



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

ISSN 2514-6114

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BULB LOG 48..... 1st December 2021



Hedera helix



Regular readers will know that while we grow some rare and difficult plants that is never at the expense of the more common, easy to grow plants such as Ivy that will often arrive in your garden spontaneously.

Hedera helix is one of the many native plants, often considered weeds, which can provide the most beneficial resources to our wild life. If allowed it can become invasive so the gardener needs to take control of where it is permitted to grow. We have encouraged it to grow up part of the wall at the southern end of the garden where it is in deep shade. The tangle of

growth is valuable shelter for a range of wild life including providing nesting sites for many birds, a month ago it was buzzing with bees, wasps and hover flies enjoying feeding on the generous supply of pollen.



Now the first of the ***Hedera helix*** fruits are colouring up and will provide the birds with a source of food well into the winter – how many other plants flower and fruit this late in the year ?



This past week Storm Arwen crashed into us -it was the biggest storm for many years with gale force winds of up



to 100 miles per hour along with rain and snow which combined to bring down many trees as well as causing damage to buildings. We only suffered light damage with some panes of glass blown out of the bulb houses as well as a shed window. The fierce winds that lasted for several hours ripped more berries from the Cotoneaster trees along with a few small branches that got broken off a Rhododendron but apart from the dramatic shaking, the trees and shrubs survived the wind. Some weeks there is so much going on in the

garden and I take so many photographs that my problem is selecting which ones to share in the Bulb Log however with the storm I have spent less time in the garden, not taken so many pictures, and as a result I have had to look back and use some earlier pictures to complete this week's Bulb Log



Checking the garden after the storm.





Chamaecyparis lawsoniana

Unless you have a very large estate there are some trees you should not plant in your garden and Lawson's Cypress is top of my list. Many people plant it because they want a fast growing tree or hedge without thinking that when it reaches the size that they want it keeps on growing.



Chamaecyparis lawsoniana

The best trees and shrubs for hedges are those that can be cut back hard and will produce buds and new growth from old wood and Lawson's Cypress is not one of those.

When allowed to grow to maturity in an open woodland it is a magnificent tree but how many problems has it caused in gardens, where all too often it is badly managed as a hedge, dominating space as it gets wider and higher, the spreading canopy robbing

the light from above the ground while the roots are impoverishing the soil below.



Having said that we are guilty of growing inappropriate trees such as this *Fitzroya cupressoides*, native to the Andes mountains of southern Chile and Argentina, which has been growing in our front garden for 25 plus years albeit severely cut back every year.



Fitzroya is a monotypic genus in the cypress family named by Charles Darwin for Captain Fitzroy of H.M.S. Beagle. It is a fascinating tree that can reach 45 metres in height with the biggest officially recorded specimen, found in Argentina, growing to a height of 57 metres - it was 2600 years old although the oldest specimen on record with a fully verified age of 3622 makes it the second-greatest fully verified age recorded for any

living tree.

