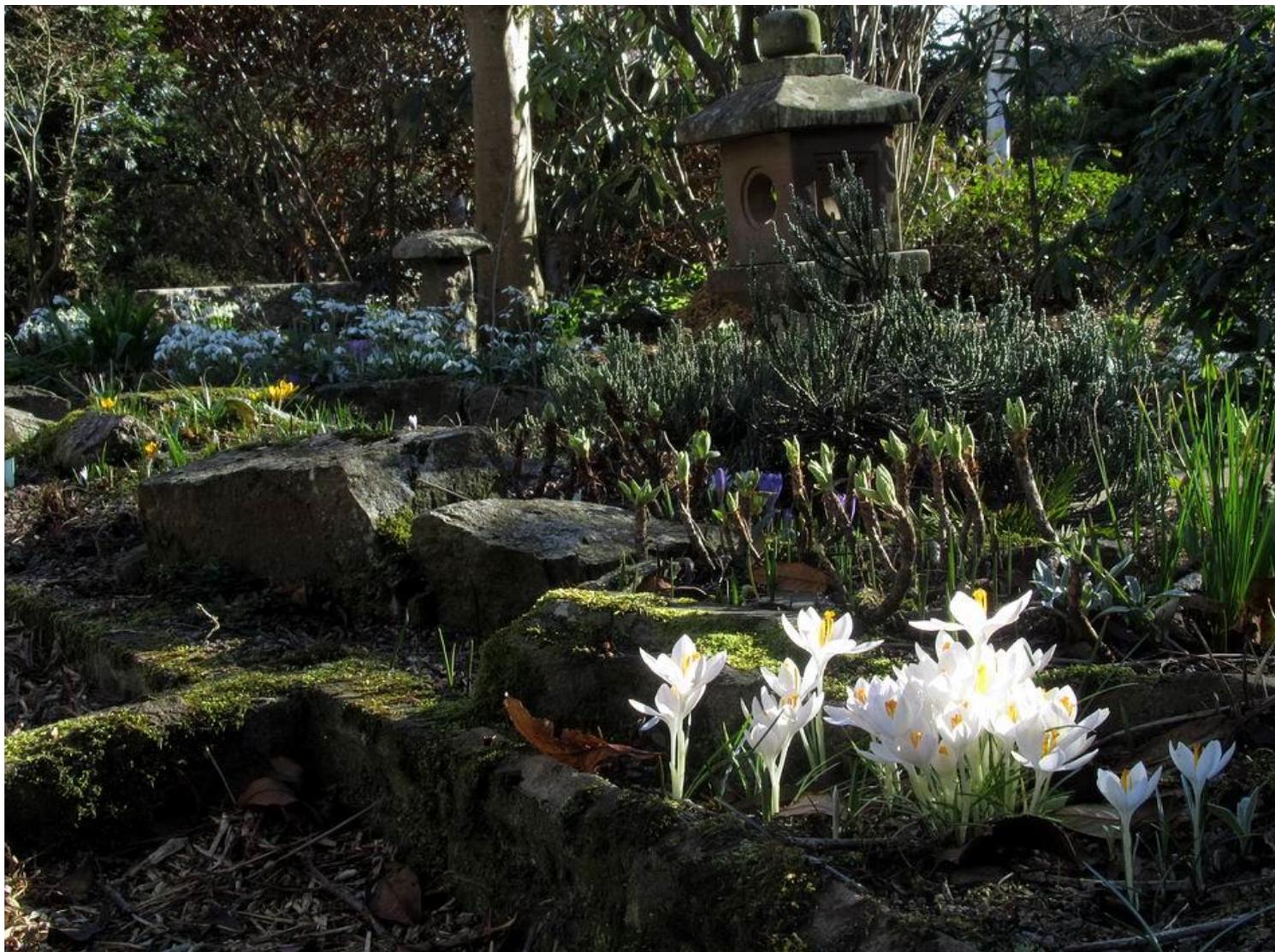
After many years of trying we now have a number of plants of *Erythronium caucasicum* in flower at the same time - when I say a number; that is five, all we have at flowering size.

