



BULB LOG 25..... 20<sup>th</sup> June 2018





This week I feature Dactylorhiza - I am happy to say these hardy garden orchids are among the plants that seed around our garden and with the exception of the few short Dactylorhiza purpurella shown at the bottom of the cover picture all are self-seeded garden hybrids.

Many years ago I tried sowing seed in a pot, without success, while during the same period I started to discover seedlings growing in the oddest of places that I would not have considered.

I quickly learned the

lesson that they never grow on bare ground they always associate with other plants in areas that are not disturbed and since then when the seeds are ripe and starting to shed I have scattered them around the troughs and such places, others are left to blow on the wind.



These are all hybrids seeded from an original planting of three Dactylorhiza purpurella.



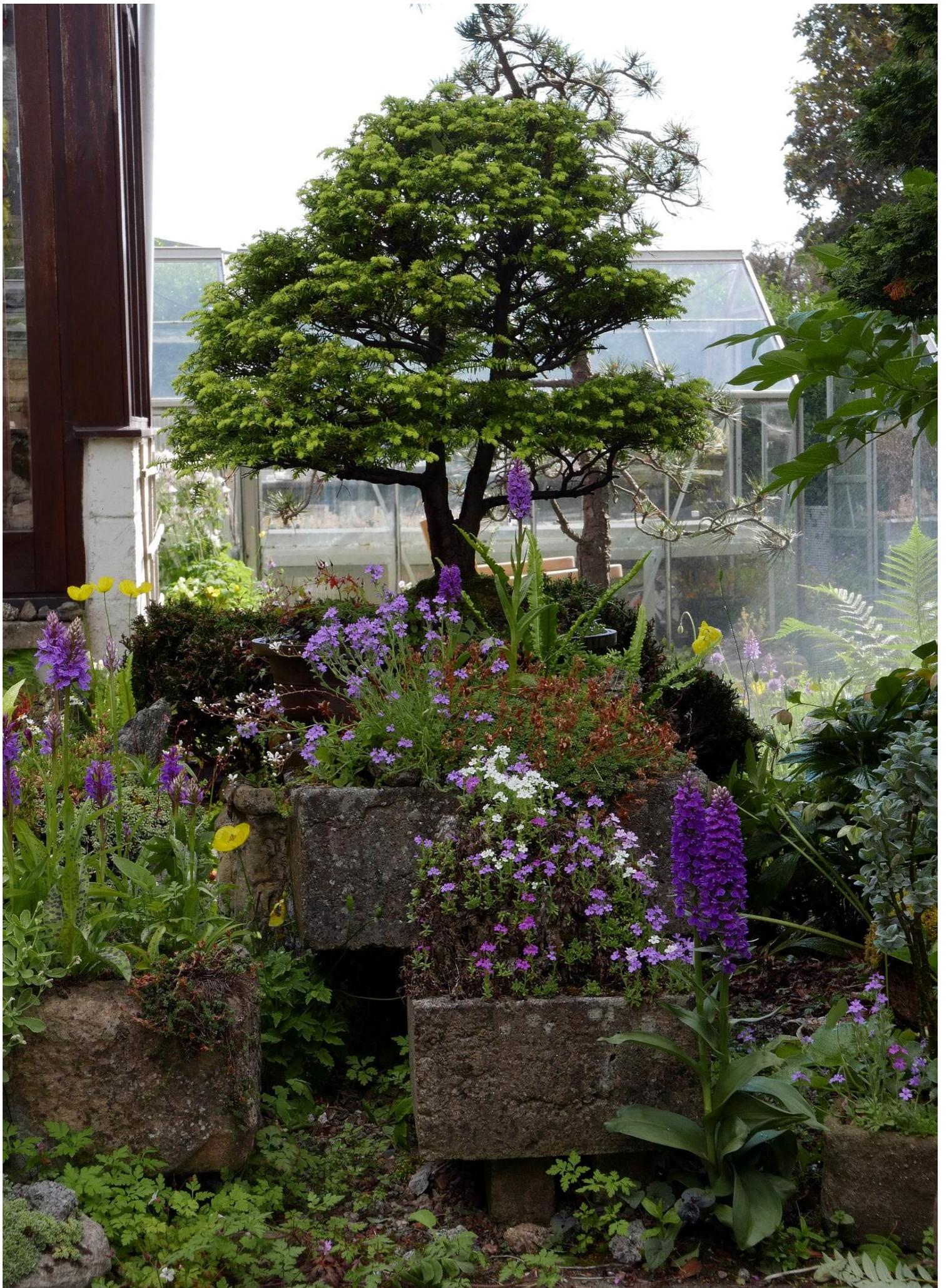
These *Dactylorhiza* hybrids are growing in the raised slab beds.



