

# International Rock Gardener







Fellow Gardeners, this is a busy time in the garden. Whether in the Northern hemisphere as the growing season for alpine reaches a peak or in the Southern hemisphere where the gardeners are collecting seed and thinking of preparations for a winter to come, there is optimism and activity all around. We hope you will relax for a moment and enjoy this offering from the world of the International Rock Gardener. M.Y.

Cover photo: ***Androsace dasyphylla*** BUNGE  
by [Zdeněk Řeháček](#), Česká Rybná, Czech Highland

This is a true alpine androsace from Central Asia; a relative of *A. villosa* and not so easy in lowland gardens. The species is variable, some flowers are single and sessile and some are in an inflorescence of up to three flowers on 2cm high red stems.

I have grown an almost sessile form from seed collected in the Pamir Mts. (Kirgizia)



Mts. (Kirgizia) in 2001. Two plants are in classic ceramic pots

and one is planted in a trough. The plants are from 4000 m elevation and they need plenty of light but they are not able to withstand sunshine when the temperatures are around 30°C. So my trough is shaded in summer time with laths and both pots are moved to the shade and sunk two thirds into sand. If one third of the ceramic pots are kept permanently moist evaporation from the exposed pot surface keeps the walls cool giving the plant some comfort from cooler surrounding air. This principle of cooling by evaporation is used with all my alpine androsaces and it partly works in the case of troughs. No seed was set, but young rosettes are easy to root.



**Hans Roemer**, our next author, is a member of the Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society (VIRAGS), which having been founded in 1921 as the British Columbia Alpine Plant Growers Society is probably the oldest rock garden society. He is an exceedingly good grower, particularly interested in bulbs. He leads most of the rock garden club's outings into the mountains of British Columbia and Washington State in the USA. Hans' son designed for his father a computer program to draw climate diagrams. Hans uses these diagrams to compare the 'home climates' of rock garden plants to the climate in Victoria, BC, to select those species that are best adapted to thrive in local garden. As most people overseas (and, sadly, also most people in Victoria!) don't realize, the local climate on the SE side of



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Vancouver Island is drastically different from the rest of Canada and northern Europe in being a pronounced Winter-rain/Summer-drought climate (i.e. sub-mediterranean). Yet most gardeners here grow exactly the same plants as one would in Scotland, or others would in Germany, etc - and wonder why they don't do as well.

Hans is pictured at the Royal British Columbia Museum herbarium where he is a regular volunteer.

## ----- GARDENS IN THE MOUNTAINS -----

### Fine alpinines from British Columbia's northern mountains

by Hans Roemer, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada.



Mt. St. George, Stone Mountain

You may not find the names of the following alpinines in your favourite seed lists. But they deserve to be celebrated nevertheless. They were admired and photographed last summer in northern British Columbia and are part of a flora that extends from Alaska and Yukon south into the Rocky Mountains. The 'Rockies' find their extreme end in northern British Columbia and are accessible primarily from the famous Alaska Highway. This highway, the only traffic artery in this part of the province, crosses the mountains in a northwesterly direction before it reaches the majestic Liard River and the Yukon border. At Summit Pass it briefly attains an elevation

of 1200 m, just below the upper limit of trees in this area and close to large expanses of alpine habitats.

#### ***Arnica lessingii ssp. lessingii***

(nodding arnica) is a unique beauty, considering other members of this genus.

It has large nodding, downward-facing flowers held singly between 8 and 12 cm above a tidy rosette of slightly toothed leaves.

It grows in alpine meadows and sometimes in moss- and lichen-rich tundra well above the tree line. Some of its associated plants are *Gentiana glauca*, *Artemisia norvegica*, *Festuca altaica*, *Lupinus arcticus*, *Rhododendron lapponicum* and an assortment of dwarf *Salix* species.

The range of this arnica includes all of Alaska and Yukon, with a few outliers in extreme NE Siberia.





