



BULB LOG 36.....7th September 2022



Cyclamen hederifolium



These **Cyclamen hederifolium** are growing beside the path right outside our front door and I love the way their stems push up through the other plants to display their pink and white flowers. They are growing in the narrow gravel strip between the paving slabs and the

garden bed. Like with so much of what we grow they were not started by planting out potted plants but by simply scattering seeds. Interestingly this week while I was doing some tidying I found a newly opened *Cyclamen hederifolium* seed capsule revealing its contents of plump seed. The plant held on to that seed for a year before shedding it at the same time as the new season's flowers were emerging giving us the lead that this is the ideal time to sow any *Cyclamen* and other bulbous plant seeds you may have.



Cyclamen hederifolium growing and flowering in a natural way though *Geranium*, *Galium*, *Saxifraga* and *Oxalis*.



For many years I have scattered **Cyclamen hederifolium** seeds around the gravel areas of the garden which are left to seed around. The natural selection process through a number of generations has resulted in a population of plants evolving which are more suited to growing in our garden conditions.



Cyclamen hederifolium



Once again while clearing away some of the old growths to make way for the emerging autumn flowering bulbs I found a **Cyclamen purpurascens** lurking in the shade of some Disporum foliage.



I am always attracted to the skeletal remains the Disporum leaves turn into – they do this quite quickly sometimes while they are still attached to the plant- I admired it here in a natural still life.



Among the autumn debris is a pile of shreadings which once the foliage dies down will be spread out as a mulch but I want to draw your attention to the **Uvularia** leaves at either side of the pile and how different they look.



This is the original form of **Uvularia grandiflora** we planted shown on the left of the pile the group right are self-sown seedlings growing where they fell from the seed capsules . See these in flower in [Bulb Log 2221](#)



There is a distinct variation between the leaves of these plants and I have also noted a difference in the colour of the flowers which is another of the reasons to encourage your plants to seed. Having groups of seedlings planted together will be more interesting and will also give good cross pollination, resulting in a more successful seed set.



Here we bring the subjects together with groups of **Cyclamen hederifolium** growing under the Uvularia foliage.



Other leaves are showing their autumn colours such as on this tree Peony.



If you grow a wide range of plants in your garden and let them seed around you will always find interest, no matter what the season, here the narrow silver **Celmisia lyalli** leaves contrast with an array of self-sown plants.



The first of September is when I start watering the bulbs under glass. They have not been watered since early June and the plunges, covered in the thatch of dried leaves and stems, look like a hay field. All this needs clearing before I can start to water.

I leave the thatch of old growth covering the sand through the summer because it shades the sand from the direct heat of the sunshine preventing the bulbs from becoming too desiccated. Although the bulbs I grow here like to be dry through the summer many can be put under stress if they get too hot and dry.





With most of the hay gathered into a bundle, which I will take to the compost heap, I will continue to clear away as much of the small bits of debris as I can before starting to water.



Gathering the small bits allows me to observe the sand in detail and that is when I spot some impatient shoots that don't even wait for the watering before they start into growth.



I spend a long time with the hose pipe spraying the water back and forward across the sand then leaving it for a while before repeating the process. It is important that the sand is soaked all the way through so moisture is there when the bulb roots start to grow - a good root system is essential for the bulbs to grow well.



As I water I find more growths emerging such as these *Sternbergia* leaves and now it is watered it is easier to gather and remove more of those small bits of old growth.



The local Sparrow population are not too pleased that I have watered the sand beds because they have enjoyed having dust baths in the dry sand through the summer – they will still have access to shelter and hunt for insects.



The way the light falls on the garden changes through the year and the low sun delivers some dramatic effects such as illuminating the fronds of a fern so they stand out from the otherwise shady background.