The difficulty with this plant is not growing it but getting hold of it as it is rarely offered in any listings either as bulbs or seed.

My experience with this plant is that it does not increase by the bulb at any speed - it has taken one bulb the best part of ten years to form a flowering sized offset.

I do have some pots of seedlings coming along including one from our own garden seed and I am cross pollinating all the flowers we have with the hope of getting a seed set on some of our flowers.

Although it is bright with good light for taking pictures the wind is strong blowing the flowers around - hence the fuzziness of the taller of the two stems in this image.



I love the light shows we get at this time of year when the relatively low sun casts strong shadow and highlights



across the garden: unfortunately cameras do not appreciate this strong lighting quite so much as they struggle to record the extreme contrast between the bright and dark. The feature plant is **Crocus tommasinianus** 'Eric Smith' named in honour of a famous plantsman by Jim Archibald who suspects this may be a hybrid, possibly with *Crocus vernus*. You can read Jim Archibald's appreciation of

[Eric Smith](http://www.srgc.net) along with a wealth of other material in the [Archibald Archive](http://www.srgc.net) at www.srgc.net.



For two days at the weekend we were under the influence of a stream of mild air all the way from the Caribbean

and what an explosion of growth occurred.



I was away all day Saturday so did not see the garden until the Sunday and it was like a different place to the one I last saw on Friday. Flowers that were in tight bud have opened while growth that had been underground sprung into action and made a welcome appearance.



Cyclamen coum and Galanthus 'Elizabeth Harrison' with a back drop of Galanthus, Eranthis and Crocus.



Iris 'Sheila Ann Germaney'



Narcissus cantabricus and one of its hybrids Narcissus 'Don Stead'



Narcissus cantabricus clusii flowers have a creamy flush as they first emerge but quickly turn crystal white when they open – see below.



Narcissus cantabricus clusii

**Narcissus cantabricus
Alex Jeans's form**

A new one to me is
Narcissus cantabricus Alex
Jeans's form, a kind gift
from a friend.

With its wide flat faced
corona it looks like a
selection of Narcissus
cantabrius petunioides to
me.





Narcissus species ex Morocco.

One of the many plants introduced by the late Jim Archibald and still, as far as I know not identified, is this lovely tiny flowered Narcissus species from Morocco.

Its colour and form suggest affinities with *Narcissus cantabricus* but it is so much smaller than any of the others.



**Narcissus
'Craigton Bell'**

One of my own raising is a hybrid between *Narcissus romieuxii* and *Narcissus bulbocodium*.

I selected it out because I loved the starry like shape it has as it starts to unfurl from the bud then the lovely bell-like shape adopted by the mature corona. An attractive colour and its willingness to increase led me to name it.





Narcissus 'Craigton Bell'



