



SRGC ----- Bulb Log Diary -----

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BULB LOG 49.....December 4th 2019





View from back door.



which have finally turned and are now rapidly dropping.

The warm autumn colours of the leaves I show on the cover picture belie the fact of how dark and miserable the weather has been for most of the week. Heavy low cloud and constant rain meant that we never saw daylight at all - in Scotland we have a word for this kind of weather - dreich - which in a recent poll has been voted as the most popular Scottish word.

Even in the short periods when the rain did stop the ground was so wet that it was not practical to get on with any of the garden jobs such as lifting leaves which were all stuck to the ground with water.

I started to write 'luckily we have good views from the windows' until I realised that these views are the result of design not luck. We laid the garden out so that we could see many of the garden features from the house including the trees and troughs where we can watch from our place of comfort, the birds foraging. With the many trees and shrubs we have planted, the garden mimics a woodland, full of habitats which attract a wide range of birds - and this week I disturbed a woodcock resting beneath a Rhododendron. It is not unusual as we often see woodcock in the garden at this time of year - the November full moon is often called the Woodcock Moon as the tradition is that the birds used the light of the moon to guide their migration across the North Sea from their summer home in Scandinavia to over winter in the UK.

The colour is provided by the *Acer japonicum* leaves



The leaves of some plants drop in a more graceful and decorative way than others - two examples of tree peonies sit side by side in this picture.



The leaves of Peony ostia 'Feng Dan Bai' go through some decorative colour changes before the eventually turn brown when I often have to cut them off.

On the other hand the leaves of this *Peonia delavayi* just turn brown hanging unattractively until I remove them from the tangle of stems.



The week of rain and wind is causing a rapid leaf fall covering the surrounding area in a golden yellow carpet and this warm colour seems to lift my spirit almost making up for the darkness of the days.



The pictures above and below were taken just a few minutes apart but are very different in colour. When taking the image above I was not happy that it was capturing the colour that I was experiencing – it was taken using the auto white balance setting so I changed that setting to cloudy for the second picture below which captures the warmth of the colour more accurately.



I will of course remove the leaves from the troughs and raised beds in addition to removing the remains of the *Cyananthus lobatus* that spreads over and trails down this end of the slab bed.



I have gathered the stems of the Cyananthus in preparation to removing this old growth so it does not lead to damage of the Narcissus and other bulb leaves which are already in growth.



This picture taken in April shows the emerging growth of the Cyananthus which at this stage looks more like a cushion plant than a trailer – it is surrounded by some flowering bulbs.



Two more comparison pictures - the one above taken this week and below one taken in August when the *Cyananthus* were in full flower.





More of the fallen acer leaves that need to be removed before long.



Now I will show some of the troughs in their winter state, above the saxifrages have grown to completely cover the rock work.



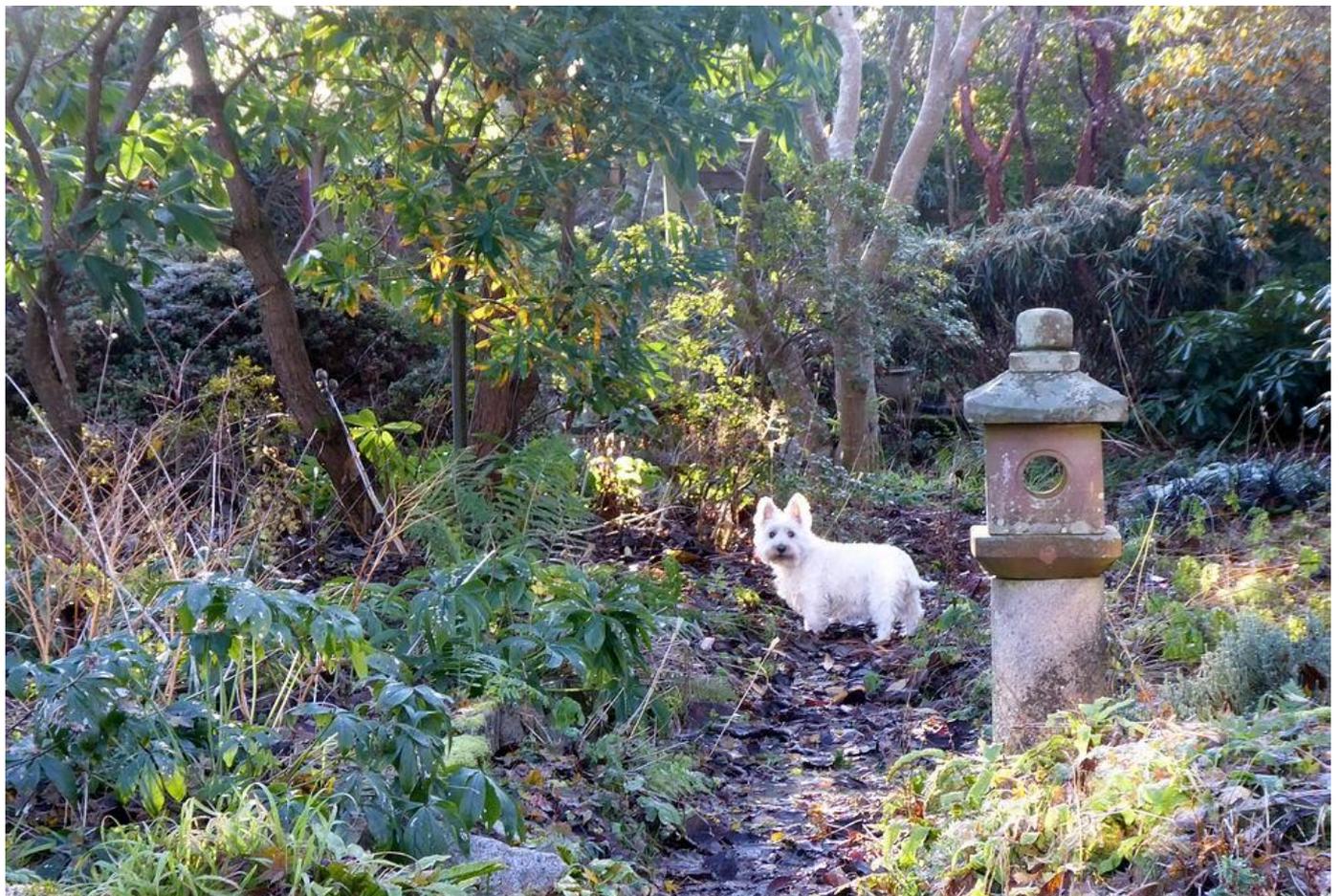
This is one of the troughs where I have built up the landscape with old roofing slates.



