



BULB LOG 37.....16th September 2015





Rosa sericea

I have been writing recently about enjoying the garden in all seasons - each brings its own attributes - the one we associate most with autumn is that of ripening fruits.

One of the species roses we grow in the front garden is *Rosa sericea* which we raised from seed collected by Alastair McKelvie. We kept and planted two of the original seedlings in our front garden it then took a number of years for the plants to reach maturity. To our delight we saw that they bore different colours of fruits, one orange red the other much darker appearing to be almost black when it is fully ripe.



Rosa sericea

There are many small self-sown rose seedlings now appearing in the front garden presumably from these plants although they may have crossed with *Rosa glaucophyllum* which we also grow here. We have no room to allow these plants to grow on where they are so I will lift them and plant a few along the southern wall of the back garden where I took down some trees recently - then, in time, we will see what we get.

Rosa sericea



I have shown pictures of these plants flowering in previous [Bulb Logs](#) which brings me to a subject I am often asked about – searching the Bulb Log archives. Firstly there is the excellent [Index](#) for which I am very grateful to Len Rhind from Canada who keeps it updated annually. I also use online search engines such as Google where I target the search by typing in SRGC Bulb Log followed by the plant or topic I am seeking - that always brings up a lot of results.

Clicking the image search will only find images from 2003 to 2008 when the Bulb Log was loaded as a web-page since we switched to PDF files in 2009 the searches do not display the images but will find the mention of the plants and if I mention a plant it is nearly always illustrated.



I am very fond of this Pieris, collected by George Forrest, which I was given as the true *Pieris forrestii* (?) keeping a single specimen in the garden much preferring to propagate by seed or cuttings but so far I have not managed to root cuttings so I will collect and sow some of the seed this year.



Both **Rhododendron 'Curlew'** and **R.saluenense subsp. chameunum** still have some late flowers along with many fat buds that will flower in the spring. While these two rhododendrons regularly produce this second flush of flowers others take longer to produce flower buds. In our conditions **Rhododendron yakushmanum** often takes two years to produce flower buds so those that flowered this year will not have sufficient growing time to form flower buds for next year.



Rhododendron yakushmanum - this year's non-flowering shoots all have fat flower buds while those that flowered this year did not start growing until I dead-headed them so are later to mature – each year we get a mixture of flowering and non-flowering branches on the same plant so we always have a display of flowers.



Vaccinium floribundum

We planted this *Vaccinium floribundum* in 1985 when we took over the house and garden next door - as the trees and shrubs over-grew the *Vaccinium* it had to grow out over a metre, climbing over the wall to reach the light.



Since we cut back and removed some shrubs last year the base of the plant is getting more light – resulting in new shoots rising.



Vaccinium floribundum

These fruits are very tasty – I have them with muesli and yogurt for my breakfast.



Crinodendron hookerianum

Crinodendron hookerianum is another shrub in fruit, not edible this time, but they will provide a number of fat seeds to sow. It is always wise to sow seed from your own plants to provide new young healthy clones.



Crinodendron hookerianum can also be raised from cuttings that root quite readily.



I cannot remember what species of *Sorbus* this is but it is one of the smaller shrubby species from the Himalaya.



There is a good crop of berries on our *Sorbus acuparia*.



This **Sorbus acuparia** has an upright habit making it ideal to grow at the edge of the raised bed and trough area.



Vaccinium nummularia



The tangled arching branches of *Vaccinium nummularia*, with their small leaves, are attractive in themselves and in the spring the shrub was covered in beautiful flowers.



Vaccinium nummularia

Now when you look more closely you can see the clusters of shiny black fruits.



I am trying to revive this long neglected **bonsai larch tree**. It was in a small typical bonsai pot for many years and I am afraid to say that I neglected it to the extent I am surprised that it survived. This year I took pity and planted it into a polystyrene box to allow it to grow a strong root system again.



I have ensured that it has been well fed and watered this summer and it has responded well producing long green growths which I have pinched back - it also has cones. After a few years of attention and good growth I may again clip the root ball and return it to a bonsai pot.



Raised bed



The beds in the garden also require care, attention and rejuvenating from time to time. The lower level around this raised bed had become congested and overgrown and would start to decline if left. In a few sections, working around *Rhododendron roxieanum* var. *oreonastes*, I have lifted lots of self-sown *Corydalis* x 'Craigton Blue' placing the mats of roots into a tray to sort out.



Corydalis x 'Craigton Blue' has clumps of strange scaly bulbs which increase by sending out short stolons - each of these parts is capable of forming a new plant. If you do not divide these clumps every two or three years they will get ever more congested with weaker growth resulting in a reduction in flowering.



Another familiar topic in the Bub Log has been moss growing on rocks and how it forms the basis for a new habitat where plants can seed and a layer of soil slowly builds up. Here I have peeled back the layer of moss growing over the rock edging revealing a shallow soil layer building up under the moss as well as a group of *Erythronium dens-canis* seedlings.



I did the same with the next rock and this time revealed self-sown *Dactylorhiza* tubers plus some more *Erythronium*. There is only a few centimetres depth forming of moss and soil so these bulbs, unable to go any deeper, have laid down flat against the rock. I have removed this moss from the rocks and rescued all the young bulbs, planting them in the bed.



Round the other side of the *Rhododendron* I have lifted a number of *Celmisia* and a large group of *Dactylorhiza* that were becoming quite overcrowded. I would have planted each orchid singly and over the years they have formed dense clumps which were starting to crowd out the *Celmisia*.



This bundle of growth has formed around the original single bulb I planted and if left the vigour and flowering will start to diminish.



Holding the clumps by the stems and shaking them quite hard loosens the tangle of roots and with care I can separate them out into individual stems. Most of these stems have only a single new 'bulb', only the odd one had two as shown above. When spaced well and in good growing conditions I would expect two new bulbs on all the stems but the competition of being congested reduces the rate of increase. In one hand I hold the base of the stem where the new bulbs are attached then I carefully twist the new growth with the other until I feel it part company – these new growths are planted into the garden. I also plant or pot up the old stem and bulb as now the dominant shoots have been removed they will grow on producing more growths by the spring. I recorded some Bulb Log video diary supplements showing this whole process check them out from the [forum](#) or from my [video channel](#)



I now have a whole tray of bulbs to space out and replant into the same area and around the garden, the majority of them will flower next year.



I space the orchids out first then I plant them, finishing of this bed by splitting the clumps of *Corydalis*, planting some of it back spaced around the orchids. There are also *Erythroniums* in this bed but they were not disturbed as their bulbs are deeper than I needed to dig.



Round the corner I replant the *Celmisia* before planting some of the *Dactylorhiza* back in among them to start the process over again.



Lysimachia paridiformis subsp. stenophylla. The seed of this plant was collected in China around 20 years ago by Mikinori Ogisu, he sent it to Roy Lancaster who sent them on to us to sow. We raised a number of plants most of which we sent back down to Roy and we kept three plants for ourselves. It is a good grower with nice foliage and a lovely cluster of bright yellow flowers in late summer. It has never set seed for us in the North but I do believe they have had seed from it further

south - it can be increased by cuttings taken in autumn which will root fairly readily over the winter.



Lysimachia paridiformis subsp stenophylla

I started this week showing a plant raised from seed collected by our friend Alastair McKelvie and now I leave you with another plant we raised from seed sent to us by another friend.....