



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 22.....31st May 2017



There are times when I look casually across the garden that I wonder what is there to share this week? Then I start looking and see so much that I end up with 200 pictures – absolute proof that the more you look the more you will see. We have experienced yet another variation on the annual cycle of the seasons in the garden where, as a result of the mild winter followed by a warmer than average start to the year, the first bulbs and plants were encouraged into flower early- however now I am observing a slowing up of growth due to a lack of water caused by the unusually long dry period.



***Paeonia ostii* hybrid**

No matter what our weather delivers there will always be some plants that do better than others and our currently warm dry conditions are suiting the peonies - many of which are flowering better than they have for a number of years. We regularly get flower buds but mostly the flowers are trying to open in conditions that are too cold and wet for them – that has not been the case so far this year.



Paeonia cambessedesi



Paeonia cambessedesii is one of my favourites: it is an endemic of the Balearic Islands so it should not be a surprise that we struggle to grow it well outside in Aberdeen. This year is the best it has been growing in this narrow bed at the base of a south facing wall which is the hottest and driest conditions we can offer in the open garden.



On the other hand ***Paeonia lutea ludlowii***, which is endemic to South-East Tibet, thrives in our garden. The original plant is over three metres tall and has to be cut back regularly to keep it in bounds. It is surrounded by self-sown seedlings of all ages: this picture is of one of the seedlings flowering for the first time.



Paeonia emodii is also from Tibet and enjoys our cool moist garden.



Paeonia obovata has a wide distribution which includes Russia and China so it has also adapted to our garden.



