



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 10.....6th March 2019



Narcissus cantabricus



Narcissus cantabricus



With the number of beautiful small Narcissus there are it makes it very difficult when I am asked to choose a favourite and I will often reply “the one that is front of me” at the time.

However I do have a soft spot for the delicate crystalline white flowers of *Narcissus cantabricus*. There are a number of variations in the form of the corona from the wide flat faced petunioid types through to

those with a conical corona all sharing the pristine white parts displaying the golden pollen.



Narcissus cantabricus hybrid

Like the other hoop petticoat types *Narcissus cantabricus* is also promiscuous and will cross pollinate to form hybrid offspring. This is one of a number of as yet un-named seedlings I have selected and the presence of other genes can be seen in among other features the yellow tinge to the stigma.



Most of the *Narcissus* I planted in the sand beds were raised from our own seed so also include many hybrids – in fact it is unusual to find a species there but the yellow flower in the foreground does look like *Narcissus bulbocodium* having no signs of any other species.

The most advanced *Fritillaria stenanthera* seen here is always the first of this genus to flower for us.



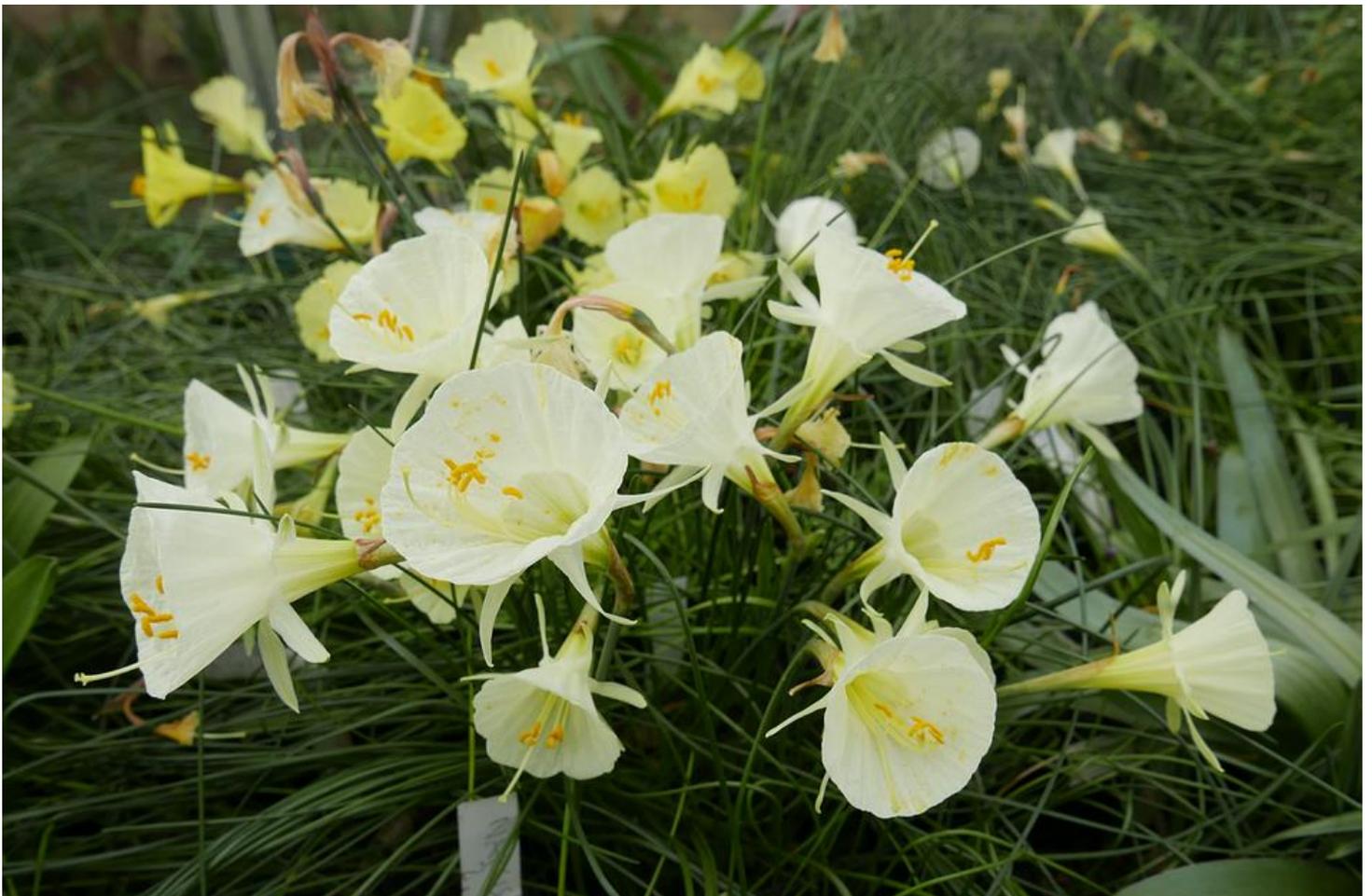
The lush growth in the bulb house where all the bulbs are still growing in pots requires regular watering especially in the warm sunny weather we have been having recently. During the winter the outside water supply is turned off so I take advantage of having to use watering cans by adding a low dilution of a liquid tomato type feed.



