



BULB LOG 22.....2<sup>nd</sup> June 2009



**Garden Seat**

Life is pretty busy for me just now- I was in Edinburgh all weekend at the Gardening Scotland show and I am off to Gothenburg on Thursday so the Bulb log has had to be squeezed into my schedule – as you can see above there is not much time for sitting on this garden seat. The Meconopsis seeds itself around so well that we have not had to sow any in pots for many years – we just weed them out of the gravel paths if they become a problem.



Nearly everything in the **bulb house** has now gone dormant and the bulbs should be ripening nicely in the superb hot sunny weather we are currently enjoying.



Crocus michelsonii seed pod

I am delighted to have four nice fat seed pods on Crocus michelsonii this year.

This is one of the most beautiful and expensive Crocus so this amount of my own seed is just fantastic.



Crocus michelsonii seed pods

It is interesting to see the remains of the flowers are still attached to the seed pod.

Here is a close up picture of some of the seeds. I have stored these in dry sand in small sealed plastic bags as I have shown previously. These bags are kept in a fridge in the shaded potting shed. The fridge is not switched on so the seeds are just kept in the dark and the fridge insulates them from any extreme temperature fluctuations. I will sow the seeds in late August or September.





That purple **Corydalis species** that I showed last week that held all its flowers clustered at the end of the stem is now extending its stem so the seed pods are spread out a long its length. It is strange why it does not extend its stem like this until the flowers are fertilised.

I am not sure if this is going to be a perennial species but by the amount of seeds it is producing I have no fears of losing it in the near future – it may even become one of the many plants that we need to control in our garden so that they do not become weeds.

Remember a weed is just a plant in the wrong place no matter if it is a Meconopsis, a Corydalis or a Dandelion – if you are happy with where it is growing then it is not a weed.

