



BULB LOG 08.....19th February 2020



Eranthis, Galanthus and Leucojum



When we see so many flowers we have a tendency to speak about an early spring but I see these early flowering bulbs such as **Crocus thirkianus, Galanthus and Eranthis** as winter flowering species: it is the next wave of flowering bulbs that for me heralds the arrival of spring. The transition from one flowering wave to the next varies every year – it depends on the weather - if it turns cold again there can be a gap between the different

flowering periods but if it stays mild there can be a significant overlap. We often **think** it is an early flowering year however when I check back through the eighteen years of Bulb Log image files I can see that this level of flowering is not uncommon for mid-February. In the North East of Scotland it is also not uncommon for winter weather to return any time over the next three or more months.



On stepping out of our back door this is the view we get of the garden. In my vision I see the cobble bed in the lower foreground as the source of the yellow river of *Eranthis hyemalis* that I am encouraging to flow across the garden by scattering seed every year. Aberdeen sits between the mouths of two great rivers the River Don to the north and the River Dee to the south. My yellow river of *Eranthis* is in imitation of the river Dee which starts its journey as a trickle bubbling up through rocks high in the Cairngorm Mountains to the west of Aberdeen.



Crocus thirkianus, Galanthus cultivars and Eranthis hyemalis



This week it got warm enough in the sunshine (6C) for the **Eranthis hyemalis** flowers to open.

Many plants are not static in the wild – I have noticed this most in woodland plants which like to move around some by rhizomes or similar creeping underground growths, others like *Eranthis hyemalis* by seed.

The original group of *Eranthis* that I planted in this area has disappeared and all the flowering plants are self sown seedlings that have migrated outwards from the original planting site. If a plant always grew in exactly the same spot it could soon deplete all the essential goodness so it makes perfect sense that plants have evolved to move around



constantly seeking new ground. To keep a healthy flowering population of these plants you should allow them to seed around – these seedlings can start to flower in the third year of growth.



***Galanthus woronowii* ‘Elizabeth Harrison’** this selection stands out from the typical species because of the yellow ovary and markings.



Galanthus woronowii

Galanthus woronowii

This pot of *Galanthus woronowii* displays another variation in having green markings on the outer petals.





Galanthus woronowii



Eranthis, Galanthus and Leucojum combine in a flowering spectacular as the garden wakes up.



Narcissus asturiensis

We raised many of the plants in our garden from seed so started off growing in pots in frames just like this. When we receive a single bulb of a new species or a cultivar I sometimes grow it in a pot until the number of bulbs increases then I can plant some direct into the garden.



Narcissus asturiensis



Narcissus 'Cedric Morris' is selection of *Narcissus asturiensis* which often flowers in December but despite being around for many years it remains a relatively uncommon plant. In the past I have built up good numbers of it but I have also found that it is one of these plants that can dwindle very quickly as it has recently done so I am working on building it back up again in a pot.



Snowdrops are spreading across the garden.