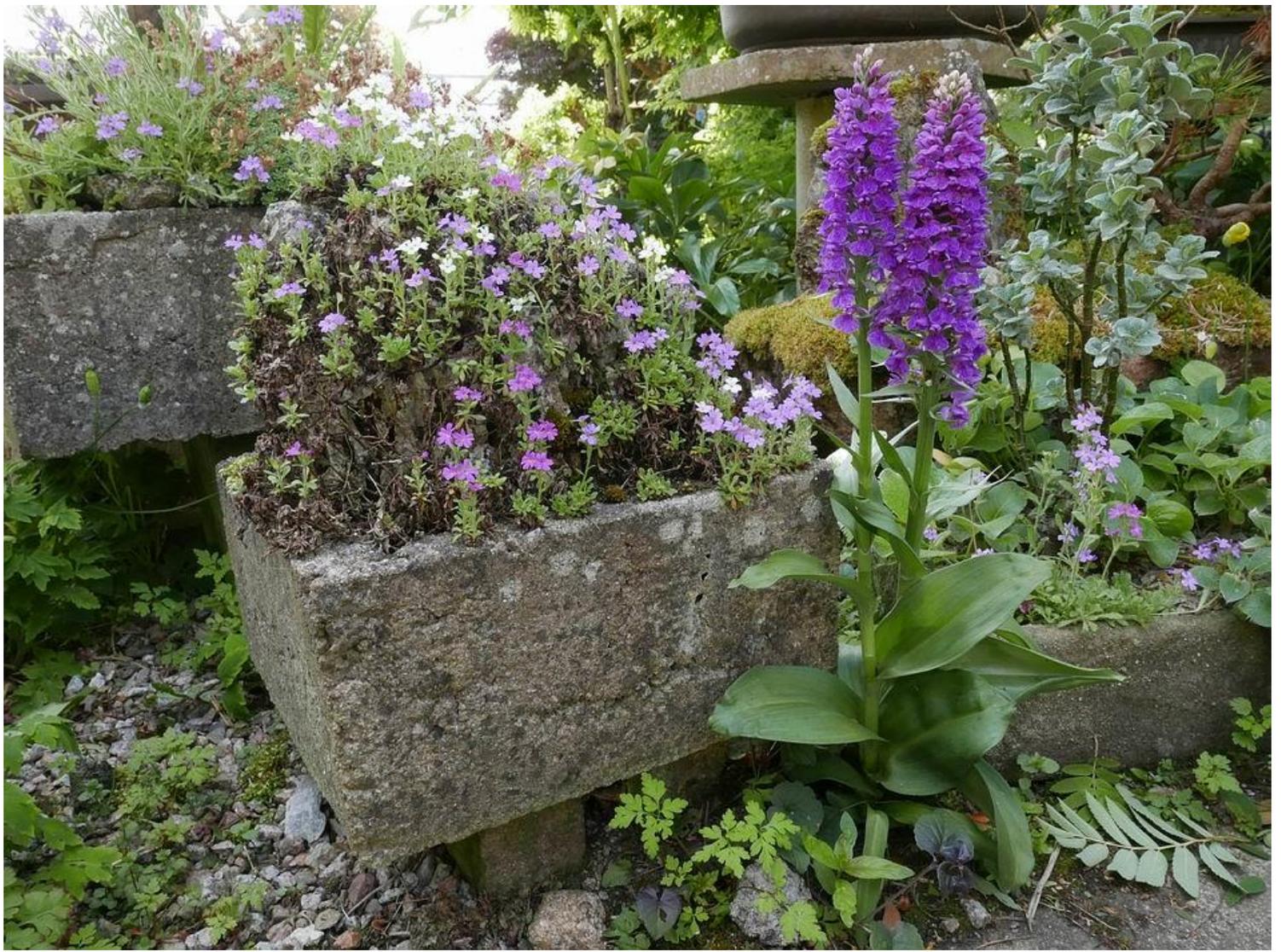


The range of flowers shapes reflects the various species that we at some time have grown and since then hybridised in the garden these include *Dactylorhiza foliosa*, *maculata*, *fuchsii* and *purpurella*.





