



BULB LOG 1116th March 2022



Narcissus bulbocodium, *cantabricus* and *x susannah*



While it would be easy for me to be distracted away from the bulb houses by all the plants flowering in the garden, the lure of the small Narcissus is too great to ignore. The earliest flowers have faded but are replaced as quickly as they go over by another wave of forms and species. My survey starts with the bulbs growing in pots where there is a colourful flowering peak.



Two bulbocodium hybrids raised by the late Don Stead are on the left, an un-named strong yellow and the distinctively shaped creamy white one I named 'Don Stead' on the right.



Narcissus 'Don Stead'



The un-named yellow hybrid looks very like a short form of *Narcissus bulbocodium* but I believe it is a hybrid as in the many the years we have grown them neither it nor *Narcissus* 'Don Stead' have ever set any seed.



Narcissus bulbocodium



Some of the miniatures growing in these 7cms pots: from the left one of our own seedlings, the others are from Anne Wright of Dryad Nursery.



First an unnamed seedling with large flowers on short stems that I found in a pot of Crocus.



A selection from Anne Wright.



Some of Anne's breeding: a miniature trumpet, *Narcissus* 'Gianna', a hoop hybrid, *Narcissus* 'Giselle' and Miss 'Poppy'



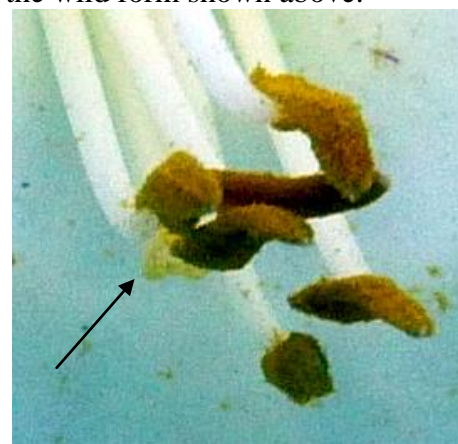
Narcissus cantabricus clusii and a wild form of the naturally occurring hybrid between *Narcissus triandrus* and *Narcissus cantabricus* classified as *Narcissus x susannae*.



I am delighted to see the **Narcissus x susannae** we raised from wild seed is shedding plenty pollen, that looks to be fully fertile, which I have been spreading around with a paint brush.



Many years ago I made the cross between plants of *Narcissus triandrus* and *Narcissus cantabricus* we were growing and raised our own version of **Narcissus x susannae** shown on the left. If you look carefully there are two differences -first our version, like many hybrids, does not have good pollen, it looks yellow but it is hard and dry not fluffy and shedding like on the wild form shown above.



The second difference is the style on the wild form is long putting the stigma well beyond the anthers while in our version it is short holding the stigma below the anthers.

The stock of our **Narcissus x susannae** is planted out in the various sand beds and this one has produced two flowers which does not happen every year but is something the bulbs will do when they are growing well. Needless to say I have been cross pollinating all the forms we have in the hope of getting a good seed set.



I have learned a lot of lessons since we planted the first 'U' shaped sand bed which is now a jungle of growth. It may look like it is over for the year but there are still some fresh flowers and more waves of colour still to come.



I love the inside outside effect we get when the early flowering bulbs in the garden combine with those under glass.



With the knowledge of how well the Narcissus grow in the sand beds I spaced them out in these beds so they would not have to compete for space and light.



The first to flower in the autumn and through the winter months are mostly forms and hybrids of *Narcissus albidus*, *bulbocodium* and *romieuxii* and because of the low winter light levels they do tend to grow tall even when given space but the later forms of *Narcissus bulbocodium*, *cantabricus* and *romieuxii* stay nice and short.



***Narcissus bulbocodium* and hybrid.**



Next for a series of forms of *Narcissus bulbocodium* given space so they are able to flower on short stems.



