



BULB LOG 13.....1st April 2009



Fritillaria House

What a speed the bulbs have moved at this year. When I left for the USA there were only the tips of the shoots showing on most of the frits and now many are in full flower. I think that coming from a relatively cold winter into the bright warm conditions we are currently enjoying has truncated the bulb flowering season into a shorter intense flowering period especially under glass.

In the far left hand corner I grow many of the larger species of Fritillaria and they are certainly in to full growth. You can also see *Tulipa polychroma* one of my growing collection of *Tulipa* species that I grow in pots.



Tulipa polychroma





Tulipa polychroma

I also grow a number of these species Tulips in the garden but because of our inclement weather they do not always perform to their best there. However on a bright warm day under glass they can look stunning.

**Fritillaria bucharica
and yuminensis**

Fritillaria bucharica and yuminensis are of similar height and make delightful companions. They also enjoy similar conditions at this time of year – that is plenty of water while they are making all this growth. Now they are in flower they do not need so much water – just enough to keep them hydrated and prevent them from wilting. Underground their old bulb will be shrinking as a new one forms at the base of each stem. I also hope to get a good seed set.





Fritillaria sewerzowii

Fritillaria sewerzowii makes much larger bulbs than other species of a similar size – many do not split but remain as a single bulb for many years. This form however does increase with each flowering stem producing two bulbs at the base most years. I have also grown *Fritillaria sewerzowii* outside for many years where it copes very well with the ever changing conditions – it enjoys the warm sunshine and is unscathed by the freezing conditions that can occur when it is in full growth.





Moving around there is lots of growth in the smaller species as well.



You can see *Fritillaria carica*, *caucasica*, *rhodocanakis*, *hermonis*, *pluriflora*, 'Craigton Max', *pinardii* and *armena* in this picture.

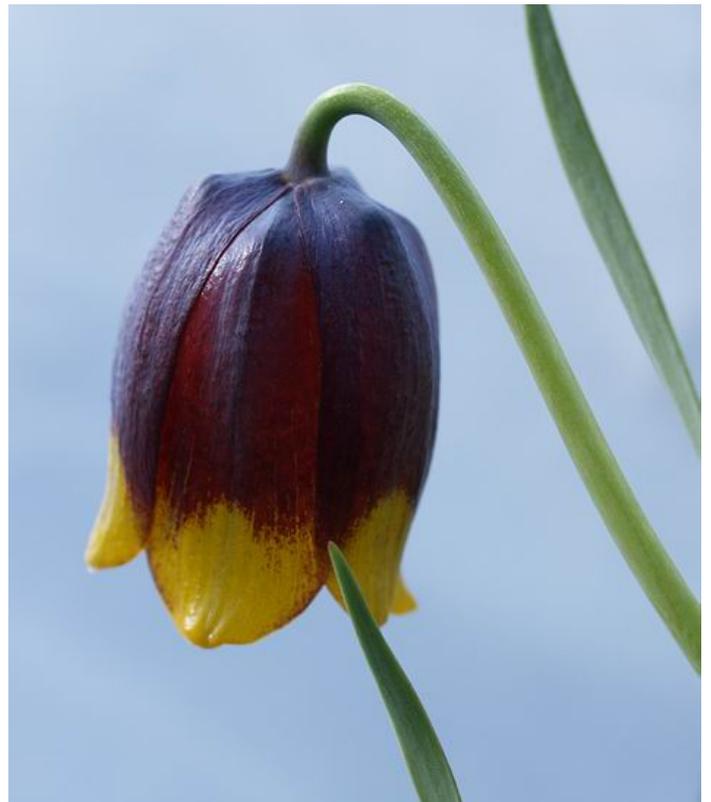


Fritillaria michailovskyi and Potassium feeding

Fritillaria michailovskyi in flower but also take note of the white powder – potassium – on the gravel surface.

It is very important to feed the plants now to help them to build up their bulbs for next year and to also ensure that they will have sufficient nutrients to also form flower buds for next spring which they are also doing right now.

I have become very conscious since I have switched to growing in plastic pots that they do not need watered nearly so often and so I have many fewer opportunities to feed the bulbs.



Fritillaria michailovskyi

These flowers are raised from seeds that were collected in Turkey many years ago and represent the true species. There are a number of hybrid forms available where the colour change is less distinct and to my eye not nearly as beautiful as these forms.



Fritillaria reuteri

Fritillaria reuteri

Fritillaria reuteri shares the same dramatic colour as the previous species.

Unfortunately it is less common in cultivation but hopefully that will gradually change as it is just as easy to grow as *F. michailovskyi*.





Fritillaria montana

I have a lot of plants in the Fritillaria montana group which while similar have subtle differences.



Fritillaria montana

Many have come under different names such as *F. tenella* and *F. nigra* but I find it difficult to see any clear distinctions that would make them different species.



Fritillaria tenella

Above and left is the plant that I raised as *Fritillaria tenella* which is a very elegant plants as are all this Montana group.

They are taller growing and many look out of place in pots as their stem grows and holds the flowers right up against the glass roof of the frit house.

I have planted a number out into the garden where I hope they will grow well and look more in place.