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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 26.....26th June 2019



Nomocharis hybrid



Nomocharis are very promiscuous so when you grow a number of species together then garden collected seeds are more than likely to be hybrids. However that does not stop them being very beautiful plants to have. Although we have had Nomocharis bulbs survive in excess of ten years, as a general rule we have found them to be a relatively short lived bulbs losing many to virus a disease to which they are particularly susceptible. We have to work to keep these beauties in the garden by sowing seeds every year.



Cardocrinum giganteum and Lilium pyrenaicum

Cardocrinum giganteum bulbs are also short lived, where the main bulbs die after flowering but provided the growing conditions are favourable, cool and moist, then a number of young bulbs will form around the old bulb these will normally grow on flower after two years. These plants also set large quantities of seed that will take several years to reach flowering size.



Thalictrum sp



It fascinates me that with all the large flowers that we find so attractive, such as the *Nomocharis* and *Cardiocrinum* that are currently in full bloom, it is the mass of tiny *Thalictrum* flowers that are attracting a constant stream of bees. I can hear the buzzing and pick up the scent as I approach the plant. I had to spend a lot of time to capture the relatively sharp image of the bee feeding and collecting pollen.



Arisaema jacquemontii



Arisaema ciliatum* var *liubaense



Arisaema ciliatum* var *liubaense

This forest of *Arisaema* mixed with *Corydalis capitata* and *C. mairei*, all self-seeding, put on a display in this bed which they share with so many of the early flowering bulbs that are now underground and dormant for the summer.



