



BULB LOG 35.....31st August 2016





I believe trees are an essential element of every garden. In many gardens you may be the tallest thing around and that is a sign that the gardeners are not utilising all the space above the garden. Fastigate or columnar trees are ideal subjects where space is at a premium because their upright habitat brings height without the spreading canopy. The tallest tree in our front garden is a fastigate form of the Scots Pine, *Pinus sylvestris*. From the west side and from the street our garden presents a barrier of

trees and shrubs of different heights and shapes displaying a diverse interesting range of foliage.



Vaccinium, Gaultheria x Pernettya and Rhododendron

Below the trees a group of small leaved shrubs have grown into each other forming a beautiful evergreen tapestry of foliage with the added seasonal bonus of flowers and berries.



The white berries of the *Gaultheria x Pernettya* are larger than the tiny leaves – we got this plant, as a cutting from the garden of Mike and Polly Stone, more years ago than I care to remember.



A few years ago we cut back and removed a number of shrubs from the front garden creating a central open planting area - there we have been enjoying establishing many plants such as ***Primula capitata***.



The flowers of a very dark form of **Cyclamen hederifolium** have a very natural look pushing up through the carpet of Gallium foliage which has provided a green ground cover since it emerged in the spring.



Cyclamen hederifolium album



Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'

Round the back and in deep shade there are still some flowers on Corydalis 'Craigton Blue' – this is part one of the plants that I lifted and split last summer which is the ideal time for dividing this type of Corydalis.

This matt of 'Craigton Blue' was planted in the front garden as a small division some three years ago during which time it has grown substantially.

To keep these plants growing and flowering well they should be divided every three years or so and now the foliage is turning yellow it is the perfect time to do this. If left they will continue to spread but the vigour and flowering will diminish.





The matt of rhizome and roots sits almost on the surface so it is very easy to lift with a fork.



The easiest way to divide it is to simply break the clump into small parts - I will get from six to ten new plants by breaking a clump like this. One part will be replanted back into the original position - along with some fresh organic garden compost to add goodness back into the ground - the other parts can be spread round.



Washing the soil from the matt reveals the strange squiggly roots which I think are like a rhizome. A small scaly bulb-type structure forms at the base of each stem with these elongated shoots spreading out in a tangled fashion. Every single bit of this clump has the potential to form a new plant which means it can be propagated very quickly and easily - the ease of growth, rate of increase along with its desirable colour and scent have allowed **Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'** to become very wide spread in cultivation and available from many commercial outlets.



Another hybrid I have selected for increasing is **Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'**.



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'

Corydalis 'Craigton Purple' ('CP') is another hybrid from our garden the seed parent was *Corydalis capitata* and as it was open pollinated I can only speculate that the parent was either *Corydalis flexuosa* or more likely *Corydalis* 'Craigton Blue' ('CB').

The root structure is different from 'CB' in that the scaly bulbous-like structure at the base of each stem is more prominent – a characteristic inherited from the seed parent *Corydalis capitata* - sometimes secondary bulbs form further up the stem as shown on the left. While 'CP' is increasing quite well it does not produce the profusion of squiggly underground shoots that 'CB' so it will take a bit longer to build up stocks.

It was some years ago that I first noticed these hybrids appearing in the seedlings and I observed them for several seasons before selecting the best form to propagate.





