



BULB LOG 35..... 28<sup>th</sup> August 2013





This week's opening pictures look like spring when the Rhododendrons were in flower but these are flowering right now. Many Rhododendrons will have sporadic flowers in late summer and autumn but some of the smaller types consistently produce a second flowering. Rhododendron 'Curlew' is one of the very best yellow hybrids – it covers itself in flowers in the

spring and provides a second flush like you see here later in the year.



This form of *Rhododendron saluenense* is our best performer as it has almost as many flowers at this time of year as it does in the spring.



Rhododendron cephalanthum



Most Rhododendrons are evergreen which means they always have leaves: it does not mean that the leaves last for ever. Different species hold on to their leaves for different times some only last one year while others remain active for three years but the leaf drop comes after the new leaves have formed giving the evergreen appearance. This Rhododendron decorum shows the old leaves turning red before dropping.



Ericaceous plants are a very important part of our garden giving us a permanent structure around which we can plant with bulbs and herbaceous plants. Above a large plant of **Phyllodoce caerulea** nestles at the base of a wall along with *Rhododendron pumilum* – both of these plants produce sporadic flowers at this time of year.



**Phyllodoce caerulea**



**Rhododendron pumilum**



Here a *Cassiope wardii x fastigata*, the one I cut back to the ground about two years ago, spreads over a large area with self-seeding *Allium wallichii*.



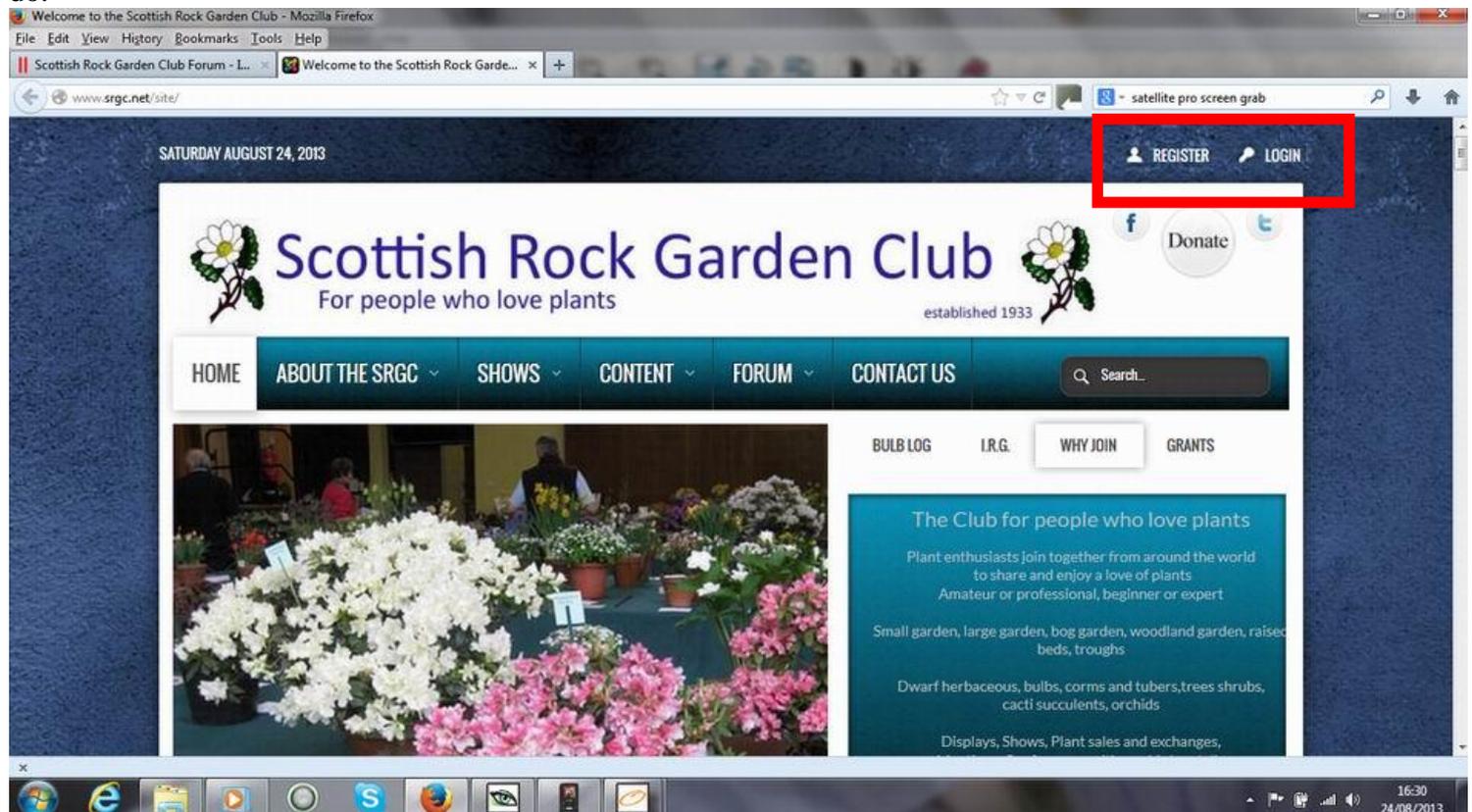
At almost a metre across this *Cassiope mertensiana* is also producing a reasonable display of late summer flowers.



