



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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Calochortus uniflora



We have never grown any *Calochortus* successfully in the open garden and in our climate with low northern light they prove a challenge even under glass. The exception is a number of forms of *Calochortus uniflora* that we have grown in the sheltered environment of the bulb houses for many years: the form on the cover with the dark central zonal marking is my favourite.

This week I am showing a number of plants which for various reasons I do not know the specific name; so I would be very grateful if any of you can

help identify them. The first group of unknowns are a number of *Ornithogalum* species that I was gifted some years ago that I greatly enjoy and value as they extend the flowering season in the bulb houses well into June both growing in pots and in the sand beds.



The multi branched flowering stem of this *Ornithogalum* species from Greece is so short that the flowers appear to be on the ground, the broad glossy green leaves also lie on the surface.



Here is the **Ornithogalum** species from **Greece** growing in a pot



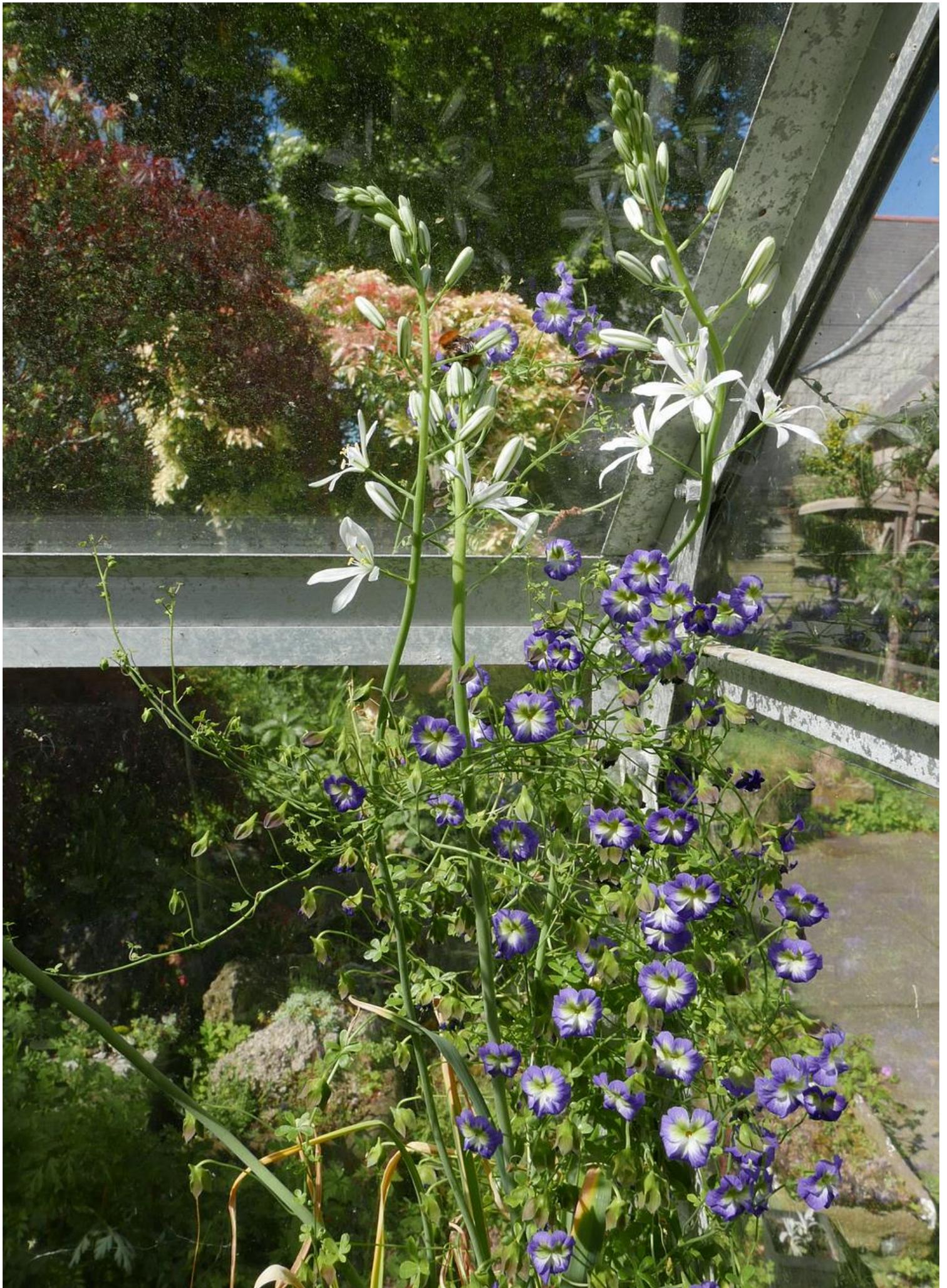
This is a longer stemmed **Ornithogalum** species from **Spain** it has grey green leaves.