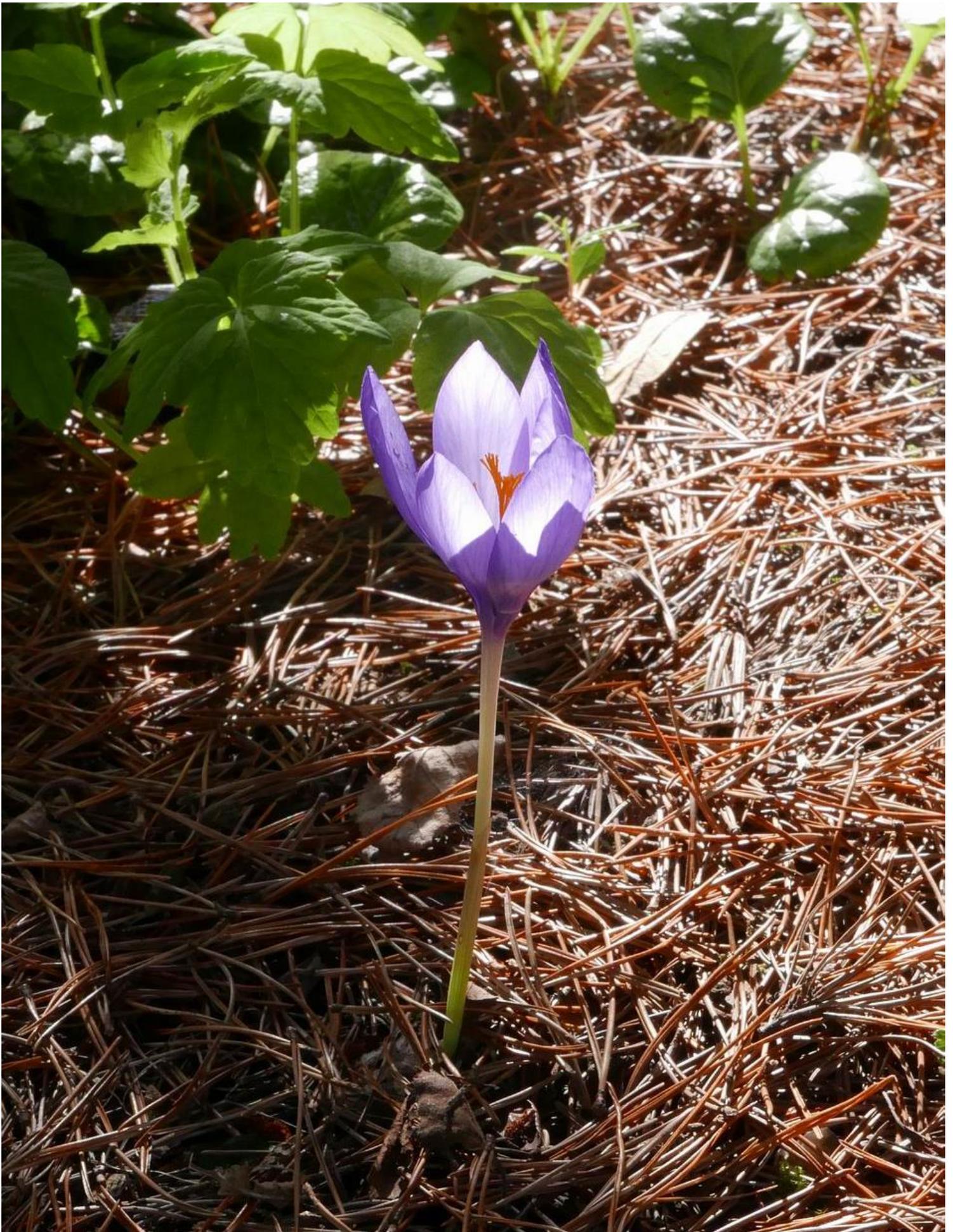
Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'

This was the only box I have of Corydalis 'Craigton Purple' until I split it this week and I now have two boxes, a small group that I planted in the garden and a few bits I sent to friends to trial.



