



BULB LOG 12.....20th December 2023



The view through the window from my work table gives me a much wider view than my camera can capture in a single shot but as I look out at what we have created I am satisfied that we achieved our aim of making more than just a garden but a mini landscape. All year round we enjoy the wildlife which lives in or visits the garden. In the winter we mostly view and photograph it through the windows, especially the varied birds that live in and visit our little woodland habitat. We have two six-port feeders that we can see easily from the



house which I am continually filling up with sunflower hearts and at this time of year they go through around twenty kilos in a month. The main beneficiaries of all this seed includes a range of Finch species, Tits and Sparrows, all feeding directly from the feeders while a range of ground feeders clear up any bits that fall to the ground. The density of song birds around the garden also attracts various predatory Sparrowhawks which because of the abundance of tree and shrub cover are not always successful in their mission but the persistent ones do get their reward.



As well as the seed we buy in the garden offers a diverse range of food sources for the birds from the ground up to the trees. At this time of year the berries attracts many Thrush species, Redwings Fieldfares and Waxwings and, of course, the resident family of Woodpigeons.



The storms have continued through December bringing long periods of heavy rain making this another wetter-than-average month. The autumn leaves were brought down prematurely by the force of the winds and rain and the constantly wet conditions have made it difficult to get them cleared away so I have a lot of work to do before the early bulbs come through and there are already many shoots poking through the ground.



The constant wet and relatively mild conditions have stimulated many bulbs to push to the surface such as these Leucojum shoots.



I love the way the recently emerged leaves of **Cyclamen hederifolium** contrast with those of the Acers which have finished their annual cycle and now cover the ground.



The scene is further enhanced here as the Cyclamen shares the ground with *Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens'.



I will spare you by not sharing all the multiple random combinations of Cyclamen leaves, each with their unique pattern, and the plants they are growing with but there are a final few below.





Cyclamen coum



Typical at this time are the remains of this year's growth waiting to be cleared away and I think we should appreciate this stage of growth as much as we do when the area is full of flowers in the spring and summer. Another reason not to be too quick and tidy is that the birds forage, finding valuable food among the decaying debris.



Likewise I find the dying off stages of this *Eucomis bicolor*, with the leaves turning transparent by the frosts, as interesting as any other stage in its annual growth. Plants are there for us throughout their growth cycle why should we not appreciate every stage of their growth rather than just the flowers?



The wet leaves are stuck to the paths - I need to wait for them to dry when they will be easier to lift.



Among the many annual routines which mark the changing of a season is when I lift away of the growth mat of the *Cyananthus lobatus* hybrid cascading over this end of the slab bed.



The stems spread out from a small area of root stock and now the frosts has stopped the growth I remove the mat to allow the bulbs that also grow there to see the light.



A reminder of the plant in flower.

Now the old growth is cleared I see that the plant is not really asleep because next years shoots are already emerging the same as they are on this *Cyananthus micophylus* which also grows in this bed.



Seedlings of *Doronicum* and *Silene*, the seed sown straight from the plant in the summer, are growing well and I have moved them into a glasshouse for some protection from the weather and winter grazing slugs.



Silene seedlings



Crocus laevigatus flowering is now flowering outside in a slab bed.



While this **Crocus laevigatus** is growing in one of the bub house sand beds.



The first of the seasons Hoop-petticoat Narcissus, growing in both pots and the sand beds, are just coming into flower. They are a bit later than in some years but their cheery wee flowers will give us interest under glass right through the winter months until the garden wakens up again.





Narcissus 'Craigton Choirster'



Rhododendron buds encrusted with frost make a very seasonal image.



The frost covered cloud pruned tree in the front garden acts as our Christmas tree and I wish all readers a happy holiday season with good health and gardening into the New Year. I have added another [Bulb Log Video Diary](#) since last month's Bulb Log- if you haven't already seen it click on the link.

I will end 2023 as always with a compilation of the cover images from the year - if you missed any of the Bulb Logs or want to read one again just click on the pictures below to open the relevant PDF.



BULB LOG 0123.....18th January 2023



Narcissus romieuxii



BULB LOG 02.....15th February 2023



Eranthis pinnatifida



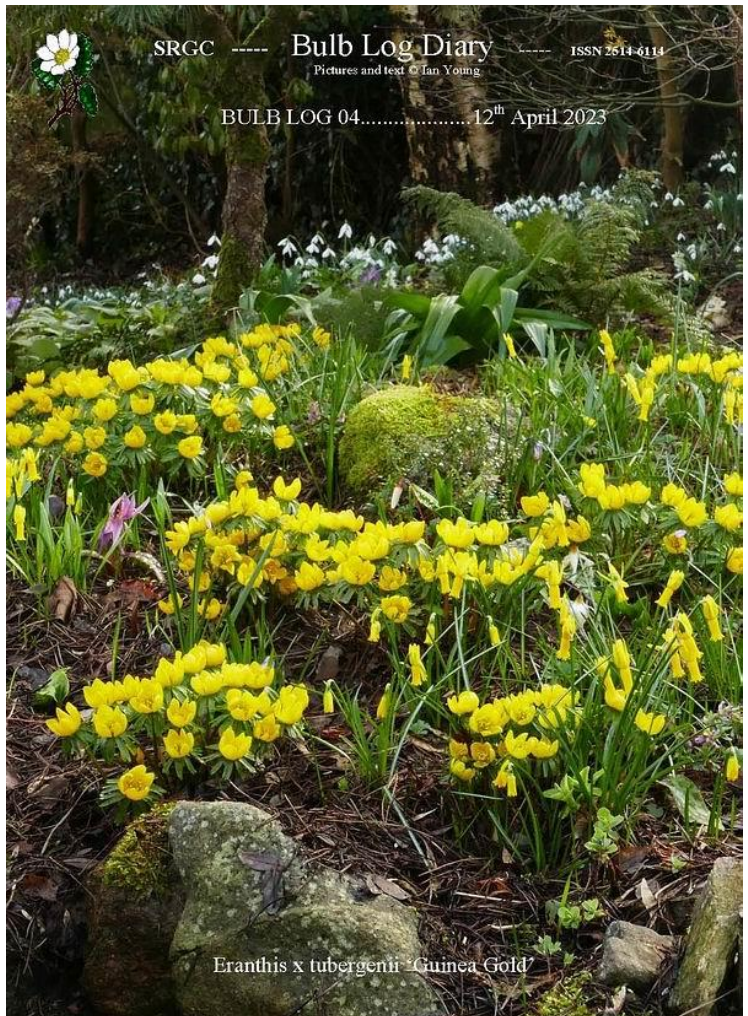
BULB LOG 03.....15th March 2023



Cyclamen coum



BULB LOG 04.....12th April 2023



Eranthis x tubergenii 'Guinea Gold'





Codonopsis grey-wilsonii

