



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

ISSN 2514-6114

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BULB LOG 50.....9th December 2020



New Bed Beside the Pond



This is possibly the least decorative time of the season to feature the new bed beside the pond on the front cover but this is the reality of the garden year and I don't want to just share the pretty bits so please read on where I look back through the year at the changes in this bed and share some of the highlights. The falling leaves and the attentions of the foraging black birds that, in

search of food, enthusiastically scatter my carefully applied mulch of pine needles, make it difficult to keep the most recently created bed in the garden looking anything other than a mess. At this time of year that look is shared across the garden as the old leaves and seasonal growths having served their purpose drop and start to decay and I have to admit that I rather enjoy observing the process. I am reluctant to tidy too quickly because I like to garden with nature and this apparently chaotic mess provides for a food source for the many birds that visit our garden which in addition to the ground feeding Blackbirds that scatter the mulch includes many others that hunt the trees and shrubs for any insects.



When I built the bed I left some troughs to become part of the edges and one contained a number of Ramondas which provide us with some evergreen interest to this area. As the rosettes get congested I will peel away some of the outside ones and if I do this carefully they usually come with some root, making them easy to establish as a separate plant. I have done this successfully at most times of the year with the exception of during the extremes of heat or cold that summer and winter sometimes deliver.



All these Ramonda plants were established by pulling rosettes from the above trough then planting them directly into this one.



The rest of this week's images are looking back at the new bed beside the pond through 2020, starting in January when the first flowers to appear were of the small white *Eranthis pinnatifida*. I am sure if I searched through the mulch today I would see the early signs of its U-shaped growth as the stem pushes through the ground bent over before straightening up to display the flower - this growth is already visible in some we have growing in pots.



Eranthis pinnatifida



As the year advances the blackbirds continue to scatter the pine needle mulch which is also being heaved upwards as ever more growths start to appear.



Moving on a month to mid-February it is the yellow flowers of **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'** that start to shine.



I have chosen to use **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'** in this bed because it does not set seed so just forms small clumps as the tuber grows which allows me to better control its spread and manage the space for other plants.



The many Crocus leaves appearing around this Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' will soon be joined by the growth of other small bulbs.



The overall look of growth at this stage is still sparse with plenty of the mulched surface still visible.



It is exciting to walk up the garden for a look because every day more growth appears here a pink Hepatica bursts into flower.



Soon the flowers of **Crocus**, **Erythronium**, **Eranthis**, **Iris** and **Narcissus** are all visible.



Erythronium dens-canis



Reticulate Iris and Erythronium caucasicum



Narcissus cyclamineus flowers dot among the *Erythronium sibiricum* and *Erythronium* 'Ardivie Bliss'



Narcissus cyclamineus and the blue of *Corydalis fumarifolia*.



(Pseudotrillium)

Trillium rivale

We love *Trillium rivale* and it grows very well in our garden. We have been raising it from seed for over thirty years.

Initially we got seed from multiple sources but since then we just raised it from our own garden seed resulting in a natural selection process as the survivors of each subsequent generation became ever more adapted to our garden conditions.



I keep a few pockets, like this one between the rocks, relatively clear of larger plants to allow us to enjoy the flowers of **Trillium rivale** and **Trillium hibbersonii**.