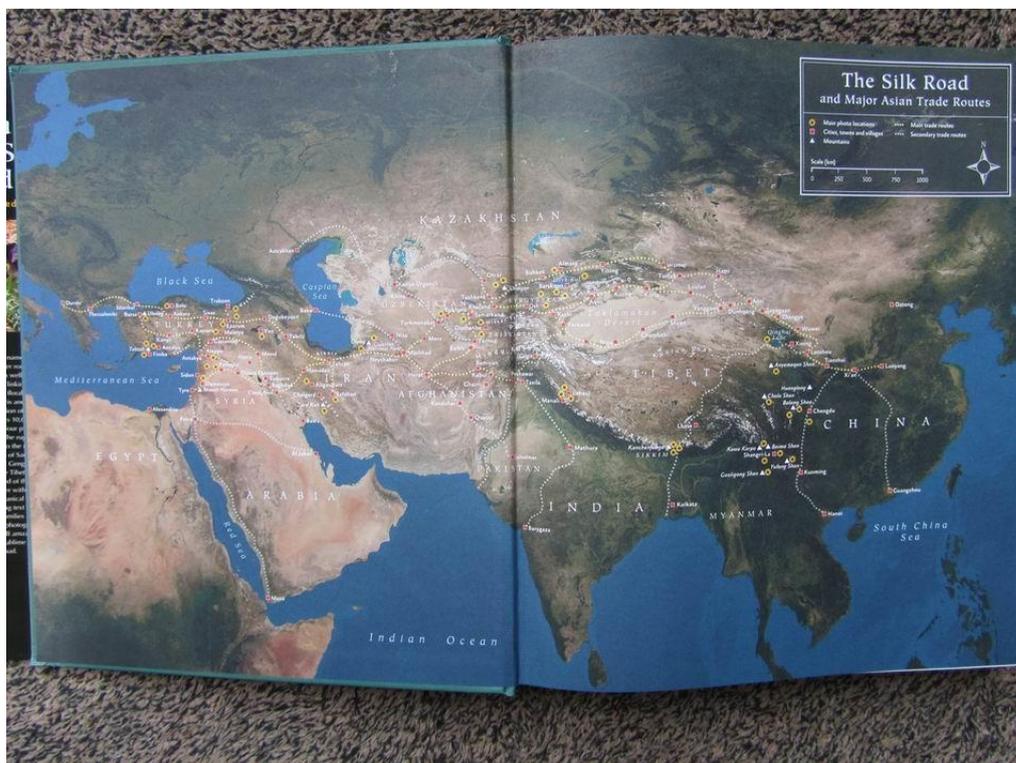
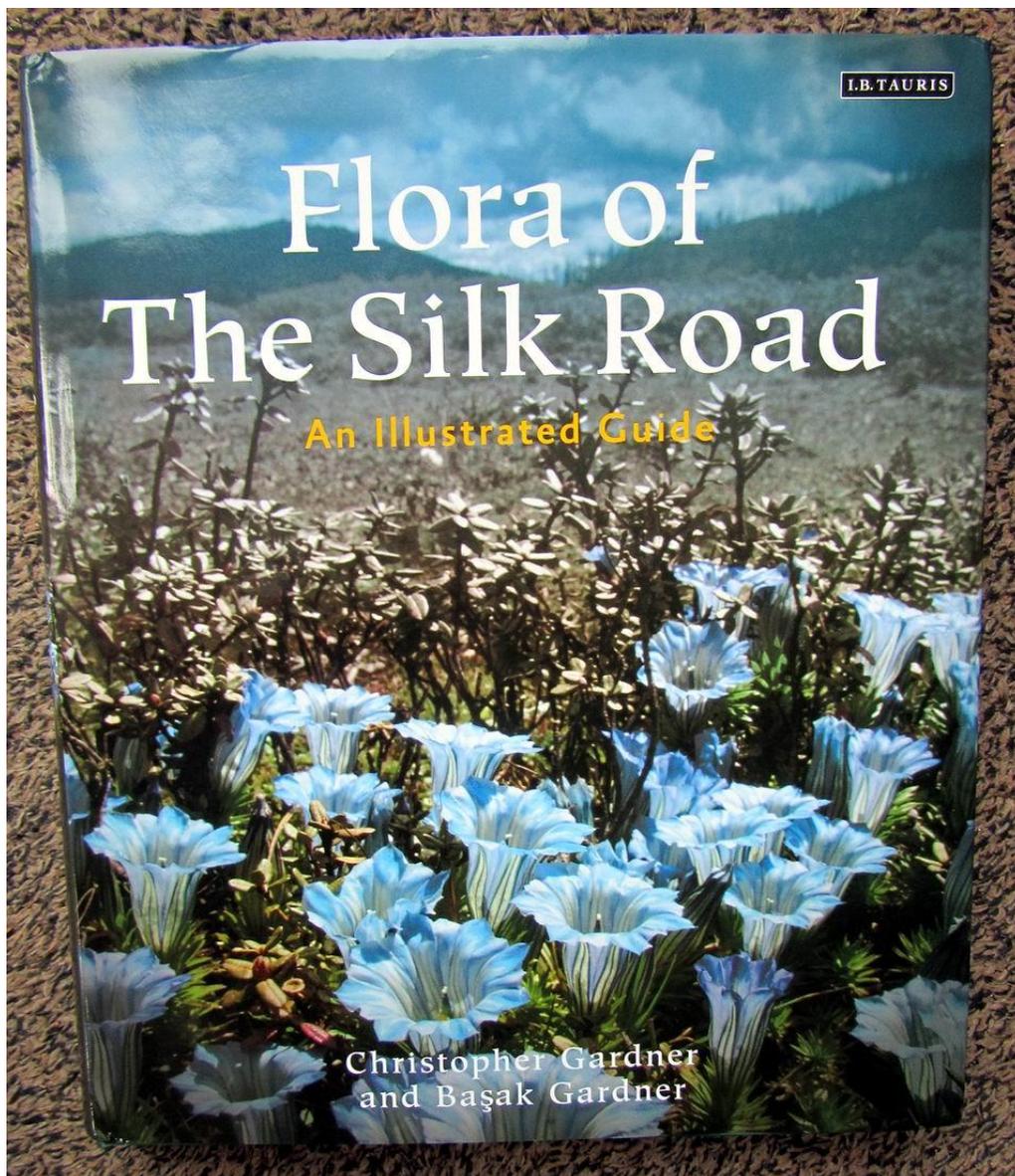
Another of my own crosses; this between **Narcissus cyclamineus** and **Narcissus 'MiniCycla'** heralds the start of the flowering season for the small trumpets.