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As the name implies, *Pyrola grandiflora* (arctic wintergreen) is distinguished by its large flowers, relative to its total size. With smallish, round leaves it is similar to the European *P. rotundifolia*, but has a shorter flowering raceme. It grows in well-drained tundra habitats or alpine heath communities, together with dwarf shrubs such as *Dryas integrifolia*, *Betula nana* and *glandulosa*, *Salix* species, sedges and grasses. The distribution of *Pyrola grandiflora* is circum-polar.





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***Campanula lasiocarpa*** (mountain harebell) (above) is a widespread and variable species. In its best form it has very large bells, combined with very tiny foliage. It usually grows in open, stony places, rather than in meadows or dense turf. In the picture it is associated with *Salix stolonifera*. While distributed all the way from NE Asia through Alaska and adjacent territories, this species also reaches south into mountains in the state of Washington.



***Antennaria monocephala*** (single-headed pussytoes), probably the daintiest in its genus, usually stands less than 10 cm tall when in bloom and may form small mats. Female flowers (picture) and male flowers are borne on separate heads and are equally decorative. This species grows in mixture with many other small plants in short alpine turf. Its range extends from the Aleutians through Alaska northwest Canada.

***Rhododendron lapponicum*** (Lapland rosebay) is the loveliest of the many dwarf shrubs found in the north. On wind-blown slopes it often forms large stands, only 15 cm tall, intertwined with dwarf willows and birches, or when growing on acidic substrates, with *Ledum decumbens*, *Empetrum nigrum*, mosses and lichens. In sheltered locations some specimens may reach 40 cm in height.

*Rhododendron lapponicum* is found on both acidic and calcareous substrates and is obtainable from some seed exchanges. It may therefore have potential for those who find it hard to keep their rock gardens free of calcareous material. The distribution is circumpolar, with occurrences in Scandinavia (hence the name).





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***Leucanthemum integrifolium*** (entire-leaved daisy). With minute rosettes of linear leaves and solitary, good-size flower heads sitting on leafless, 6 to 8 cm tall stems, surely this species could compete with the best dwarf forms of *Chrysanthemum alpinum*? Forms with broad, rounded ligulate flowers look even better, but I didn't have the pleasure to encounter them. *Leucanthemum integrifolium* grows in places relatively free of competing vegetation, usually bare ground, on gravel, broken rock and in rock crevices. The distribution includes Alaska, Yukon and extreme northern British Columbia.

***Corydalis pauciflora*** (few-flowered corydalis) This is a cousin to the attractive East Asian blue *Corydalis* species, but a relatively dwarf and sparsely flowered version. The flowers also

vary from blue to pink, even in the same population. This species was found to occupy moist depressions on slopes, probably with late snow cover. Seepage indicators such as *Senecio pauciflorus*, *Saxifraga lyallii*, *Equisetum pratense* and *Parnassia palustris* were among the associated plants. This should give growers some hints as to the species' water demand in the summer. The distribution of *Corydalis pauciflora* reaches from Siberia through Alaska to northern British Columbia.



***Anemone parviflora*** (Northern anemone) is another very widespread species that ranges all across the American continent in the far north and follows the mountains in the west as far south as Colorado. It is the only one of the described species that also grows in mountains directly bordering the Pacific Ocean, for

instance in the Vancouver Island Ranges and in the Olympic Mountains of Washington. The showiest specimens, including those shown in the photograph, belong to the *var. grandiflora* and occur mainly in the northern mountains. *Anemone parviflora* grows in alpine habitats of broken rock with less than a closed vegetation cover, often on north-facing slopes or, where found at lower elevations, in moist, calcareous sites.



All of the species portrayed here make a "growable" impression when seen in the wild and most of them are common plants in their respective habitats. Why then are they

neglected by rock and alpine gardeners? Have you got a friend in Yukon or Alaska ?



