



BULB LOG 28.....



Colchicum leaves

As I will be spending all next week at Art School learning a new print making process I decided to write this bulb log a few days early. Looking round to see what I might share with you I decided to show some of the areas that do not work so well all year round. This area where the Colchicum leaves have just died back does not look too good just now. There are some new growths coming such as Gladiolus, Nerine

and Eucomis but it would be nice to find something that would fill this short gap. It will have to be plants that do not mind being shaded out by the growth of the Colchicum leaves. I do have another method that I employ and that is the diversionary tactic, see below, of having some bright colours and beautiful new Rhododendron leaves close by to distract the eye from the yellowing leaves. Now the leaves have died completely back they can be removed.





Elsewhere I allow some herbaceous poppies to provide some cheery colour while the bulbs are absent.



Dactylorhiza and Roscoeia

In some beds Dactylorhiza and Roscoeia work fine and help extend the season of the interest and colour in a single bed. This picture also reveals another mistake or perhaps it is a lack of control.



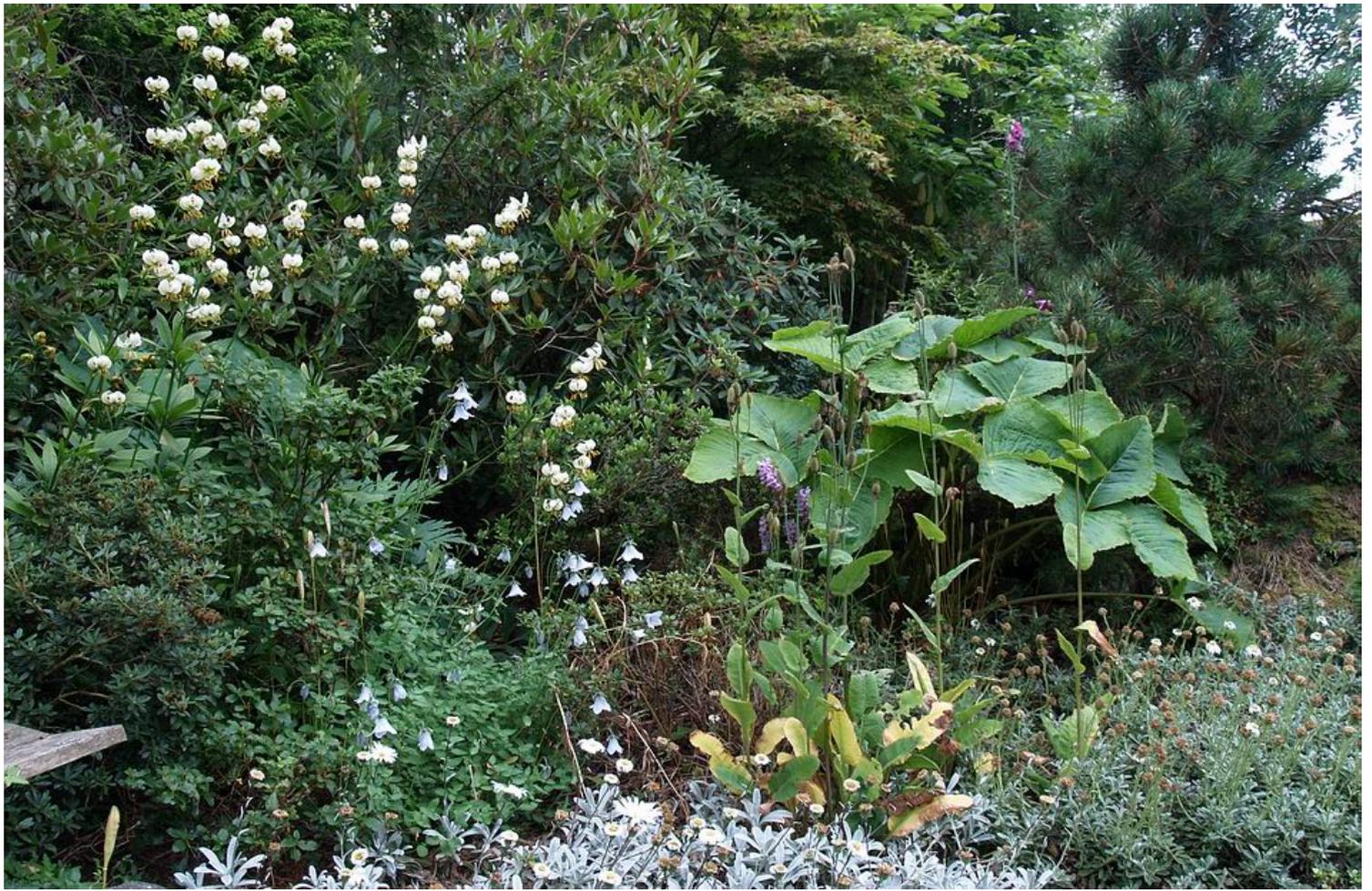
Roscoea humeana

This fine large clump of *Roscoea humeana* can only be partially seen as the adjacent *Dactylorhiza* is covering it over. I will need to lift, split and re-site the *Dactylorhiza* so we can fully enjoy both these fine plants.



Roscoea self seeding

This group of *Roscoea* are holding their own space-wise but they are self seeding so I may lift a few and move them to other beds that could use their seasonal colour.



Garden View

This should be a familiar view to regular bulb log readers with the giant, now mature, leaves of *Arisaema wilsoni* dominating the scene where earlier in the year *Erythronium* and *Corydalis* displayed their bright colours. There are a number of bulbous subjects in flower such as the flowers of *Lilium martagon album* floating in the air like a group of fairies.



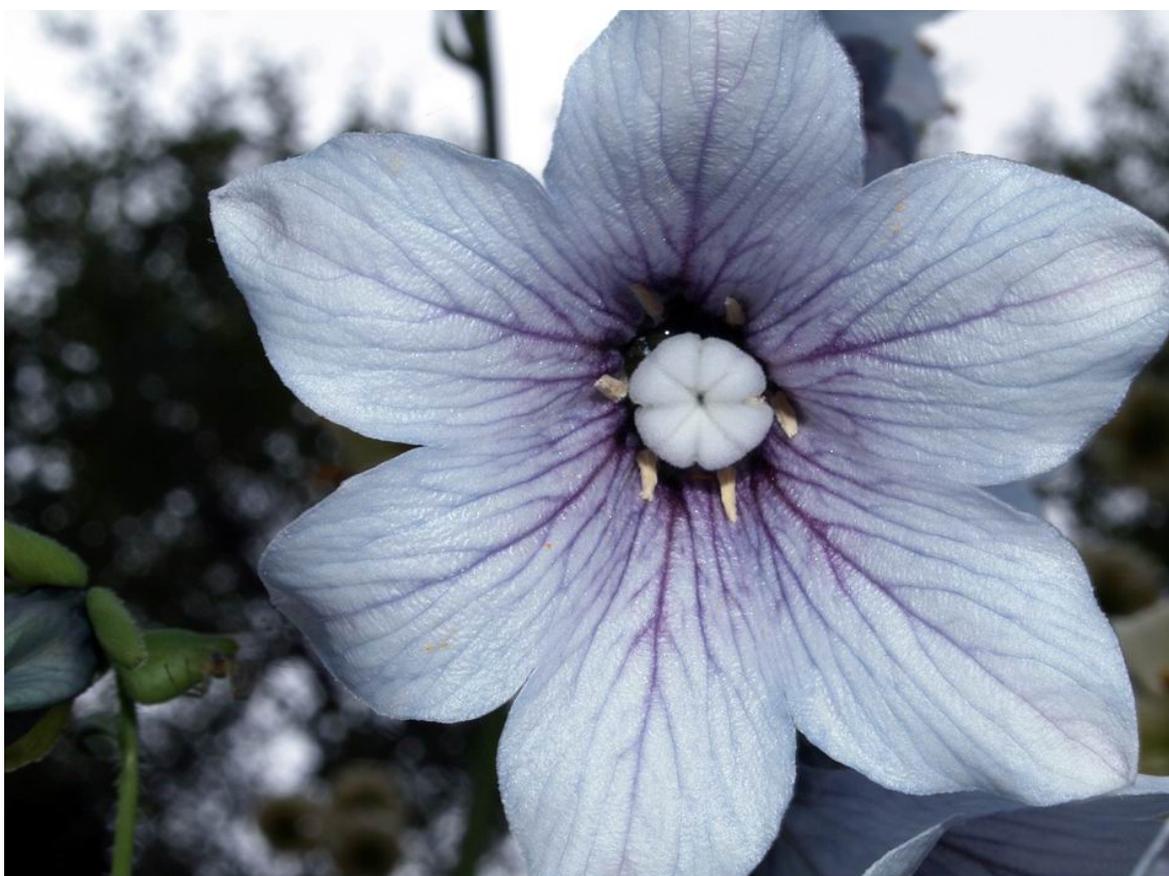
Lilium martagon album

Many lilies have straight styles at first which then bend through 90 degrees as the pollen ripens.