Dactylorhiza seed into and around the troughs.



This fine orchid with plain green leaves seeded beside the *Erinus alpinus* rock trough. I sowed *Erinus* seeds across a lump of eroded limestone marl and now there is a pleasing range of colour forms. Due to the long dry period we are having this year these plants are very compact compared to previous years when they grew significantly bigger in our typical damp weather.



More of these self-seeded *Dactylorhiza* can be seen all across the garden with a good cluster around the troughs and slab beds.





Most of the seedlings appear growing through other plants and I have no doubt that this association is beneficial whether it is that they can share the same mycorrhiza or some other parameter, I can only speculate.





I am often surprised at the wide range of conditions that these orchids can grow in; from a very shallow trough which is often very dry, to growing in permanently wet conditions that I show further down these pages.





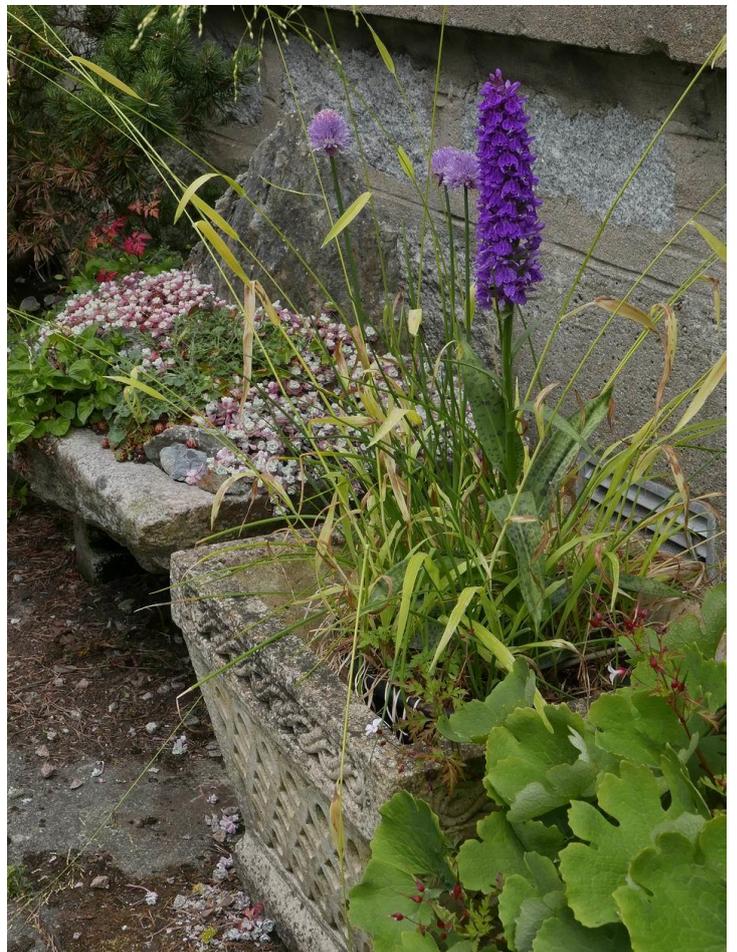
I hasten to remind you that I did not plant any of these *Dactylorhiza*: they all volunteered as seedlings where you see them and where the conditions are amenable they have increased into clumps.



This was not a case of the Saxifrage growing over the orchid: the saxifrage was there first and the orchid seeded in.



This was a single *Dactylorhiza* last year now it has increased to two at the edge of this trough landscaped with concrete.



The pot on the right was one of our pots of herbs planted with chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*) then during a period of neglect Bowles' Golden Grass and *Dactylorhiza* appeared.



Another neglected pot of chives has been populated by *Dactylorhiza* – we can still harvest some chives.



A mixed group of floriferous self-seeders flower together.



The next few pictures show more plant associations which include the Dactylorhiza.





On the front drive they have to survive being driven over.





Megan finds some more *Dactylorhiza* growing with *Ramonda*.