----- GARDENS IN THE MOUNTAINS -----



Robin Gemmill, a Scotswoman, living in Switzerland writes in the SRGC Forum of her [‘Alpine Walks in the Valais’](#). Robin has an instinctive grasp, shown in her words and photos, of the connections between all the elements of nature and our place in that scheme.



Glacial Rocks with pine trees on top of them have moss and primulas growing where the water runs down.

**Rocks in the Swiss Alps are full of life however bare they may seem....** by Robin Gemmill

On the edge of the ravine, close to the village of Salvan in Valais, Rochers du Soir there is a wonderful place to walk in the early evening. This is the last point that the evening sun reaches when the rest of the steep-sided alpine valley is cast into deep shadow. Amongst the gigantic glacial rocks a pine forest grows offering protection and diverse habitats for flora and fauna to flourish. Plants that are happy in winter sun but seek shade and moisture in summer like it here, especially mosses and ferns, primula and orchids.

In amongst the pine and rocks mixed woodland, predominantly beech, allows leaf litter to build in rocky pockets and from here the first flowers emerge through the dry crust, pushing upwards towards the light. Underneath the humus is wet with melt water and roots of *Hepatica* are the first to take a drink and welcome Spring. Blue, violet and white splashes of colour decorate the pathways that snake round the rocks so each corner turned brings a new surprise.....Here a ***Crocus vernus*** and there, in pure and simple form, a group of wild and enchanting ***Hepatica nobilis*** ‘Alba’ nestle against a rock and face the evening sun.





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Two more of Robin's photos from the Valais; a group of blue Hepatica at different stages of growth dimly lit in a rocky dip with leaf litter.



*Crocus vernus* Albus

There are a great many Hepatica forms in cultivation, below is a selection of mixed Hepatica blossoms from the garden of Harry Jans



***Hepatica nobilis*** (syn. *H. triloba*):  
remarks from ZZ

Formerly known as *Anemone hepatica*, these are well-loved spring flowers for shady positions. They are definitely lime-lovers.

One day I met flowering plant in a limestone cliff in the Czech Karst and it gave me the idea of planting *Hepatica nobilis* in a shaded granite crevice garden (there is old mortar rubble in the soil already) in the Prague Show place. The plants have established themselves there and are seeding around well.

Rose forms are more and more rare in our woodland and albinos are nearly unseen here because of ruthless collecting.

This pale *Hepatica triloba* was found near the garden in NE Moravia of Jaroslav Baláž, together with some nearly violet forms.



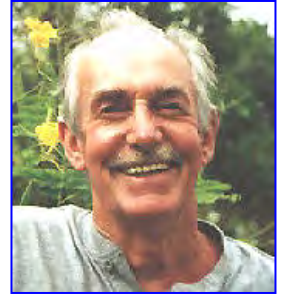


----- MOUNTAINS IN THE GARDENS -----

Graham Nicholls, English Nurseryman and Campanula maven, has suffered considerable damage to his alpine houses this past winter, as can be seen from this photo of one in January, collapsed by the weight of snow.



Graham is not easily discouraged however and here he illustrates two good reasons for growing from seed:



***Campanula 'Timsbury Chimes'***

I always collect seed from my campanulas; growing so many plants in close proximity you never know what gem may arise from the results of unintentional cross-pollination. ***Campanula 'Timsbury Chimes'*** is the result of one such 'bee' cross producing a plant with compact tight growth but with flowers similar to the seed parent. In 2003 I collected seed from my plant of

*Campanula 'Covadonga'*, a lovely natural hybrid with deep blue-purple flowers that originally was found by Clarence Elliott and Roger Bevan many years ago, growing at the foot of a cliff face in Covadonga, northern Spain.



