



## BULB LOG.....07-08-2003

### Codonopsis white

We first got this beautiful codonopsis under the name *C. forrestii* alba but it is now renamed *Codonopsis nepalensis* 'Himal Snow', we have found that it comes true from seed.

If you want to check out the naming of some of the codonopsis there is an article by Chris Grey-Wilson in the December 1995 edition of the *Plantsman*.



'New



### Colchicum

I will need to wait for the leaves to appear before I can put a name to this colchicum. The label is lost .... it is in the bulb bed where we plant all sorts of stray bulbs that have lost their label or we cannot find a home for.

I thought that I would say a bit about cleaning up bulbs when repotting them. I know that nobody does this in the wild but my answer to that is that we are not growing them in the wild and the conditions in cultivation are sometimes very different. There are probably far more harmful pathogens such as fungal attack in the average garden than there are in the wild.



*Crocus biflorus* cleaning corms

I like to get as much of the old tunic that is loose, off the corm. The way I do this is to gently rub the corms, as they came out of the pot (left), between my hands in a circular motion, this removes the worst of the old tunics and dried up roots but does not harm the corms which are now ready to re-plant (right).



*Crocus paschei* with seed

It is also important when repotting crocus to watch out for any seed capsules which as with the above *Crocus paschei* were below the gravel level of the pot and could be easily lost.

When I have a small amount of seed and I only have a bulb or two of the plant I now sow the seed with the parent bulb.

The main reason for doing this is to reduce the number of pots that we have as we have no more space in the glasshouses.



Crocus biflorus corm, seed and seedlings

Last year we only had one corm of this form of Crocus biflorus isauricus and as you can see if you read the label '02-1 seed' this indicates that last year (2002) we had one corm and we sowed the seed into the pot. You can see we still only have one corm in the centre surrounded by one year old seedlings with this year's seed on the outside, all will be sown back into the same pot. It is a fact that you can only increase your numbers of some bulbs by seed.

Narcissus seedlings 1 year

This is a group of one year old Narcissus seedlings which were sown at least 5cms deep in the pot. I know that a lot of people are afraid that they will never come up from this sort of depth but I can assure you that with Crocus and Narcissus seed you will get much better results and bigger better bulbs. The same is true for all bulb seed, that I have tried, that is physically similar to these two, but do not try it with



Fritillaria and Lily type seed as in my experience they do not germinate if sown deeply.



Second year Frit seedlings

I sow Frit seed on the surface and only cover it with approximately 1cm of grit. I also never repot Frit seed until at least the second year and this is what I like to find after two years. Both sown in September 2001 germinating in Spring 2002 and repotted this week, you will see that the young F. aurea bulbs on the left have already started to produce rice grain bulbils.



Narcissus jonquilla bulbs

Bulbs also have a way of telling you when they are not planted deeply enough: as these Narcissus jonquilla bulbs show how they have moved deeper each year and then turned through 90 degrees when they hit the bottom of the pot. It is vital to plant Narcissus jonquilla bulbs as deep as you can to get the best results from them.

I will sign off this week with a very beautiful hybrid lily which smells as beautiful as it looks. Maggi's Dad, who lives with us, is partially sighted and takes great pleasure in scented plants so we grow a number of these in pots so that we can place them in his sitting room when they are in flower.



Asiatic lily hybrid