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# Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 11.....11<sup>th</sup> March 2020



*Eranthis x tubergenii* 'Guinea Gold'



I have been frustrated that this slab bed looks so bare at this time of year and have been trying to find the solution. For much of the year it is covered in the sprawling colourful growths of various *Cyananthus* and *Hypericum* reptans, (see [Bulb Log 3419](#)). The dense matt of foliage they form makes it difficult to find companion plants that can survive and give us that sequential flowering that we enjoy across the garden. The obvious answer was to plant some of the early flowering bulbs that would flower and complete most of their growth before the

*Cyananthus* and *Hypericum* starts to spread out. I am gradually adding more bulbs which will make this a much more interesting bed at this time of year as well as the colourful display it bring later in the season. To the left of the bed you can see the box of the golden coloured *Eranthis x tubergenii* 'Guinea Gold', featured on the cover: as this form does not set seed it has to be increased by division hence I grow some in boxes which I can replant every year providing a steady supply of this plant to spread around the garden.



***Eranthis x tubergenii* 'Guinea Gold'** and ***Narcissus cyclamineus*** are among the bulbs I have planted in this slab bed so far.

I have been growing **Eranthis x tubergenii** 'Guinea Gold' in this box for so many years now that the box has become rather battered and worn. In [Bulb Log 0820](#) I wrote that for Eranthis plants to remain vigorous and healthy they need to be constantly on the move to fresh soil which they will do naturally by seeding.



'Guinea Gold' does not set seed so it cannot move around in that way however by growing it in a box I can change the soil annually to that same benefit.



Two years ago when I was replanting that box of Eranthis x tubergenii 'Guinea Gold' I planted some the small tubers into the recently mixed soil of the 'new bed beside the pond'. They are growing very well there and have reached what I consider to be a perfect size for this bed. I do not want the plants to get much bigger than they are now so I will watch how they grow over the next few years if they get too big I will lift and divide them.



The flowers on another group of *Eranthis x tubergenii* 'Guinea Gold' I recently planted in a shaded area of the garden are only now emerging.



*Eranthis hyemalis* flowers some weeks earlier than those of 'Guinea Gold' and are now starting to lose their freshness however they still provide colour to the garden as they slowly fade away.



From the warm golden colour of *Eranthis* I move to the cooler colours such as white and green seen in this view looking across the rock garden bed.



Molly makes her appearance as I move in to photograph some of the crocuses.



This *Crocus tommasinianus* is almost white, sometimes the flowers have faint purple spots – we also have a pure white form.



Seeking out the subtle differences in plants is a common trait among gardeners and that is very evident in the snowdrop world where the slightest of variations can cause great excitement among collectors.

Plants such as this form *Galanthus nivalis* where the green markings that are normally only found on the inner three floral segments but here also appear on the outers are much sought after.

***Galanthus nivalis* (ZDPR1)**



***Galanthus nivalis* 'Fairy Tail'**

Another variation is where the inner three floral segments are the same length as the outer three and in this case they are also pure white.

**Galanthus plicatus  
'E. A. Bowles'**

Galanthus plicatus 'E. A. Bowles' has a similar but much larger flower to 'Fairy Tail'



**Leucojum vernum var carpathicum**

For many the ultimate desirable snowdrop flower would have all six segments the same size having green or yellow tips – it is my view that they are collecting the wrong genus it is Leucojum that they desire ;-)

Having yellow markings in place of the more typical green ones is a variation found in both Galanthus and Leucojum but it is a variation which is subject to environmental and physiological conditions which can affect the degree of yellow/green displayed. My observations are that light and temperature are two key factors which determine the degree of yellow so much so that the tips can be yellow on one side of the flower and green on the other, as shown in the picture of a Leucojum flower above.



