



BULB LOG 41.....12th October 2022





There is so much beauty in nature that I have never been able to resist so all my life I have been compelled to collect things that I find on my walks. Sometimes I have to collect just a memory by taking pictures of what I see while other times I can collect the actual object. I rarely come back from a walk without some kind of souvenir and one day this week I spotted the 'U' shaped bit of wood and I tried to understand how it grew into that shape. It must have been forced into that shape by growing round something so I thought I could stage it as a container filled with some of the other treasures I brought home.

The bountiful autumn crops of tree seeds are among nature's fascinating creations. For the cover picture I staged a still life by filling the 'U' with the cones of the Scots Pine adding some colour from fern fronds and leaves. The next picture has some amber-like solidified tree sap plus

a small stem with a lovely burr suspended to close off the 'U'. Then for the last image I placed some Horse Chestnuts and Sweet Chestnuts all found locally.



I have shown pictures of Couper's Pond before but not since the large, almost two hundred year old Black Poplar (*Populus nigra*) was brought down by one of the storms earlier in the year. There has been no attempt to remove it so I have been watching it try to regrow.



The root ball at the extreme right of the previous picture is a good four metres across and possibly has a few roots still intact towards the pond side but there are masses of new growths rising all over the trunk and larger branches.



There is a wonderful crop of fungi, which I think are Shaggy Scalycaps (*Pholiota squarrosa* ?), growing on the bottom of the root ball.



I collect only images of these fascinating structures by taking a series of pictures.



Another beautiful outcrop of fungi I spotted is this white bracket type with gills growing on a section of a beech tree below where a rotten branch had broken off some years previously.



The pristine semi-transparent white mushrooms look as if they were made of porcelain by a very skilled ceramicist.



Another outcrop of fungi has sprung out of this old rotten tree trunk which I found lying in deep shade.



We are entering prime fungus season so as well as those on the trees I find plenty more fungi growing on the ground.



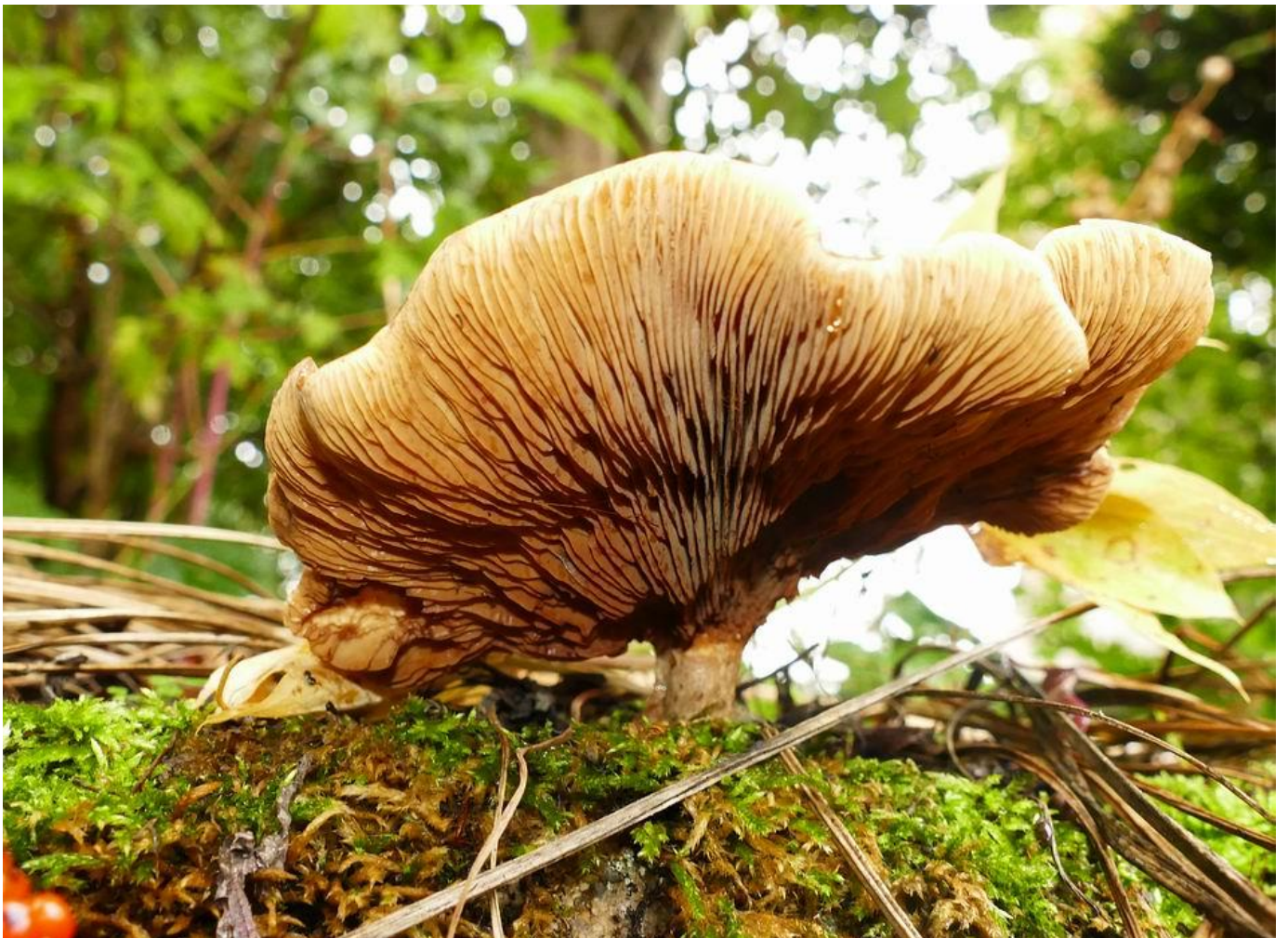
I am not familiar enough with the fungi to know which can be eaten safely but I do know that the most colourful Fly agaric, (*Amanita muscaria*) should be left alone because it is poisonous.



