

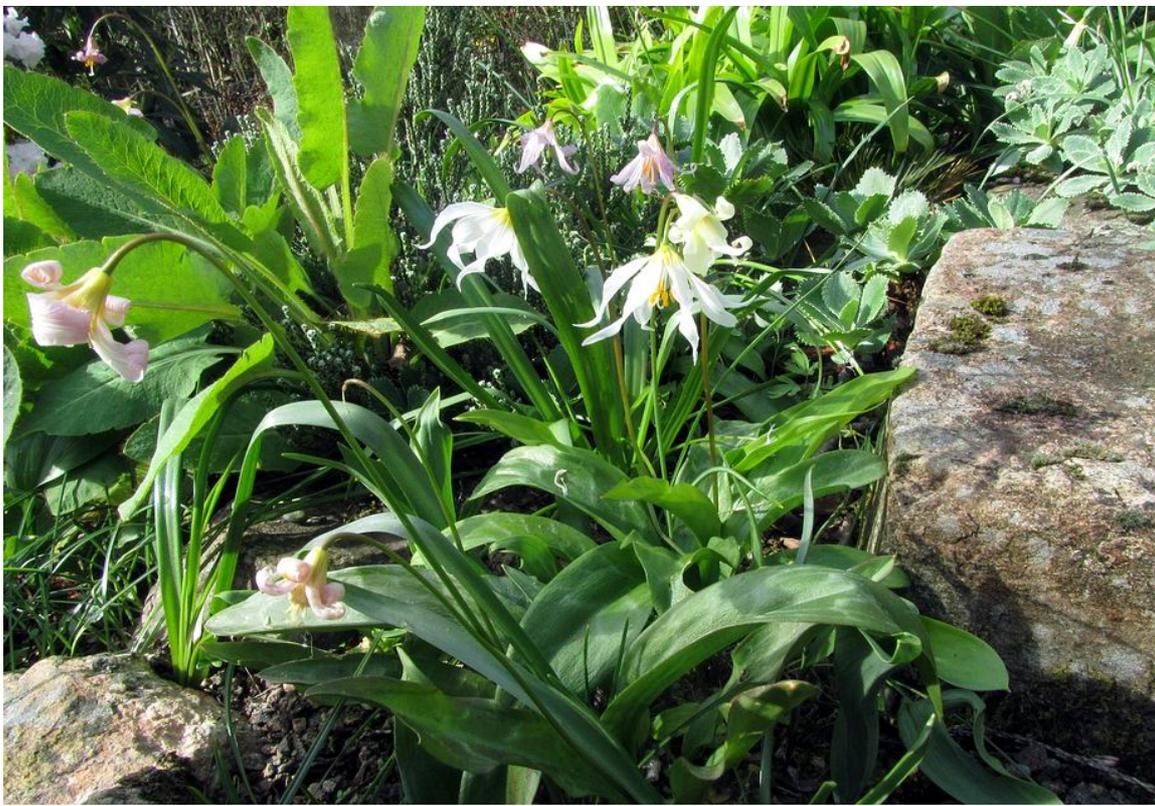


BULB LOG 21.....22nd May 2013



The garden is entering another phase of growth as the earlier bulbous plants such as *Corydalis solida* retreat underground to be replaced with other ground cover plants such as the later flowering *Corydalis*, *Dicentra*, *Anemone*, etc. The bulbs are very at home coming up through this understorey of leaves; in fact if you look at the growth of many of them, such as *Trillium*, they have a long stem with the leaves and flowers at the top, perfectly evolved to grow in such a plant community. Contrary to the often written advice I have not disturbed last year's flowering stem of the *Cardocrinum giganteum* shown on the left. I decided I need to find out for myself what will happen if I do

not lift and replant the six small bulbs formed around the base of the old bulb. They are growing well just now and depending on how they progress I may decide to space them out more, a bit later in the year.