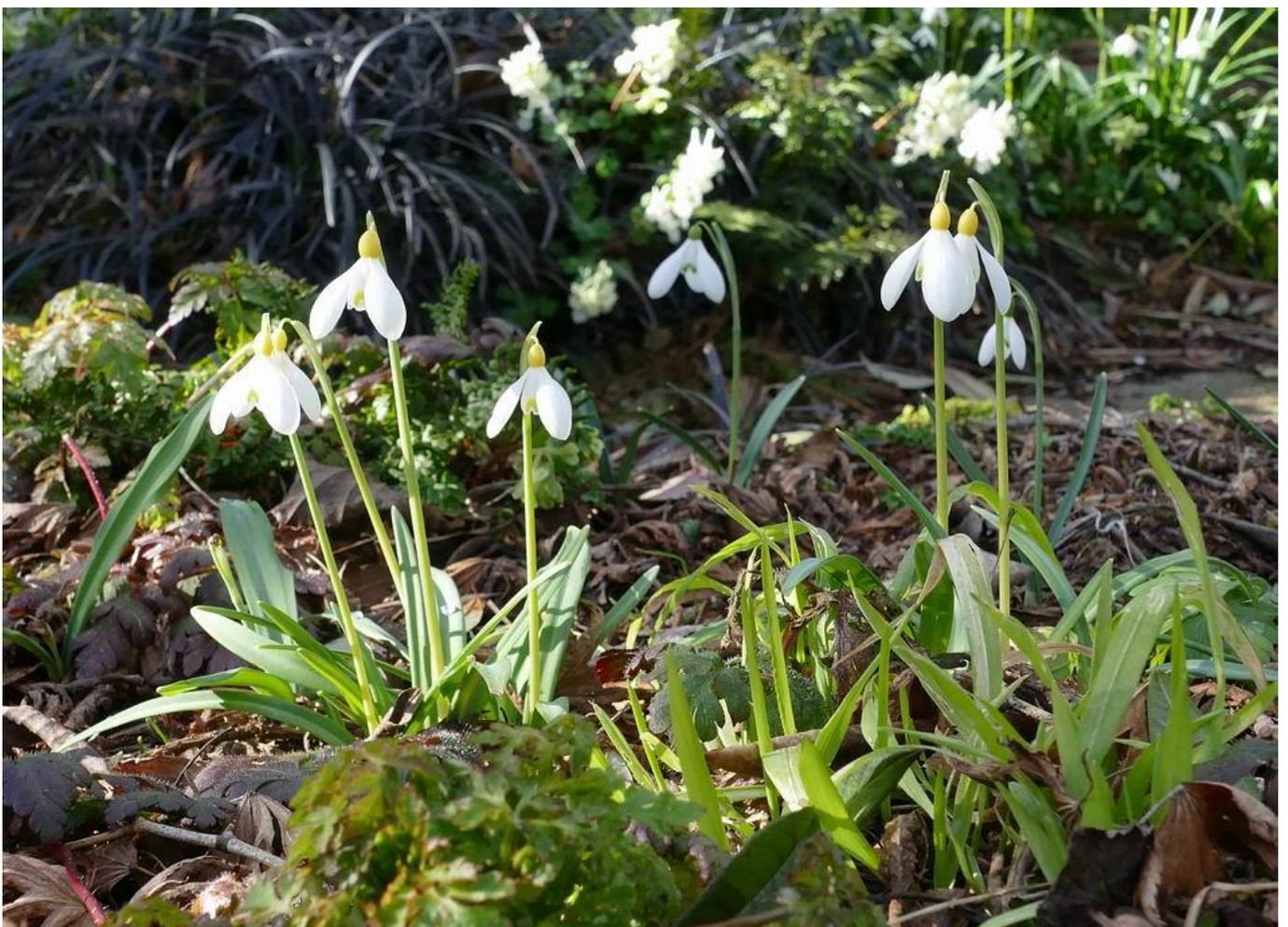
**Leucojum vernum var carpathicum:** this variety of the species is more inclined to have yellow tips but the degree of yellow on the same plants will vary.



Other forms of *Leucojum vernum var carpathicum* do not have such yellow on the tips of the petals but have yellow seed capsules. Like with most other plants the *Galantus* and *Leucojum* are encouraged to self-seed around our garden giving us hours of pleasure examining each of the flowers and enjoying the variations that we observe.



***Leucojum vernum* var. *carpathicum***



**Yellow marked *Galanthus***



More yellow marked Galanthus flowers picked out in the sunshine while behind in the shade are some of the large long established crocus cultivars, often called Dutch Crocus, that are so commonly seen in municipal plantings and are a legacy from our earliest days of gardening when we were first getting into growing bulbs.



Dutch Crocus and Galanthus



**Dutch Crocus and Galanthus**





Large flowered *Crocus vernus* cultivars - Dutch Crocus





Moving into one of the bulb houses where Crocus and Narcissus continue flowering in one of sand beds



Just like in the open garden as one group of flowers start to fade other forms and species come into bloom.