Seed was sown on 19th September 2003 and germinated in spring 2004. I pricked out about a dozen seedlings and when they flowered in 2005 I noticed that one seedling was quite vigorous and had flowers the same size and colour as the seed parent. This one was isolated and potted on over the following two years increasing in size and number of flowers. In 2008 it was exhibited at the [AGS Summer Show South](#) in the 'one pan grown from seed' class and drew favourable comments from



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several exhibitors. In 2009 and this time filling a 19cm pot it flowered profusely in time for the same show once again when it was given an [80th Anniversary award](#) as the best plant in a 19cm pot. In September 2009 it was repotted into a 25cm pot when a few small rooted pieces were removed from the edge of the plant and potted up. Some were given away and some retained. All of these are doing well demonstrating that this is a satisfactory method of propagation for this plant although I will try cuttings in the spring as well. In the last three months the plant has increased in size by sending up vigorous shoots all around the edge of the pot. It was named for the church bells of the village where I live, Timsbury, near Bath in Somerset.

### ***Campanula* 'Rick Lupp'**



This second plant is ***Campanula* 'Rick Lupp'**: one I have named for my good friend Rick Lupp, proprietor of [Mt. Tahoma Nursery](#) in Graham, Washington State with whom I have exchanged plants for many years and who is a keen campanula grower.

I collected seed from a plant of ***Campanula raineri*** that I had grown from wild collected seed and sowed it on 12/10/2004.

It germinated in spring of 2005 and flowered a year later in 2006 with just one stem. It increased in size every year and this year 2009 filled a 19 cm pot. The leaves are larger than *C. raineri*, pubescent and with a slight yellowish tinge as most campanula hybrids have. The stems grow 15-18 cm tall and have large deep blue flowers the same as *C. raineri*. It is propagated by division.



*Campanula raineri* in a granite trough

Joyce Carruthers



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### ----- MOUNTAINS IN THE GARDENS -----

#### THE LINCOLN FOSTER MEMORIAL ROCK GARDEN by Zdeněk Zvolánek

[Montreal Botanic Garden](#) is one of the oldest and largest botanic gardens on the American continent. There is a huge and elegant Japanese garden of white veined green serpentine boulders with plenty of water from the St. Lawrence River. The Chinese garden nearby displays romantic limestones weathered by seawater and a tall hill of unpleasant rockwork of igneous stones. 80 years ago a rock garden with an enormous waterfall was made in a large area with huge limestone slabs placed in classic horizontal stratification. One small corner near the entrance of the main garden has a relatively new small outcrop, stratified with a dip of 60°. It was built by the Czech landscaper, collector and writer [Josef Halda](#) with the help of the local chapter of [North American Rock Garden Society](#).

After my lecture to the Ottawa chapter I was asked by the French-Canadian René Giguère, curator of the Rock garden in BG Montreal, to build a crevice garden in one “wild place” occupied by *Convolvulus arvensis*, which constantly defied many chemical attacks by gardeners. The agreement was that I would receive transport expenses and accommodation and do this rockwork in 14 days as a volunteer.



Garden in March 2009

In the autumn of 2004 we excavated the area with machinery to a great depth, removing all possible roots of this convolvulus pest. Then we modulated the terrain and covered all the area with a modern sheet of thick geotextile to stop the growth of *Convolvulus*. The geotextile was covered with 5-7 cm of fine soil and then with approximately 30 cm of sharp sand. The finishing was with vertically placed layers of local sandstone slabs and top dressing of sandstone grit. All rockwork was done only with manpower; two gardeners and myself. Then I flew back to Europe feeling that my old arms and hands were much longer! I suggested naming this

special garden, the hybrid of two growing techniques (sand bed and crevice bed), as the [Lincoln Foster Memorial Garden](#) and to apply for a [grant from NARGS](#) to buy plenty of rock garden plants from a Canadian Nursery.

In May 2005 Joyce Carruthers and I arrived to lead the planting of crevices and the high desert looking areas among small outcrops. The feeling of the American West was provided by groups of *Pinus aristata*. Of course, we did not have enough plants to fill all the crevices. This job was left upon the weak shoulders of the Botanic Garden (they do not have a special section or facilities for propagating alpinists). Added to this handicap they had lost many skilful professional gardeners because of new Town Hall regulations. [Roger Barlow](#), the well known nurseryman from Fruitvale British Columbia collected together and raised cuttings of Linc Foster's varieties and hybrids of *Saxifragas*, *Phloxes* and *Androsace* and donated them to the Botanic Garden - a wonderful contribution.