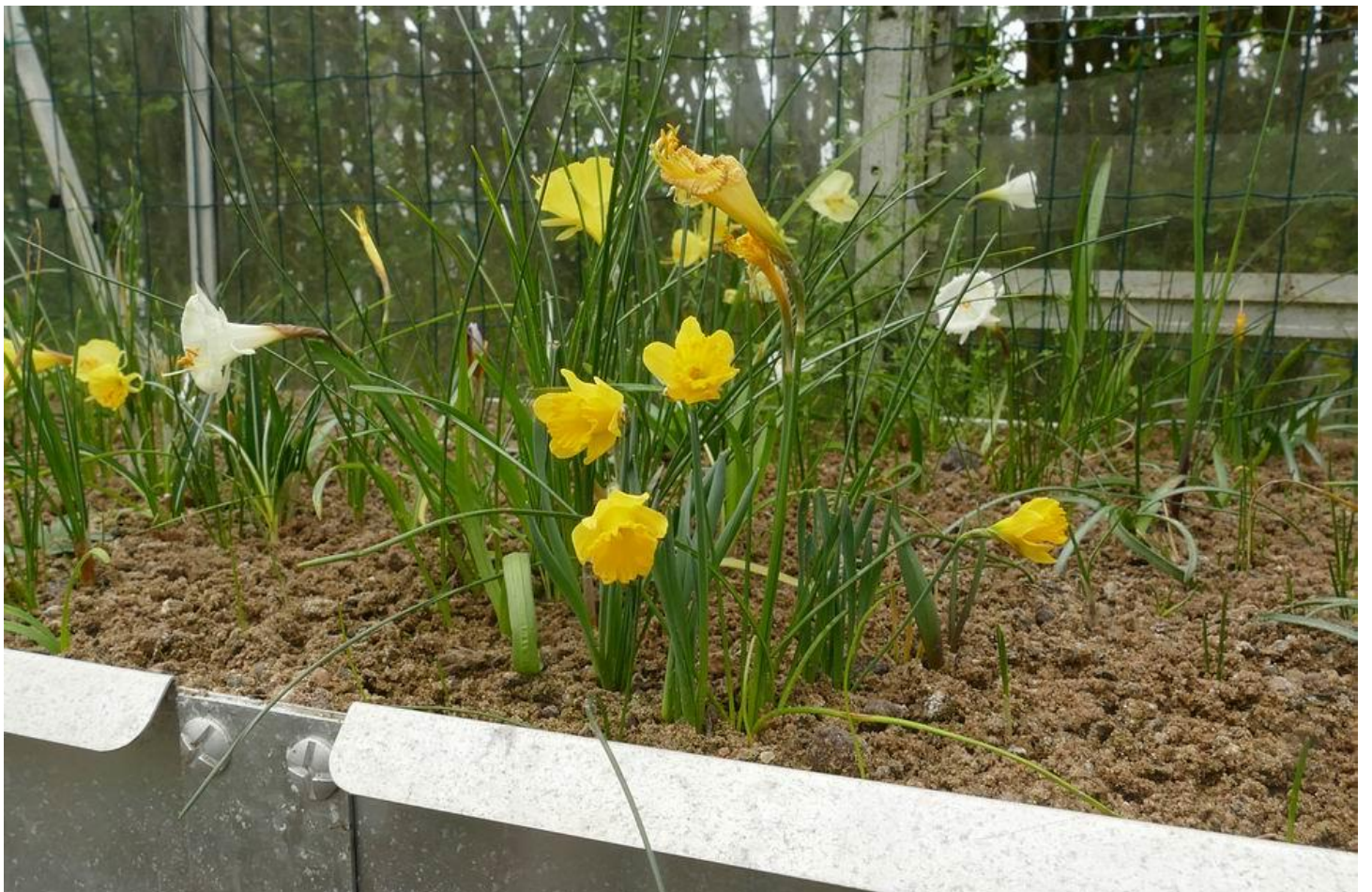


Narcissus bulbocodium





Species and hybrids of *Narcissus bulbocodium*



Narcissus asturiensis



One trumpet type daffodil stands out among the hoard of hoops as its flowers start to open. We first grew this under the name *Narcissus perez-chiscanoi* but now it comes under ***Narcissus confusus***.



Narcissus confusus is among the first of the trumpet daffodils to flower for us both under glass and in the garden.



The yellow of the daffodils stands out among the predominantly white flowers of *Galanthus* and *Leucojum*.



