



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 50.....15th December 2021



Snowdrops

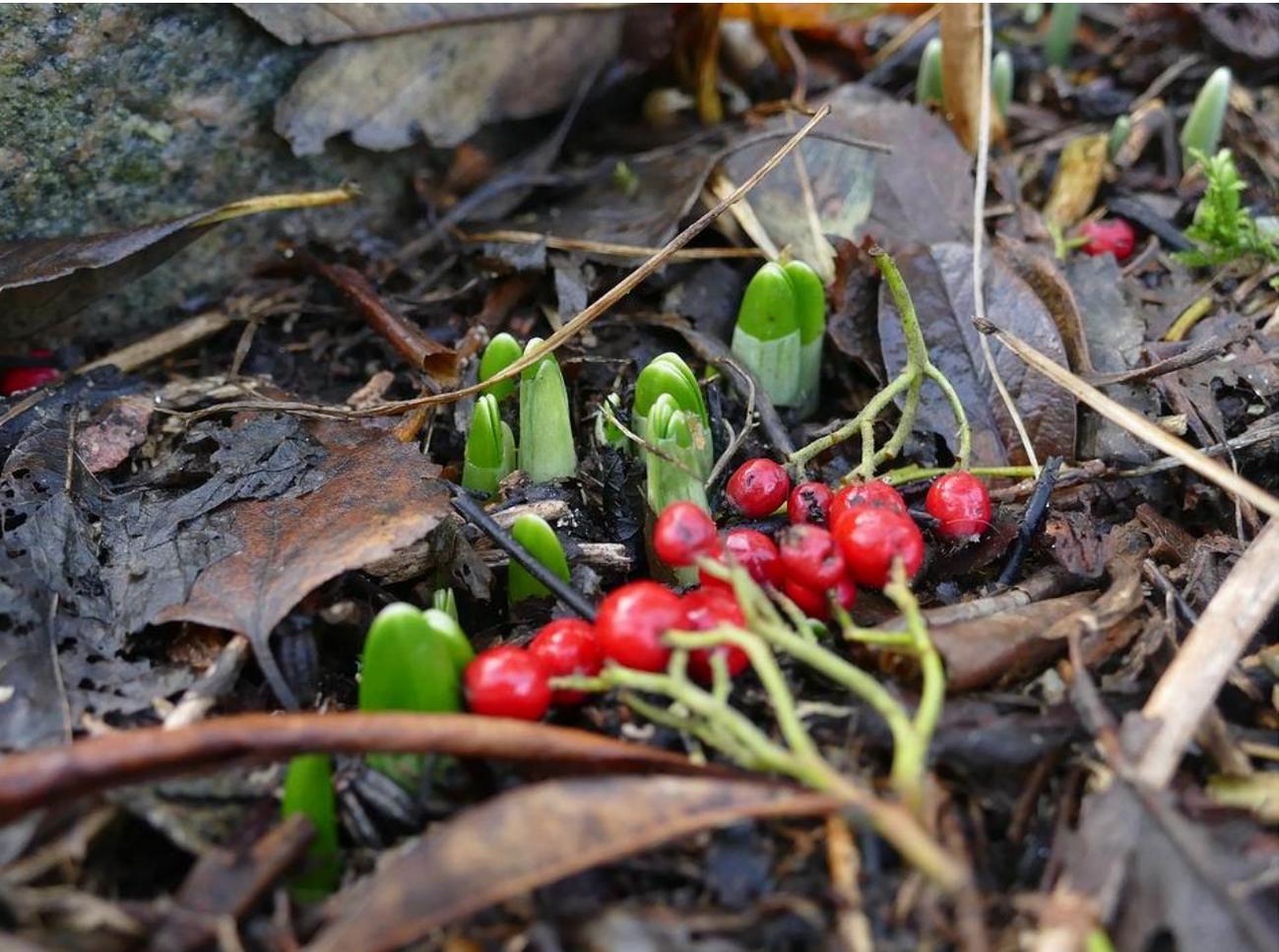


Each day gets shorter as we move into winter and it is the decreasing day length that many plants respond to. Trees drop their leaves when the days start shortening, long before the frosts start biting, while, at the same time, other types of plants stay green until the frosts start before they retreat underground. However the garden does not shut down in the winter: underground the new growth of many, especially bulbs, is slowly preparing for the spring rush to flower, indeed, many shoots are already breaking through the ground, pushing upwards as if putting a toe in the water to judge the conditions. The rate

