



## BULB LOG..... --2004



Spot the difference

I thought it would be nice to start the new year with a wee quiz to make you work and see if you are paying attention so you have to spot the difference between the two pictures above.

While we have kept some written records of what is in flower at a particular time of the year last year, because of the bulb log, we now have a large number of pictures that are filed by date so we can do a direct comparison between this year and last. You can join in by reading the corresponding log from 2003. Last year I said how early the Narcissus 'Cedric Morris' (see above picture) were and this year they are even further advanced. The fascinating thing is that many of the other narcissus flowers shown in the first log of 2003 are nowhere near to flowering yet - some are weeks away from opening.



Tropaeolum azureum

These are two *Tropaeolum azureum* seedlings in the plunge, I discussed them in an earlier log, what strikes me is the extreme difference in the leaves. I am now wondering if they are both *T. azureum* or is one *T. tricolor* (*tricolorum*)? I have never seen any seed on our plants of *T. tricolor*. There are three possibilities 1) the leaves of *T. azureum* can vary a lot, 2) it is *T. tricolor* or 3) could we have a hybrid? (Or has a bird brought in a seed of *T. speciosum* that romps freely all over our garden.) This is part of the fascination of growing plants.





Frit pot erupting

What do you notice about this pot ? A sure sign that there is substantial growth below ground is the way the gravel is being pushed up well above the rim - this is a very welcome and reassuring sight.



*Fritillaria yuminensis* pot

Soon the shoots will break the surface like this pot of *Fritillaria yuminensis* which has joined the ranks of the early risers among the Frits we grow.

shoot

It is such a welcome sight to see these shoots that promise beautiful scented flowers later in the spring.

Fritillaria yuminensis



Frit new shoots

Always one of the earliest frits to appear is *F. 'Martha Roderick'* (picture, left) which holds the record with us as the first frit to appear and the last frit to flower and go dormant in the summer so it has the longest above ground growing period. On the right is a form of *F. caucasica* that also appears very early but this plant is also one of the first into flower.



## Frit pluriflora seed

This pot of *Fritillaria pluriflora* seed is starting to germinate. It was sown in September and sat outside until last week's snow melted - I found it, forgotten by the bird bath, already germinating so I now have it under glass.



## Frit rice

This pot of Frit rice is the most advanced of the frits and this is because it was planted very late in November. It had been stored in a fridge, at about 2C, since we did our repotting in July. I have observed over a number of years that bulbs stored in a fridge and planted late come up earlier than those planted to our normal regime.



## Crocus biflorus ssp tauri 2

Definitely an early bird of the species *Crocus biflorus* ssp *tauri* is more advanced than it has been in previous years - a very welcome sight to cheer in 2004.

I hope that you all have a very good gardening year - especially among your bulbs.