Narcissus bulbocodium and Narcissus 'Craigton Bell'



Narcissus bulbocodium



Narcissus 'Craigton Bell' is a hybrid between *Narcissus bulbocodium* and *Narcissus romieuxii*.



A paler yellow form of *Narcissus bulbocodium*.



This lovely compact deep yellow hybrid is a real favourite of mine and was raised by the late Don Stead.



Galanthus 'E.A. Bowles' and Narcissus flowering together in the bulb house.



Galanthus 'E. A. Bowles'



**Narcissus
confusus**

Some more of the trumpet type narcissus are also flowering in the bulb house now, such as *Narcissus confusus* on the left and *Narcissus eugeniae* below.



Narcissus eugeniae



Narcissus eualbidus



In 2013 I wrote ‘To my eye *Narcissus eualbidus* is one of the most beautiful of all the bulbs I know. I first received it many years ago from the Dr Tom Norman but sadly lost the bulbs in one of our severe winters. The next time I saw it was a few years ago on a trip to Belgium where I saw it growing in bulb house of Luc S. and typical of the generosity of growers, he kindly offered to send me a few seeds and bulbils when he repotted his plant - one year on I now have this stunning plant in flower. Now the *Narcissus eualbidus* name is not officially valid and I do not know what the true botanical name for this plant is but I will forever associate it with the two great plantsmen who shared it with me.’

Even though there was some damage to his small group at the bud stage which caused browning at the tips of some of their corona I still find ***Narcissus eualbidus*** among the most attractive of the wee *Narcissus*.



Crocus biflorus



Once the Crocus flowers have gone over and collapsed onto the sand like this I will carefully pluck them off to prevent them being infected with mould which can then attack the leaves and even work its way down to the corm.



Crocus sieberi

A few more Crocus are currently flowering in the bulb house sand beds.