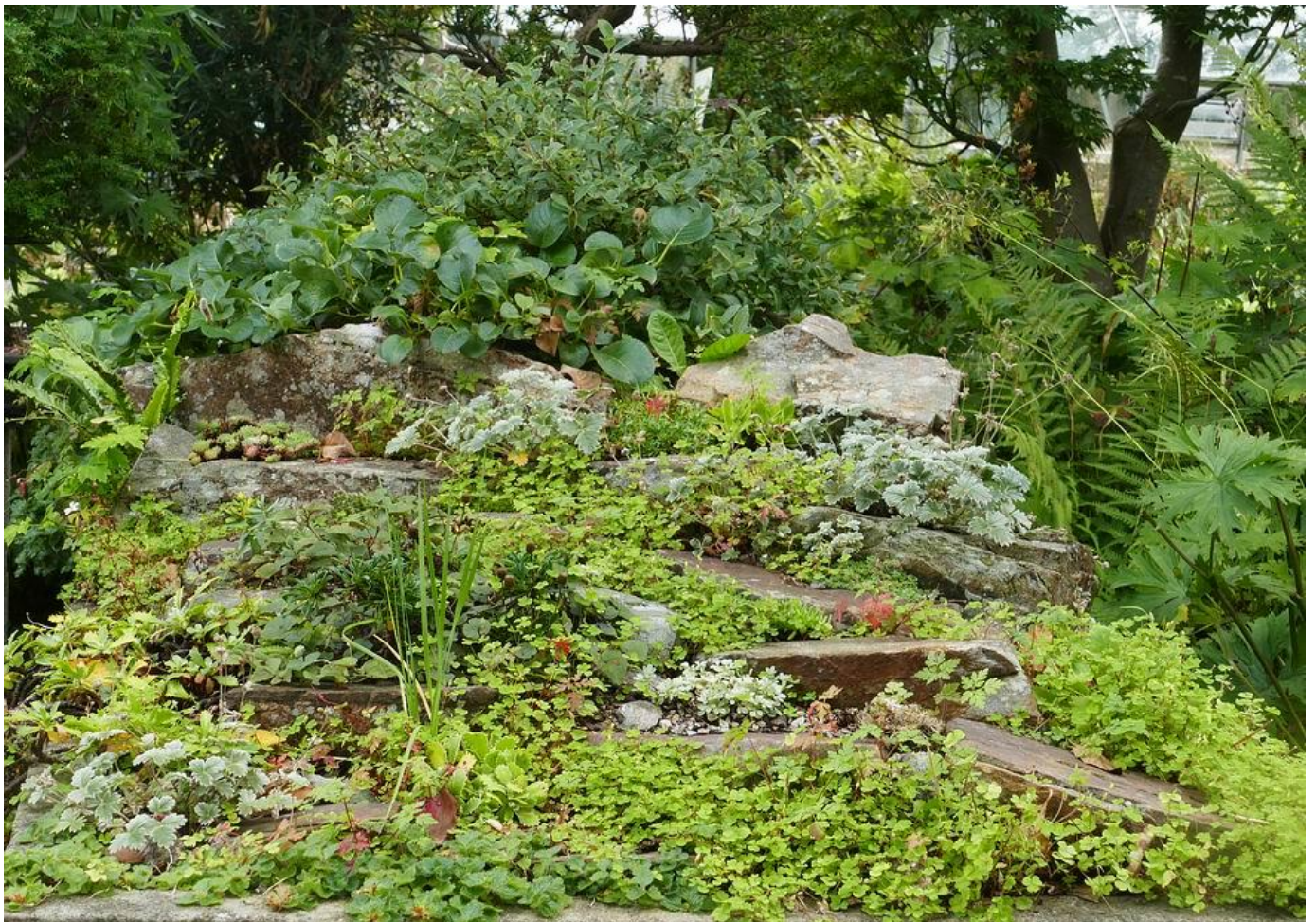
The patchy lighting effect of light and shade brings out the emerging autumn colours of the garden while above my head (below) the trees are set against a clear blue sky.





The wonders of nature are all around us even in the garden like this line of ferns that was growing not in a bed but at the edge of some paving slabs which butted up against a line of bricks set on their ends forming the edge of a bed. Over the years a number of ferns have taken hold and this week I went to remove the large one so we could see through to some autumn Crocus but as I tugged the whole strip lifted away from the slab. The ferns were forming

their own habitat as their roots accumulated and grew into any sand, soil or humus that got swept to the side of the path. I have found the perfect home for them at the base of the south boundary wall.



The line of ferns grew at the edge of the path to the right of this slab bed.



As gardeners we often have unreasonable expectations of our plants thinking they should perform to their best every year when this is not what happens in nature or the garden. Last year this very plant of **Eucomis bicolor** had only two flower stems while this year it has five; it is often the case that after flowering bulbous plants can take more than one growing season to build back to full flowering size again. The reasons may be due to environmental or climatic conditions.



I am glad to say that we have had a month's worth of rain over the past week which brings welcome relief to the trees and shrubs as well as being perfect timing for the bulbs growing in the open garden.



Walking round the garden my eye is drawn to more spots of colour as the autumn flowering bulbs gather a pace.



I will leave you for this week with a group of *Colchicum* partially illuminated by the speckled autumn light.....