



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

ISSN 2514-6114

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BULB LOG 43.....27th October 2021



Fungi



Woodland floor in front garden.



You may be forgiven for thinking that I took the cover picture of a group of fungi while out on one of my walks in the local woods and indeed if you did that would bring me great satisfaction because my aim is to blur the line that separates a cultivated garden and the wild. The older I get the wilder I become as I learn to understand what I love in nature, then see how I can adapt those lessons into my attempts to imitate nature in the garden.

Many other plants, that are now resting underground, have grown and flowered in this space throughout the year but only a few hardy evergreens are presently spreading out under the canopy of trees and Rhododendrons, which in turn, are also shedding their old leaves adding some colourful highlights to the ground tapestry.

While *Galium oderatum*, grasses and the fungi seen on the cover can be found in the woods around here the give away, in the picture above, that this is a garden is the *Rogersia* leaves and Rhododendrons.



Gardening with a light touch can be interpreted in many ways and depends on how much control you want in your garden. Our version over the years has been to introduce plants, by seed where possible, then allowing those plants to self seed so there are always going to be surprises. While exploring the garden I discovered this nice ring of fungi pushing up through the leaf litter and *Arisaema* seed around the base of a large *Paeonia lutea*.



I have not studied fungi so do not know all the names but that does not stop me enjoying their structures.

I had to disturb this cluster while gathering material from the compost heaps so took the opportunity to capture this image.

Through the years we have added masses of organic matter onto the soil from mostly from the annual leaf fall but also from the garden compost heaps. We have closely followed our principle of 'what grows in the garden stays in the garden' so when plants die back, or we cut back the trees or hedges, everything is shredded, composted then top dressed back as a mulch. I am pleased to see the



heathy crop of fungi which are an indicator that we have a healthy lively soil where the strands of mycelium will be spreading out through the ground breaking down the organics and recycling the goodness back onto the soil.



The *Crocus speciosus* flowers have suffered a bit in the wind and rain but the moisture is good for the ground and the fungi in the background as well as benefiting plants such as Cyclamen which are producing new leaves.



This cluster of fungi seem strangely attracted to a plant of **Celmisia mackau**, except I know there is also the decomposing remains of a tree that I took down there some years ago.