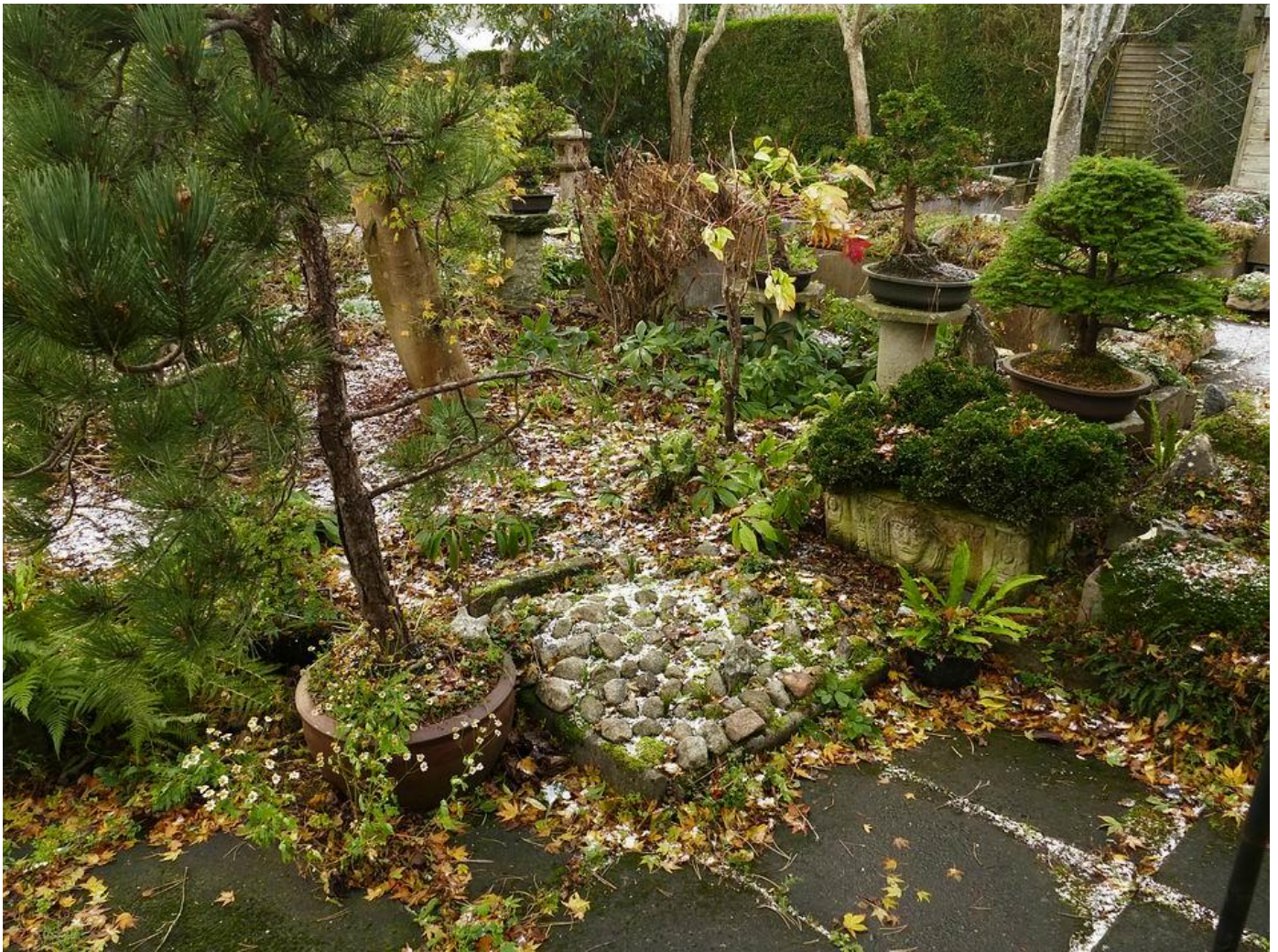


Fitzroya cupressoides seen here growing on the left of the path with a **Sequoiadendron giganteum** to the right.