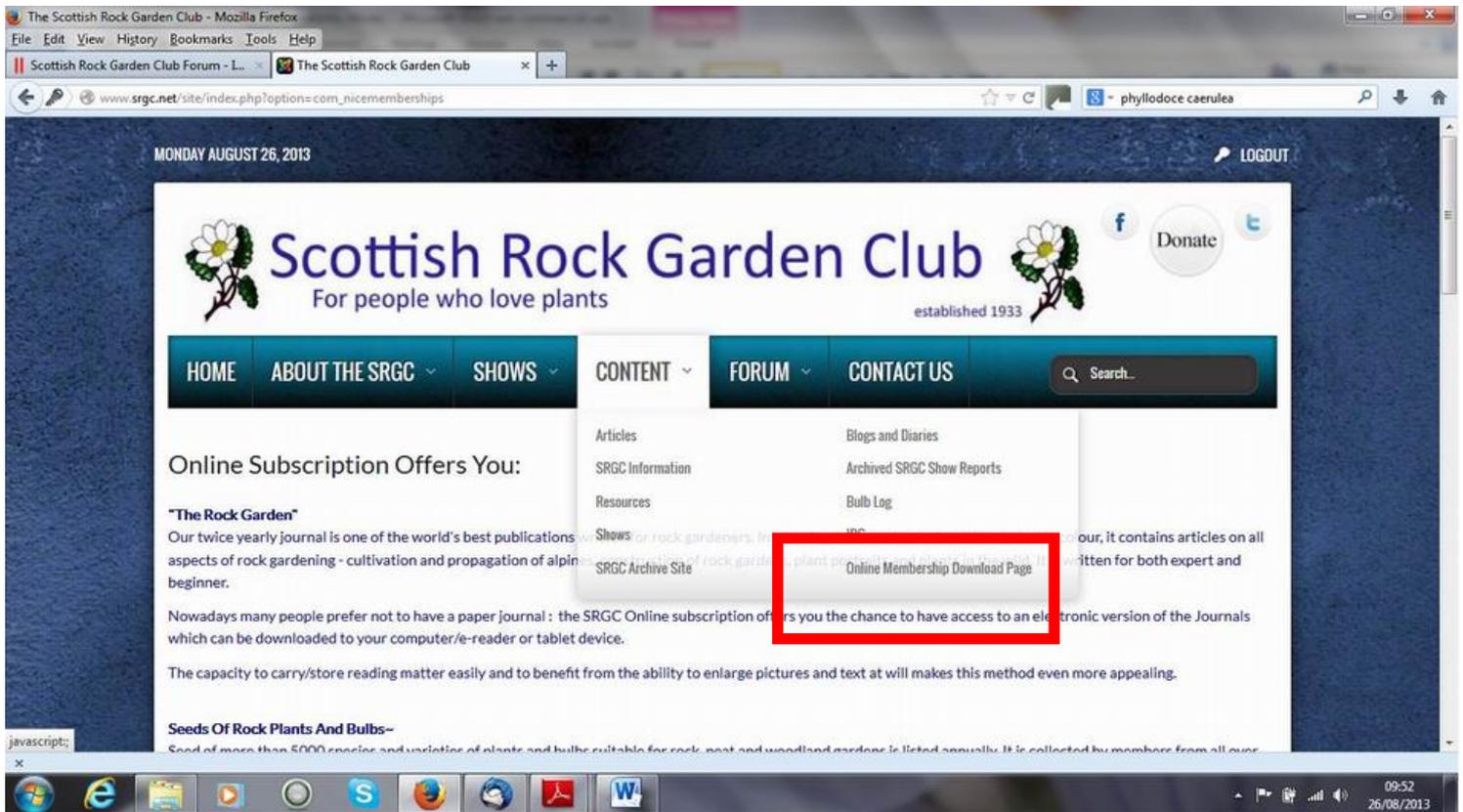
*Cassiope mertensiana*



I started the Bulb Log in January 2003 as a one year project to provide some regular new content to the fledgling SRGC web site - now eleven years on it is still going. Every year around this time I think how nice it would be not to have this weekly commitment to produce a bulb log but every year I have been persuaded by you loyal readers to continue. It is my wish to spread the pleasure I get from growing plants freely and openly to as many people around the world as I can sharing what knowledge and thoughts I have, showing my success and failures as the garden and plants go through the year. I am very fortunate that this wish to spread the word freely and openly is shared by the Council of the SRGC who have fully supported the development of the Club web site but that comes at a cost. The growing success of this site brings on-going and rising costs principally to pay the server from whom we have to buy disc space to store the massive amount of data on the site and bandwidth for every byte that is downloaded. Every part of the SRGC is run by volunteers who generously give of their time to provide the many facets of the Club and the Council manage the accounts so that we are always getting the very best value for money. We are very grateful to all our Members for their support which provides the income to provide this service and to all those of you who have made donations using the 'donate' button on the web pages and now we are adding a new way to help support this platform and the wider work of the SRGC. We now offer an 'Online Subscription' at £10 per twelve months and we can set that low rate because you will not receive any printed material thus cutting out all the printing and postage costs - the Journals will be placed on the website for you to log in and view or download. Online Members will also be eligible to participate in the annual seed distribution if they wish by ordering their seeds online and paying the same contribution towards the postage and packaging of the seeds as all other Members do.



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Once you are an Online Member and logged in go to the content page and you will see an additional heading 'Online Membership download page' here you will find links to all the latest journals, Sectartry's pages, etc.



We all love our Journal 'The Rock Garden' and I am one of those that likes to hold paper in my hands to flick through the pages to take it anywhere I go and I hope that the printed version will continue for a very long time. However younger generations are growing up in a digital age where they want everything electronically on their 'device'. They do not like cases full of dusty old paper books taking up space in their homes - they want content instantly and on the move!



Since I got my tablet a few years ago I too have been converted to reading the Journal electronically. It is much the same size as the actual printed journal as I show above and I can take it where ever I go.



Reading on a tablet or e-reader is so much better than viewing it on a computer screen. Not only can I take the latest copy with me but also I have all the Journals of the SRGC on this slim tablet so I can reference them on trains and boats and planes and anywhere else I go.