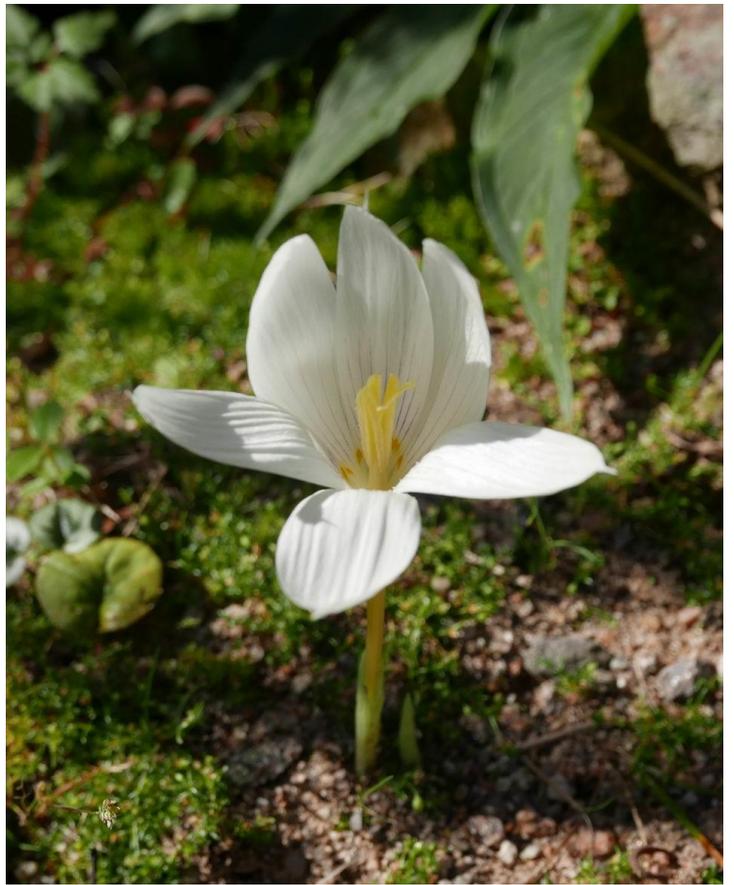
Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'

Just to remind you of what the flowers are like here is a picture from June this year.



Crocus nudiflorus

The first of the Crocus flowers have appeared – I never cease to be amazed at how quickly these flowers can appear. They seem to spring up almost overnight and open in the sunshine but they are fragile and can disappear almost as quickly especially in wet and /or windy conditions.



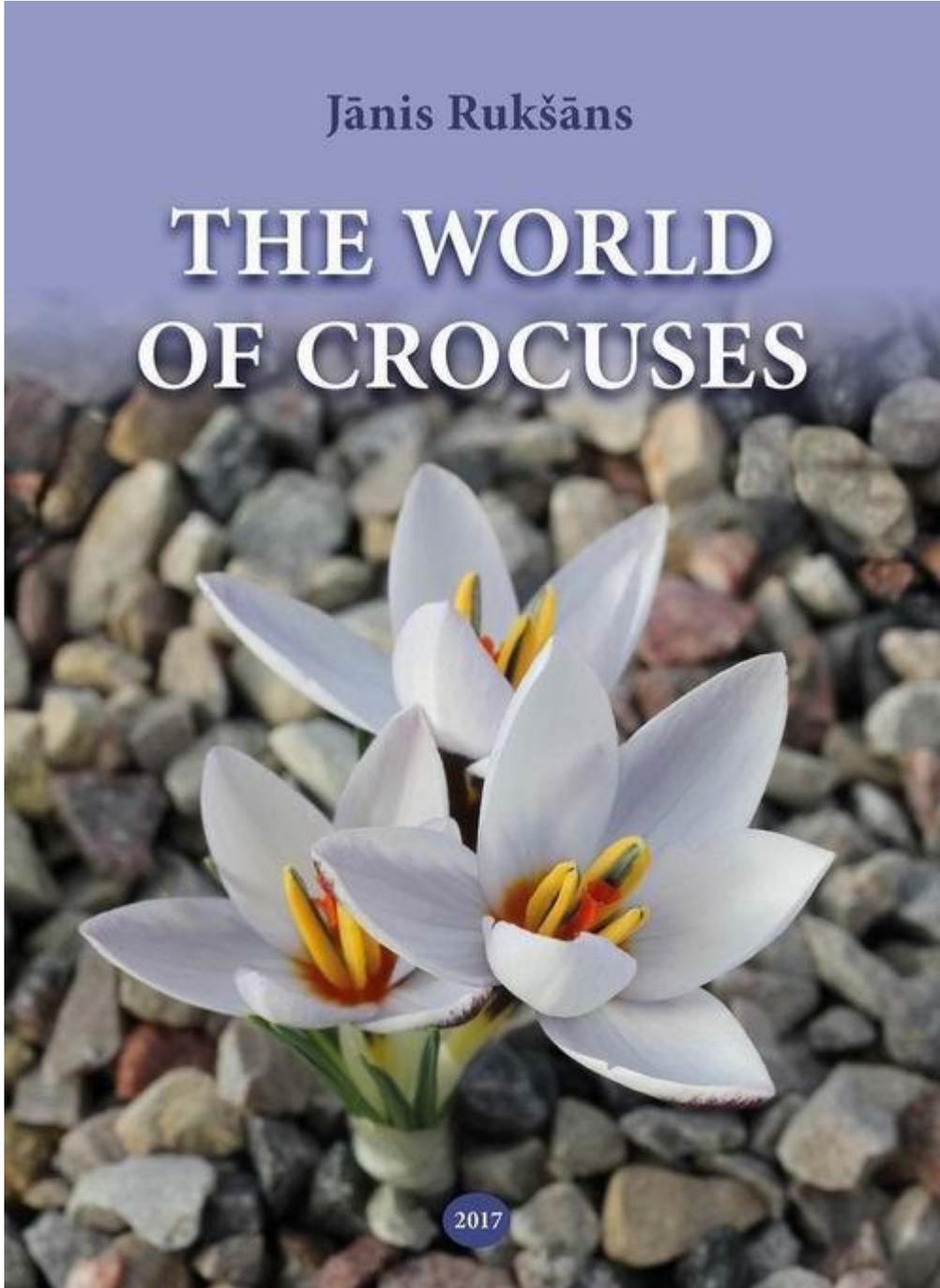
***Crocus scharojanii flavus* and the related *Crocus vallicola* .**



