



BULB LOG.....23-01-2003

The narcissus are still looking beautiful and will go on for some time yet, if you have not got any of these you can see what you are missing in the winter months.



Bulb house 21.01

In the highlighted area is the small hybrid between cantabricus and bulbicodium raised by Don Stead which I showed in an earlier log.



Narcissus hybrid 'Don Stead'

It is a superb short stemmed large flowered narcissus and it bulks up well and I think it is deserving of a name Narcissus 'Don Stead' would be appropriate.

Narcissus romieuxii
gem 21.01

Narcissus romieuxii
'Gem' is also still going strong.





Narcissus 'Camoro' is also now coming out, it is similar in form to *N. romieuxii* *mesatlanticus* but the flowers are more of a pure white it also multiplies well in pots.

Narcissus 'Camoro'



Crocus michelsonii is a very beautiful crocus which is still very scarce.

We have one flowering sized bulb which has not produced any offsets since we first flowered it in 1996. The cold temperature in the bulb house is not sufficient for the flowers to open and the pollen to flow so we take these early crocus into the warmth of our kitchen where the flowers open and the pollen runs. I use a paint brush to get pollen

onto the stigma and ensure a better chance of a seed set. I am sure that this warmer temperature also aids the plant to set seed as there is a marked difference in the seed production between those that have been inside and those that stay out in the cold. *C. michelsonii* has set seed for us using this method since 1998.



Colchicum luteum is also in full flower in the bulb house.

The red arrow on the left picture points out a typical problem when growing bulbs in a cold wet atmosphere: botrytis seen here as brown rot on the leaves. The danger is that this is transferred down to the bulb so the solution that I employ is to take hold of the effected leaf with one hand place the other on the gravel at the base of the leaf and tug sharply. This should remove the leaf completely from the bulb and so prevent the rot from transferring. This is a nice form of *C. luteum* that we raised from wild collected seed and I find it a better plant to grow than the one that has been available from bulb suppliers for many years which while having a bigger flower does not produce the number of flowers from a single bulb. We are without that commercial form now having lost it some years ago and I am happy to stick with the illustrated form.

It is not only inside that *Colchicum* is appearing. Still in a pot but grown in a frame that has been open to all weather is *Colchicum hungaricum* which can be seen just behind the pot with *Galanthus platyphyllus*.



Galanthus and Colchicum

Both are just opening both have shiny green leaves and pure white flowers but there the similarity stops.

We have the galanthus in the garden as well but I have never found a place to plant *C. hungaricum* where it would not get swamped or lost in among the other plants. Slug pellets have been spread in these frames as the slugs seem to be particularly fond of the young colchicum leaves.

One recent visitor was interested in our frame covers so I thought that I would share them with you.



Fish box trough barn cloche

The well-known polystyrene fish box trough makes a great temporary frame and the standard sizes of square plastic pots fit into it perfectly as do the old style barn cloche, which, as you can see, two turn the trough into a mini glass house.



Frame cover

For our seed frames: when I do cover them I use some sheet plastic that I salvaged from an old sign at a petrol station it is flexible enough to form a beautiful curve like a rigid mini poly tunnel; “just the job”. There is a new heading in the forum on the web site for the Bulb Log your chance to post your comments, questions, or tell be what you might like to see in the Bulb Log, please use it as this is your site and we want your input.