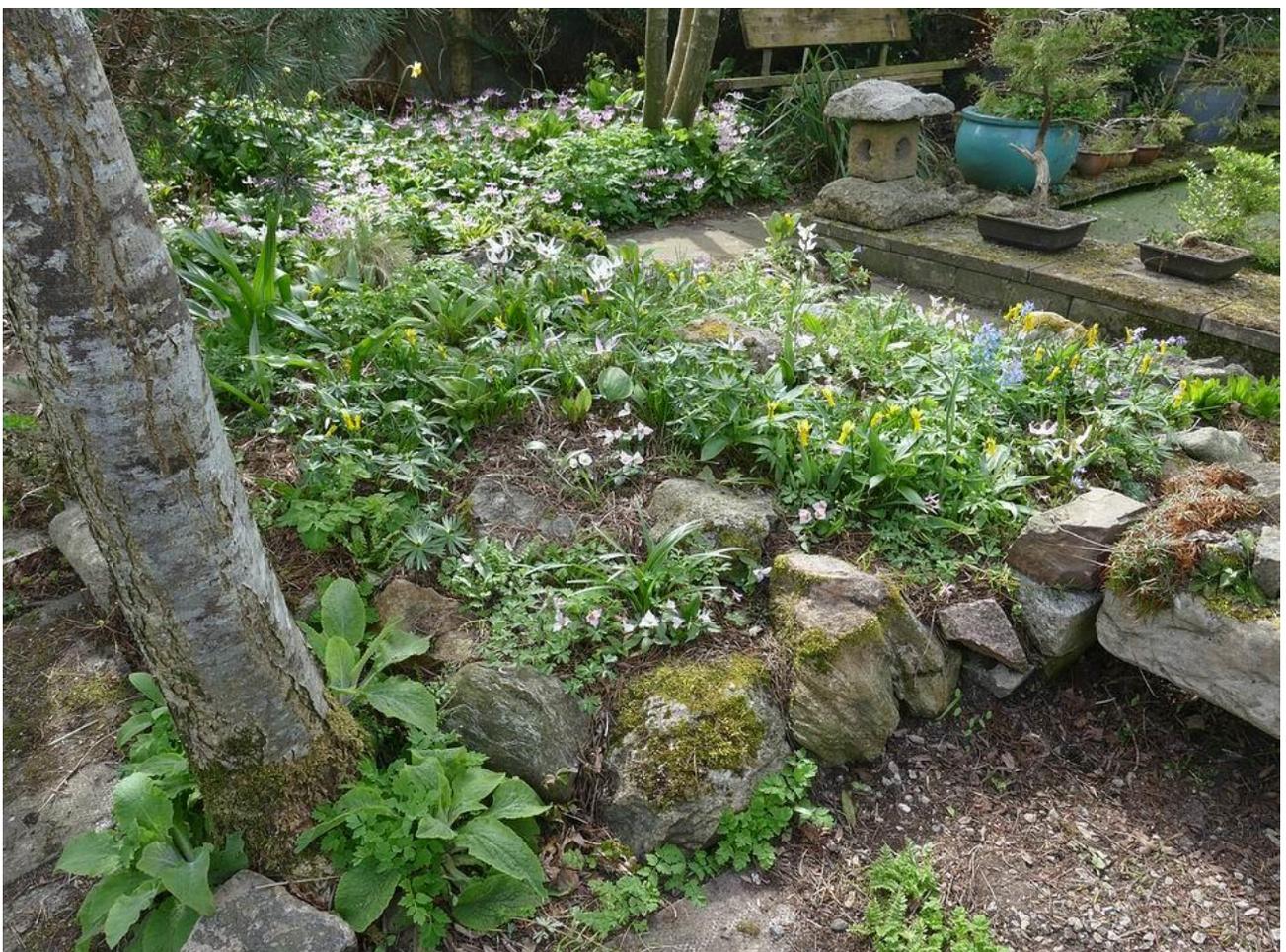
Fritillaria aurea



The next three pictures are views of the bed from different angles showing that the mulched surface slowly vanishes as ever more growth appears.



This is the faraway corner as you approach, where I planted some larger growing plants.