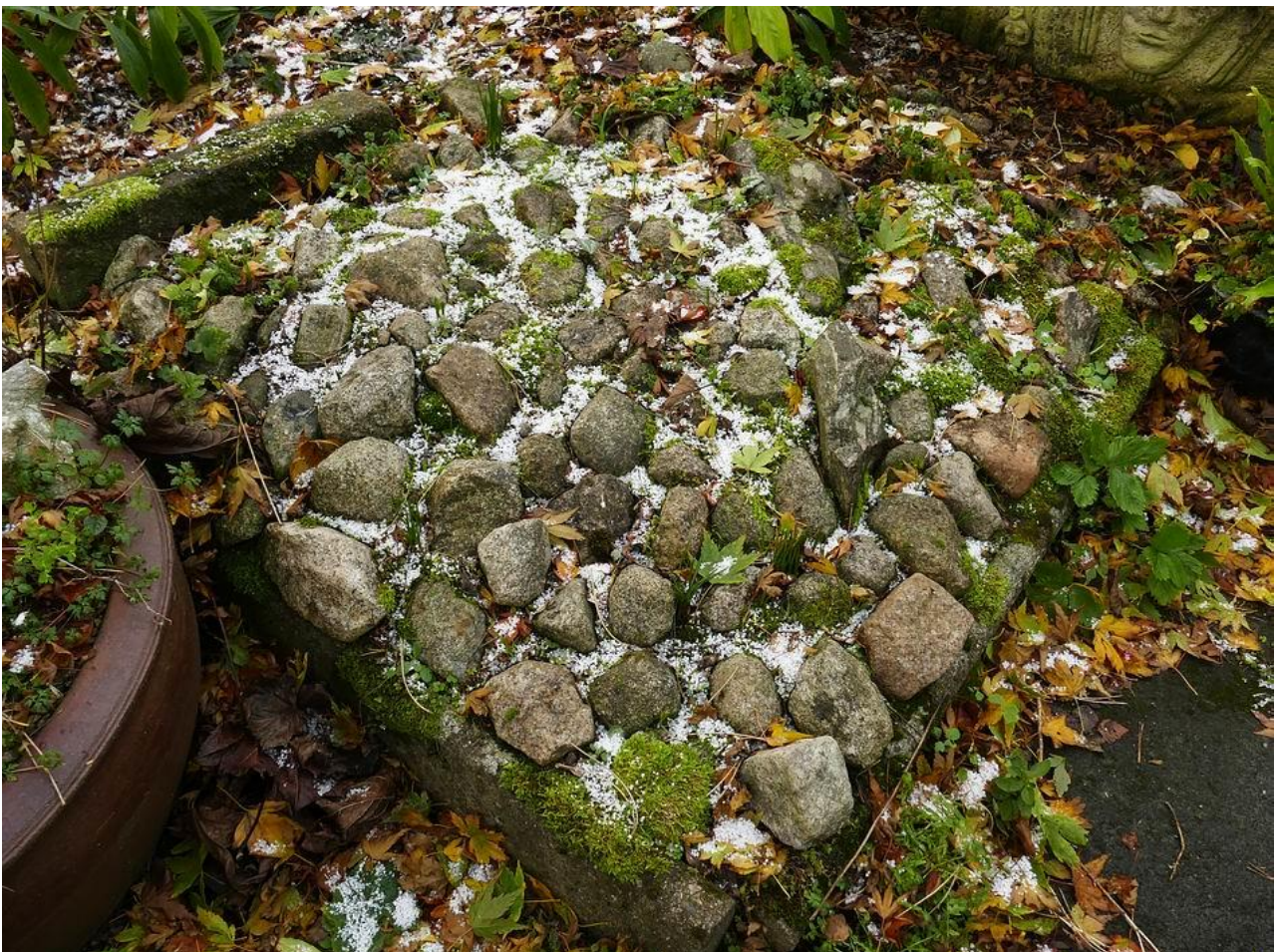


Metasequoia glyptostroboides

Metasequoia glyptostroboides, the Dawn Redwood, is another of my top trees if only we had enough space - it is the sole living species of the genus *Metasequoia*.



Back in the garden as the storm raged I was able to grab some pictures from the shelter of the house and the nearest bed is the small 'Cobble Bed' pictured as the snow came and went as the storm blew.





The snow has not lasted long and as I write this on Tuesday it is all gone.



Looking further back to the sand bed in its original state before the mice dug and ate the crocus corns.



The cobbles were added as my solution to stop the mice digging up and eating the bulbs.



Crocus and Galanthus from the early spring.



I did venture out during a lull in the wind to record some of the troughs as we go into winter.



These tiny troughs were landscaped and planted with unrooted cuttings as a demonstration at a workshop in 2008.

