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Bulb Log Diary

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If you are compulsively tidy autumn must be a torment however I could never be described as tidy so feel at home in this season when growth is collapsing as it dies back and falling leaves scatter the ground. The recent Storm Ali greatly added to the debris as trees and plants were pounded by gale force winds and heavy rain. We were lucky none of our trees suffered major damage but around half the bunches of rowan berries were ripped from the trees covering the surrounding ground with clusters of shiny red berries adding a strong

note of colour to the already autumn coloured leaves and foliage. A casual glance suggests there is not much to enjoy on the rock garden bed but I am rewarded on closer observation by plenty points of interest to capture in my camera and share in the following photo essay.



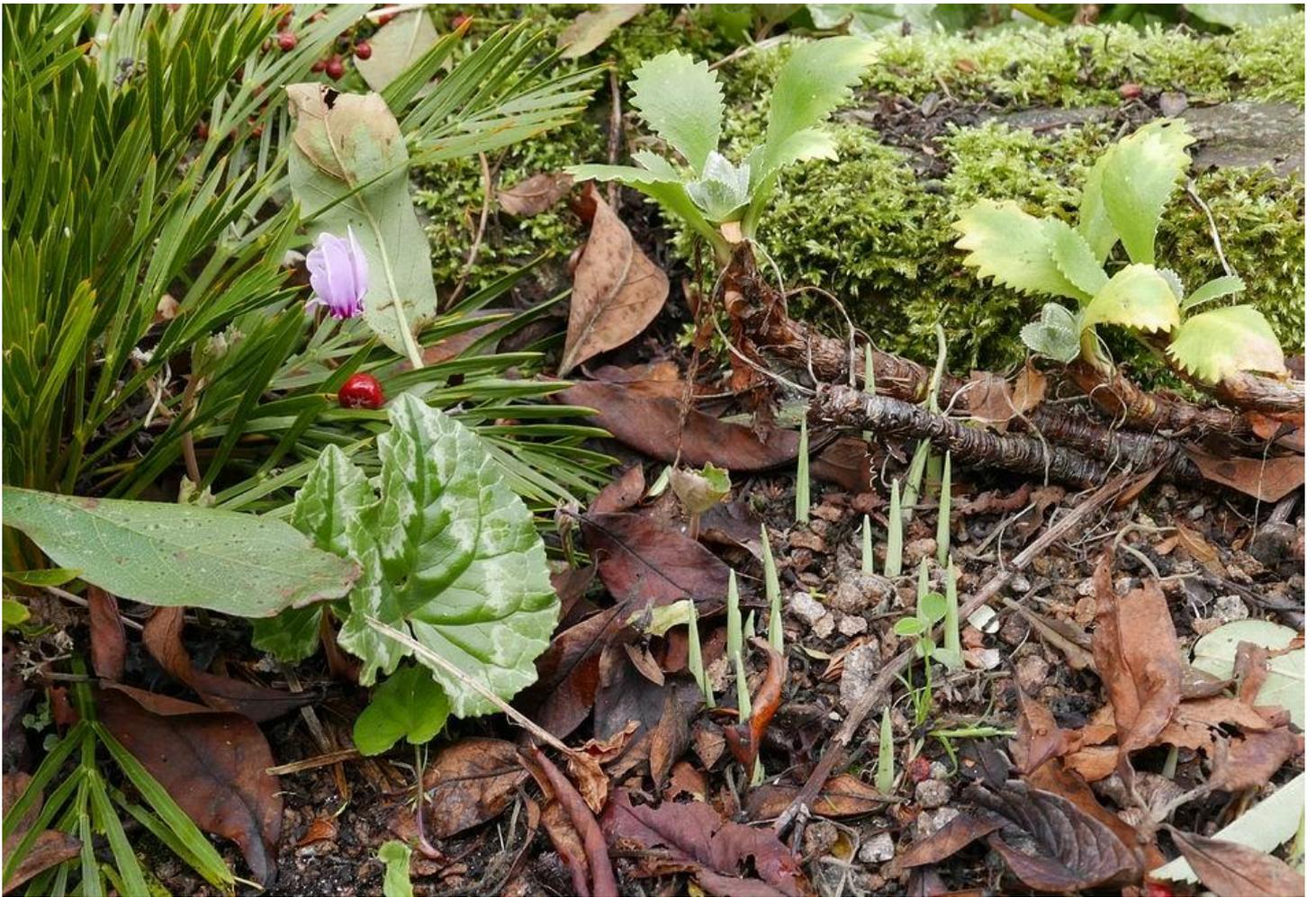
New foliage, retreating foliage and evergreen foliage all enrich this small area.