Mixed Narcissus seedlings.



Selected Narcissus bulbocodium seedlings growing in pots click this [Bulb Log Video Diary link](#) to view a short video of the Narcissus in the bulb house.



*Narcissus perez chiscanoi* and *Narcissus bulbocodium*



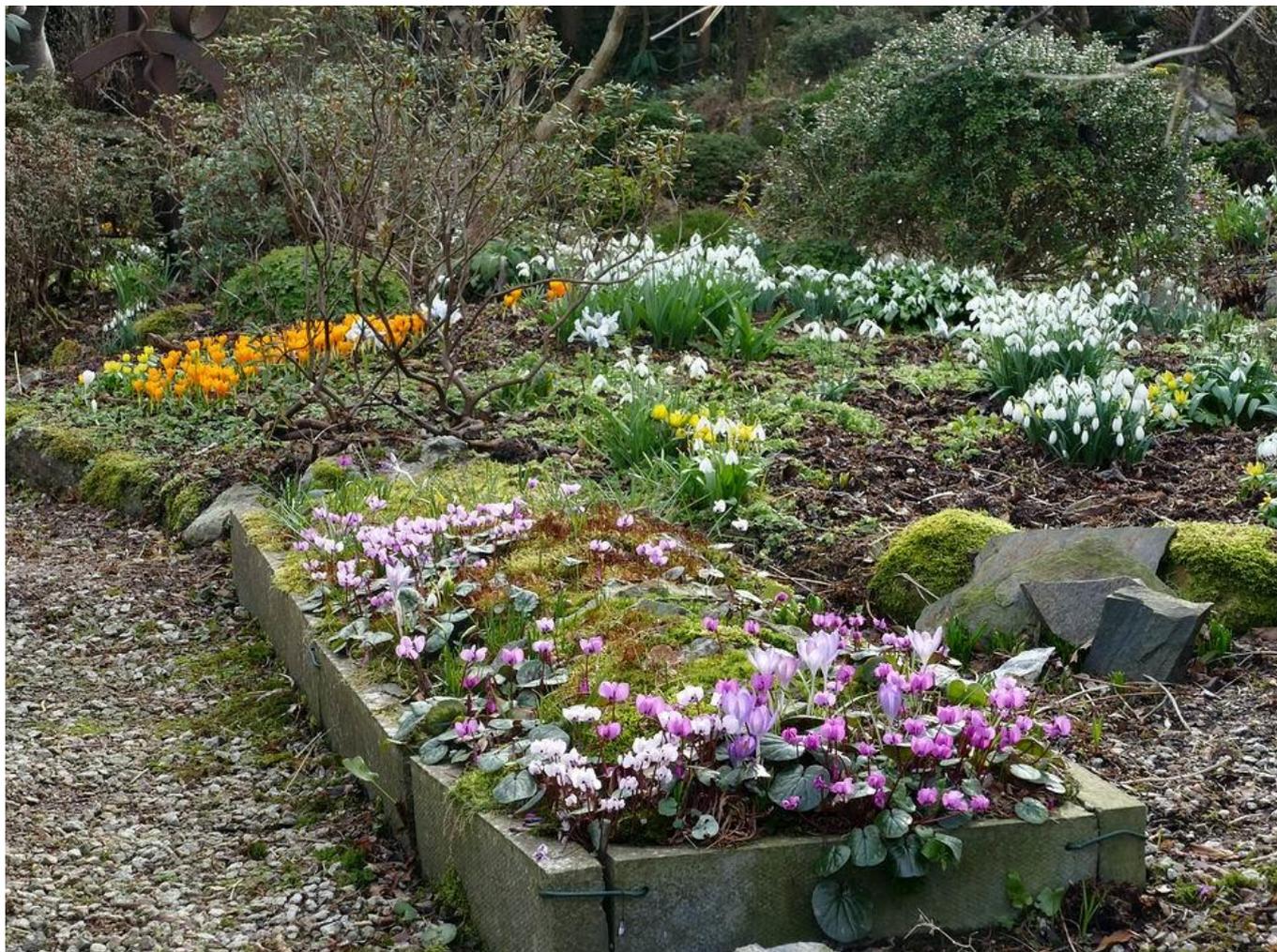
*Narcissus cantabricus clusii*



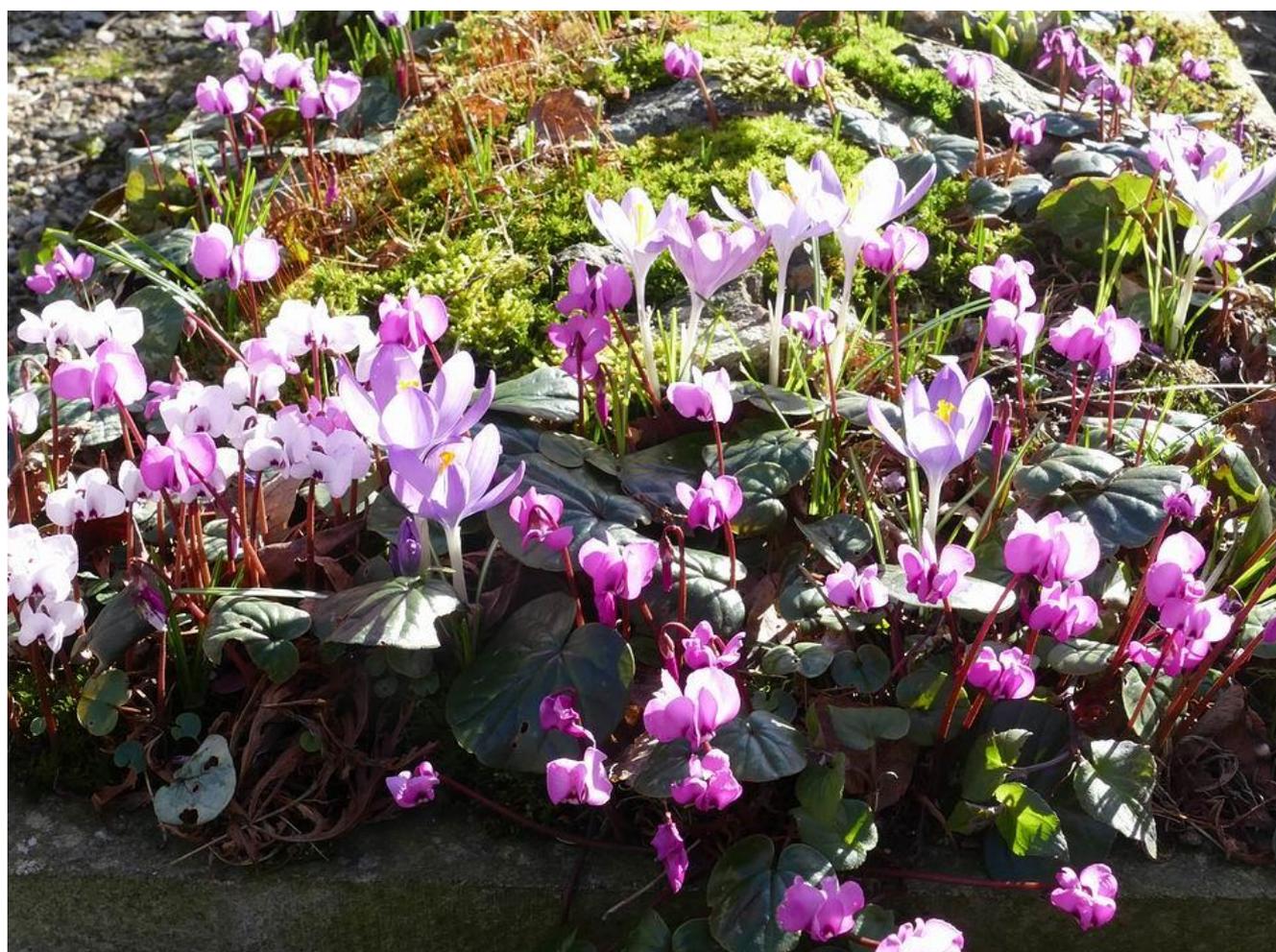
***Narcissus cantabricus petunioides***



***Crocus sublimis* 'Tricolor'**



The early spring garden is filling up with colour now as we move into the second wave of mass flowering



**Cyclamen coum and Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus tommasinianus**



**Crocus heuffelianus**



For the last image of the week I will return to golden coloured flowers this time those of **Crocus thirkianus** .....