



BULB LOG.....14-02-2003



Bulb bed

Well, the snow has gone for just now and the early flowering bulbs have emerged relatively unscathed from under the blanket of snow. Iris 'Kathrine Hodgkin' will dominate this bed over the next few weeks. It multiplies itself by rice grain bulbils which break off when we split the clumps every few years as they get so congested that you cannot see the beauty of the individual flowers. These rice grains take about three years before they start to flower and this bed is full of them.

Crocus sieberi atticus

Crocus sieberi atticus is another bulb that does really well in our garden it has steadily increased over the years and now it is every where and it is always the first *Crocus* into flower.

The snow drops also enjoyed the bit of sun this week opening their flowers in the warmth. I am a long way from being a *Galanthophile* but I do enjoy their charm even if I am not instantly compelled to throw myself on the ground to study the extent of their green markings. (I save that sort of behaviour for *Frits* and *Erythroniums*!)

A nice selection of the more showy ones is a joy on a sunny late winter day.



Galanthus

I also like to have the snowflake, *Leucojum*, in the garden and we grow quite a number of these as well.



Leucojum vernum

The other early bulb to appear is the *Eranthis* which seed around even in our acid soil and are so beautiful when they eventually open.



Eranthis

A lot of our time is spent just walking around the garden, ignoring all the obvious tidying up that needs to be done, seeing what new delight has appeared from below ground, that is the real joy of gardening. After a walk round the garden it is off round the frames, usually with a cup of tea in hand, where many treasures are raised.



Bulb frame 1

It is amazing just how quickly the spring bulbs shoot up whenever we get a warm day.



Crocus cvijicii

Crocus cvijicii came from not being visible above the gravel to being in full flower within two days.

It also grows in the garden but I always like to have some pots of it in the frames where we can collect the seed more easily as this is the main way of increasing this still scarce species.

Bulb house, crocus

Things move even quicker under glass in the bulb house and it is definitely Crocus time just now. Because of the speed of growth in bulbs they must have plenty of water to fuel this rapid surge of cell growth, so watering has been the daily routine as long as it is not freezing or a very wet day. All the Narcissus that have been flowering for the last few months are now starting to build up next years food reserve and they need extra feeding so I have spread sulphate of potash on all of their pots now and this is washed in as I water them.





Crocus olivierii

Crocus olivierii is glorious: opening whenever the sun shines it even attracted a very large bumble bee into the bulb house this week who was zubbing from crocus to crocus without any morals at all, it always surprises me that we do not get more crocus hybrids from in our own seedlings.



Crocus sieberi sieberi

Crocus sieberi sieberi is just ready to open and will be one of the pots that we hope to take with us on Saturday when we go down to the Early Bulb Display at Dunblane. It is the first get together of the Season and we enjoy meeting our friends that we have not seen for a few months as well as enjoying the plants and the talks.