



BULB LOG 12.....24th March 2010



Fritillaria chitralensis

I promised at the end of last week's bulb log that I would show some of the Fritillaria that just seem to have shot up in response to the warming of the sun on the glass. Despite my sacrificing a Fritillaria chitralensis bulb to the knife in an attempt to speed up the rate of increase I still have three good flowering stems. I am sure that the failure of the cut up bulb to form buds was my fault as I did not get the storage conditions correct and rot set in. I am not put off and will try again this summer when I will aim to keep the cut pieces slightly drier – watch this space. It is a beautiful species and the flowers have a scent that reminds me of lemons.



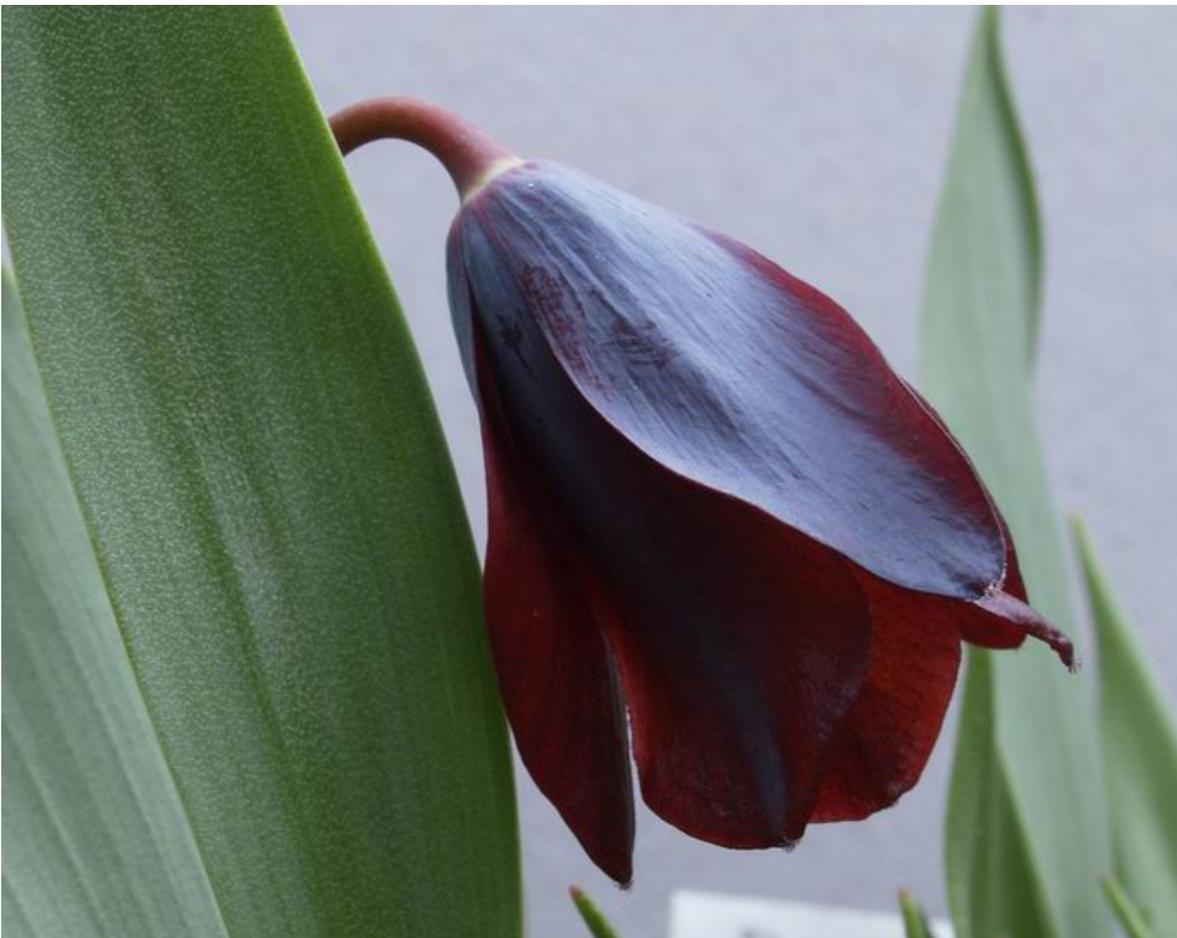
Fritillaria carica

This are two forms of Fritillaria carica that I cloned out from a pot of three seedlings many years ago. The third clone flowers quite a bit later, after the flowers on these two forms have gone over.



