



BULB LOG 19.....11<sup>th</sup> May 2016





**Taraxacum officinale**



The garden is full of flower just now including my pet Dandelion which has been growing in that raised bed for some twenty years. It reminds me of the beauty of common wild plants and as long as I remove the spent flowers daily it will not shed any seed.

Primula vulgaris is another beautiful wild flower and I took a visiting friend from Alaska, Clay

Koplin, on an expedition to find this Scottish beauty growing on the cliffs south of Stonehaven.



We found some very good colonies in full flower –they were growing best on the slopes. Some, which were growing right at the edge of a high cliff, were too dangerous to approach but we did find some accessible sites.



**Viola canina, Primula vulgaris and Ficaria verna** growing happily through the grasses.



**Viola canina**



Many gardeners take inspiration from “great gardens” but I get my stimulation directly from nature. In nature plants do not grow as isolated specimens they are all mixed in together like the primroses growing through grasses which will grow up in the coming weeks shading the primulas from the sun and desiccating winds.

My aim is to create something similar in our garden but using plants from around the world.



My ideal garden.



**Primula vulgaris and Viola canina**



With their leaves and flowers held at the top of the stem Trillium are ideally suited to growing through other plants. Copying from nature I have this **Trillium grandiflorum** growing through **Dicentra formosana**.



Provided they are of similar vigour, or grow at different periods, plant communities can be mutually beneficial. Above: the smaller early bulbs have finished flowering before the Anemone comes into growth, the Erythronium are taller and grow above the Anemone and the Meconopsis which will flower in around a month's time are only just starting into growth.



Because our weather is so nice right now, I do not intend to spend too much time inside writing this week's Bulb Log so I will leave the pictures to tell the story and illustrate some of the plant combinations we have in flower just now in our naturalistic planting style. Although I use the term naturalistic it is very artificial because the plants we use come from all around the world so can only come together in a garden.



***Erythronium* hybrid and *Matteuccia struthiopteris***



***Milium effusum* 'Aureum'(Bowles' Golden Grass) self-seeds around – here it adds colour with *Erythronium* 'White Beauty' and *Tulipa tarda***



**Mainly Erythroniums**





### **Front garden planting**

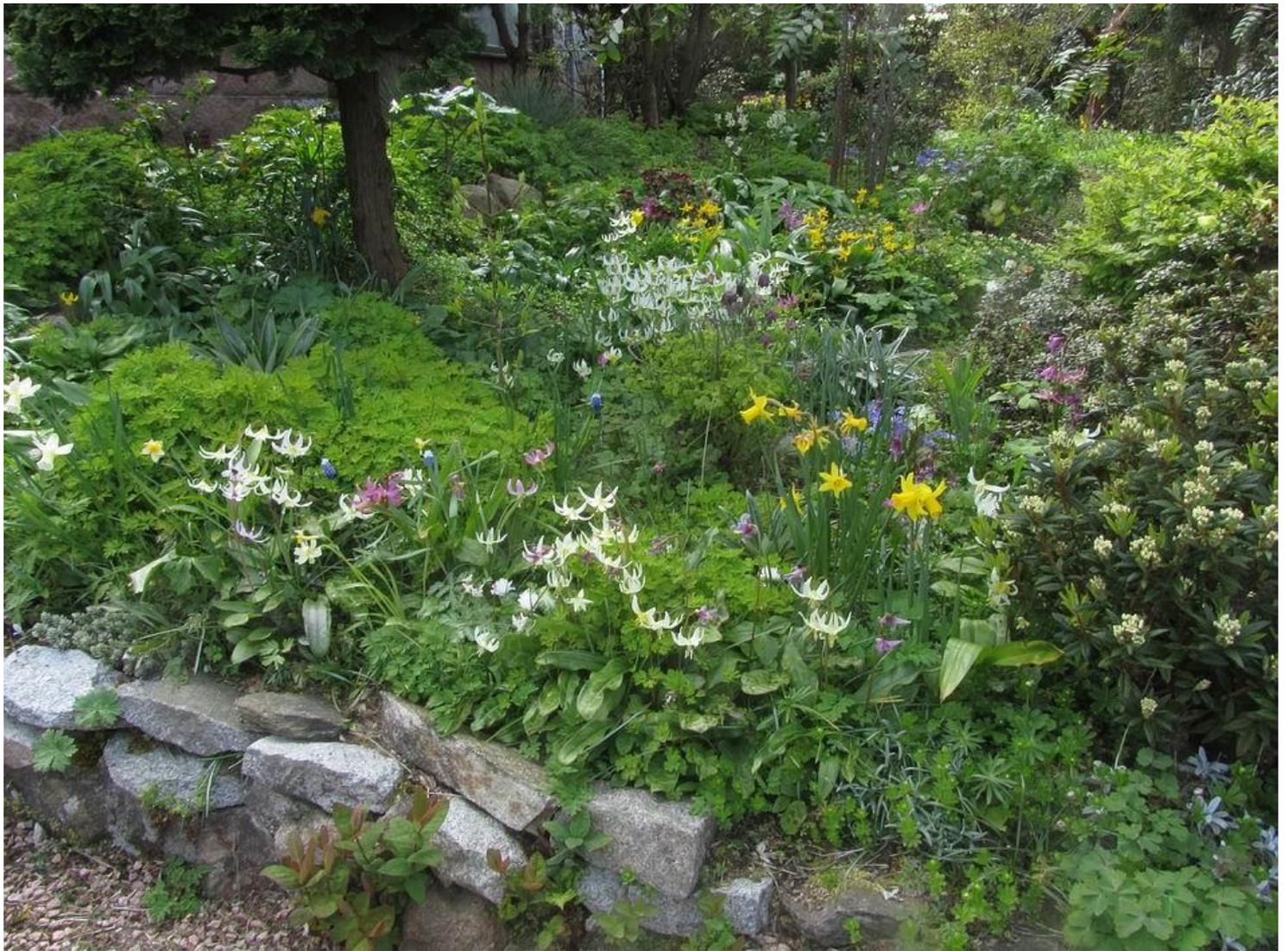
The next series of pictures are from the front garden illustrating the effect you can get after a few years. We started a revamp of the lower half in 2013 and the upper half one year later.