Crocus vallicola

Jānis Rukšāns

THE WORLD OF CROCUSES



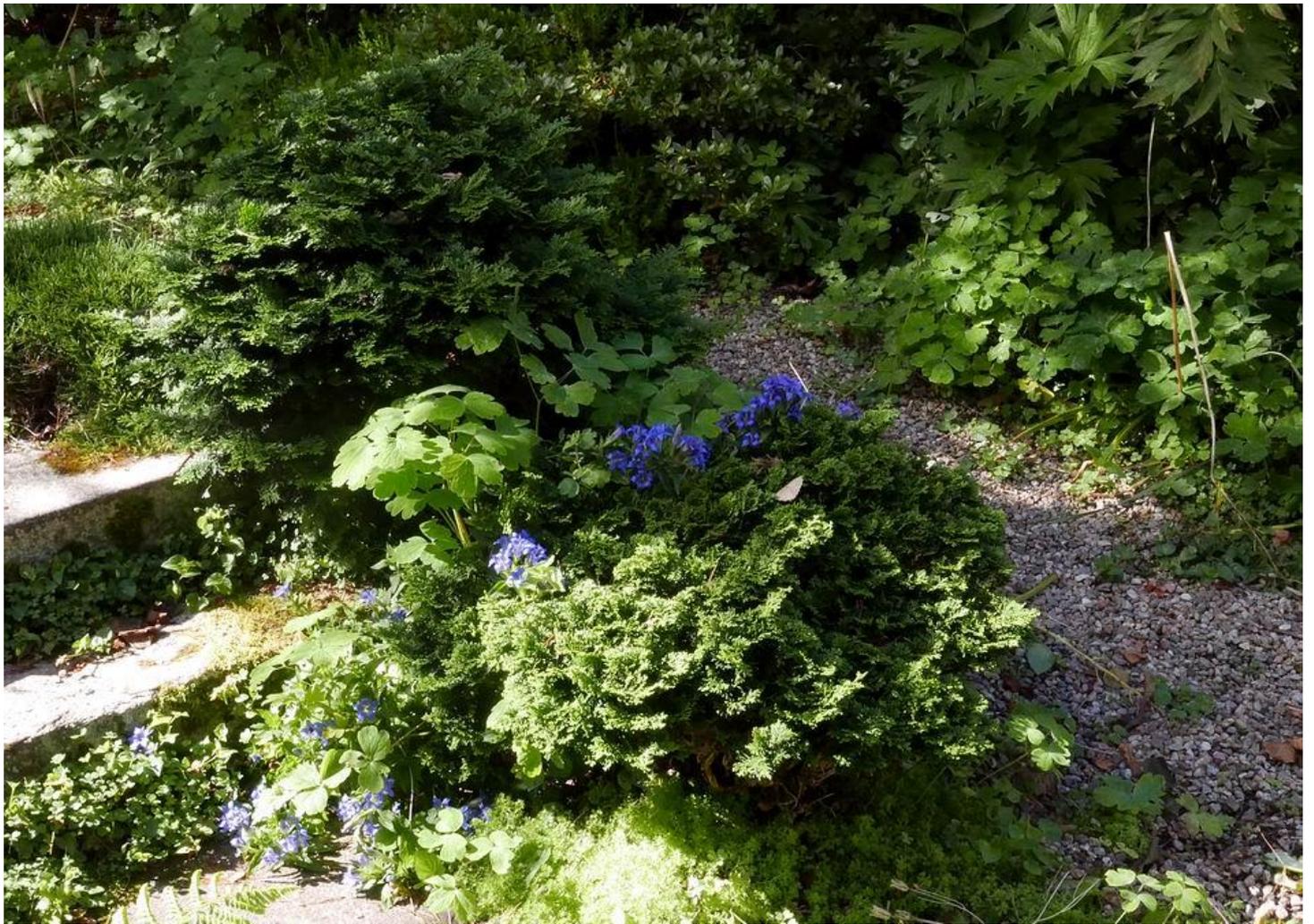
Now exciting news for bulb lovers around the world - Janis Ruksans has completed working on his new book '**The World of Crocuses**'. This new book will be more than 500 pages long and will include more than 1500 colour pictures. The species are arranged in alphabetical order, making it easy to find them without searching through an index. This is a major work bringing together JR's fifty years of experience of Crocus into a beautifully illustrated book covering plant descriptions and identification, habitat and cultivation making it equally suitable for gardeners and botanists. From the sample pages I have seen the design and layout is clean and user friendly with all illustrations and photographs included in the text.