***Fritillaria carica* 'B'**

Although these two look superficially similar the one I have labelled clone 'B' has stippled brown markings on the petals while the other clone 'C' has pure yellow flowers. The third clone 'A' has yellow flowers but flowers much later. I know I have mentioned it before but just to remind you to look at the clusters of 'hairs' at the tips of the petals – a feature that you will see on all *Fritillaria* although it is not unique to this genus.



Fritillaria armena

The superb colour of *Fritillaria armena* is difficult to capture in all its glory because the white bloom on the dark petals tends to reflect the light. Imagine the effect that you get on fresh black grapes with that lovely silver bloom and that is the same on this species.



Fritillaria armena

This form of *Fritillaria armena* flowers on relatively short stems and it also produces rice grains. This is a pot of rice that I have grown on from the parent pot. You can see that there are still masses of young bulbils that will take around three years to reach flowering size and as even the bulbils produce bulbils so I have an almost endless supply of material to propagate this clone. I am still keen to fertilise the flowers to ensure a seed set as I still much prefer to raise my plants from seed and get that variation.



Fritillaria pinardii

This is a pot with a single clone of the very variable *Fritillaria pinardii*. I have a number of forms of this species which can vary from all dark flowers to almost all yellow flowers where it becomes difficult to tell it apart from *Fritillaria carica*.



Fritillaria minuta

This is a lovely form of *Fritillaria minuta* – not to be confused with the yellow flowered *Fritillaria minima*. *F. minuta* has what are often described as brick red flowers and many have a solid orangey/brown colour but this form has these lovely translucent pinky/brown flowers with a darker stripe running down the petals. It is not the most showy of frits as it tends to modestly hide its flowers amongst its shiny green leaves.



Fritillaria stenantha

There is nothing modest about *Fritillaria stenantha* which holds its large crystalline pinky/white flowers proudly facing outwards and there can be as many as 10 on a single stem.



Fritillaria stenantha

Seen from the side it is easy to see the large swellings at the base of the petals that form the nectar pits on the inside of the flowers. It is these horn-like bumps that gave rise to the name of the section of *Fritillaria* *Rhinopetelum* that includes this beautiful easily grown species.



***Fritillaria pudica* 'Richard Britten'**

The form of *Fritillaria pudica* called 'Richard Britten' was chosen for having larger than normal flowers, however I have raised a lot of forms from wild collected seeds that have flowers equally as large as 'Richard Britten'