of this early growth will depend on the temperature we experience over the next weeks and months - in the cold the growth will slow right down while in mild spells it will accelerate, which is not always a good thing. Aberdeen is often described as the coldest city in the UK but that does not mean we get the coldest temperatures. If you look only at the daily average temperatures through a year we are among the coolest but that is because the North Sea moderates our temperatures so we never get the extremes of hot or cold experienced by nearby inland places such as Aboyne, 32 miles west, of us which is often the hottest or coldest place in the country. Our moderate climate does mean that we can grow a wide range of plants even though we can be disappointed sometimes when late spring frosts cause damage to flowers and the new emerging growth.

These new Allium leaves are always among the most advanced even though the flowers don't appear until quite late in the spring. The leaves survive all that our winter can throw at them so can bear the scars by the time the tall flower stems push upwards.





It is a season of walking round the garden to spot the adventurous shoots and there are plenty such as Narcissus above and Leucojum, on the left, as well as the Galanthus flowers on the front cover.



Crocus leaves of both the autumn and spring flowering types are also appearing.



Crocus laevigatus flowers anytime from autumn to the spring depending on the form and the weather. These are braving the winter conditions but we are unlikely to get temperatures warm enough for their flowers to open.



The leaves on these young *Hepatica* plants are still looking in good shape and should continue to build the plants through the winter and hopefully we will see flowers in the spring.



Cyclamen hederifolium leaves stand out among the debris of the autumn leaf fall and ferns.



The plant of **Eucomis bicolor** that featured on the cover of Bulb Log 4521 has now been cut down by the frosts; but only the top growth, the tubers have survived growing unprotected in our garden for thirty years.



Many ferns have naturalised around the garden and we are happy to let them grow so long as they do not out compete any neighbouring plants.



Asplenium scolopendrium fronds covered in spores.



The frosts have also caused the *Cyananthus* growing in this slab bed to retreat underground for the winter.