I find the colours of the pictures are better and sharper than they are in the printed copy.

Pictures can be enlarged to fill the whole screen.

There are none of the restrictions or compromises the printers have to make to achieve an overall colour balance.

Tool bars at the top and bottom allow me to jump quickly to any page or open another issue.

forms of *A. biflora* but in the wild this species varies from this colour through coppery shades to pure yellow. Brian Mathew in his *Smaller Bulbs* publishes a table that attempts to sort out the species. When I first became aware of them in the mid 1990s it was from photographs in books, especially *Bulbs* by Phillips & Rix. At the time they were rare in cultivation in Britain, the introductions of the 1960s having apparently died out. More recently, as their parts of the world have become more accessible, these plants have begun to appear on the show benches again and tubers are available to buy.

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Darren Sleep



Whole pages are clearly displayed and by using the toolbar at the bottom, which displays a small image of every page, allows me to jump to any page by simply tapping on it.



Or I can hide the toolbar with a simple tap on the screen flicking from page to page of the journal with a swipe of my finger - it could not be easier.

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The dwarf, tuberous, summer-dormant anemone species of the *Anemone biflora* alliance have a natural distribution from Iran and the Central Asian republics to Kashmir and occur in seasonally arid rocky terrain alongside many true bulbs. Whilst some species are relatively distinct in appearance there is a particularly complex group of yellow flowered 'species' that are distinguished primarily on the differences between basal and stem leaves. The situation is not helped by variability in flower colour in some other species that one might have thought were distinct on the basis of this character. For example, most of us are familiar with the red flowered forms of *A. biflora* but in the wild this species varies from this colour through coppery shades to pure yellow. Brian Mathew in his *Smaller Bulbs* publishes a table that attempts to sort out the species. When I first became aware of them in the mid 1990s it was from photographs in books, especially *Bulbs* by Phillips & Rix. At the time they were rare in cultivation in Britain, the introductions of the 1960s having apparently died out. More recently, as their parts of the world have become more accessible, these plants have begun to appear on the show benches again and tubers are available to buy.

Also by turning the pad to the landscape format I can enlarge the text making it easier for my aging eyes to see. Please, if you are not a Member of the SRGC and enjoy any or all the facilities on offer via this website consider clicking that button and become an Online Member - we will be very grateful for your added support.



I will leave you this week with one of the many Cyclamen that are now flowering around the garden.....