



BULB LOG 11..... 13th March 2013



As we expected, after the few mild sunny days, winter has returned.



Last week I showed this same view with open flowers enjoying the sunshine and mild conditions now they are blanketed in snow.



The snow does create a striking contrast with the deep warm yellow flowers of *Crocus herbertii*.



Galanthus, Crocus and Corydalis are all able to withstand our erratic spring swinging as it does from sunny warm days to freezing snowy days.



Despite their delicate look the reticulate Iris flowers are also tough and able to cope with being covered in snow.



Galanthus 'Elizabeth Harrison'

Galanthus 'Elizabeth Harrison' holds the record for fetching the highest price ever fetched by a single snowdrop bulb, a record that surely will never be beaten. This crazy price more reflects the desire for people to be among the first to own a new different form than it does the actual value of the plant. However it is a beautiful form with its striking yellow ovary contrasting so well with the green and because of that it stands out as you walk around the garden without the need to bend down and squeeze the flower open to view the interior markings. Last year I got some seeds from our plant which I sowed 5cms deep - now I am delighted to see them starting to germinate with three seed leaves visible so far.



Galanthus platyphyllus

Galanthus platyphyllus is not so commonly seen in gardens perhaps as it has a reputation of the flowers hiding themselves down in the leaves. Here we grow it in a pot in an open frame where it is just coming into flower now and the flowers are opening just above the leaves. As soon as we build up a small stock we will plant it out into a sand bed to see how it grows there – I have been pollinating the flowers and am hoping for some seed.



Narcissus 'Cedric Morris'

Narcissus 'Cedric Morris' is now in full bloom and like so many other Narcissus it is some three months later than in recent years.

It is said to be a large form of Narcissus asturiensis but I am not so sure – I get the feeling that other species may be involved.

It does survive planted out in our garden but because it comes into growth so early it gets hammered by our winter and so does not do well long term in the open.



Narcissus asturiensis is a perfect miniature trumpet type daffodil flowering on stems of less than 10cms. The flower stems of this form never grow upright as most of the other forms we have do - they are always at an angle.



I spoke of **Narcissus 'Minicycla'** being a bit miffy to grow last week and I have just two flowers this year from around twenty bulbs. Hopefully a good feed of potassium as the flowers fade will give me more flowers next year.



You will see that my own hybrid between *Narcissus cyclamineus* x 'Minicycla' is much more vigorous with every bulb producing a flower. Comparing the flowers of my hybrid with 'Minicycla' you will see the petals of my plants are more reflexed as I have increased the influence of *Narcissus cyclamineus* from one part to two..

Narcissus* *perez-chiscanoii

Here are some flowers in my original pot of the species *Narcissus perez-chiscanoii*.

Compare them with the picture below of this plant crossed with *Narcissus cyclamineus* and you will see that the flowers are superficially similar but close observation shows they have more sharply reflexed petals – again the influence of *N. cyclamineus*.





Narcissus perez-chiscanoi* x *N. cyclamineus



Narcissus bulbocodium is a very variable species - all display the classic hoop petticoat shaped flower.



Another form of *Narcissus bulbocodium*



Narcissus 'Don Stead' is a hybrid, made by the late Don Stead between *Narcissus bulbocodium* and *N. cantabricus* – I repeated the cross and you can see the resulting seedlings below.



The two pictures above are of the same seedling that has attracted my attentions. It was a self-sown seedling that grew in the sand plunge— last year I lifted it and planted into the spare sand plunge area along with other stray bulbs and seed. I can only speculate as to its parentage but I am certain that *Narcissus romieuxii* is involved. The points that drew me to it and which I think make it very attractive are the much exerted stamens and style plus the flared and deeply lobed corona, seen best in the picture below.



Narcissus 'Mondieu'

Narcissus 'Mondieu' is a Southern Hemisphere raised hybrid that was a present from my friend Otto Fauser.

Due to the later flowering this season its stems have stayed relatively compact and are more in keeping with its size. Too often when it flowers much earlier in the season the stems etiolate so much in our poor light that they cannot support the weight of the flower and flop over.



Narcissus species, Morocco- this beautiful plant is an unknown species from Morocco that I got from Jim and Jenny Archibald. I have no idea what it is or if it has even been described but it is a wee cracker.



Iris 'Sheila Ann Germaney' is comfortable in the snow



Snowdrops are well named as they are so robust and their flowers are well adapted to both the snow and freezing conditions unlike those of *Rhododendron thomsonii* McBeath, below, whose flowers were destroyed by the frosts that occurred the night after I took the picture below. What will next week bring.....



Rhododendron thomsonii