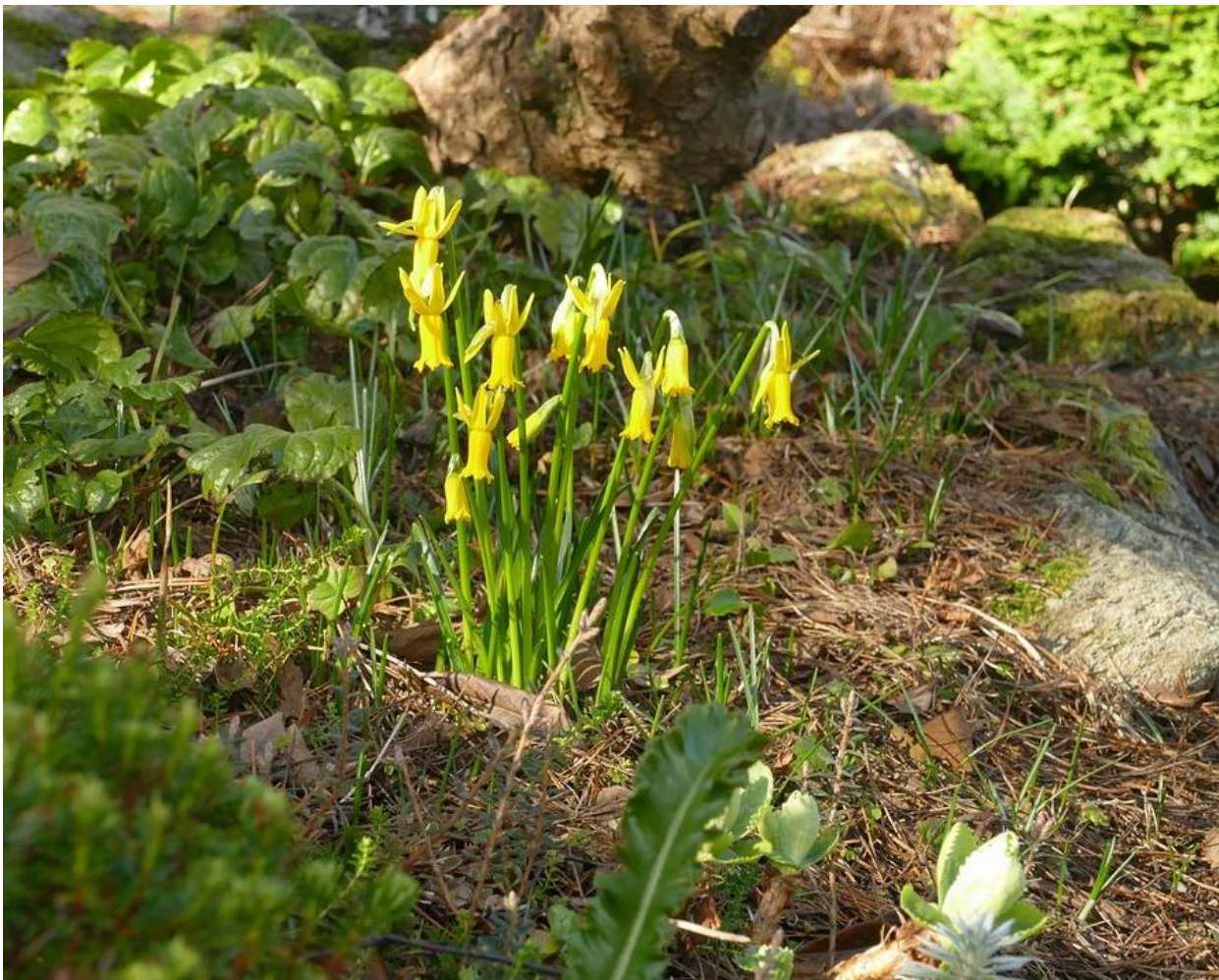
Leucojum vernum, *Narcissus hispanicus* and *Galanthus*



Narcissus cyclamineus, asturiensis and Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' growing in a raised slab bed.



While most forms of **Narcissus cyclamineus** have a single flower, we nearly always find the odd one sporting two but this is not a stable feature of the species. All our **Narcissus cyclamineus** are seed raised.



We have raised all our **Naricssus cyclamineus** from seed which is the most reliable method of increase for this species however some of the seedlings, such as this one, do form clumps more readily than others. As vegetative increase is rather slow I do spend time going round pollinating the flowers at this time of year to maximise the chance of them setting seed.



The final series of images for this week are of the **New Bed Beside the Pond** which is really starting to mature nicely and looking very colourful with the plants emerging through the pine needle mulch.





I planted *Eranthis* 'Guinea Gold' in this bed because it does not set seed. It is unusual for me not to want a plant to seed around but here I wanted the flowers without the mass seeding that I encourage of *Eranthis hyemalis* across most of the garden. The reason behind this is I have a number of other bulbs such as *Narcissus cyclamineus*, *Erythronium caucasicum* and *E. sibiricum* that I want to have the space to seed around without that competition.





New Bed Beside the Pond



I will leave you with **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'** and **Narcissus cyclamineus** along with a link to the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary](#) if you would like to see more of these plants and the garden