We have been flowering **Erythronium montanum** in the garden for many years now. When I first read about this beautiful plant it was commonly written that it could not be grown in UK gardens. So often these statements were written from a Southern UK perspective where there is a very different climate to ours here in the north. Rising to the challenge I started with some seed from the NARGS seed exchange and managed to raise some plants to flower

and to set seed in our garden. Now we are several generations into our own garden seed each of which becomes more adapted to our growing conditions producing their large beautiful flowers.



Erythronium montanum



Erythronium howellii

There are a number of white species of Erythronium that occur in Western North America that can appear very similar to the gardener. Erythronium howellii is very similar to Erythronium citrinum – it differs in not having the swollen appendages at the base of the petals and has a slightly different flower shape – check [Bulb log 1810](#) for full details of these differences.



Erythronium howelii

Many of these white species will have a pink flush as the anthocyanins develop while the flowers go over.



Erythronium multiscapoideum

Another of the white species is Erythronium multiscapoideum which despite the specific name does not have multiple scapes - or main flower stems - but has a single scape that divides low down in the leaves.

What we see rising up from the leaves are long pedicles or individual flower stems that branch off the scape low down hidden in the base of the leaves.

It is written that this species forms stolons but I have never observed this feature.

**Erythronium
multiscapoideum**

This picture shows how easy it could have been to think that this species had several scapes.

Close observation will reveal that one of these flowers does have extra parts – see close up picture below to see if you can see what they are?



Erythronium multiscapoideum



Erythronium oregonum

Erythronium oregonum is one more of the white species that shares many botanical details with the pink flowered *Erythronium revolutum*. *E. oregonum* is later flowering in our garden coming into bloom as *E. revolutum* is going over.



Erythronium oregonum



I have included this picture to give you an idea of the size of **Erythronium oregonum** flowers – the largest of all the Erythroniums that we grow.



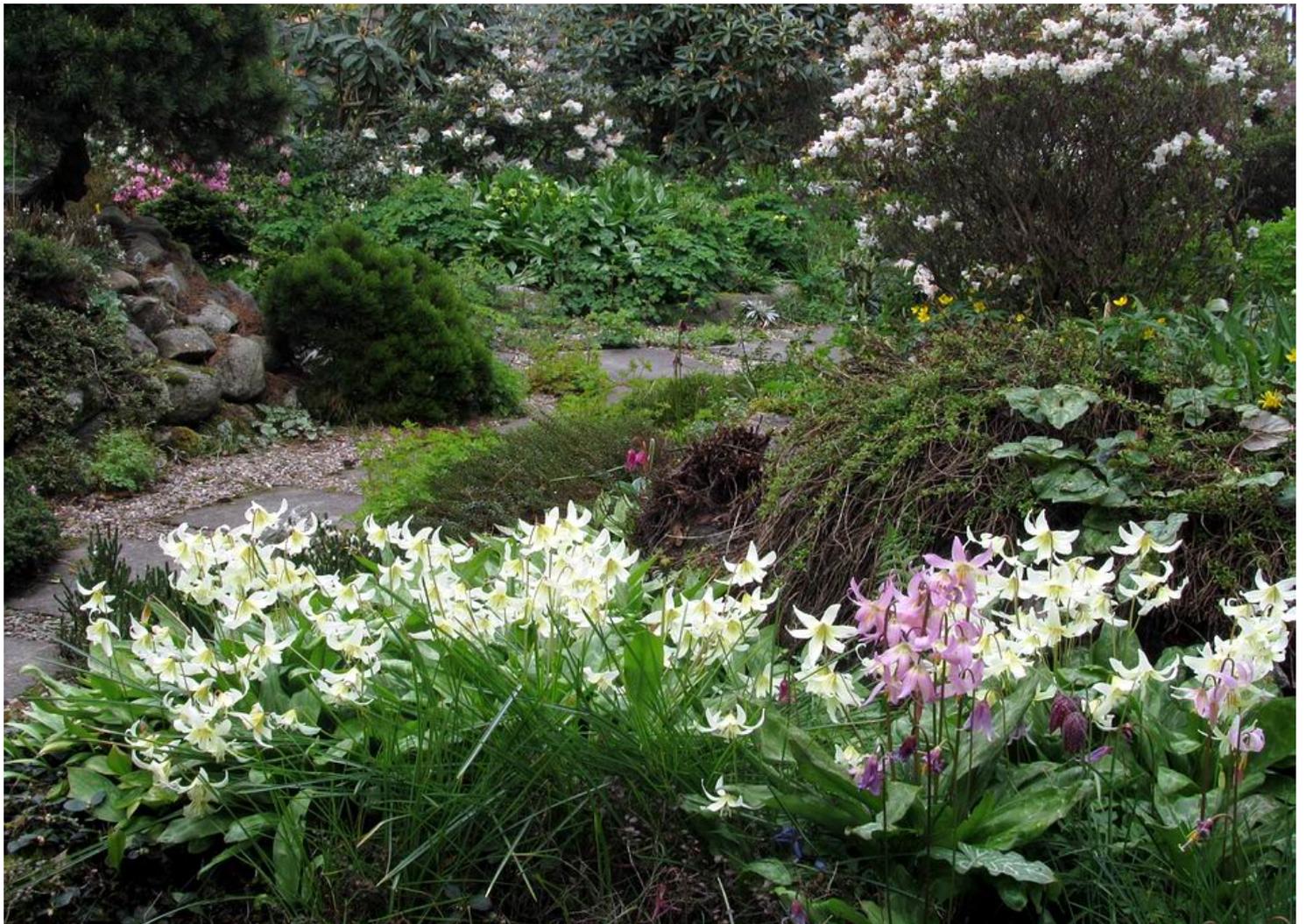
Erythronium 'White Beauty'