Two years later the steepest part of rockwork was showing signs of collapse and was rebuilt by René Giguère. Hidden metal constructions were used to support the high northern sidewalls. The shame; the collapsing of the part of my rockwork was because of the insufficiently strong foundation above the



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slippery geotextile at the steep slope. Canadian frosts, water and a road for trucks nearby (above) helped the movement of heavy layers of sandstone and sand. I learned something from this oversight.



ROCK CREVICE  
SAND BED IN  
MONTREAL  
BOTANIC  
GARDEN

*Pinus aristata,*  
*Armeria, Genista*

**René Giguère**  
answers the  
questions of  
**Zdeněk Zvolánek**

### **How much sand is there in this area? What is the size of this special garden?**

The surface area is approximately 150 sq meters.

We used 30 tons of coarse sand, which gardeners call 'Drainage sand'; it has the following particle sizes (granulometry):

Size of sieve	% passing through
2.5mm	85-100
1.25mm	70-90
0.630mm	20-45
0.315mm	3-12 (it has relatively few fine particles)
0.160mm	1-4
0.080mm	0-2

You probably recall that we used clean ¾ inch gravel as a base underneath the whole thing to cover the excavation before laying the geotextile sheet to block the convolvulus. On top of the sheet we added a shallow layer of soil, approximately 10cm thick, then we used sand for the rest of the construction upwards. The company that provided the sand is local and named: Sables Thouin.

### **How are any hidden remains of *Convolvulus arvensis* handled?**

It is quite under control and absent from the crevice areas. It is only making a shy return on the edge, coming from under the masses of conifers on the side. I conclude that the geotextile sheet is doing it's job very well and that we have taken the right decisions.

### **What is the stone and how many tons were placed?**

The stones came from Carrières Ducharme, near the US border one hour from Montreal. It is sandstone which they call silica. We used altogether, in three shipments, 60 tons of it; that is 50 tons for the construction in 2004-2005 and an additional 10 tons when we repaired the section that was only showing risk of collapse in 2008.



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### Are your *Pinus aristata* happy in sand?

Yes, the Pinus are perfectly happy; they are showing good growth despite the hot environment they are subjected to in summer. A few have developed reddening in the head but minimally. I am surprised at their vigour and their yearly growth is more than I expected.

### How many plants have you lost?

The pines have all survived, 22 of them. As for the plants, obviously there have been losses, as we suspected not all have adapted. Among the plants that have died are: *Anemone trullifolia*, *Calceolaria biflora*, *Campanula tridentata*, *Colobanthus quitensis*, some *Delosperma* and some cactus, *Primula pulverulenta*, *Primula rusbyi*, *Salvia taraxacifolia*, *Castilleja sulphurea*, *Dionysia bazoftica*, *Physoplexis comosa*, *Primula bulleyana*, *Primula florindae* and *Carduncellus pinnatus* after some 4 years.