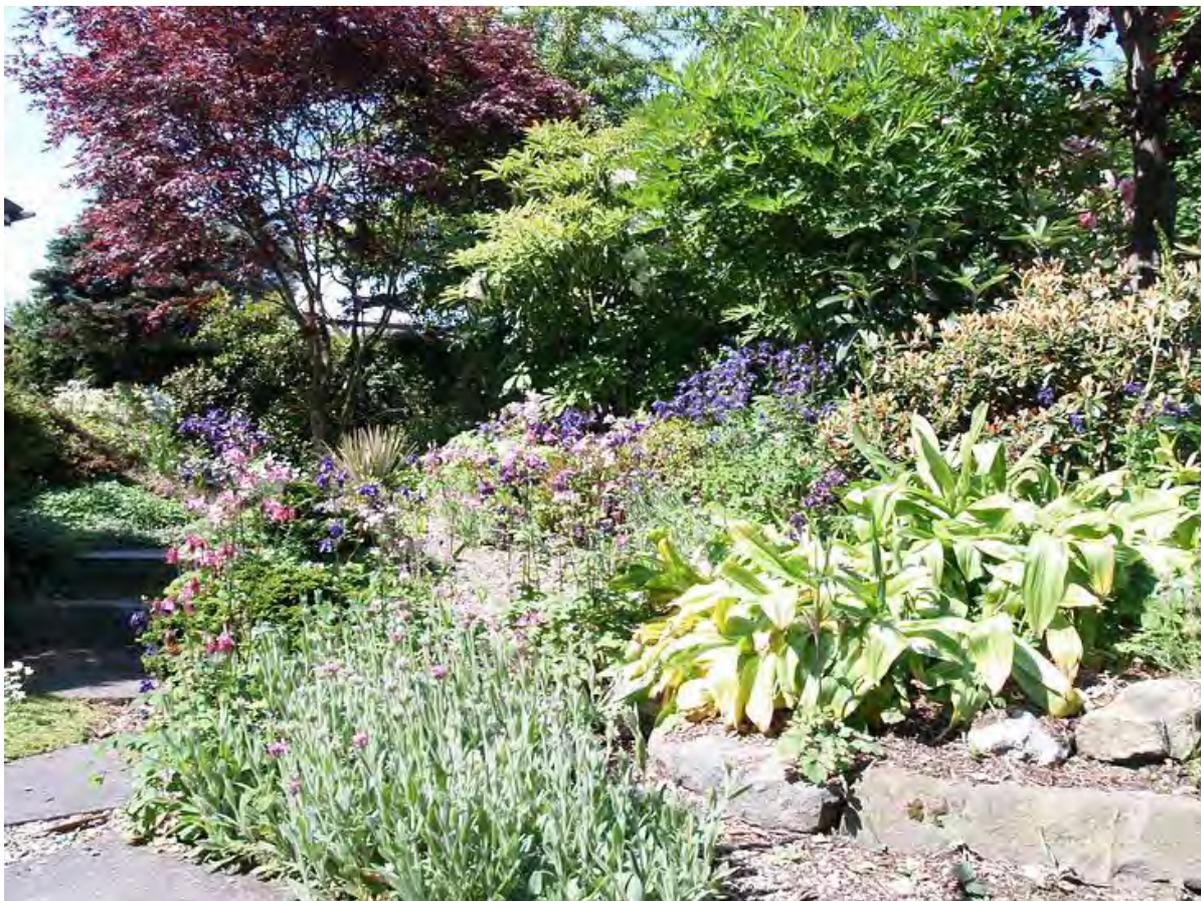


### **Corydalis cashmeriana seeds**

I am really delighted to have these Corydalis cashmeriana seeds – it is the first time I have collected the seeds from our own plants.

Notice that this is one of the corydalis species which scatters its seeds by ‘explosive’ action..

The sides of the long capsule roll back violently like a spring scattering the seeds as it recoils.



### **Garden View**

There is lots of evidence of plants seeding themselves around in our garden and this is a delight to me - all I have to do is to decide if they can stay where they are growing, need to be moved to a more appropriate place or just weeded out. The Colchicum leaves are in the bed but everything to the left side of the raised area was originally intended to be a clear area of gravel with paving slabs indicating the path way. Lychnis and Aquilegia have run amok in this area but what a show they put on.



### **Aquilegia seedlings**

The original Aquilegia we planted many years ago was a blue species but now we have all sorts of colours appearing just at the time when we do not have so many bulbs in flower. We are happy to leave most of them where they self sow but I do weed some out so we are not taken over completely. I intend to lift a few of the mature plants from the gravel in the autumn and plant them in among the Colchicums that are to the right of the picture above. If this works then they will provide good colour above the Colchicum leaves.



**Arisaema sp.**

I have forgotten the name of this diminutive *Arisaema* sp. and do not have time just now to check my records. I nearly lost this plant when I lifted it a number of years ago to send bulbs to someone but am pleased to see it is now growing happily and seems to be spreading by stolons - I have also had seed from it.



**Arisaema forest**

In the front of this picture you can see how short that species I have just shown you is when compared to *Arisaema ciliata* which is really forming an *Arisaema* forest in this bed, spreading both by stolons and seed.



**Arisaema ciliata**

*Arisaema ciliata* is a very easy species to grow and has beautiful striped flowers which show some slight variation in the seed raised plants that are appearing. I also love the multi sectioned leaves with their long acuminate tips that act to channel the water down to the bulbs when it rains.



**Arisaema wilsonii**

*Arisaema wilsonii* is by far the largest leaved species that we grow, when they are fully grown the leaves can compete in size with those of rhubarb. Despite a few false hopes I have never had any seed set on this species but it does increase well forming clumps as you can see and every few years I split the clump.