Erythronium 'White Beauty' was the first Erythronium I acquired or ever saw on a visit to Jack Drakes Nursery in the early 1970's and it is still with us. Almost certainly just a vigorous increasing form of Erythronium californicum, we have many seedlings from it as well as those that have vegetatively increased.



Erythronium revolutum

Some pink *Erythronium revolutum* are still in flower in the cooler parts of the garden and these contrast well with the many creamy white species.



Where they are growing close together these species, *E. californicum* and *E. revolutum*, will hybridise producing a range of intermediate colour forms – you can see a group of self-sown seedlings in this picture.



I spend many enjoyable hours looking at every single Erythronium flower in the garden taking note of any that look different or exceptional. This one took my eye last year and I am again drawn to its multi flowered stems - with up to seven flowers on those that are most mature.

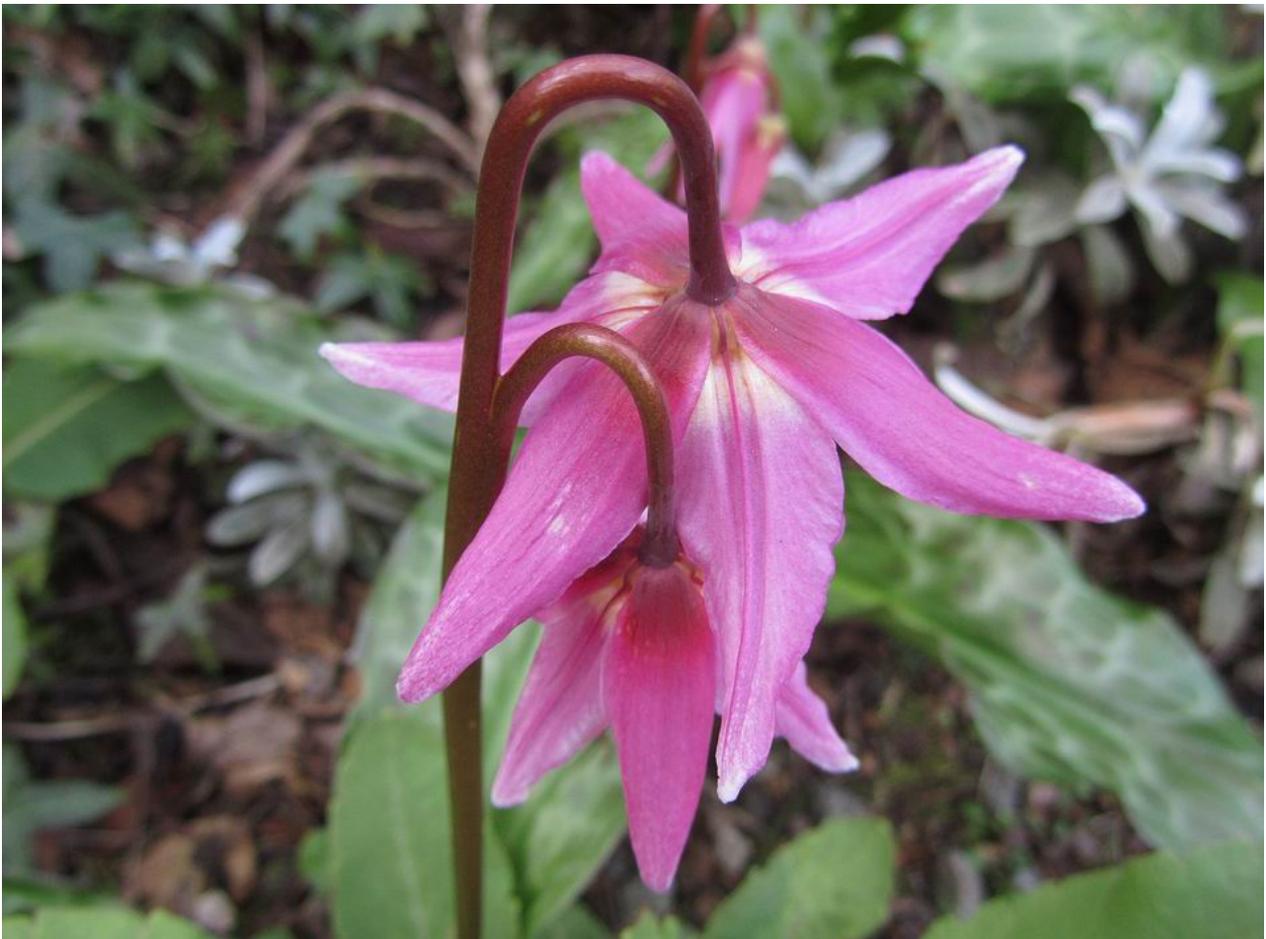


Looking down on the plant shows us both the number of flowers and that they have a good strong colour which is reinforced by the dark reddish stems. As well as looking attractive these plants need to increase vegetatively reasonably quickly to be a successful garden hybrid.



I am assessing a number of hybrids of the same parentage around the garden to see if any deserve to be given a cultivar name and distributed as I did with *Erythronium* 'Craigton Cover Girl'. A detail of the one on the above left is shown below.





Erythronium revolutum

This is a late flowering and good dark coloured form of Erythronium revolutum that exhibits a tendency to produce multiple flowers per stem and it has a very nice double zoned yellow marking overlaying the white centre of the flower.





I have included my hand again to give an idea of the size of the flower. This one is quite large when compared to many forms of *Erythronium revolutum* but not as large as the *Erythronium oregonum* I showed above.



As with all plants extra floral segments are sometimes produced – fortunately, in my view, these do not persist and the flower will more than likely be normal next year. I know some people love double flowers and there are a few that I quite like but please, not a double *Erythronium*!!



I am more than happy to allow erythroniums to self-seed into the gravel path or where-ever the seed falls.
I have circled a group of newly germinating seed in the picture below.





From front to back, *Erythronium californicum*, *Erythronium* 'Craigton Cover Girl' and *Erythronium* 'Mini Ha Ha'



***Fritillaria pallida* and *Erythronium* 'Joanna'**

With the *Erythronium* flowering season coming to an end other plants are going to attract my attention.....