



BULB LOG 31.....1st August 2018





Every week I search the garden for an interesting subject that will make a suitable image for the cover of the Bulb Log and at many times of the year I am spoiled for choice but late July into August is often a quiet time for flowering interest in our garden and especially so in the drought conditions we have been experiencing. That drought came to a spectacular end this week with thunder and lightning accompanied by torrential down pours and very quickly we could see the relief of the plants as they rehydrated.

There are many plants that flower at this time of year but it is not so easy to find those that will fit in with our intensive planting which

has to provide changing seasonal interest. In recent years we have been adding to the range of Roscoeas that we grow and the magnificent **Roscoeas 'Harvington Imperial'**, the subject of this cover image, is proving an excellent grower. We removed an old rhododendron from this corner of a bed which gave the infrequent opportunity where we could dig a reasonable sized area, refresh the soil with organic matter from the compost heaps and release some plants from pots in the frames. In our garden the Roscoeas do not appear above ground until July by which time much of the early bulbous growth has retreated underground for the summer leaving the Roscoeas plenty room for growth.



Roscoeas 'Harvington Imperial'



Roscoe 'Harvington Imperial'

Bred by Hugh Nunn in the Vale of Evesham I think it is a selection from the variable *Roscoe purpurea* – it has decorative stout stems infused with red which greatly adds to its decorative values. The individual flowers do not last long but there is a steady progression extending the flowering period over a number of weeks.



Lilium lankongense



Seed interest is provided by the many fascinating forms of the seeds and capsules such as **Jeffersonia dubia**.



Last weekend I visited the [Explorers Garden](#) at Pitlochry when I was attending a planning meeting for the next [International Rock Garden Conference](#), a gathering for lovers of plants, gardens and mountains which will be held 08-11 May 2021 at Perth Concert Hall, Perth, Scotland – make a note in your diaries and watch for more information.

The 6 acre Explorers Garden is in a magnificent setting, next to Pitlochry's famous Festival Theatre, and is a wonderful woodland garden which celebrates the stories and

some of the introductions of Scottish Plant Hunters.

I enjoyed an all too short walk around with Julia Corden, the garden Manager and SRGC president elect, who along with some 50 volunteers cares for this garden. As in our own garden, many of the plants here are suffering from the drought with many flowers going over too quickly however some were still putting on a spectacular display.



***Hydrangea arborescens* 'Annabella'**



There are sections of the garden dedicated to the Scottish plant hunters planted with some of their introductions; information boards give brief historical information and where in the world they collected.



A number of crevice style beds are in the process of being rejuvenated and will be planted up in the autumn when the moisture returns to the ground.



The peat bank is full of treasures including *Shortia* which are seeding about the peat blocks, something I first saw in Gothenburg Botanic Garden.



Primula capitata

The garden is full of *Meconopsis* and *Primula* which love the woodland conditions of this highland garden – they have mostly just finished flowering for this year but make a spectacular sight when in full bloom.





The Douglas Pavilion commands a high point in the garden offering wonderful views across the ravine towards Ben Vrackie.



This season I have an exhibition of sixty photographs of Erythroniums in the pavilion.

There is still some colour in the garden provided by such plants as Hosta and Spirea.

This is a garden that is well worth a visit.



Back home the rain has refreshed the garden and the foliage that had collapsed to the ground has rehydrated and is standing back up again – two pots of non-hardy Eucomis are out of the bulb house to take the summer rains.



A few weeks back I showed the flowers of this group of **Arisaema candidissimum** - now the leaves have emerged.

The leaves and hanging heads of the ripening berries of **Arisaema ciliatum**.





Podophyllum hexandrum



Due to being under stress from the drought and heat some of the Meconopsis leaves have an infection of powdery mildew but the new growth is coming clean and healthy.



Podophyllum delavayi 'Spotty Dotty' leaves are looking better now they have absorbed some moisture.



Above and below I show two plants raised from the same batch of *Celmisia semicordata* seeds.





Rhododendron tsariense x yakusimanum

Another result of the unusually dry weather is that the new growth and flower bud formation on the rhododendrons is very slow but I hope that it will still appear now the moisture is back in the ground.



Even though there are not many flowers around just now there is still plenty of interest to be found among the foliage of the smaller plants on the raised wall.



Celmisia hectori



Primula marginata



**Cornus suecica,
Pyrola media
and
Maianthemum
bifolium v.
yakushmanum**



One of the areas I have been watering is the new bed where I planted out a lot of Ramonda cuttings pulled from the plants that you can see in the trough on the right last autumn.



I am regularly amazed at where self-seeded plants appear - if you look at the bonsai pot to the right of the rock you

will see two Rhododendron seedlings which have been growing there for a number of years now.



I do think it is time I got them out and planted them somewhere they can grow to maturity then we will see exactly what we have got.



Cyananthus microphyllus has joined in with *Cyananthus lobatus* in flowering on the slab bed on the left hand side.



Cyananthus microphyllus



Corydalis chaerophylla

I will leave you with *Corydalis chaerophylla* which may have small flowers but that is more than made up for by the number produced over the decorative fern like foliage – it gently seeds around under the trees and shrubs....