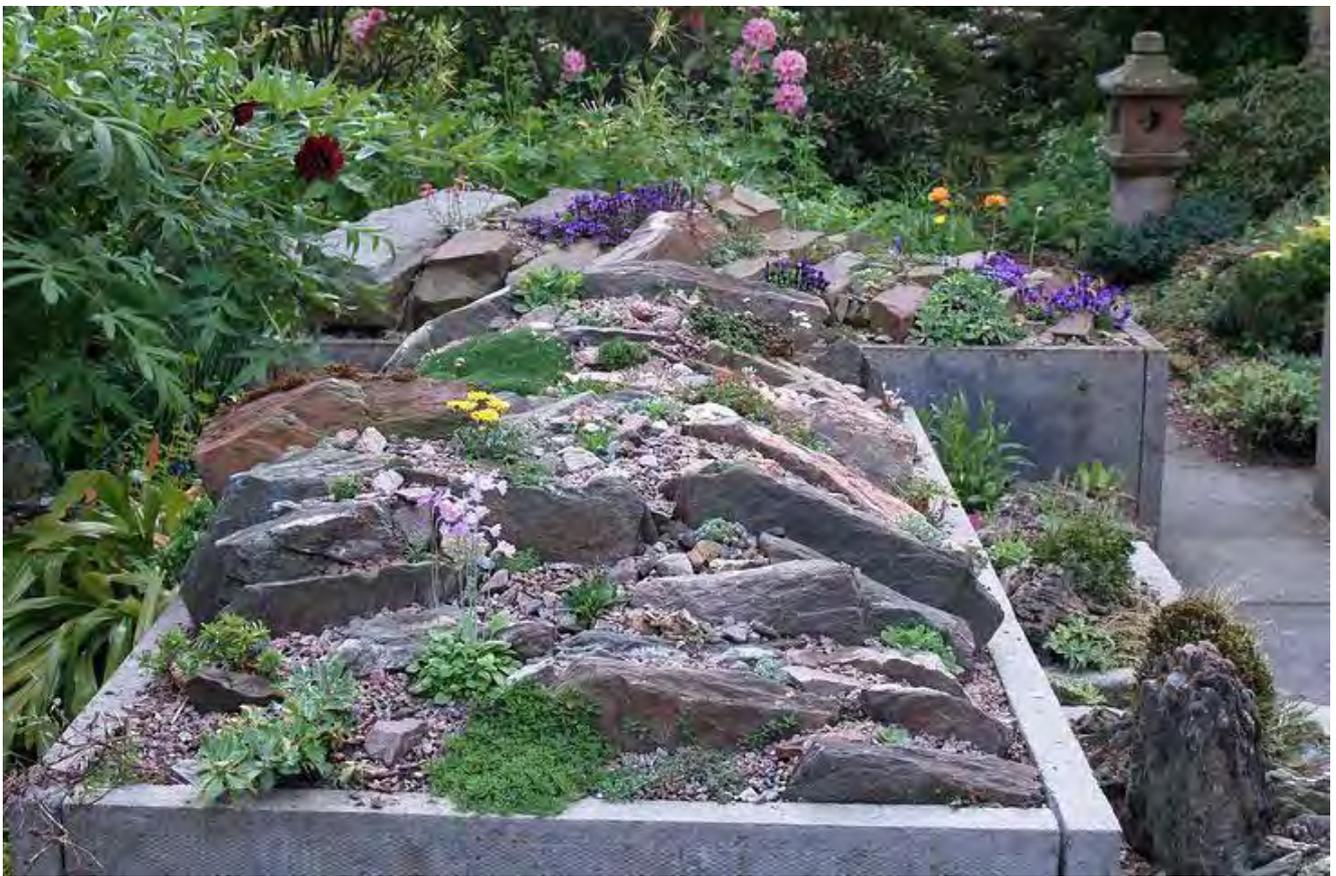
### **Troughs**

Here are a few pictures to keep you updated on some of the troughs where we grow our alpines now. The bulb house used to be our alpine house before bulbs took over completely under glass so now we have to try and make our alpines happy growing out side and troughs seems to be the place where they do best.



### **Erinus alpinus**

I sowed some *Erinus alpinus* seeds directly on to this lump of hard tufa-like rock some years ago and it has flowered now for four years. Each year the plants get tighter and the flower stems shorter – I love this wee trough even though this is one of the easiest alpines to grow and is seen as a weed in some people’s eyes I think it is one of the nicest.