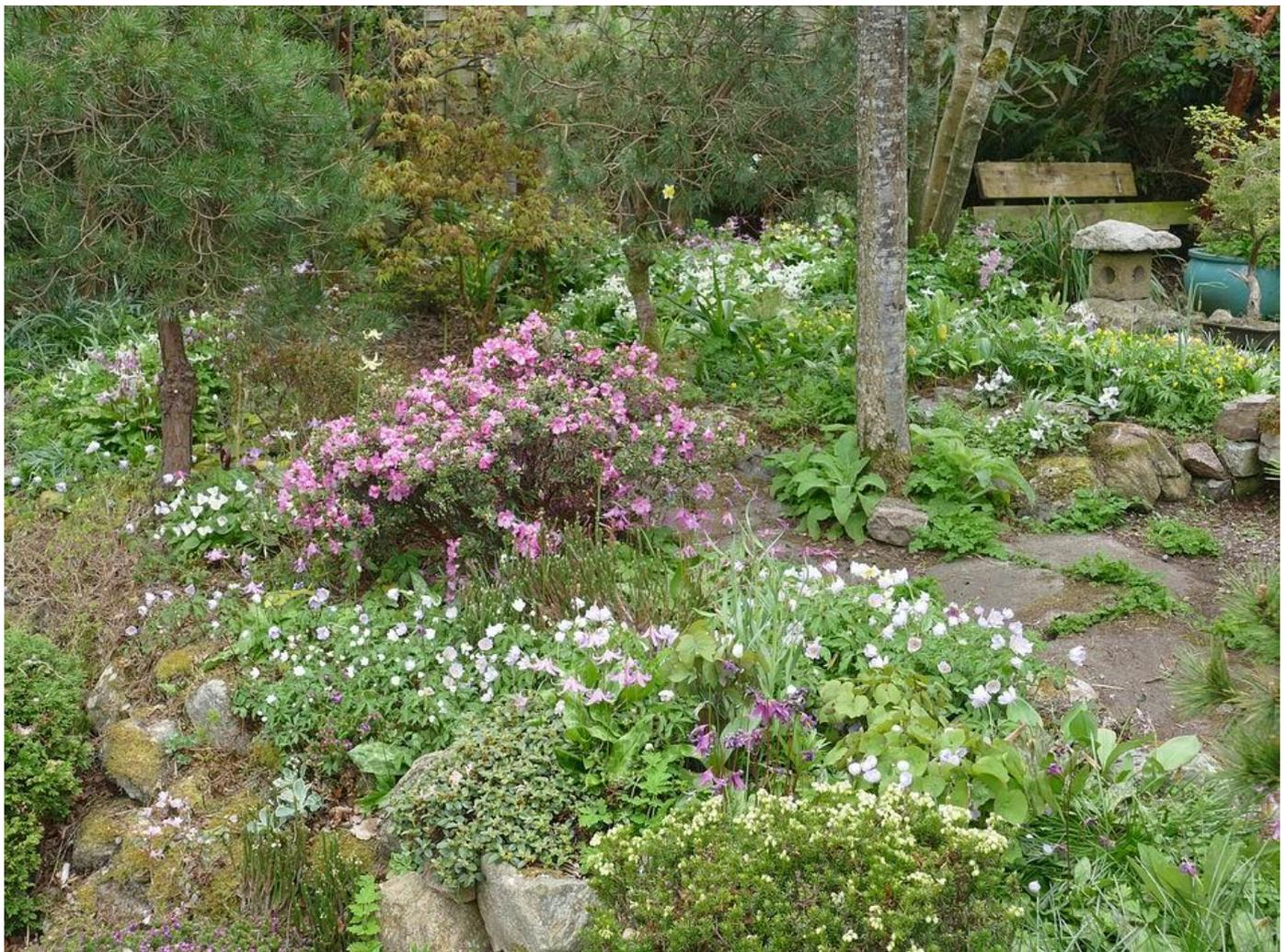
The pocket with the smaller Trilliums I showed in a previous picture is located on this corner.



Trillium rivale and a yellow *Erythronium* aff. *grandiflorum* from Mount Prevost on Vancouver Island.



The troughs that I used to form some of the edges offer a variation in habitat for plants.



This is a longer view across the plantings of the raised wall to the new bed beside the pond.