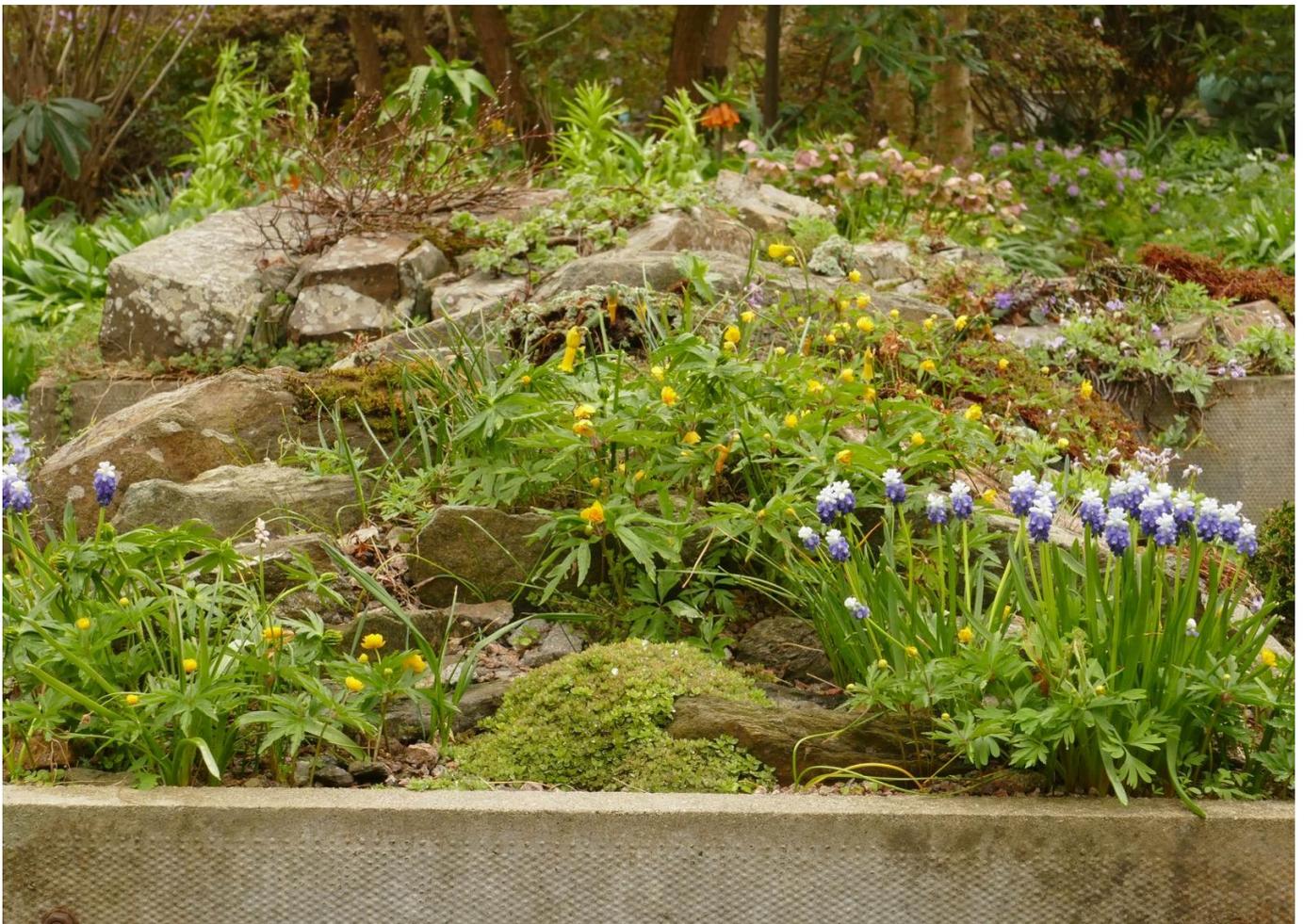
As I look carefully I spot the new leaves of *Narcissus bulbocodium* and other bulbs pushing up through the soggy mat of dying *Cyananthus* foliage.



This is not an ideal condition for the bulbs through the winter, so it is time to remove the mat of foliage.



The *Cyananthus* plants emerge from a single congested point so it is very easy to remove it which allows the air and light into the bulbs as well as exposing any slugs that were taking shelter in the damp conditions under the mat.



A look back to this picture from earlier in the year shows the new growth of the *Cyananthus* emerging like a cushion in the foreground surrounded by the bulbs.



With the bulk of the mat removed I will tidy up what is left of the old *Cyananthus* growth carefully because the new shoots are already visible as you can see better in the picture below of *Cyananthus microphyllus*.



Old leaves continue to cover some of the paths as a number of the large Rhododendrons are shedding their old leaves so tidying will have to continue through the winter.



This bed has been tidied and mulched with some shredded leaves in preparation for the first of the Snowdrops.



The grey green hummock of new **Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'** foliage will tough out all that our winter brings.



Narcissus albidus

The next sequence of images shows a small selection of the many hoop petticoat Narcissus that are in flower.



Narcissus romisuxii seedlings



Narcissus albidus seedlings



The form called *Narcissus romieuxii mesatlanticus* is a hybrid that looks like so many of the spontaneous seedlings that occur in our sand beds but every so often we find some that stand out.



Different colours and sizes appear and you should note the bicolour feature where the petals of the yellow one are almost white.



Naricessus romieuxii and Narcissus albidus



This Narcissus seedling may have some *Narcissus bulbocodium* in its parentage.



The emerging growth of *Tropaeolum azureum* and *Tropaeolum tricolor* scrambles through the *Narcissus* leaves as it grows up towards the light – I do try and direct it towards the mesh I placed against the sides for it to climb up.



In addition to the shoots poking through the ground in the garden beds we also have many more *Narcissus* flower buds showing in the sand beds and pots signalling a blooming good winter ahead of us.....