*Armeria maritima* 'Dussendorfer Stolz',

However some have shown very good adaptation and progressed in growth: *Aethionema schistosum*, *Androsace carnea* ssp. *brigantiacae*, *Androsace x 'Millstream'*, *Androsace lanuginosa*, *Androsace sarmentosa* 'Salmon's variety', *Anthyllis vulneraria* ssp. *vulneraria* var. *coccinea*, ***Armeria maritima* 'Dussendorfer Stolz'**, *Asperula boissieri*, *Asperula gussonii*, *Centaurea pindicola*, *Degenia velebitica*, *Daphne arbuscula*, *Dianthus haematocalyx* ssp. *pindicola*, *Draba incerta*, *Draba ventosa*, *Draba rosularis*, *Erigeron compositus*, *Genista lydia* var. *lydia*, *Gentiana septemfida*, *Geum triflorum*, *Helianthemum 'Fire Dragon'*, the *Lavandula*s of all sorts, *Penstemons* in general behave very well, *Oxalis depressa*, *Phlox condensata*, *Phlox pulvinata*, *Primula marginata*, *Pulsatilla vernalis*, *Rhododendron 'Chipmunk'*, 'Wee Bee' and 'Wren', *Salix arctica* var. *petraea*, *Salix jejuna*, *Salix x boydii*, *Salix retusa*, *Silene acaulis*, *Stachys lavandulifolia* var. *lavandulifolia*, *Thymus praecox* ssp. *arcticus* 'Minus', *Yucca nana*.



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### Do you water this hybrid between sand bed and crevice garden? What about the need to weed?

Watering is a consideration during the hot weather in June and July but surprisingly the plants don't seem to suffer from water stresses. We do water occasionally during long periods of absence of rain otherwise we let the rains take care of it. Weeding is easy as it is from sand where weeds are easily pulled out. We are not getting more weeds than elsewhere in the garden. *Oxalis* is present in some spots but easily controlled and *Senecio* as well, but not much. No *Equisetum* is present and we have no *Marcanthia* (liverwort) in this area.

### *Aethionema schistosum* is sowing itself around. Which plants do the same?

*Androsace carnea* ssp. *brigantiaca*, *Erigeron modestus*, *Degenia velebitica*, *Androsace fedtschenkoi*, *Draba incerta* and *Pulsatilla vernalis*.



### Do you have success with Androsaces?

As you have seen, yes with some, they are even self-sowing. We presently have 8 taxons and most are surviving: *A. x 'Millstream'* (*A. carnea* x *A. pyrenaica*) (left), *A. carnea* ssp. *brigantiaca*, *A. fedtschenkoi*, *A. hirtella*, *A. jacquemontii*, *A. lanuginosa*, *A. sarmentosa* 'Salmon's Variety' and *A. studiosorum*.

### Do you have some damage to *Penstemon rupicola*?

No, they are behaving very well, blooming abundantly and requiring very little care, they are thus the perfect plants for this kind of garden. We have not lost even one of the some 51 planted in there in 2005. Other penstemons are also doing very well: *P. cardwellii*, *P. pinifolius* 'Mersea Yellow' and *P. hallii*.

### How big is the collection of *Kabschia Saxifragas*?

We have 30 taxons of the *Kabschia* group. Since we have had to move many from their garden position into pots in the nursery during the repair of the collapsing section, we lost some in the process. Many of these *kabschia* are Lincoln Foster's hybrids. They are showing a rather slow increase in size, the successes for now are not yet clear. I will try this summer to make a better assessment of where we are with these and hopefully provide you with an update.



*Saxifraga oppositifolia* 'A.C.U.Berry'



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*Ranunculus parnassifolius*



the biennial *Campanula celsii*

### What is the comment of visitors about this modern design of garden?

Visitors are quite impressed with this unusual structure, which strikes them as they enter the alpine garden. Very many enter the pathway leading to a bench placed at the lowest part. It has become a 'picture spot' (for photographs) popular to all. With the new interpretive panel that explains the concept, they are more informed and seem to understand what the crevices are all about. There is also a bronze plaque that gives credit to you and NARGS for the funding and creation of the garden.



## ----WORLD OF BULBS----

### *Fritillaria eduardii* Regel by Joyce Carruthers

Once while visiting Mr. Polívka, a well known Czech bulb and Peony aficionado, who was a leader of plant expeditions to Central Asia and to Caucasus, I saw group of mature yellow *F. eduardii* in flower. He only had yellows ones in his garden and I instantly fell in love. Later he gave me seed, which did not germinate, and after his death his son gave me more, which failed to germinate. Now I realised that seed collected in the winter or late autumn usually fails to germinate.