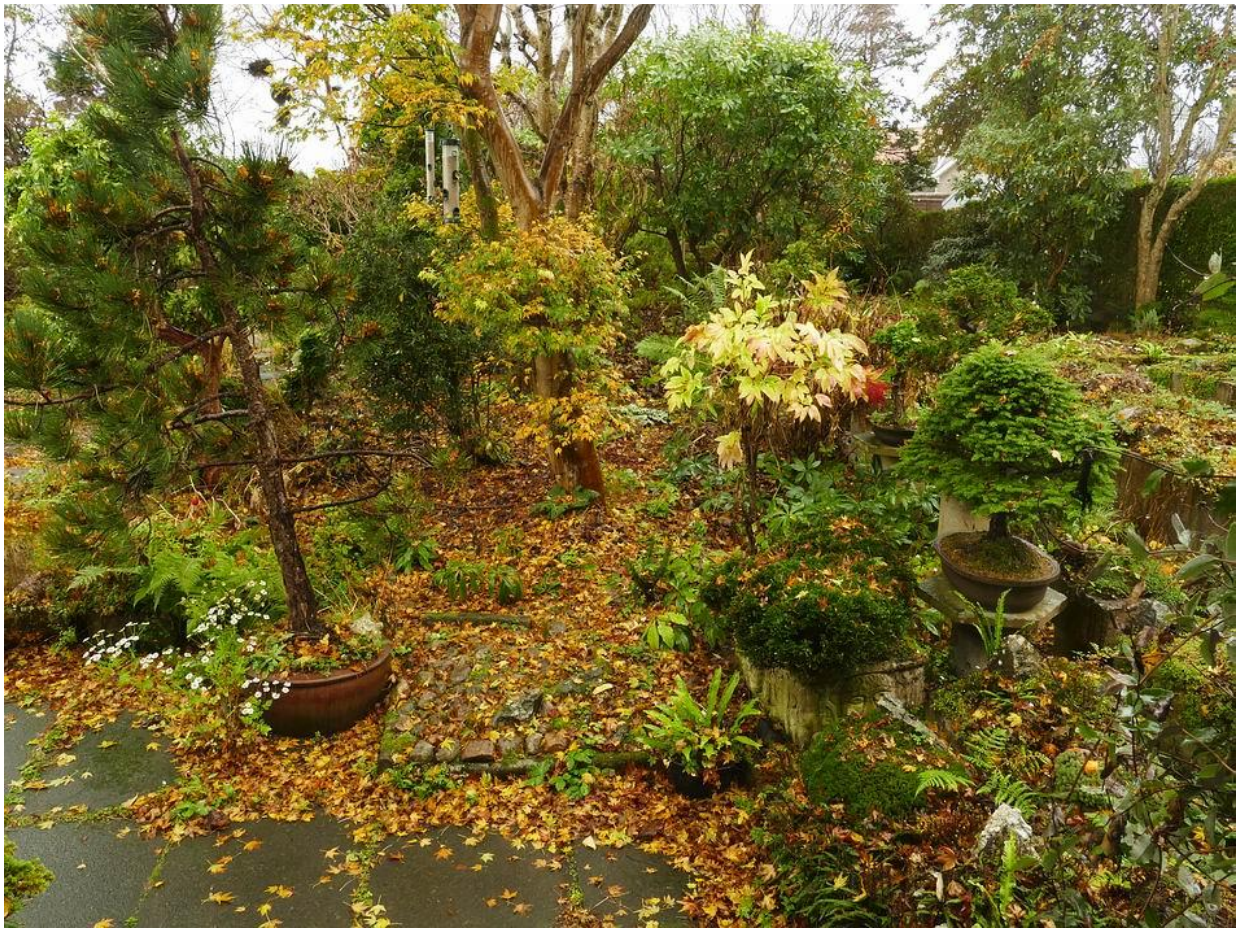


Over the years these plants have grown to completely cover the rocky landscape.



All our troughs are experiments in habitat: this one is planted with plants that many would call weeds.





The warm colours of Autumn light up the garden before the storm moved in.



Feeding the birds.

Looking up into some of the trees in the garden the Ivy can be seen in the bottom left corner.



Trees reflected in the water.



I will leave you with one of the very first 'dwarf' conifers we planted in the garden over forty years ago it has been clipped every year