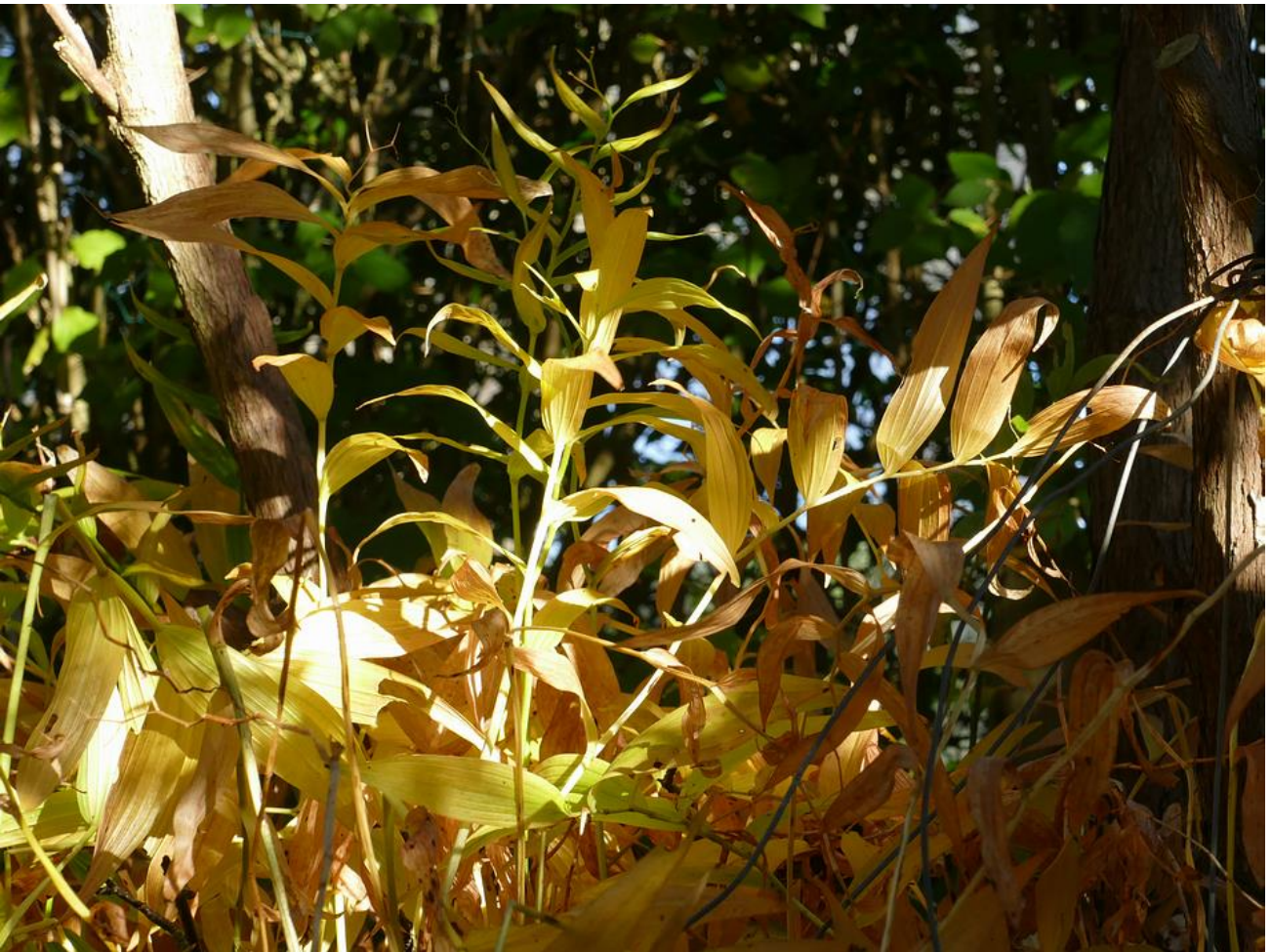




It may be that the New Zealand native *Fuchsia procumbens* liked the unusually hot dry summer because it has formed more fruits than usual and, for the first time, some are actually turning red.



This *Acer* is also turning red: seen here in front of another NZ native *Aciphylla glauca*.



We should not take for granted the foliage as it dies back and we should certainly not cut it off until it has dried and collapsed: then it can be cut off and moved to the compost heap. The old foliage produces beautiful moments as seen here where a shaft of light from the low sun penetrates the canopy briefly highlighting the golden yellows.



I can spend time just watching and photographing one clump of yellowing foliage changing with the light.



Composing selectively I can capture the fleeting moments of the deciduous ferns dying fronds - freezing that moment into interesting semi abstract images.





As soon as the rain stops the previously tightly closed buds of the Crocus flowers flex as they start to open in the rising temperature.



Neither will I rush into clearing up the old foliage on rock garden bed I will leave it as it creates a habitat and resource for all sizes of garden wild life from the tiny micro-fauna to the birds that forage and feed on them.



These **Crocus banaticus** are looking sorry for themselves in the rain while the Meconopsis leaves perk up with the much needed moisture to help build good plants which will ensure good flowering next year.



These Meconopsis self-seeded, growing happily in the Erythronium plunge bed for many years - there were more which I transplanted when I re-potted most of the baskets of bulbs this year.



The new leaves appearing on **Cyclamen hederifolium** exhibit a wide range of shape and colour and because they are all grown from seed that I scatter around in many different areas of the garden they pop- up in varying groupings.





Cyclamen hederifolium



A group of **Crocus pulchellus** seeded into the path is being covered in the leaves falling from the birch tree.



Autumn garden



The bulb season in the open garden is slowing down for the winter but that does not mean it stops when these Allium set seed and die down, because we simply move into the bulb houses where we will enjoy flowers all winter.



There has been significant growth in the sand beds since I applied the September and October storms.



Native to North Africa, the beautiful autumn flowering bulb I have known as **Scilla lingulata** has been reclassified and is now called **Hyacinthoides lingulata**, although as with many name changes, this new name will take time to stick.



One of the first of the hoop-petticoat to bloom every year is **Narcissus albidus ssp. foliosus** which you may call *Narcissus cantabricus ssp. foliosus*. Whatever you wish to call it, I welcome its appearance because it starts off several months of small daffodils flowering all the way through the winter taking us into spring, by which time the garden is waking up again.





Maintenance in the bulb house sand beds includes routinely removing the old *Crocus* flowers before moulds form.



Even withering *Crocus banaticus* flowers possess a beauty.



I did get chance this week to give the cloud pruned tree in the front garden its annual trim, starting with a long reach trimmer, but I had to get up a ladder to finish the top.



The difference between the before (above, and after (shown below is subtle but a fair amount came off.



The definition of the clouds is sharper.



It was after clipping the tree that I found the cluster of fungi that started off this weeks' Bulb Log. Embrace biodiversity in the garden, take the time to enjoy everything that it brings, not just the flowers but all the natural processes, fruits and beauty of nature.....