



BULB LOG.....06-12-2007



Bird bath

The cold, wet and very windy weather has finally brought down most of the leaves from the acers in the garden and this picture also marks another mile stone – it is the second picture I have taken with my new camera.



Two cameras

Wait a minute, I hear you say, it is not long since you bought the Fuji 9500 zoom: but that was about two years and 9037 pictures ago.

Olympus E330

I did declare on the forum some time ago that I was very taken with the Olympus E330

digital SLR , this has a flip out screen on which you can view the live image just like the Fuji. Once you have used a camera with a flip out screen, especially for macro work on low lying plants, there is no way you would go back to lying with your ear pressed to the ground trying to look at an alpine through the view finder - so that feature would be a





must if I were to go for a digital SLR. The other requirement I wanted was some device to tackle the issue of dust on the image sensor and the Olympus E330 has a sonic vibrator to clean the sensor. The last of my criteria was it had to be a reasonable price that I could afford and when I first looked it was over £800 just for the body. However by chance I found it for a fraction of that price on Tesco Direct - £349.97 and that was within my budget. When I think of how much it cost me to buy and process slide film it will not take long for me to get my money back. I seem to remember I paid just under £300 for the Fuji and if you work out how much that is per picture it comes to 3.3pence per picture. If I had taken that many slides and was still paying the same as I was six years ago when I last used slides I would have spent £2008. So, it will not be long before I get my money's worth out of the Olympus – I will also be hanging on to the Fuji.



Problem cyclamen

Now of course I have to start learning the new camera and its functions so I will start with the colour balance. We all have a preference for a certain colour balance when we see a picture and it will vary between people, some prefer warm tones, others cool. What is important is that you learn how to change the settings. The picture on the left was taken with the white balance set to automatic and for me it is too yellow. I switched the white balance to a preset for cloudy conditions which gave a much more pleasing and realistic colour to my eye at least. What do you think? Now to the plant: this is the cyclamen with the wilting leaves – I tipped the gravel off the top to see if there were any signs of rot on the top of the corm.



Cyclamen seed coils

Nothing was evident and the leaves are all soundly attached – you can also see that the seed pods have all coiled down in a perfectly normal manner and seem to be healthy for now at least. I have not tipped the corm out to see its roots yet but I did give the corm a good tug to get an indication of how it was rooted and it seemed to have a good hold of the compost with no give at all. I will continue to watch this plant and try and work out its problem.





*Cyclamen cyprium* seedlings

I showed a flowering seedling of *Cyclamen cyprium* a few weeks ago which had very nice leaves. Here is a pot of seedlings which would probably do better if I had pricked them out this summer; I will separate them out next summer.



*Cyclamen hederifolium* silver leaf seedlings

Two more pots of *Cyclamen* seedlings that would also grow on better if they were potted out individually - this time they are *C. hederifolium* silver leaf seedlings.





Narcissus time

Narcissus time is upon us now as more of the *N. romieuxii* forms and hybrids are opening every week.



Narcissus seedlings

It is also exciting to see the first of this year's seedlings appearing. These seeds were sown half way down the pot and watered in well in September and now they are growing strongly – three years to flowers.

A few more shots as I test my new camera. The auto focus system worked well on these Narcissus 'Camoro' flowers – I can set it to focus on a single point or several points plus of course I can focus manually.





Narcissus 'Camoro'



Narcissus romieuxii mesatlanticus

Interesting to see how *Narcissus romieuxii mesatlanticus* has quite a yellow flush as it first emerges but it soon turns to a creamy white as the corona unfolds.