Ornithogalum species from Spain, Turkey and Greece



Ornithogalum species from Spain, Turkey and Greece



This is a much taller **Ornithogalum** from Turkey growing with **Tropaeolum azureum**.

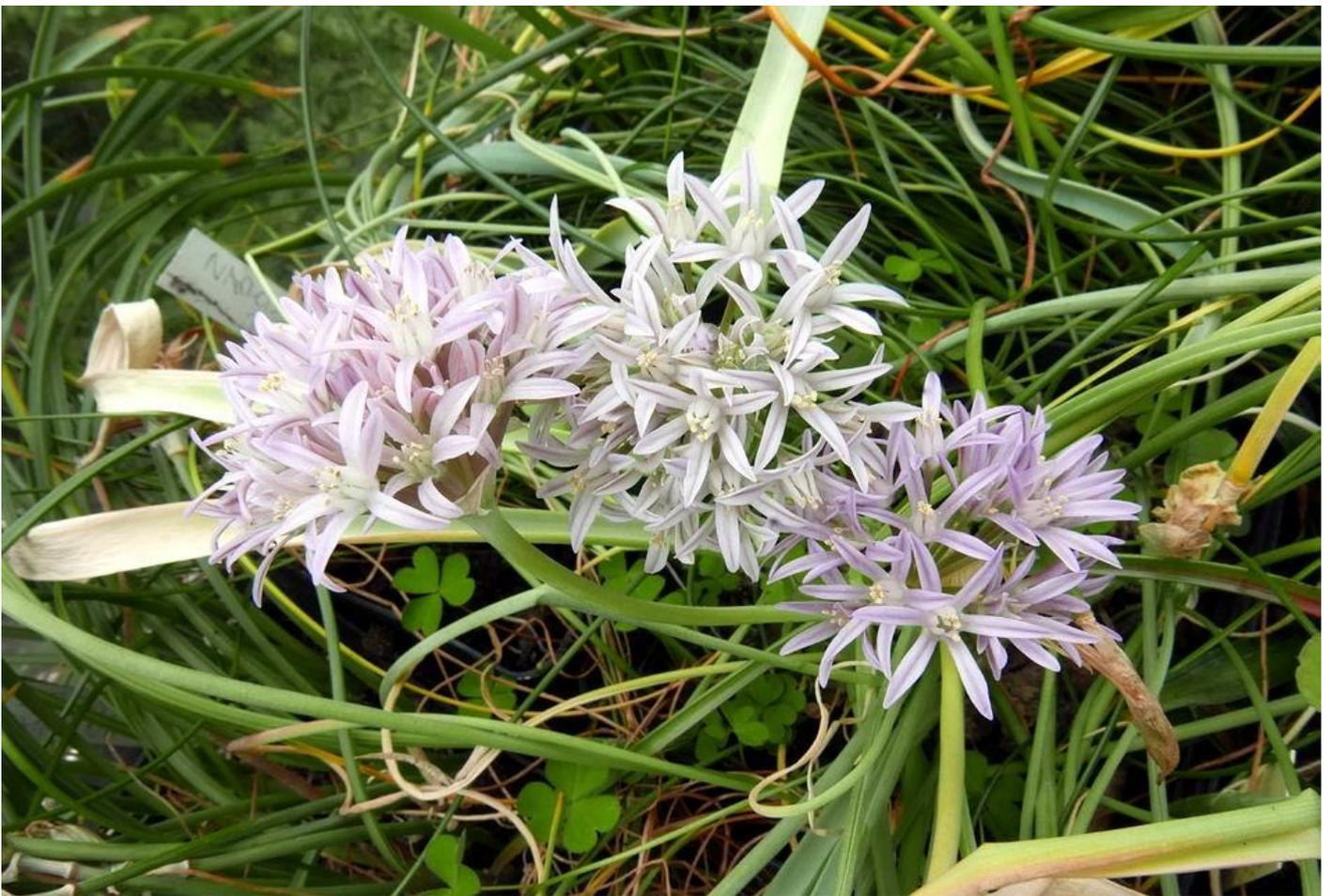


The bees have been very busy feeding on both the *Ornithogalum* and another genus, *Allium*, whose flowers also help extend the flowering season in the bulb houses - I hope that their pollination will result in a good seed set.