Codonopsis cardiophylla

If you look carefully in the garden view picture you will see this beautiful *Codonopsis cardiophylla* below the *Lilium*. From a distance its flowers also seem magically suspended in the air.



Codonopsis cardiophylla

As with many of the nodding *Codonopsis* it is well worth tilting a flower upwards to view the interior.



Arisaema and Paris

In this area of the garden green is the dominant colour in all its shades and textures but that does not mean there are no flowers. Look carefully and you will see that the Arisaema and a Paris below it are both in flower – they just happen to have green flowers



Ferny leaves

Here you can see how a fern and a *Corydalis* sp. with fern like leaves contribute to this green tapestry. Ferns are very useful plants in the summer garden as they will grow happily in the dry ground you just have to choose the right scale to suit the bed. We grow the dwarfier forms and species in bulb beds and the larger ones in the denser shaded areas below the large Rhododendrons.



Podophyllum leaves

There are a lot of Podophyllum and its relatives that have wonderful leaves both in shape and pattern. One of those accidental associations that occur in the garden is seen above with the blotched stem of *Arisaema nepenthoides* reflected in the blotched leaves of the Podophyllum. It was only when I was clearing some of the *Corydalis* foliage away to take this picture that I found the cluster of beautiful Podophyllum flowers pictured below.





Podophyllum seedling

Despite the fact that many of the early flowering bulb seedlings have now gone dormant the bulb seed frames still need watching. Some of the later germinating plants are just emerging like these strange fused first leaves on this Podophyllum.



I showed you a picture of this pot of **Arisaema nepenthoides** seedlings a few weeks ago when it was only the ones around the edge of the pot that had germinated – now you can see that the ones in the middle have caught up.



Nomocharis seedlings

To achieve flowering sized bulbs in the shortest time it is very important to keep the seedlings growing for as long as possible in their early years – this means regular watering and feeding. I apply potassium rich liquid feeds diluted to around half the recommended strength almost every time I have to water them. As most of these seedlings are in open frames I do not always have to water them as rain often keeps them wet enough but I still apply the feeds every two weeks. These *Nomocharis* seedlings were only sown in January and the broader leaves that you can see are second leaves produced from some of the young bulbs. I hope that by keeping them well watered and feeding them most of these seedlings will produce a second leaf this year, next year they should produce a short stem and hopefully I will see the first flowers appearing in year three.



Ledum seedpods

I have spoken in the past of the pleasure I get from hand weeding, identifying everything before it is pulled out. During one of those sessions I was delighted to find this tiny *Ledum* seedling growing in the sand of my experimental bulb bed tucked in close to one of the rocks. I raised these *Ledums* from the AGS Japanese expedition seed and this is the first time I have found a self sown seedling. Maggi is deadheading less than before, it seems!



Fritillaria camschatensis aurea

I do not remember ever having seed set on *Fritillaria camschatensis aurea* before. This is the plant that was called *Fritillaria camschatensis alpina aurea* when I first came across it and I seem to recall that it came from Japan. It is very distinct from the other yellow form of *F. camschatensis* and it is always shorter but I am not sure of its correct taxonomic status. While I am delighted to have these lovely fat seed pods I will wait to see the seed before I celebrate as a number of other Frits go through this process but none of the seed turns out to be viable.



Generally it has been another poor year for seed on the *Fritillarias* but a few mostly the later flowering garden grown ones have produced good plump pods.



Fritillaria imperialis seed pods

If you think the ones above are a good size what about these? *Fritillaria imperialis* produces the biggest seed pods of all the Frits that I know but then they are the biggest plants with the biggest bulbs.



Cyclamen purpurascens

I normally associate the first flowers of *Cyclamen purpurascens* with the end of July but I found these two flowers today, Friday 9th July, a nice coincidence as I have just received some lovely packets of *Cyclamen* seeds from a generous friend and I am off to sow them so I can spend next week concentrating on my art.