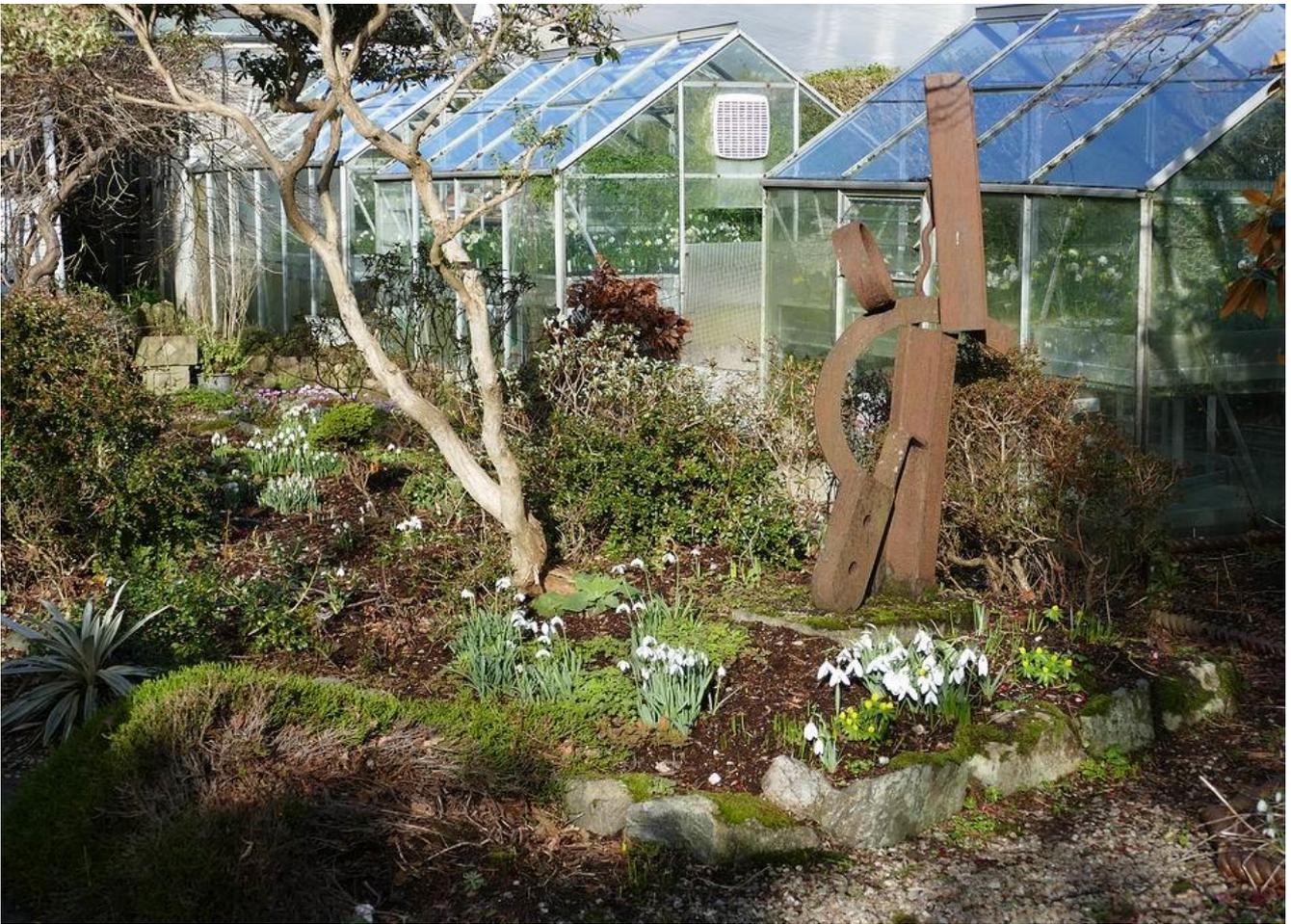


I often describe my approach to gardening as being just like that I use when I my drawing, painting or print making. I start by making some marks than gradually build up the image from there and that is exactly what I am doing in this area.

It is part of the garden that I opened up by cutting back the overgrowth of shrubs then started by planting some bulbs and plants.

Now as it is difficult to find a spare space to dig I will mostly add plants by scattering seeds. My aim is, as it

is throughout the garden, to create a sequential planting that will provide us with decoration and interest over as many months of the year as is possible.



Winter sunshine bathes the garden in strong light casting sharp shadows.



Eranthis hyemalis and *Galanthus* 'Mighty Atom' enjoying their moment in the sunshine.



The blackbirds have been foraging in the new bed beside the pond, scattering the mulch of pine needles that I had carefully applied, exposing some emerging shoots and covering other plants.



Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' does not set seed so needs increased by division - I will lift and divide it every three to five years.



Leucojum vernum* var. *vagneri



Leucojum vernum* var. *carpathicum



***Leucojum vernum* 'Podpolozje'**



In a few months' time the ground will be completely covered with a wide array of growth.



Narcissus flowers add yellow into the predominately white wave that is currently flowing over the garden.



Narcissus hispanicus



The final series of this week's images show a mix snowdrops opening their flowers in the sunshine.









Galanthus 'Snoopy'



I walk round the garden looking at these flowers in the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#) uploaded last week.....