The upper half of the front garden was reworked in 2014 so we can still see the ground between the plants.





***Fritillaria meleagris* and *Erythronium*** are happy to grow through low growing plants.



**Dicentra cucullaria** and **Corydalis 'Craigton Blue'** are good companions and create ground cover for the Erythronium to grow through.

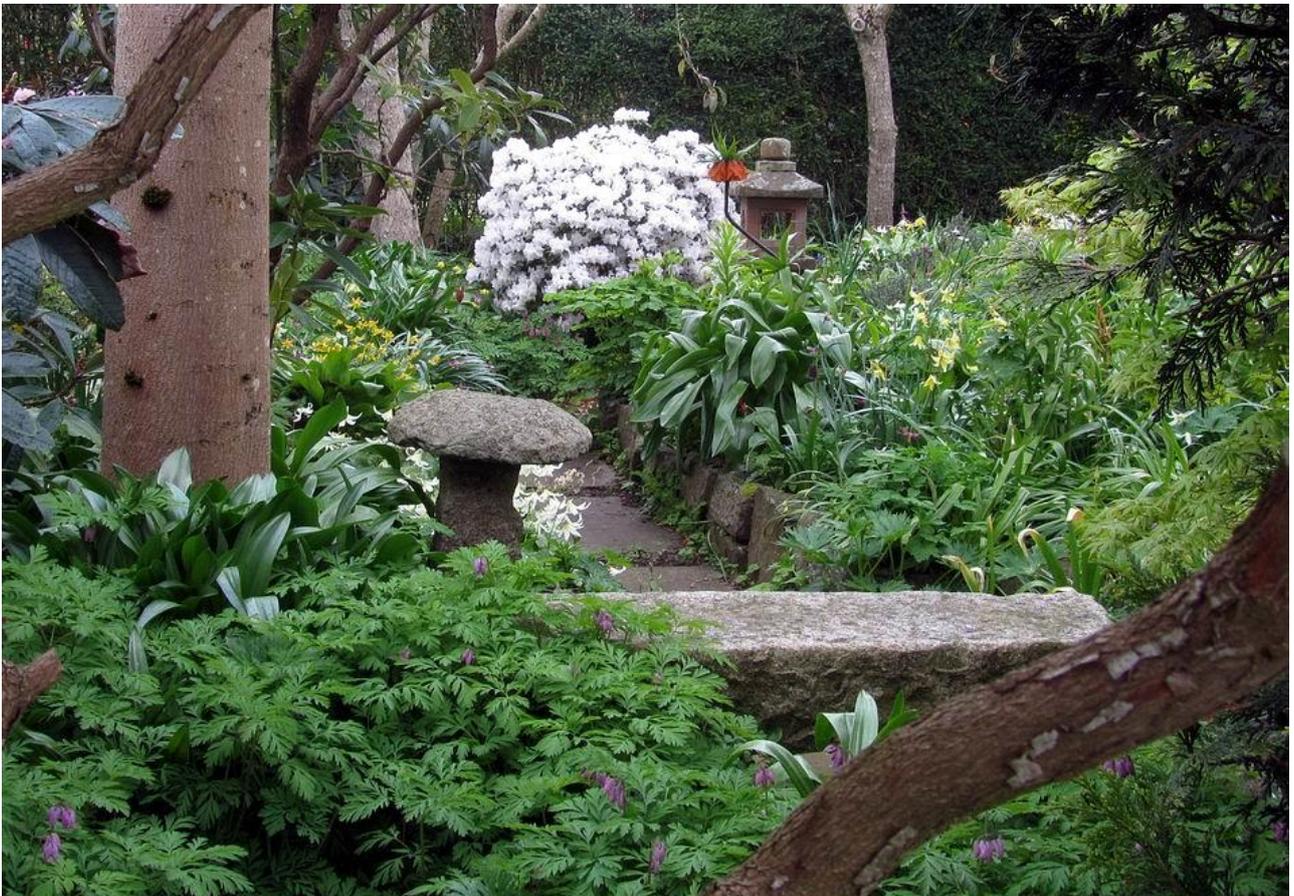
See more of the mixed planting in the front garden in a [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#).



