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Bulb Log Diary

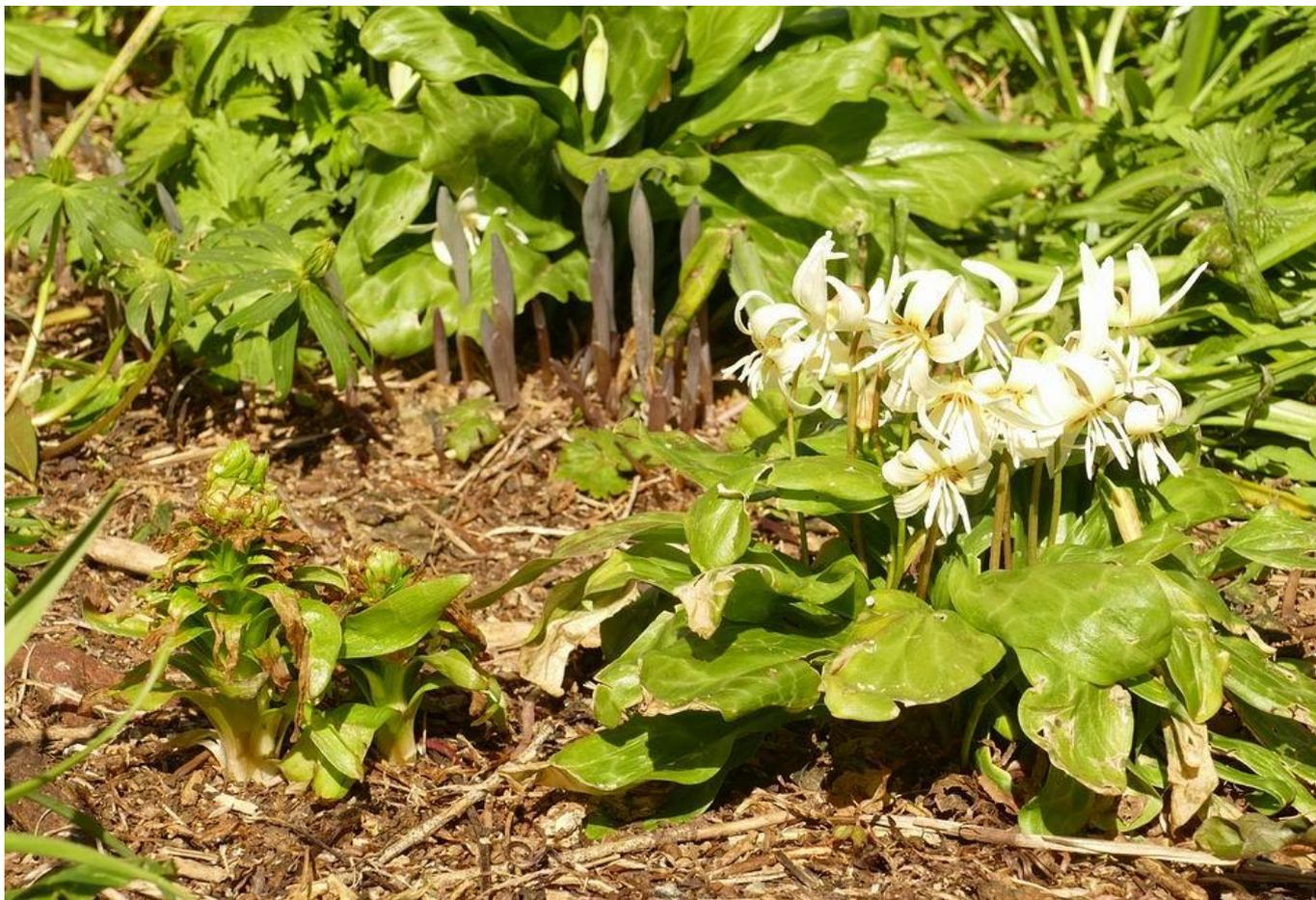
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BULB LOG 17.....28th April 2021



Erythronium 'White Beauty'



If you have not grown any Erythronium before then **Erythronium 'White Beauty'** is the one to start with; it is very tolerant of a most garden conditions, it flowers well, forms clumps reasonably quickly and lives up to its name by being both white and beautiful. To the left are the shoots of a lily that like so many of the plants in the garden bear the scars of the recent period of winter conditions when snow and freezing gale force winds pounded the garden.



Erythronium 'Craigton Cover Girl' is a hybrid between the pink Erythronium *revolutum* and 'White Beauty' the former giving the colour and the later has passed on the clump forming characteristic, so it increases well.

As with many flowers the intensity of the colour varies according to the weather and growing conditions – the cold and dry conditions this year have resulted in this plant being a deep pink.



The other colour found in Erythronium is yellow and in that is delivered by *Erythronium tuolumnense* and its hybrids. The strongest yellow belongs to the species and as most of the hybrid partners are white flowered plants they tend to be paler shades of yellow such as 'Susannah' and 'Eirene' both of which are also in this picture.



Erythronium bed.