Crocus kosaninii

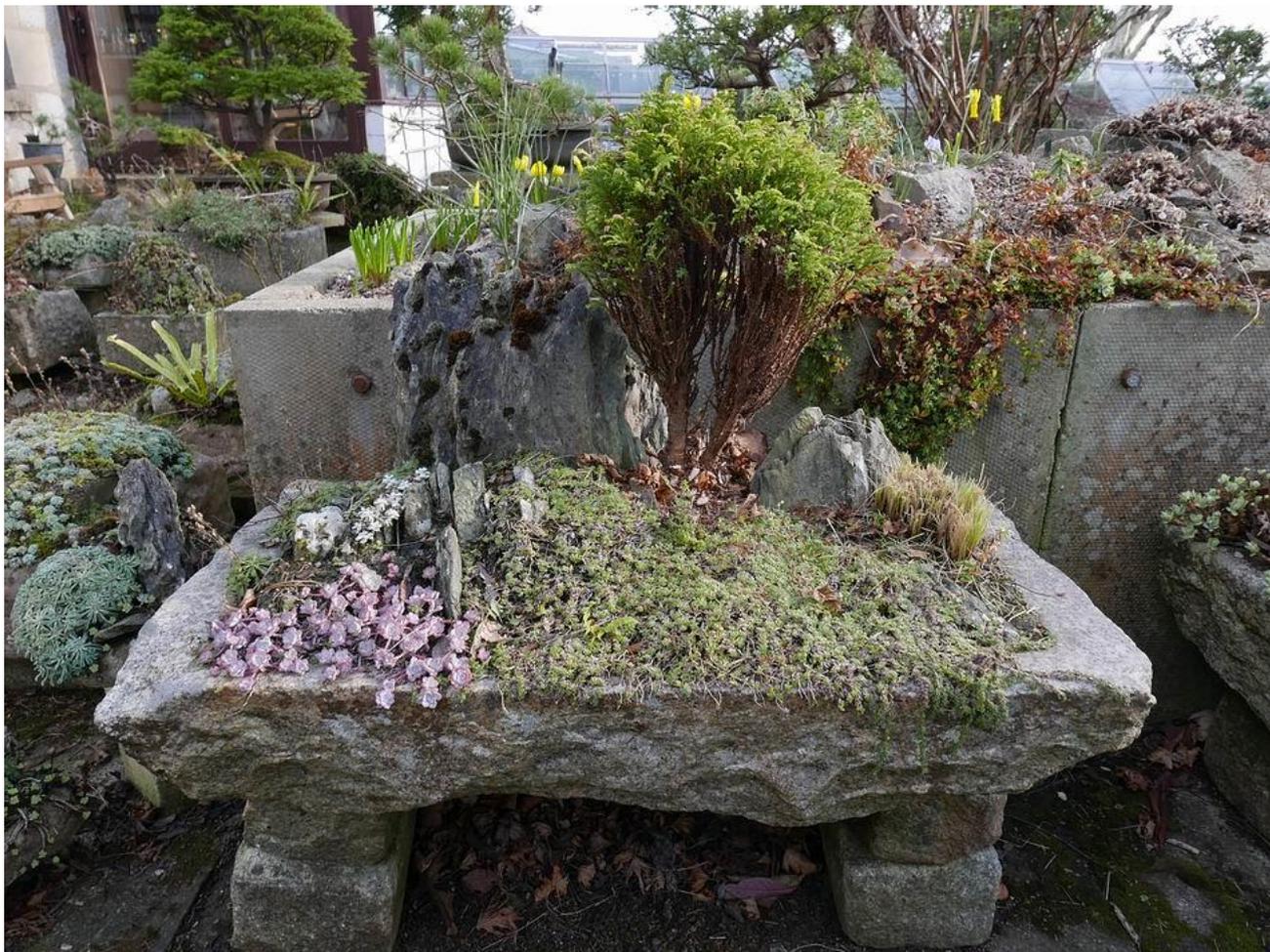


Last year in [Bulb Log 1518](#) I showed how I root pruned these bonsai, something I only do around every five years and since then all I have done was to keep them watered through last year's unusually hot dry summer.

Most years I would have to trim the top growth at least twice during the year but due to the root pruning, the growth of the foliage has been slowed down so I am only now giving them a clipping. Now the new root growth will be established I expect to see more vigorous top growth again so I will need to clip it a couple of times this year.



For the last few years I have been thinking that despite regular clipping back the conifer in this trough was getting out of scale and now I have taken the decision to do something about it. The most likely outcome is that I will remove it completely but that is an irreversible move so I will do it in stages.



The stages I go through are exactly the same no matter what size of tree or shrub that I am cutting back or removing. First I explore the structure to see if I can reveal another form hidden among the growth bearing in mind that once you cut off a branch you cannot stick it back on.

With that in mind I have explored the shrub and removed many of the multiple trunks leaving just a few to see if I can create something pleasing and appropriate to the trough. My suspicion is that I will end up taking it out at a later stage but for now I am going to let it grow through the season and continue to assess it as the new growth appears, remembering that new growth will not break from old wood in most conifers.



I have also been working on another reveal project in the narrow crevice I built a few years ago beside this path.



At the time I did the original rock work I did not have the plants I wanted to grow so was I happy for the mossy saxifrage, which seeded in, to spread and while I have enjoyed the effect of the saxifrage with the ferns that also planted themselves there I now want to have a change.



With the mossy saxifrage stripped off and the rocks revealed I can now start to plant it with the Hepatica seedlings I have been raising.



I collected the Hepatica seed from the bed at the other side of the path and now into their third year since germinating they are big enough to be planted out to give a similar colourful effect at this side of the path.



Although the *Hepatica* seedlings look small and insignificant at the moment, there are a few holding their first flower. In a few years they will grow and make a colourful display especially as I intend to sow some *Corydalis solida* seed to match the combination of the other side as shown in the picture below taken last year.



Hepatica nobilis

At the moment the first of the *Hepatica* flowers for this year are just opening on the other side of the path.



Narcissus cyclamineus



Crocus thirkianus



Above and below are two images showing different views of **Crocus sublimis forma tricolor**





Narcissus romieuxii hybrid

I return to yet another of the Narcissus hybrid seedlings for the last picture of this week.....