***Corydalis capitata* seed capsules.**



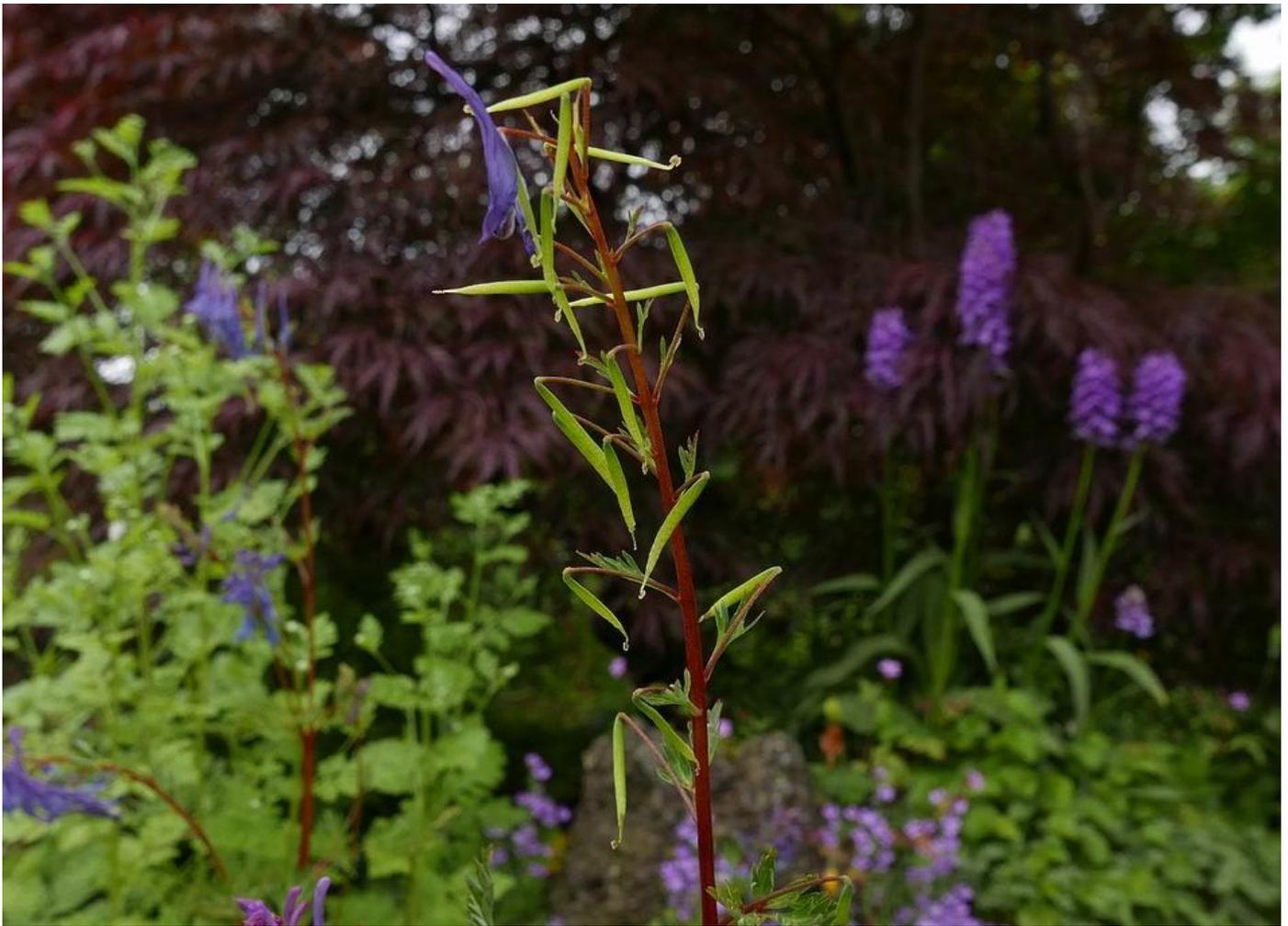
Corydalis capitata seed

I have to be vigilant if I want to collect some seed from this group of Corydalis because the seed is ejected very explosively when the capsules are ripe.



Corydalis capitata seed capsules

The seeds are thrown out when the sides of the capsule recoil like a spring, letting go from the base and coiling towards the tip where the remains of the stigma can be seen. I check them every day holding a container below while I run my semi-closed hand gently up the stem, which will if they are ready, trigger the spring-loaded capsule.



Corydalis mairei seeds ripening

These are smaller capsules but have the same action scattering the contents of many small seeds.



The hybrid **Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'** does occasionally set a few seeds which can just be seen within these capsules.



I actively encourage the *Corydalis* and *Arisaema* to form self-seeding colonies in some of our beds.



Corydalis 'Craigton Blue', *Papaver cambricum* and *Dactylorhiza* are a common theme across the garden.



The tall flowering white form of ***Digitalis purpurea*** (another volunteer plant that seeds around) rises through ***Acer palmatum dissectum atropurpureum***



This very tall **Eremurus 'Joanna'** should really not be growing here in the shade in our northern garden. It is a plant that loves the sun and heat and it does show that you should not always be directed by the general advice that you read – the only way you will know if a plant will grow in your garden it to try it for yourself.



Eremurus 'Joanna'



Crinodendron hookerianum

Native to Chile in South America, *Crinodendron hookerianum* is much more suited to our cool shaded garden, but once more if we had believed what we have read about it not being hardy in our area then we would not have been growing this plant for the last twenty plus years. The young wood and leaves have been killed off in very cold winters, such as we had in early 2018, but new growth always appears from the older wood.



Crinodendron hookerianum



Philesia magellanica

Another shrubby plant from Chile in South America that we grow is the low growing *Philesia magellanica* which scrambles though this bed forming new plants by means of radiating underground runners.



**Glumicalyx
flanaganii**

Another plant from far off lands that has grown well in our garden is *Glumicalyx flanaganii*, from Lesotho South Africa; it is not the showiest plant until you get down close and look at the bright flowers.