A few years later another friend, Mrs. Kořobková, gave us a few small bulbs of *F. eduardii* because Zdenek had converted her retaining wall of horizontal limestone rocks in her garden, in which she could grow nothing, into a vertically placed crevice garden in which she could grow something.

I read somewhere that these bulbs like *F. raddeana* and *F. imperialis* should be planted deep (2-3 feet) in prepared soil, including some humus and fertiliser mixed into the bottom. I dug a deep trench not far from our **south facing dolerite cliff**.



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Since our planting medium is mineral soil from broken down dolerite with a good clay contents I decided that we did not need humus because clay is nutrient rich, water retentive and provides good surfaces for bacterial activity around the roots of plants. I only added a small amount of onion fertiliser mixed to the bottom of the trench and arranged the bulbs. The trench style was inspired by a photo I had seen by Dieter Zschummel of *F. imperialis* in Iran growing in profusion near a cliff with *Dionysia haussknechtii*.

At the end of March Vojtěch Holubec admired and photographed our blooming plants and said he did not have it in his garden. Our *F. eduardii* flowered for the first time last year after about three years from planting and this year the flowers were better. After flowering I water them well and scratch and water in a small amount of onion fertiliser hoping to increase the size of the bulbs and eventually trigger bulb splitting. Without knowing it I was following the advice of [Leonid Bondarenko](#) for bulb splitting (into two).

His story about this species in the wild is captivating (see his [article for Fritillaria Group](#) of the AGS). As you see our *F. eduardii* is yellow-orange and begins to flower in the middle of March (even in this hard year) at the same time as *Crocus tommasinianus*. The cliff still has stored heat at root level in winter and cool in summer.



*Fritillaria eduardii* on the Beauty Slope



The botanist and gardener at the St. Petersburg Botanic Garden Eduard Regel named this beautiful plant after himself and described it in 1883. As you see, our plants are correctly named and they do not have a garlicky smell. When starting to flower our plants are between 40 to 50 cm tall and 60 cm when the first flowers fade. They did produce some seed last year. We decided to consult Mrs. Korobková before sending in this story. What a surprise- she told us that she obtained her seed from Eduard Hanslík, a member of the [Prague club](#). He was in Tajikistan east of Dushanbe at a place called Romit on an expedition many years ago. He was rather ill so did not go with the main party, but went off on his own outside Romit and



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entered a gorge/valley where there were large wild rhubarb plants and rich humusy soil. There he encountered a population of *F. eduardii* at the sloping base of this gorge.



*Fritillaria imperialis* forms with *Dionysia haussknechtii* in Iran; photo by Dieter Zschummel (similar to the one remembered by Joyce)

The plants of *F. eduardii* seen by Eduard Hanlik in Tajikistan were mostly 120 cm tall and the prevailing colour was yellow/orange ranging into almost yellow and those which were Bordeaux wine-red colour! He collected five bulbs and now has eight.



They have not flowered for the last two years, probably, he said because of bad summers. Eduard does have a rhododendron and conifer woodland environment and grows his *F. eduardii* outdoors.

*Fritillaria eduardii* bud in a Scottish garden  
[Ian Young](#)

Yellow *Fritillaria imperialis* in the Belgian garden of  
[Luc Gilgemyn](#).





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### ----Mountain Gardens Revisited----

In the March IRG there was a piece by Dieter Zschummel about *Solmslaubachia prolifera* and *S. baiogoinensis* : somehow the photo of the latter species was not sent to IRG but we are pleased to show you it now.

#### ***Solms-laubachia***

***baiogoinensis*** is a relatively unknown species, - also previously in genus *Desideria*, which the Zschummels also found in Tibet at altitudes of about 5000 m on high passes SE of the town Tsetang, SE of Lhasa. It is found there in finer scree, seemingly of granite gravel, avoiding the competition of other plants. The deeply crenate and rather hirsute leaves and calyces are a feature. There is little information about this species in cultivation and we suppose that this will not prove easy to grow.