Saxifrages and other alpine plants growing in a slab bed.



Another trough planted with saxifrages.



Molly leads me up the garden path.



Among this debris of the past seasons leaves new growth is emerging in the form of Galanthus flower buds.



After the days of dark clouds the wind changed bringing us some very welcome bright but cold weather from the north. Among the frost covered ground I spotted yet more growth as some plants prepare for the spring to come.



Now the weather is turning cold I have moved these pots of *Tropaeolum azureum* and *tricolorum* seedlings under glass. I sowed the seed in the one on the left, *Tropaeolum azureum*, immediately it was ripe which is why it is more advanced in growth than the other two which were only sown around a month or six weeks ago.



Another plant that starts into leaf growth as winter approaches is this *Corydalis*, which is another seedling from the same cross that I selected *Corydalis* 'Craigton Purple'.



Frosty leaves and Arisaema seed heads.

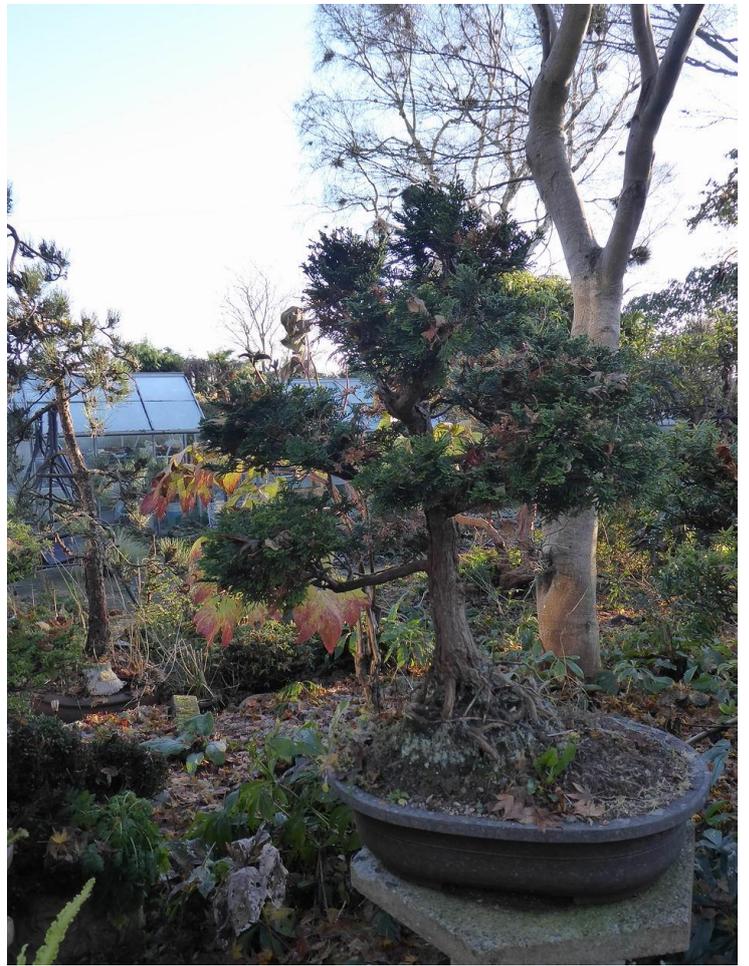


Frozen Cyclamen leaves.



Frost covered Cyclamen coum leaves growing through a carpet of mixed mosses in a small sand bed.





On page 2 I showed the view from our back door: this cloud pruned *Chamaecyparis obtusa* 'Nana Gracilis' forms part of the view from our front door, it is exactly the same age, around forty years, as this bonsai version.



The growth on the front drive has died back and when the weather dries out I will get it cleared ready for another season of interest: see the special report on the drive way planting in [Bulb Log 5117](#) .



Molly surveys her garden.



The last image this week shows the trees now devoid of all leaves against a blue frosty sky.....