The brown and tattered *Meconopsis* leaves have fulfilled their task of supporting the flowering stems, the fresher leaves are building up the side shoots which will produce next year's flowers and the recently emerged, slightly chewed, silver leaves of a *Cyclamen hederifolium* seedling.



Crocus pulchellus flowers blooming through the yellowing *Roscoea* leaves.



The flowers contained in this group of *Crocus banaticus* shoots will soon grace this bed.



This mixed group of *Crocus* among the yellowing *Roscoeia* leaves and fallen rowan berries made a seasonal cover image, especially when the flowers opened in the sunshine.



Walking slowly round the garden I can find so much of interest - this group of *Eucomis bicolor* has only produced one flowering stem - last year it had five which reminds that as gardeners we can have unreasonable expectations expecting our plants to increase and flower more every year - in reality that is not always the case.



White *Crocus speciosus* hybrids flowering through the now brown *Dactylorhiza* growth.



Various forms of Roscoeas continue to produce yet more flowers especially the larger 'Harvington Imperial' which started flowering way back in July.



The fronds of the small fern running around the edge of this bed were scorched brown in the hot dry summer but a whole new growth appeared as the cooler and moist weather returned.



Colchicum speciosum



Veratrum fimbriatum flowering under the giant **Podophylum pleianthum** leaves.



Cyclamen hederifolium plants flowering under **Rhododendron roxieanum** var. **oreonastes**.