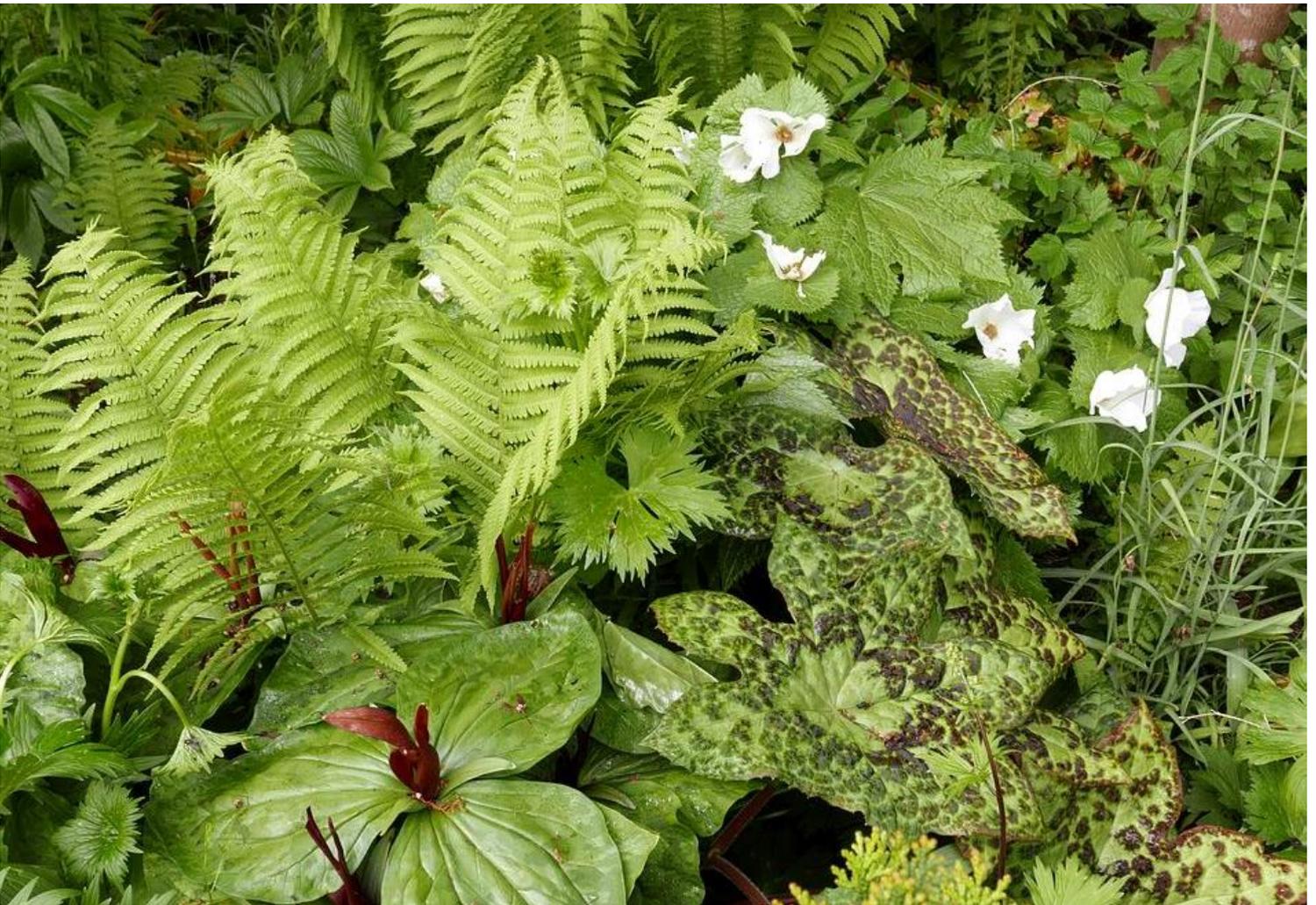
Paeonia obovata



Paeonia obovata alba



As the flowers are only there for a short time it is important to plant your garden with foliage in mind.





The bulb bed looks very different to how it did when the first Crocus and Galanthus pushed through the bare ground some months ago - now you cannot see the ground - it is totally hidden by herbaceous plants with some tall stemmed Alliums providing flowering highlights.



Even the yellowing *Fritillaria imperialis* still adds beauty providing a contrasting background to the Allium.



I am happy to see these Alliums self-seeding as they provide colour and interest into the summer months.



The recently converted Fritillaria house sand bed is nearing the end of its first year – now most of the plants have retreated underground it is good to have Alliums extending the flowering interest for a few more weeks.

This is a species that I raised from collected seed and have so far not identified. Just as I do in the garden it is my aim to have as long a flowering period as is reasonable possible in the sand beds and Alliums are one of my key target plants to bring flowers at this time of year.



A few still in seed pots that are now flowering and I will plant in the sand bed includes **Allium barczewskii**.



Allium parvum



Allium yosemitense is another candidate, although it is also proving to be hardy in an outside sand bed so I will be interested to compare how well they grow in these two very different environments – I will also try some of the other seedlings outside.



Allium gomphrenoides



I have just been watering the sand bed directly around the alliums that are in growth.



Another genus that offers late flowering interest with potential for the bulb house sand beds is **Ornithogalum** of various types.



Ornithogalum



Calochortus uniflora



The majority of the bulbs in the bulb house are going underground but there is still colour and interest to be found – repotting will start soon.





Ramonda nathaliae flowering in a trough.





Armeria maritima trough



Similar in many ways to a trough is the **Pinguicola grandiflora** rock in the pond which is looking lovely. Gardening has its disappointments and challenges and shortly after I took this picture a bird, a magpie, stripped a large chunk of the moss towards the right hand end away and I lost some of the Pinguicola luckily there are still plenty left and I will build them back up again – never give in.