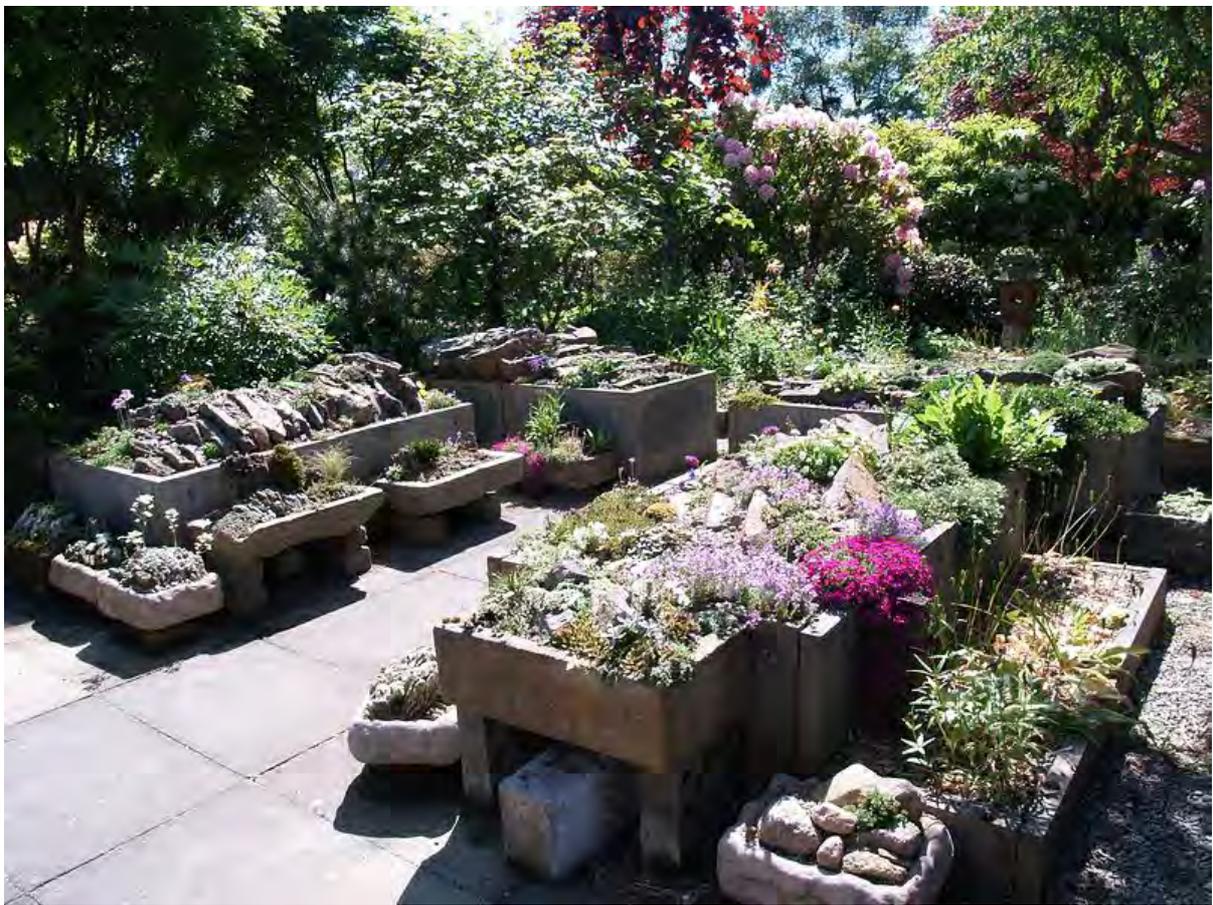
Another view across some of the large **Slab Bed Troughs** shows that we have a number of alpines in flower.



### **Edraianthus serpyllifolius**

I grew this *Edraianthus serpyllifolius* from seeds that I got from Vojtech Holubek and while the flowers are more or less the same colour there are considerable differences in the habit of the plants. Some are quite sprawled with long flowering stems while my favourite is the one below which forms a leafy clump with good flowers on short stems. The difference in colour between this picture and the one on the left is just that it was taken in shade which brings out the blue of the flowers while sunshine brings out the red more making the flowers look more purple.





I will leave you with these two views of the **Trough Area** showing what a difference you get when photographing in bright sunshine as above where the contrast is very extreme between the bright and dark areas – this makes it very difficult for the camera, film or digital, to capture the details and colours. It is much better to take your photographs in flat light when there is a covering of white cloud then the contrast is much less and the resulting pictures look much better to my eye any way.



**Trough Area**