*Dactylorhiza* with *Corydalis* 'Craigton Blue'

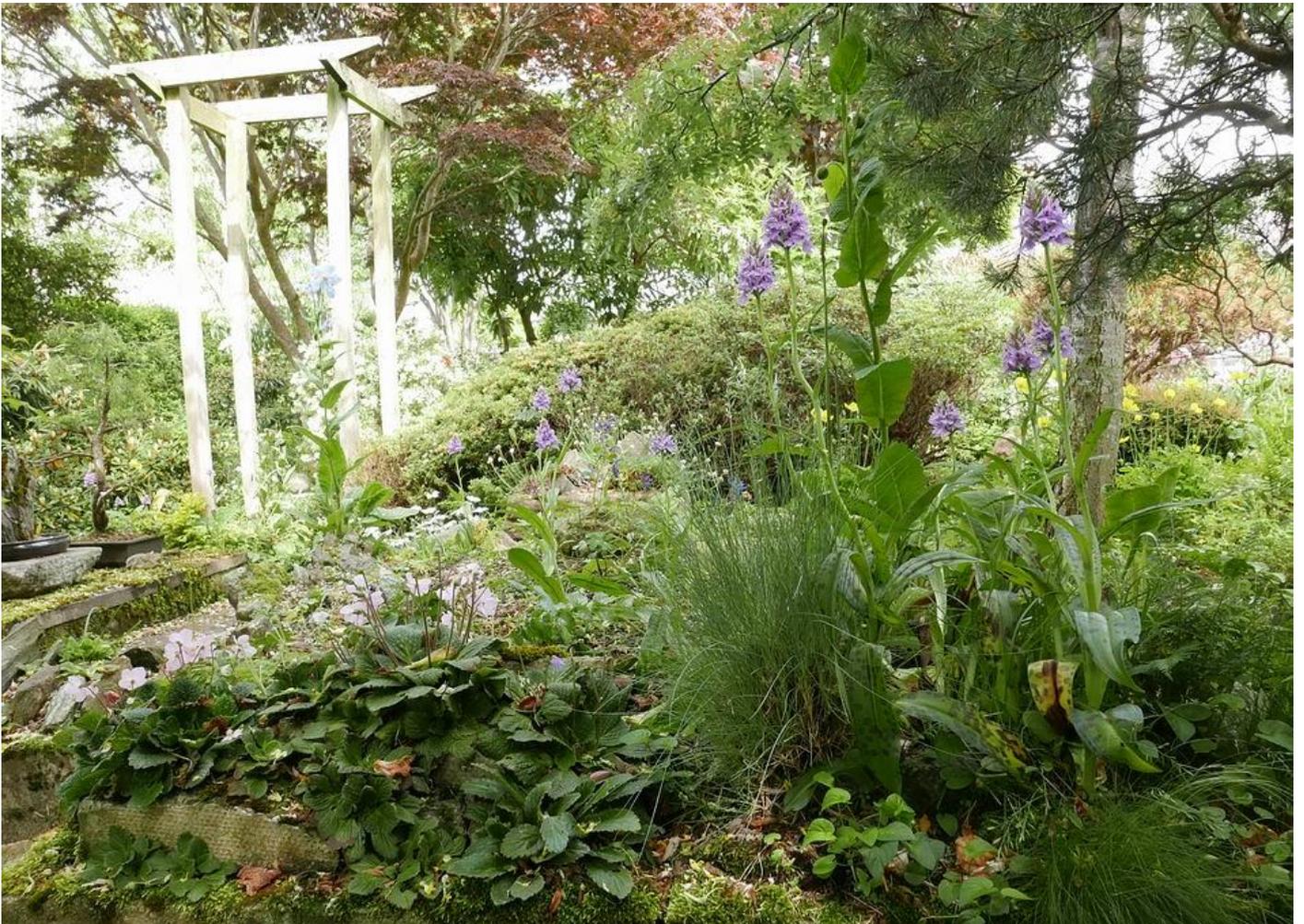




This *Salix lanata* has grown in a pot for thirty plus years - it sits half-submerged on a pile of bricks in the pond - it also has a colony of self-seeded *Dactylorhiza*.



These are seedlings that I transferred to the narrow marginal planting alongside the pond which I created last year.



Further *Dactylorhiza* seeded into this trough of grasses and ferns beside the *Ramonda* trough both of which form one edge of the new bed beside the pond.



Dactylorhiza are among those plants that seed around and contribute greatly to our garden like many other subjects I love the way they dot themselves about linking the various parts of the garden – I never know where they will appear next.

As you read this I am on my travels across to Benbecula on the Outer Hebrides of Scotland where I am taking part in the second SRGC David Boyd Day. We will be holding a workshop demonstrating landscaping and planting troughs and containers with rock garden plants as well as studying the flora of the machair read more next week....