I return to the garden again where I find more fungi growing in the humus rich ground along with Colchicum.



A typical autumn scene in the garden is represented by some old stems, red leaves, Arisaema seed head and fungus.



Fungus



There is a fundamental shift in colour in autumn when the deciduous plants are shutting down for winter – many go through a sequence of colours as the plant withdraws support.



Yellow as represented by this fern is one of the dominant autumn colours.



The leaves on this **Vaccinium sp.** from Japan turn yellow briefly before going brown and dropping off.



Nearby and grown from the same seed collection, AGS Expedition to Japan (1988), **Vaccinium smallii** turns a lovely deep red before it drops its leaves.



Above the vacciniums the first signs of autumn colours appear on the leaves of a seed raised *Acer palmatum*.



While autumn paints bright colours above, the ground is still covered in a lovely mixed green carpet.



The trees and shrubs provide year round structure around which the ground level plantings display successive waves of colour throughout the seasons until they retreat underground to start all over again around February.



The slab beds and troughs, in various shapes and sizes, deliver us with year round interest and decoration.



Heading up the garden I pass the Erythronium plunge, rock garden bed and Japanese lantern.

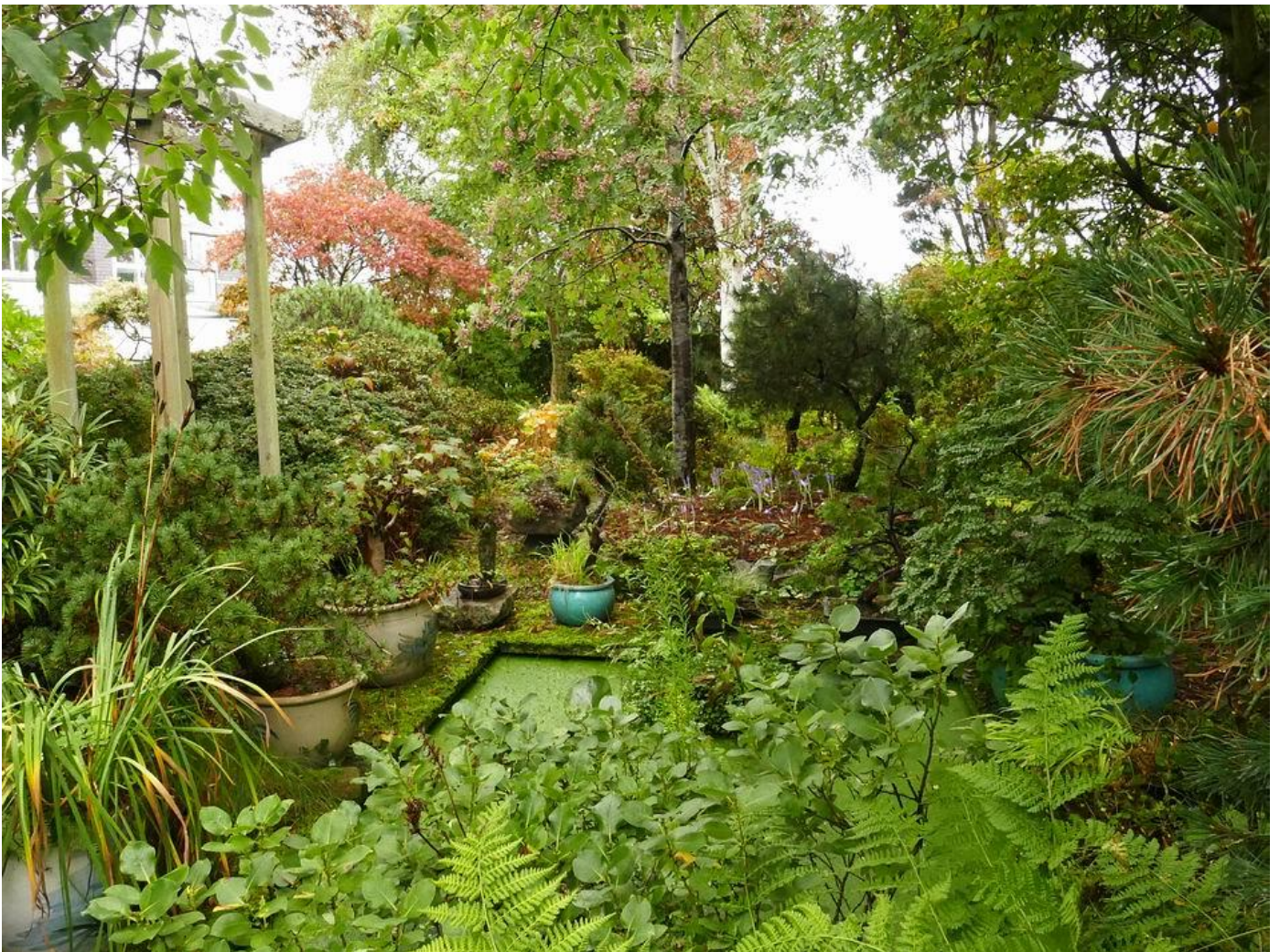




A few plants including **Crocus**, **Colchicum**, **Roscoea** and **Veratrum** continue to produce flowers.



The eye focuses in on this **Acer palmatum 'Osakazuki'** with the start of its autumn colours from close up as well as various viewpoints as I walk around the garden as shown in the following two pictures.





I could not finish this week without sharing a few more Crocus and you may notice there is one flowering at the edge of this trough. I did not plant it there so it must have got in by seed from the adjacent bed.



The trough can be seen behind this bed where the **Crocus banaticus** are currently in full flower.



The populations of autumn flowering crocus around the garden are increasing every year as they are allowed to seed, here it is the flowers of **Crocus speciosus** that are catching the light.



This time **Crocus pulchellus** grows among the dried remains of Erythronium stems which have shed their seed.



As you can see in the previous picture Erythronium and Autumn Crocus are very happy sharing the same space and you may think that this (above and below) is a plunge basket of **Crocus banaticus** when in reality the crocus seeded in some years ago and is growing in perfect harmony sharing the basket with Erythronium.



The seed most likely came from the **Crocus banaticus** growing in the rock garden bed backing on to the sand plunge.



I round off this week with a picture of **Crocus banaticus** flowers illuminated by a shaft of the autumn sunshine.