A view across a raised bed in the back garden.



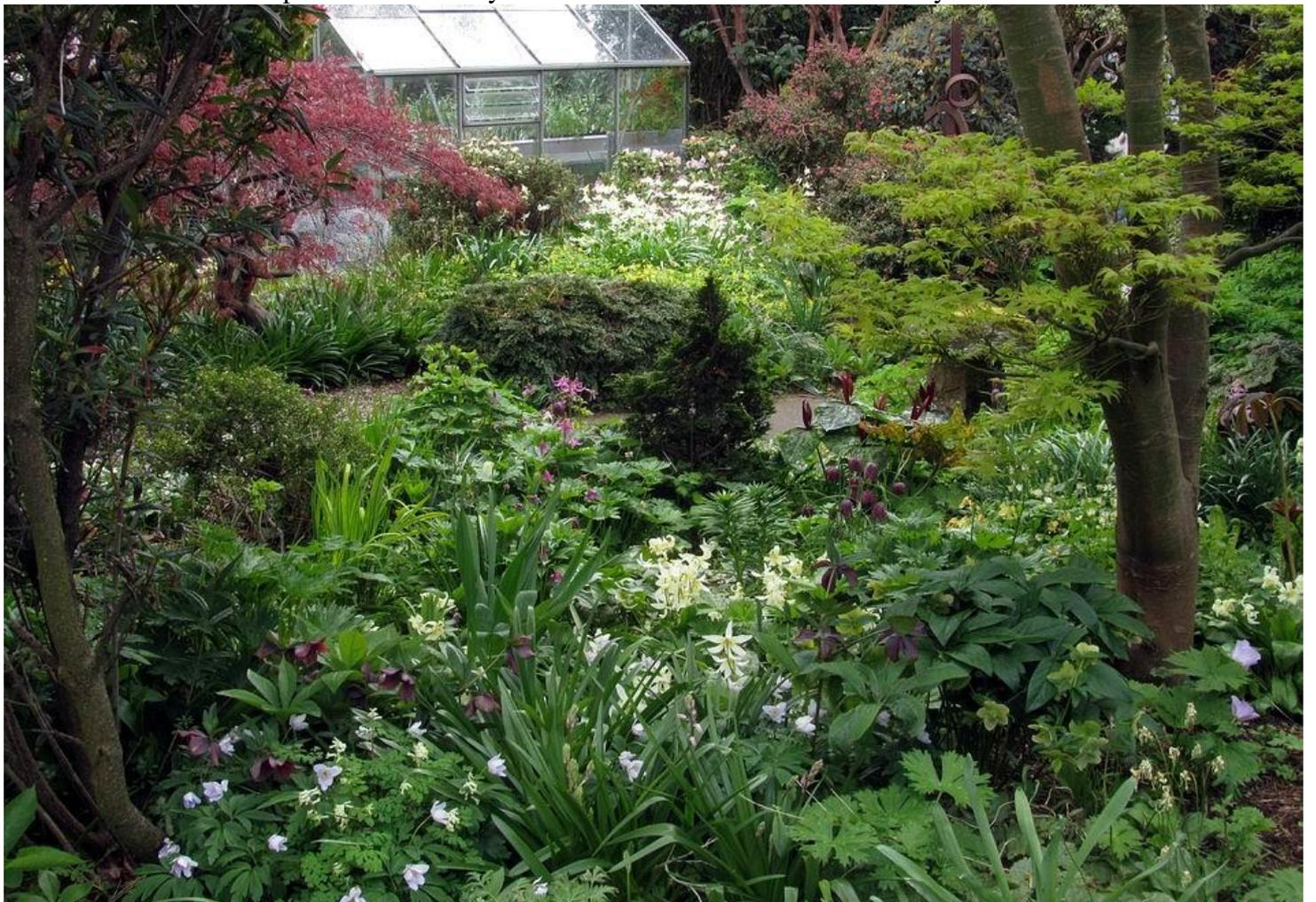
***Erythronium americanum* and *Jeffersonia dubia***



View enhanced with garden furniture



Garden paths should always form nice curves to direct both the eye and the walker.



Trees and shrubs help make the garden look like a small landscape – which is my aim.



View

**Stonehaven harbour** where Clay and I started our trek along the cliffs.

As our sunny weather may not last much longer I am going back outside to enjoy it.....



I leave you this week with a panorama, taken on Clay Coplin's mobile phone, of me with Dunnottar castle in the background, check out a video of our [trek and the primulas](#) on my [YouTube channel](#).....