Now there is the chance for you to donate towards the printing costs to allow this work to be printed.

Jānis is offering:

Everyone who donates at least 50 Euros towards the printing of his Monograph (more will be specially appreciated!) will receive a free copy of the book, with personally addressed signature of author, paying only postage costs. Everyone who will donate at least 500 Euros will be mentioned in the book's "Acknowledgments" chapter with full information about donors, according to their wishes and will receive three signed copies without any additional payments. Donations must be received before 1st of February, 2017 when manuscript must be forwarded to be typeset. To receive detailed information about sponsoring the project, please write to Jānis via <mailto:janis.bulb@hawk.lv>

Please consider giving your support – you can read more detailed information and see sample pages in the August edition of the online magazine [International Rock Gardener \(IRG\)](#)



Gentian climbing through a dwarf conifer.





Gentiana septemfida



Lysimachia paridiformis subsp *stenophylla*



***Lysimachia
paridiformis* subsp
*stenophylla***

You can see this plant of *Lysimachia paridiformis* subsp. *stenophylla* growing at the edge of the path. It flowers very late with us and our weather turns too cold for it to set any seed however I have been told that in warmer gardens it flowers earlier and it sets seed. I have propagated it from cuttings taken as the stem with a leaf rosette and rooted over winter.



This interesting group of foliage took my eye as I walked by, ***Podophyllum* 'Spotty Dotty'** with ferns, *Arisaema*, *Aconitum*, etc.

I was also attracted to the red stems of this Primula shining out as they are momentarily illuminated by a shaft of back light.