I know that I raised this *Allium* from seed ex Gothenburg Botanic Garden but the label is no longer in the pot so I need to check back my records to get the name, it is one of the species that has a single, large grey-green leaf.



Allium species



A kind friend sent me some seed of this **Allium shelkovnikovii** and you will see that there is a slight difference, mainly in the colour, of these three different clones.



This is one of a number of double flowered forms of **Anemone ranunculoides** that we grow.



Ranunculus nemorosa 'Vestal'



Tanacetum parthenium commonly called Feverfew.

These 'double' or 'Multiplex' flowers are caused by a genetic mutation in the plant that causes some or all of the stamens in a flower to form as petals. You can see a number of degrees of mutation in the flowers this plant of *Tanacetum parthenium*.



Varying degrees of mutation are exhibited in these **Tanacetum parthenium** flowers.

One of the biggest challenges that the plants (and gardeners) have to face is from our changeable weather. Last summer we had a long period of record breaking dry and hot conditions that put many of our plants under stress and as is often the case the damage caused was not obvious at the time. Last autumn and through the winter all looked well with



this small Rhododendron it had even formed flower buds on most of the branches it was only during the unseasonably warm period in February that the first signs of stress, yellowing of the leaves, appeared. What I believe happened here is that the most if not all the roots died out in the hot dry conditions of last summer but the plant was sustained through the cool moist winter and by the sap in the stems and it was only when things warmed up that it succumbed.



This Dactylorhiza is another casualty of weather related factors – firstly like all plants it was put under stress last summer but a few weeks ago the shoots came up looking normal only to be hit by the unseasonal cold and wet weather we are currently experiencing. When under such stresses plants are more likely to succumb to bacterial and fungal conditions which are causing the leaves of this plant to die. It may be that the tubers of these plants survive to grow another year or it

may be the end for them – I have experienced both these scenarios when these infections strike.



Apart from Molly notice the yellow flowers in this part of the garden.



The first is **Papaver cambricum**, formally a *Meconopsis* before it was reclassified: the colour is almost exactly the same as the tree peony in the picture above and shown again below.



Paeonia lutea* var *ludlowii



If left to their own devices both the Peony and the Papaver will self-seed and form colonies as we have allowed to happen in this area of the garden. I am very attracted to the more natural look in a garden where there are plants of all ages from seedlings to mature flowering specimens and not just a single clump or mature specimen.



These colonies of plants and similarity of colours also guides the eye linking the different areas of a garden.



Paeonia emodi



Paeonia mlokosewitschii



Once more I am not sure of the name of this seed raised Paeonia.





I will now share some pictures of the front garden with you starting with the peony shown above, which is growing through the under planting.



This is an outstanding form of **Rhododendron yakushimanum 'Koichiro Wada'** that has superb flowers and foliage.



Rhododendron yakushimanum 'Koichiro Wada'



Not all plants are created equal this is another form of **Rhododendron yakushimanum** which does not flower so regularly as the previous one does and when it does the flowers are smaller and not quite so attractive .



I have noted that this form does flower better after we have had a warm summer. This is something I have observed with a number of Rhododendrons and I presume that they produce their flower buds more readily in warm summers while others prefer our more normal cool moist summers.



View across the front garden



Rhododendron bureavii is worth growing for the foliage alone it is among the most attractive of any of the species so when it does flower well after a warm summer that is an added bonus to us.



Rhododendron bureavii



Rhododendron schweliense





Front garden



A long way from its native homeland of New Zealand this ***Aciphylla glauca*** has produced a flowering stem.



Moving to the back garden again we can appreciate the scent from some seed raised **Rhododendron decorum**.



Rhododendron decorum



I will finish off this week with another **Ornithogalum** species from Turkey growing in one of the sand beds - plus this link to my latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#).....