I am slowly getting to like the planting in this slab bed that has caused me such a problem for years. Later in the year it is covered in growth and flowers delivered by various *Cyananthus* and *Hypericum* reptans but I have been slow to find plants that flower early in the year and are compatible with the spreading growth that emerges to cover the bed through the summer. I like to fill each of the many habitats around the garden with a wide range of plants not just for decoration but to provide me with interest to explore throughout the year.



Small early flowering bulbous plants are the obvious solution and part of the reason it has taken me so long to get here is that when the bulbs are dormant and ready to plant in the summer I was reluctant to disturb the extensive growth of *Cyananthus* and *Hypericum*. The flowering year now starts off with some of the smaller *Narcissus* and *Crocus* then some multiplex forms of *Anemone ranunculoides*, that we were gifted, continue the yellow theme and so I seek to

pack each area with a sequence of companionable plants .



I enjoy seeing the Anemone growth popping up between the crevices in harmony with the Narcissus and the other plants.



There are a number of named forms of these double Anemone ranunculoides this one has a neat rounded form and the colour goes well with the Muscari species.



These flowering bulbs growing as crevice plants bring early colour to this bed.



I am not a big lover of such mutated (double) flowers but I find these *Anemone ranunculoides* quite appealing.



Double forms are very sought after and desirable to many gardeners but they would stop short of growing the flower on the left which looks superficially very similar, only larger.



Taraxacum officinale

Yes I plucked a flower from my pet Dandelion to place in the previous picture - here it is on the corner of one of the other slab beds where it has grown displaying its beautiful flowers for over twenty years without ever shedding a single seed. It is easily controlled by plucking the flowers of as soon as they start to go over which as well as preventing the seed encourages the plant to produce ever more beautiful blooms for the gardener and pollinators.



Sticking with a yellow, which apart from green is the dominant colour across the garden just now, a group of *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* rises through a carpet of *Anemone x lipsiensis* which is a hybrid between *Anemone nemorosa* and *Anemone ranunculoides*, here in the cultivar 'Pallida'.



Trillium kurabayashii scarred by the cold weather still puts on a display as it pushes above **Anemone ranunculoides**.



Anemone ranunculoides



Anemone x lipsiensis

As the following sequence of pictures shows we use both these plants as ground cover allowing the taller plants to grow up through the carpet.



We have created many individual beds in the garden each of which is linked by a series of paths using spaced out paving slabs surrounded by gravel and while the paths were originally intended just to link the areas they have evolved to become a fascinating series of habitats in themselves to which I will return in a future Bulb Log.



I mentioned the additional growing space that the walls of a raised bed provides but they also add decorative interest and create shade and increased moisture levels in surrounding areas which the plants take advantage of. The circular raised wall supports a wide range of plants some appearing in the following images.



A large and ever expanding group of self-seeding **Erythronium revolutum** have taken advantage of the shelter on the east side of the wall to colonise the gravel surrounding the paving slabs.

The north face of the wall is the home to a number of Haberlea and Ramonda while **Erythronium 'Craigton Cover Girl'** are among the many plants that grow in the low raised bed on the north side of the wall alongside Corydalis 'Craigton Blue' and a number of Dactylorhiza that will flower after the Erythronium.





Early flowering *Erythronium caucasicum* and *dens-canis* were the first to flower on the top planting area before the carpet of *Anemone x lipsiensis* emerged covering the bed in a practical as well as attractive green mulch that helps retain moisture.



Erythronium grandiflorum is another of the many bulbous species that grow happily in this habitat.



The yellow flowers of **Erythronium grandiflorum** are a perfect match with the Anemone and are starting to self-seed across the top and down the wall, as seen in the picture below.





A clump of **Erythronium japonicum** grows in the low bed on the south side of the wall along with many others including an expanding colony of *Erythronium americanum* which has managed to find its own way to the top.



Despite days of blue skies and sunshine it has not been warm enough for the **Erythronium americanum** flowers to open. I find this species needs a warmer temperature than any other species we grow to open its flowers.



Moving on to other garden habitats where we apply the same garden philosophy of gradually planting as many compatible plants in a relatively small area as we can then allowing them to naturalise. *Trillium rivale* and *T. hibbersonii*, *Fritillaria aurea* alongside plants of the *Erythronium sibiricum* complex are among the many smaller subjects shown above.



Trillium rivale and the ***Erythronium sibiricum* complex** are successful in seeding in and around this bed. I learnt early on that plants do not recognise and so are not contained by the edges of the beds and many have seeded beyond these boundaries into the paths and any habitat they find a root hold.



When we first get a plant we do collect and sow the seed in pots or baskets - here a mesh basket of **Erythronium sibiricum complex** seedlings are flowering and ready to find a home in the garden.



After seeing the earlier flowering forms of **Erythronium hendersonii** get destroyed by the icy winds it is good to have this group of seedlings flowering in sunshine.



Erythronium revolutum hybrids



The larger Trilliums are also appearing above the various ground cover plants that we use.



Trillium albidum



Trillium grandiflorum



Despite the heavy damage the cold winds caused to the foliage these **Trillium grandiflorum** seedlings have gone on to produce their pink flushed flowers.





This pale pink form of *Trillium grandiflorum* is flowering happily through a carpet of *Dicentra* foliage.



I will leave you this week with the finest of the pink forms, **Trillium grandiflorum Gothenberg Pink**.....