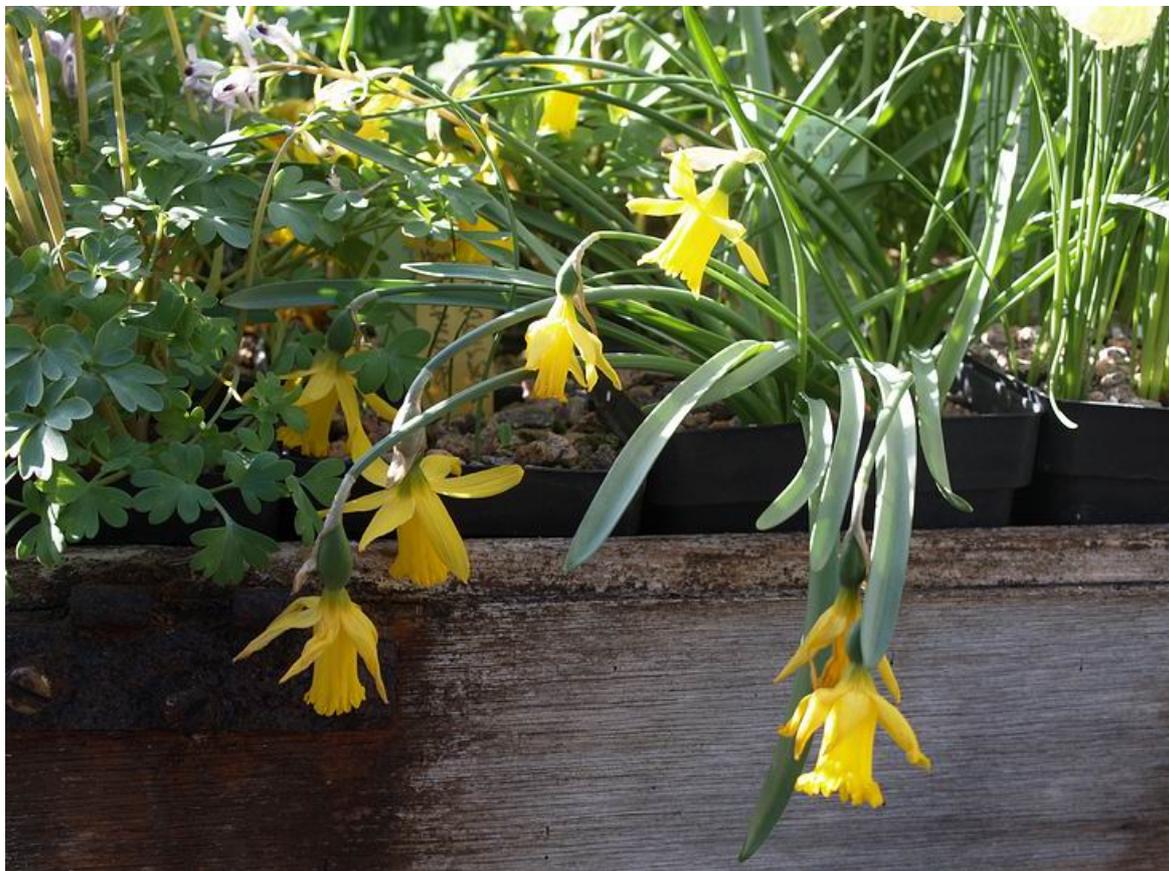
Narcissus cyclamineus

There are *Narcissus cyclamineus* popping up all over the garden just now. Last summer when I was sorting out some of the frames I decided to plant lots of them that had been in pots out into the garden. I popped them in as single bulbs dotting them around a number of beds both with gravel mulch as above and the more woodland type beds – I am delighted with the results.



Narcissus cyclamineus

These are in a plunge basket in the new frame I made last year to replace a wooden one that rotted away. This bed contains many *Erythroniums*, *Crocus* and also this basket of *Narcissus cyclamineus*. It is my intention to plant out into the garden a lot more of the bulbs that I only grow under glass. Obviously I will not risk losing all my stock of a particular bulb but I will start by planting out any spares I have when I repot. I have been doing this in a casual way for a number of years but now I am determined to do it in a more organised way.



Narcissus asturiensis

You could be excused for thinking that this *Narcissus asturiensis* is flopping over because it wants a drink but I can assure you that is not the case. When the flowers stems first come out they are more or less upright, see bulb log 1010, but when they have been fertilised they bend over with a definite kink towards the base of the stem just above the gravel. It is clearly a mechanism that this plant has evolved which I presume has some benefits to aid seed dispersal.



Narcissus 'Candle Power' x asturiensis

This is a hybrid made by Brian Duncan between *Narcissus* 'Candle Power' and *N. asturiensis* – I am sure that Brian has used a very similar form of *N. asturiensis* because this hybrid exhibits exactly the same characteristic of the stem bending over. You can see very clearly where it bends just above where the stem emerges from the leaves- if you try and straighten it springs quickly back when you let it go.



Narcissus pseudonarcissus bicolor and Narcissus pseudonarcissus eugeniae

The bigger forms of Narcissus are now starting to come into flower and above are two forms of Narcissus pseudonarcissus. I think that the one on the left is bicolor. I have grown it for a very long time in the garden and it sets seeds most years –these are the first flowers on the bulbs that were sown as seeds in 2005. On the right is a plant of Narcissus pseudonarcissus eugeniae that I was given a few years ago.



Narcissus x susannae

It is very difficult if not impossible to pick a favourite species out of any genera but if I had to choose one from Narcissus then this cross that I made between Narcissus triandrus and Narcissus cantabricus imitating the naturally occurring hybrid Narcissus x susannae would be my choice – of the white Narcissus.



Erythronium caucasicum

Erythronium caucasicum is always the first of this genus to open beating the others by around two weeks. Unfortunately I find this species slow to build up by division so it is by seed that most of the increase will come from – that is no doubt why it is quite a scarce plant and rarely offered by the trade. I am pleased however to notice that a third leaf has risen from this bulb indicating that an offset is forming and perhaps next year I will get two flowers.