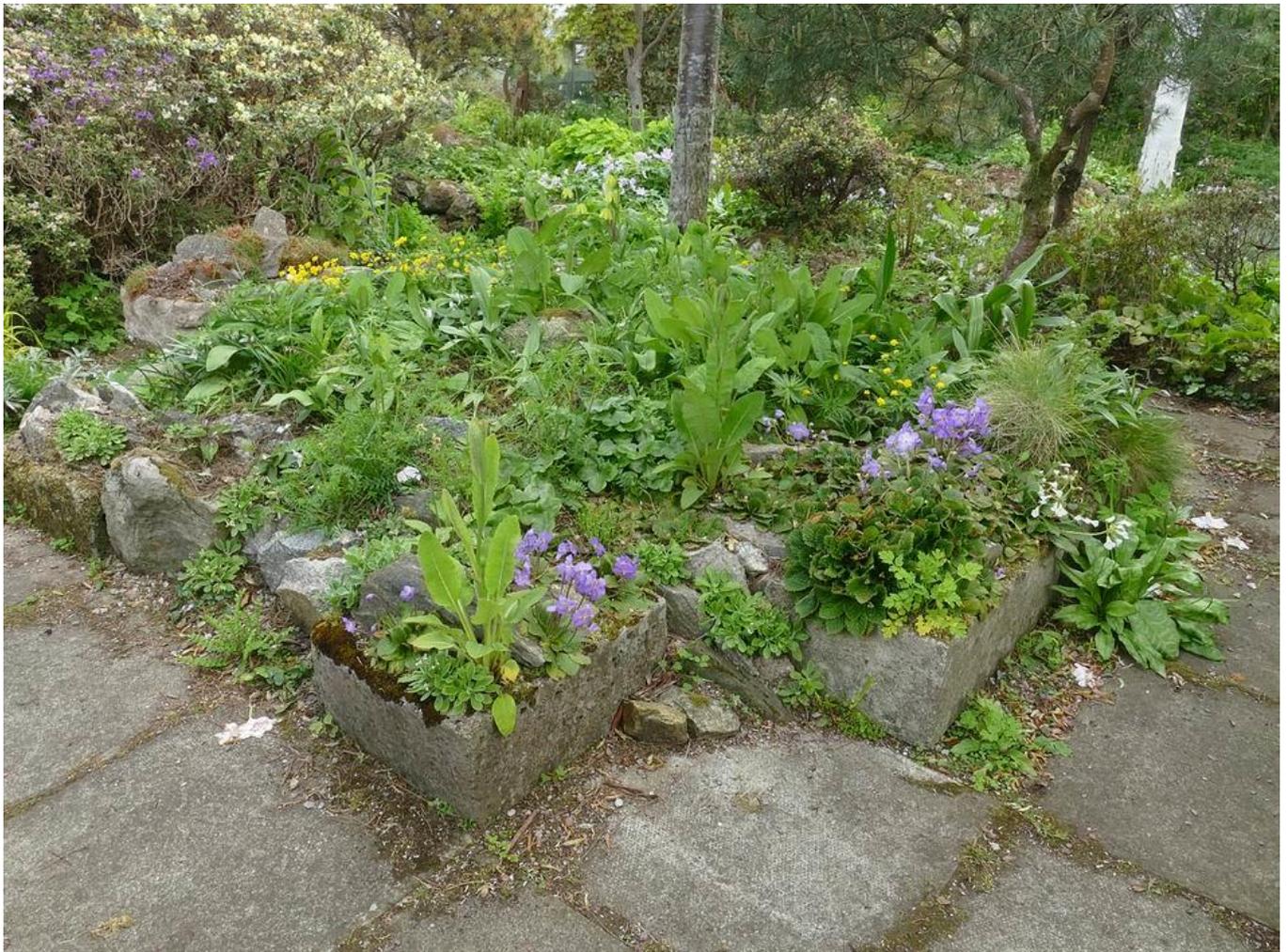


The flowers of (Pseudotrillium)Trillium rivale last for a long time.

Anemone ranunculoides
– here a double form - is perfectly in scale for this bed but if left to its own devices it can grow to dominate an area: however it is easy to control this spread by removing some of the rhizomes that form near the surface.



Green growth becomes more dominant as the season progresses and the taller plants, which I have mostly planted in the far corner, start to rise up.



In the troughs in the foreground the **Ramonda nathaliae** are in full flower.



Ramonda nathaliae



Ramonda myconi



Meconopsis baileyi seeds around this bed including into the troughs, providing us with a succession of blue flowers through June.



The majority of the early summer growth is taller, significantly changing the look of the bed.