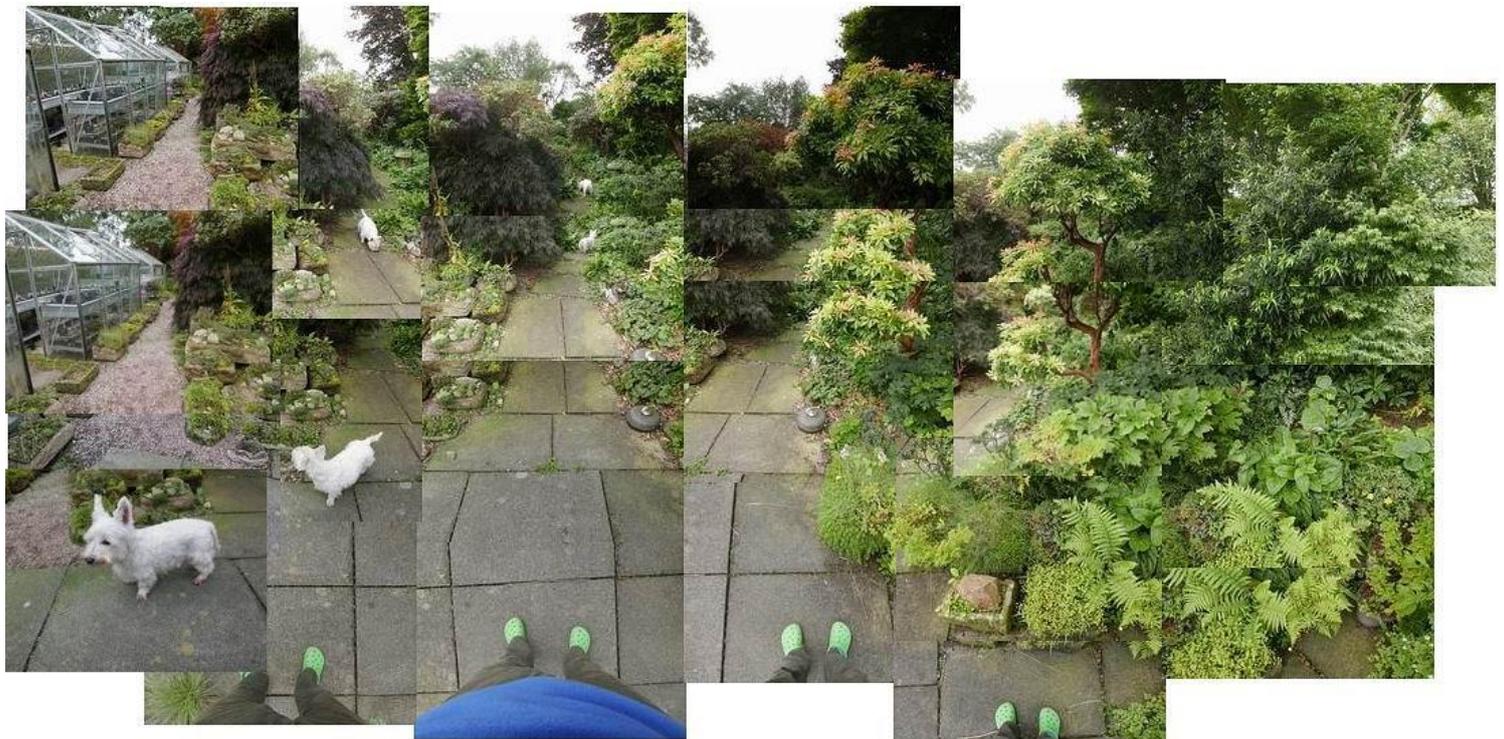
The white flower spike is the first time we have flowered **Veratrum (Melanthium) fimbriatum** – the leaves were completely intact until the flower spike extended now they have become heavily chewed by snails. I don't know if this a coincidence or not but many surrounding plants have been well chewed since spring and it is only recently that they have turned their attention to the Veratrum – has the chemistry perhaps changed the taste of the leaf???



Veratrum (Melanthium) fimbriatum



Read all about **Veratrum (Melanthium) fimbriatum** and its close relatives in Christoph Ruby's article in this issue of [IRG](#).



I am a big fan of the Artist David Hockney: he is one of the best observers of our time constantly considering how we look and view things. While playing with my new camera I decided to try out his method of photographing where you take many views of the subject and combine them into a single image most famously in his work 'Pearblossom Highway'. A conventional photograph captures a single view point at a single moment in time this method combines multiple viewpoints taken over a period of time allowing the viewer to experience time and movement in a still image – this is my first attempt and I am encouraged to experiment further.....