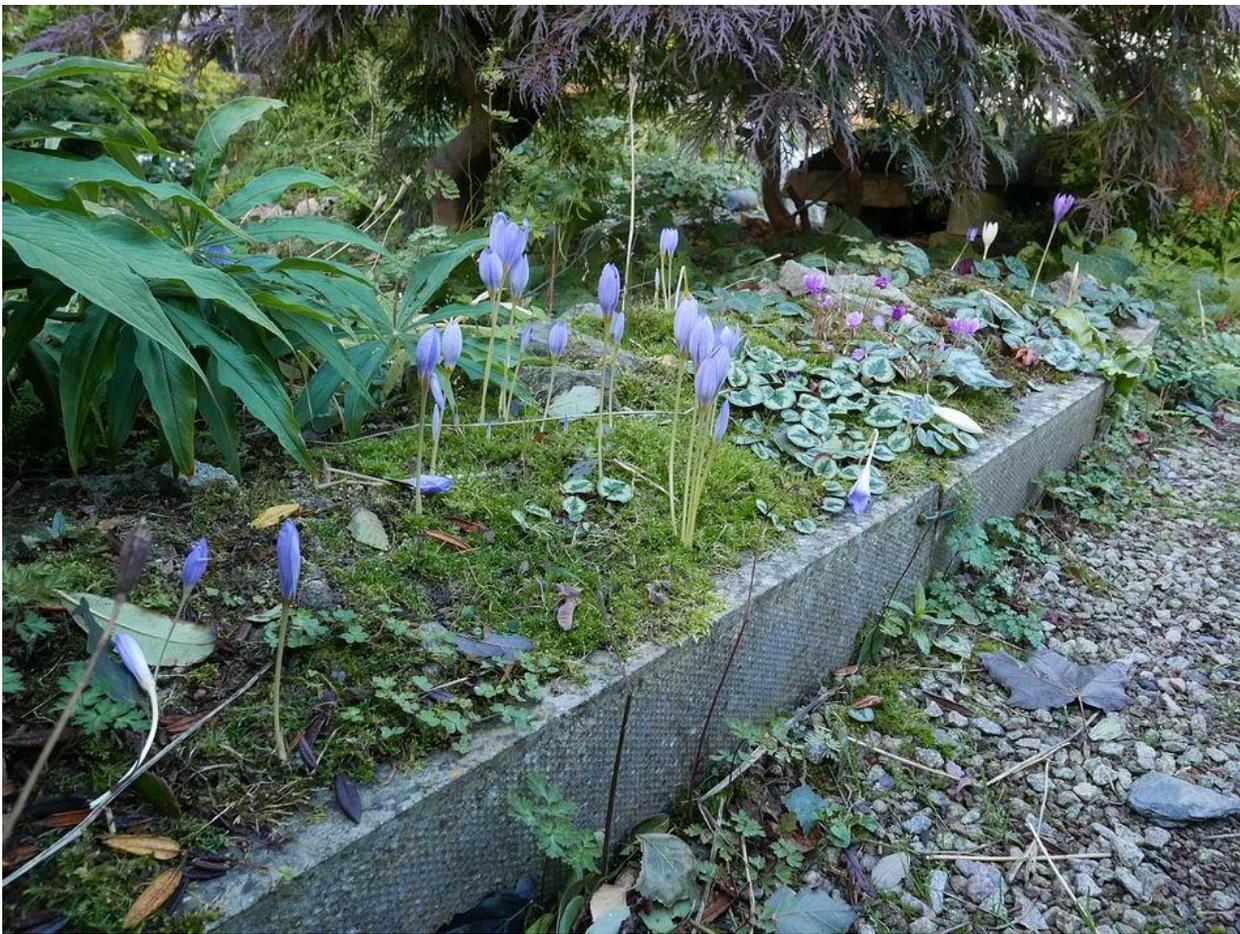


Cyclamen hederifolium



The ever present silver leaves of various *Celmisia* add style and interest to these autumn vignettes.





Crocus flowers open and close according to the temperature which in turn is affected by the sunlight. With the blue cast over this sand bed you can feel the cold in contrast with the same view, below, when the sun was shining.



Photography is also all about light and the low sun casts very dark shadows across the subject, to counteract that I have added some light to the shaded foreground with some fill in flash.



Similar comparison pictures from the other end of this sand bed.



***Crocus vallicola*, *nudiflorus*, *pulchellus* and hybrids.**



Another plant of ***Veratrum fimbriatum*** this one is growing in the front garden.



Colchicum growing in a naturalistic planting.



Arisaema candidissimum





Colchicum autumnale album

Shaded under the Arisaema leaves is not the ideal place for the Colchicum to flower but this combination has not happened before - the Arisaema has been spreading from its original planting spot.



Crocus pulchellus

A Crocus seed must have fallen between the slabs at some time at first we got a single flower now every year a few more flowers appear.



When not being warmed by the sunshine the closed crocus flowers do not grab our attention but when they warm up and start to open they are quite a display. This is the cobble bed where the mice dug in the sand and devoured the crocus corms. Adding the stones has proved to be a deterrent and now the crocus are recovering. From a similar experience I can deduce that the mice chew off the shoot and eat the new corm leaving the old

corm below which, having lost the dominant growth, now the secondary buds are activated.