Pond



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'



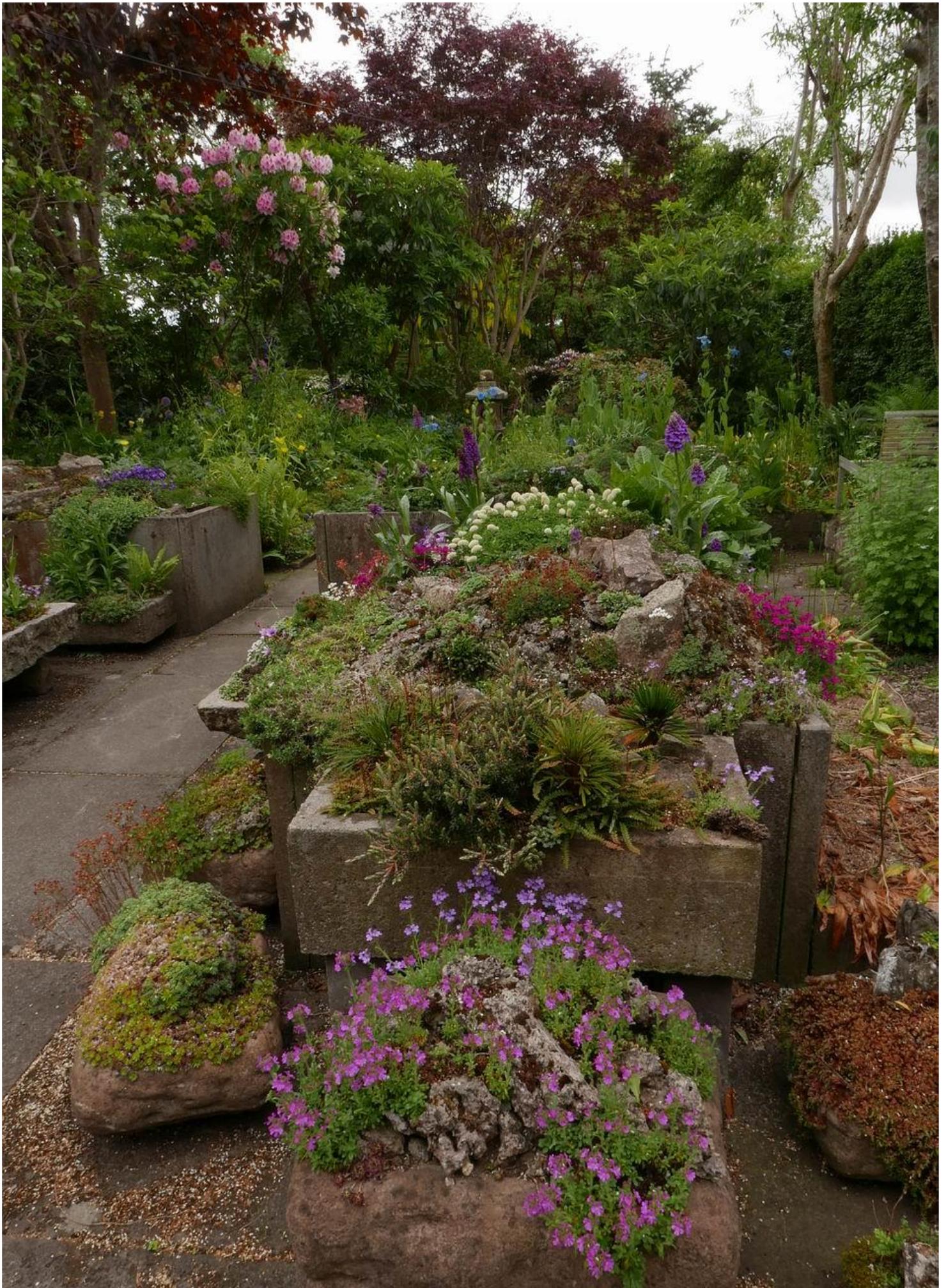
I have been trialling Corydalis '**Craigton Purple**' for a few years now and I am very satisfied that it is worthy of being named. It increases well and offers a different colour to Corydalis '**Craigton Blue**'. Above it is seen growing in two boxes to increase it, while below is a group of two bulbs I planted out in shade last autumn to see how it would grow in those conditions.



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'



A yellow form of ***Fritillaria affinis***.



The last image for this week is another view across the raised slab beds and troughs towards the garden.....