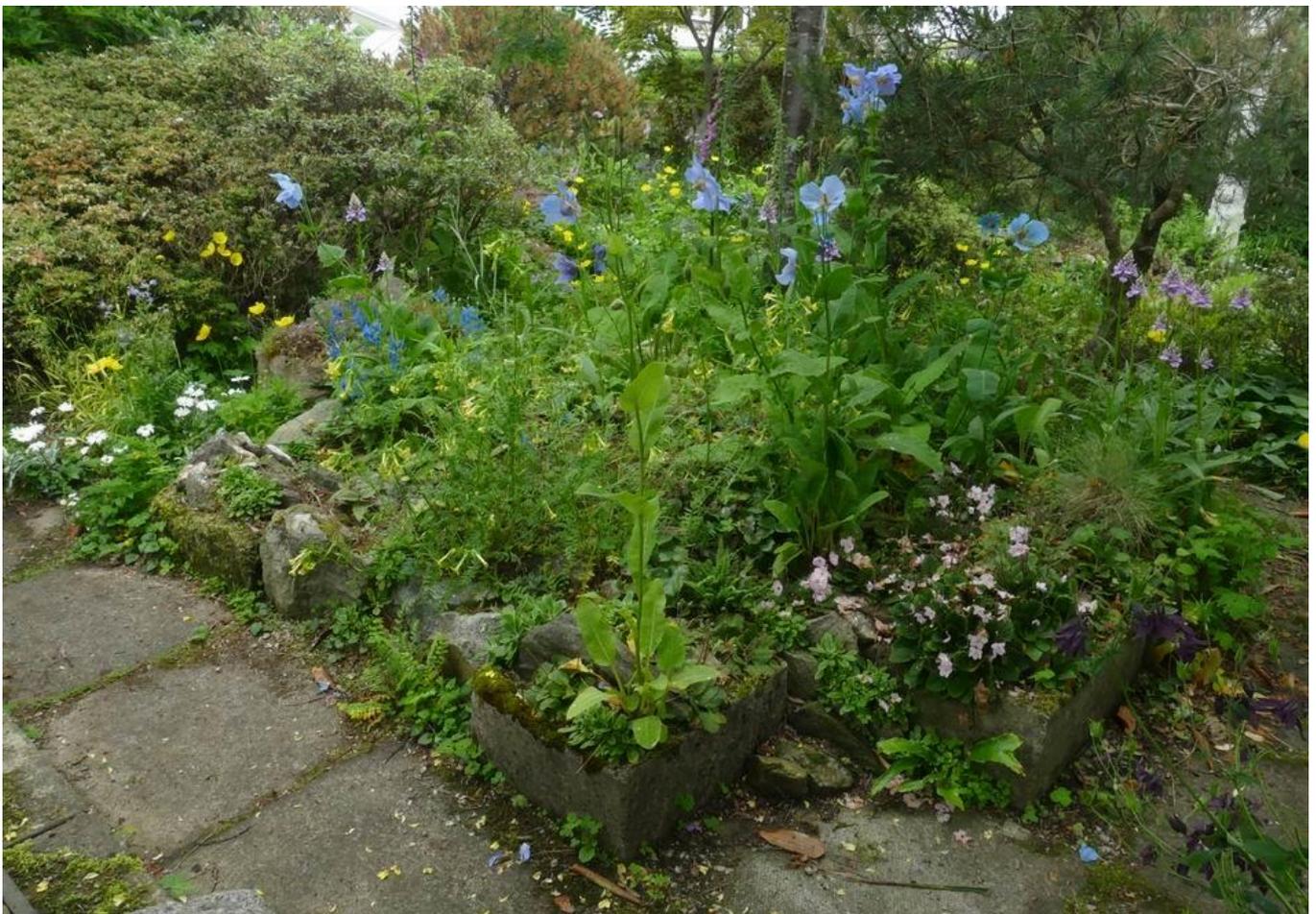
Corydalis mucronipetala



***Corydalis mucronipetala* and *Meconopsis baileyi*.**



***Dactylorhiza* orchids and the yellow *Polemonium pauciflorum* join in the summer flowering display.**



As the summer progresses the season of the lush growth comes to an end as the plants set seed and die back.



By the middle of August much of the growth is dying back, which is a good time for me to thin out or move any of the plants that I judge are spreading too much or are not in scale any more. This year I moved a few of the *Meconopsis*. They were forming large clumps right in the middle where I was concerned that they could overwhelm some of the small bulbs growing nearest to them so I lifted two *Meconopsis* and moved to another bed.



Codonopsis grey-wilsonii sprawls across the bed climbing up the small pine tree as well as any of the *Meconopsis* stems it comes across. It flowers through August into September and the pale lavender colour perfectly match that of the first of the autumn flowering **Crocus nudiflorus**.



The appearance of autumn flowering crocus shoots is a timely reminder to clear the way for their display by cutting back what remains old growth at the same time I also add more pine needles to the mulch.



***Crocus nudiflorus* and *C. vallicola*.**



I have been allowing the *Crocus banaticus*, *nudiflorus* and *vallicola* to self-seed so in the coming years we expect to see an increasing number of flowers.



Crocus banaticus* and *vallicola



The flowering season lasts through until the end of October when the autumn turns into winter. Reviewing the many images I take to document each bed through the year is not only a colourful way to spend a dark winter day but also a way to show where we can add to the plantings in a way that will fit in with and extend the sequential flowering we seek....
If you want to see the history and construction of this be click this link to open [Bulb log 4119](#).