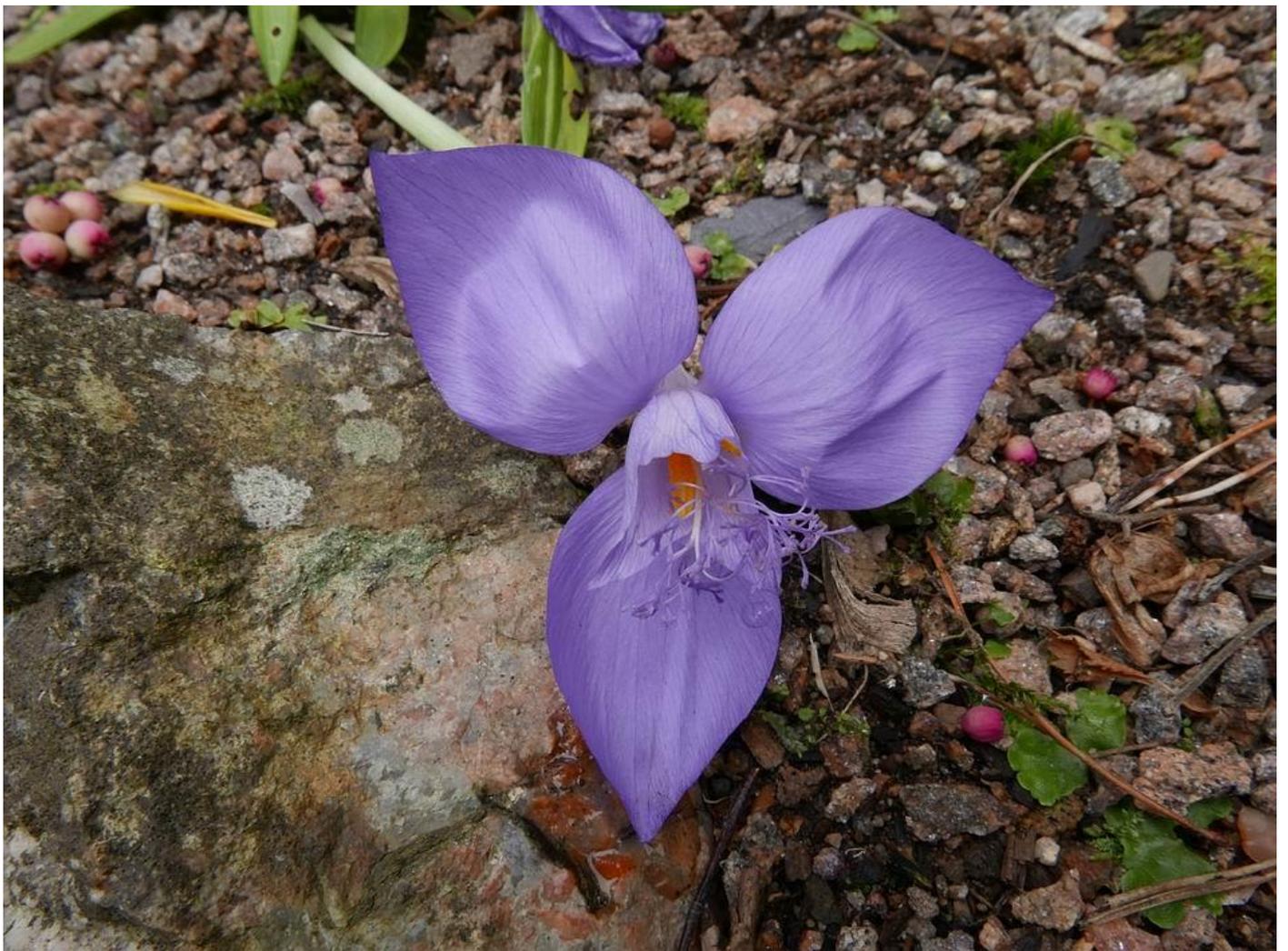


Warmed by the sunshine the crocus flowers start to open.

The different colour forms of **Crocus nudiflorus** continue to flower as they run through this Erythronium plunge bed.



The eagle eed among you may be able to spot *Crocus speciosus* among the *Crocus nudiflorus*.



Crocus banaticus





I intended to split this seed-raised pot of **Crocus vallicola** in the summer but did not get around to it until I was reminded by seeing the first flowers appearing. It is not the ideal to handle your bulbs when they are in root but if you are careful you can do it with minimal damage.



It was only when I tipped the corms out that I saw how many there were.



I planted some, the ones above, into the new bed by the pond and potted the others into a larger pot, below.





Cyclamen hederifolium



Once the Cyclamen flowers are fertilised the stems coil up pulling the seed capsule down towards the ground where it will be clasped for the best part of a year before it opens to reveal the ripe seeds which when hydrated are like tiny versions of the adult corms/tubers.



As we have no ants to distribute them the seeds fall and germinate on top of the corm where they have been held for so many months. I lifted this cluster out of the leaf debris they were germinating into. Some I have potted up individually others I have carefully planted elsewhere in the garden.



Stages of the germination of **Cyclamen hederifolium** seed, a tiny corm forms on the end of the first shoot to emerge then the shoot extends upwards to form a single leaf.



I will leave you with one more autumn vignette and a link to my latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#), see if you can spot my silly slips where I mix up a couple of names in my commentary, the first time I mention *Eucomis* I mean *Arisaema* and once I say *Crocus* instead of *Colchicum*.