Book Review:

[Flora of The Silk Road](#)

An illustrated guide by
Christopher Gardner
and Başak Gardner
ISBN: 978-1-7806-941-7

We were lucky to receive this book for review, I say lucky because this is a truly wonderful book celebrating the flowers found along the length of the Silk Road. There can be few people who have not heard of this historical and legendary route that brought treasures such as silk from the Far East to the West passing through the heartlands of many great civilisations. That such a route should also pass through some of the richest botanical areas of the world adds to its fascination and attraction to anyone with even a passing interest in plants. The authors have extensive experience of these areas having both explored it and [lead many tours along its route](#) gathering a stunning series of images as they went.

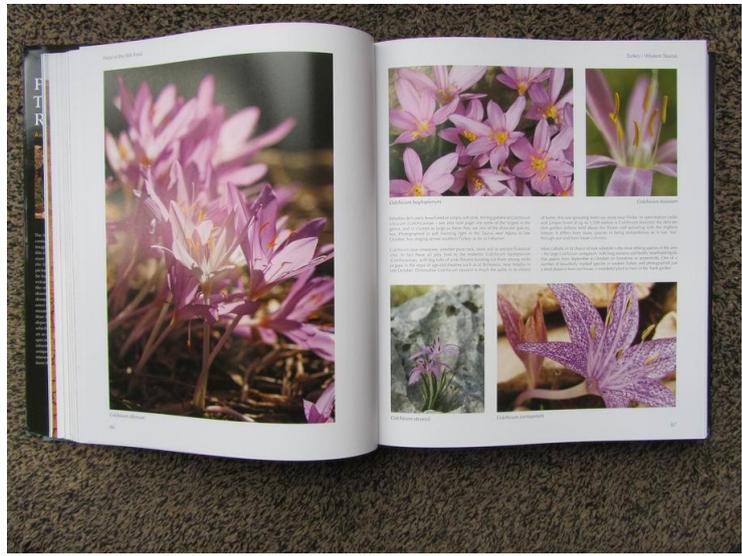


Tien Shan
Pakistan and Kashmir
CHINA and SIKKIM
Qinghai and Northern Sichuan

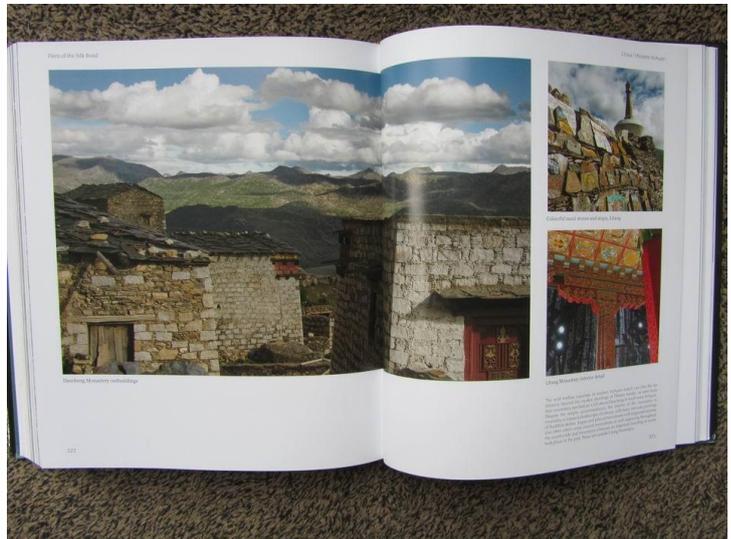
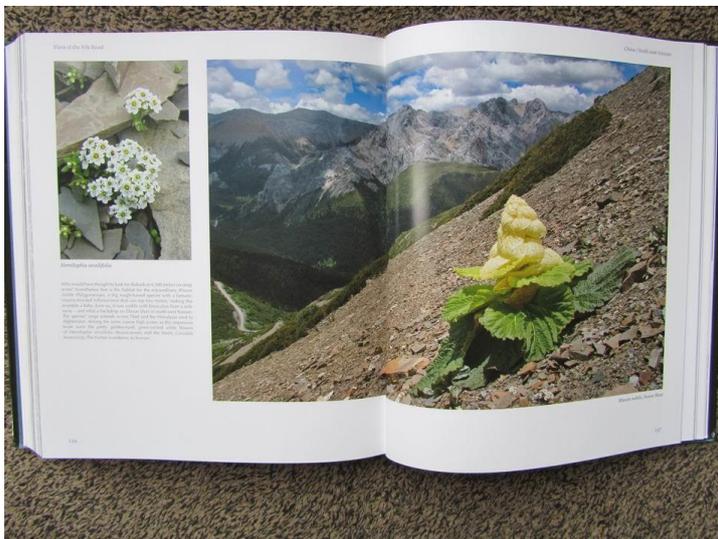
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CENTRAL ASIA
Tajikistan
Ammankutan
Western Sichuan
North-west Yunnan
Sikkim



It is a large scale book, 308 x 258 mm, more akin to many an Art book than a book on a flora and they have used that size to great effect with some images the size of the whole page. The standard of the pictures is excellent showing around 500 flowers; some in detail and others in habitat. This is such a botanically rich area that it would be impossible to show all the plants but those chosen to be featured are among the most decorative and sought after plants for our gardens.



Dramatic scenery and local architecture and culture also feature in some of the pages.



Do not expect great amounts of text describing the plants in detail as this is very definitely an illustrated guide – the text is in the form of expanded titles of the pictures naming the plants, the locations and other interesting snippets that add to the interest of each page and are testament to the authors' familiarity with the areas and plants.



There are many spreads like these showing so many of the plants that I love and for those of you who like me are unlikely ever to visit these regions this is the next best way of getting a flavor of what we are missing. Even those not in the least bit interested in plants will be drawn to flick through in wonderment at the colours and landscapes so well illustrated here, the sort of book you could pick up and flick through for a few minutes or a few hours and never tire of coming back. Doubtless many will now be tempted to travel along the route!



I cannot recommend this book highly enough - it is a visual feast at what seems a ridiculously low price of less than £30 - you will not regret buying it. If I was not such a canny Scot I would say, if you do not like I will refund your money, I am that confident that you will get pleasure from having this book. [If you do buy it from [Amazon](https://www.amazon.co.uk/) please follow the link at the bottom of any of our webpages and at no extra cost to you the SRGC receive a small percentage of the price towards or funds – this goes for anything you buy not just books.]



That's all for this week.....