Erythronium caucasicum

The main and perhaps only difference between this species and a white form of *Erythronium dens canis* is that *E. caucasicum* has yellow pollen and *dens canis* has dark violet pollen.

This flower has been out for around two weeks now opening and closing its flower depending on the weather conditions.



Erythronium dens canis

This dark coloured form of *Erythronium dens canis* is just coming into flower and as you can tell from the evidence that some of the flowers are out of focus I took this picture on a very windy day. It is a very good clone that originated in a church yard in Aberdeenshire and from the number that grow there it has been there for a very long time. It has the darkest flowers of all the forms we grow and beautifully marked leaves.

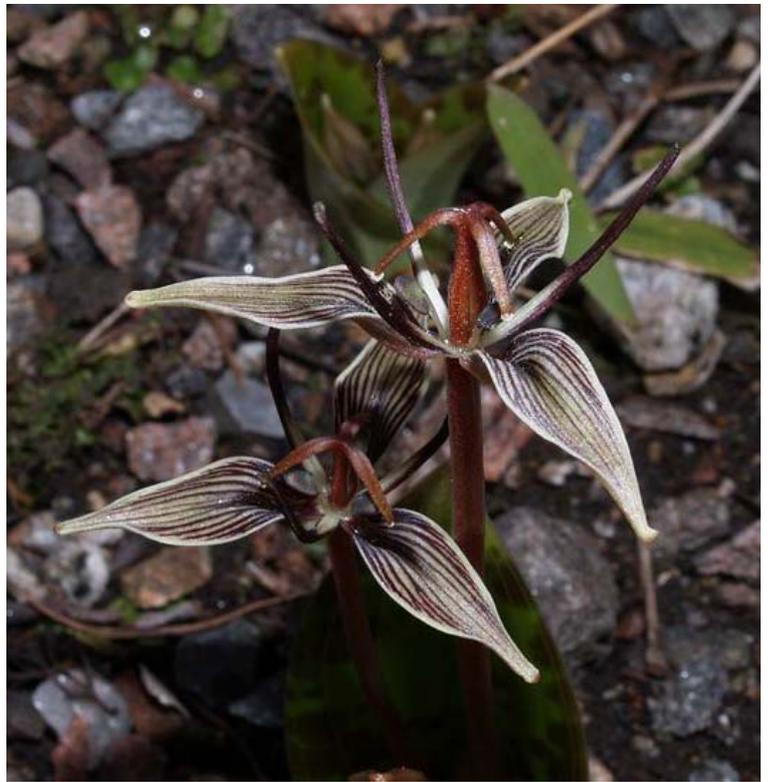


Scoliopus hallii

Scoliopus hallii is the less familiar of the two species in this genus perhaps because it has very small less 'attractive' flowers. It is one of those plants that would be termed a 'connoisseurs plant' in a nursery list.



Scoliopus hallii



Scoliopus bigelowii

and



Neither of the two species is the sort of plant that would jump out and grab the general public but if you are a plant person and look carefully at flowers then you will be captivated by their charm. It is the wonderful dark striped bracts of *Scoliopus bigelowii* along with the dark brown spotted leaves that make it so attractive. The spotting of the leaves is also variable from clone to clone and the spots fade as the season progresses. The petals are the three very narrow upward pointing structures so there are three bracts and three petals.



Scoliopus bigelowii

When you raise them from seed you will get quite a variation in the markings on *Scoliopus bigelowii*; they can range from almost totally dark maroon to almost completely lime green but I like the ones with contrasting dark lines. I have not noticed the same degree of variation in the *Scoliopus hallii* seedlings that I have raised; the one pictured earlier has the typical appearance for this species.



Anemone caucasicum

As an indicator of what else is coming into season in our garden and a trail of what might appear in the next bulb logs here is *Anemone caucasicum*.

I was pleased to be given this just over a year ago and this is the first time it has flowered for me.

It is just like a smaller version of *Anemone blanda* and as soon as it increases I will plant some into a favourable site in the garden where it will not get swamped by larger plants and where I can enjoy its charms – perhaps a trough or raised bed.



Corydalis incisa

This group of *Corydalis incisa* are growing in a raised bed and I started them off by scattering some seed from the parent plant which I grow under glass. Luckily I got two plants one white and one purple which looks much better than a group with a single colour. Now I have second generation of seedlings that have self sown with just a little help by me to distribute them around the same bed.