Glumicalyx flanaganii

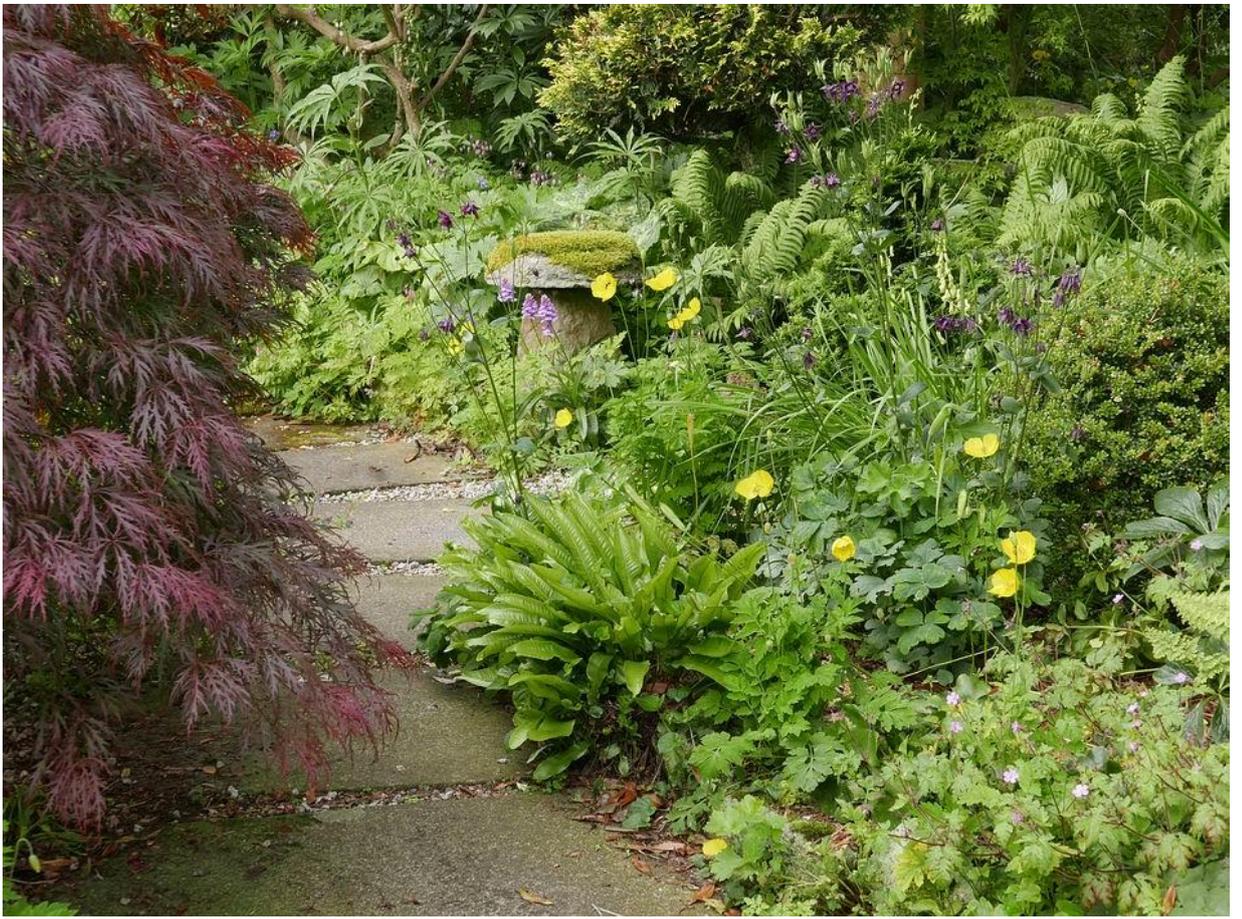


This view up the garden is framed by the twisted stems of one of the first plants we ever grew – this *Pieris*, along with the *Acer palmatum dissectum atropurpureum* shown in a previous picture, were planted alongside the path to our first flat in 1972 and were moved and planted in their current locations in 1974.



Viewed in the distance, I will make my way towards the *Dactylorhiza* and *Celmisia spectabilis*

With plants closing in across the paths we encourage the wild character the garden takes on at this time of year as the lush growths rise up from exactly the same beds where earlier in the year the colour and interest was delivered by a sequence of the smaller early flowering bulbs.



Dactylorhiza and Celmisia spectabilis



Corydalis 'Craigton Blue', Dactylorhiza and Papaver cambricum



Papaver cambricum and Dactylorhiza



Familiar plants can be seen in these images but this time the blue is from a colony of ***Corydalis mucronipetala***





Your plants will always have better fertility, providing a larger seed set, if you grow a number of clones together so they can cross pollinate. I planted out a pot of seed raised *Corydalis mucronipetala* in this bed which has resulted in some very promising looking seed pods which in turn will allow me to spread this plant even further across the garden.



Nomocharis and other lilies rise up through the undergrowth of Dicentra.



Delphinium sp.



Papaver cambricum colour forms



While we enjoy having self-seeding plants, like *Papaver cambricum*, linking the different areas of the garden we exercise some control over the spread of the more prolific ones by removing the stems once the flowers have passed and before the seed is shed- this is much easier than having to remove the thousands of unwanted

seedlings that could result.



While we work to reduce the output of some plants we are actively encouraging the seed production and spread of others such as with these ***Erythronium sibiricum*** seeds which were sown in a pot immediately after I took the picture. I allowed others to shed their seeds into the beds where they are growing although as they tend to end up in a clump where the capsule falls I did help them out by scattering them across the bed.



Erythronium sibiricum

We should never stop propagating plants by which ever means we can and growing from seed is the best way to get a wide range of healthy plants for your garden.....