Dieter now takes this opportunity to tell us about another species of *Solms-laubachia*:



*Solms-laubachia baiogoinensis* close-up

#### ***Solms-laubachia* species ? nova** by Dieter Zschummel

In 2007 near Rawu in Southeast Tibet we explored a valley situated north of that small village because we wanted to see *Androsace zayulensis* in flower. In 2007 we walked rather a long way uphill over an area with small rhododendrons and *Androsace delavayi*. We then had to cross a large rough scree before we reached limestone cliffs.

Here we found very interesting plants. *Androsace yargongensis* just started flowering whereas the green compact cushions of *Saxifraga ludlowii* were past their best but still with some of the large pink flowers. Also other species of *Saxifraga* were growing there: one also of the section *Porphyron* with white flowers and some of the section *Ciliatae*.

Besides these saxifrages a member of the Brassicaceae family was the most exciting discovery. In all probability it was a species of *Solms-laubachia*.





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The expert for the whole family of Brassicaceae, [Ihsan Al-Shebaz](#) of [Missouri Botanic Gardens](#), confirmed the genus and his guess is that the plant could belong to a new, as yet undescribed species.

Unfortunately we found only one plant in flower and because of lack of time we didn't search for more. Also we didn't collect any material and so the identity of that *Solms-laubachia* stays uncertain.

We are very thankful to Ihsan, who identified several plants from our photos: "You are really killing me by sending me these lovely images and no specimens" he wrote in 2007.

*Solms-laubachia* species ? nova, Rawu.

## ----REPORT FROM BEAUTY SLOPE----

by Zdeněk Zvolánek; introduction by Joyce Carruthers



A cooler corner of the Beauty Slope



## ----International Rock Gardener----



“April brings many changes on a south facing slope and even more sudden ones on south facing cliff.

One evening climbing up like a fly on the wall to see *Iris taurica* (yellow form) in bloom, with some ‘Roundup’ in the bottle, I was able to see some extremely small *Asplenium septentrionale*, which had put on minute fresh growth. Normally they would be invisible to the naked eye from below, perhaps for hundred of years. Using one hand for the ‘Roundup’ and balancing inward for life and limb, I administrated the herbicide to an aggressive Boraginaceous “weed” growing next to the Iris. On another place nearby *Lithodora zahni* ‘Ness Blue’ on a hardiness trial, is beginning to show sky blue blooms” J.C.

There is no compulsion to mention every flower which appears in the steppe but readers surely expect strong selection and information about new or rare plants. Today is April 20<sup>th</sup> and spring sprung with a long cold period, so there are still some *Saxifraga marginata* and *Primula marginata* at their best. Rudi Weiss gave us a cutting from his mother plant of the slow growing cultivar *Daphne blagayana* ‘**Brenda Anderson**’ (a selection from the Durmitor Mts. in Monte Negro) which opened its round inflorescence in the middle of March in a very sunny position. The fragrance is sweet and the white colour is intensive.



[ Ed: Readers may be interested to know that the late Brenda Anderson, was an accomplished plantswoman, who, with her husband, made many trips each winter to see plants in the Southern Hemisphere and who had great success with those plants from the Drakensberg, Australia, Tasmania, Argentina and Chile in their garden at Wester Balruddery in Scotland. The deep sided valley site was also full of Himalayan wonders: fine Rhododendrons with *Primula bhutanica* carpeting the eastern slope. The hardy cactus *Maihuenia poepigii* from Chile flowered on the sunny rock garden, Mutisias clothed the walls of the house and *Rhodohypoxis* lived out all year in troughs. ]



## ----International Rock Gardener----



This plant growing in deeper mineral soil in association with *Erica carnea*, benefits from shade to its roots. Brenda has finished flowering now, releasing its show to the first wave of the large deep pink flowers (18 mm) of *Daphne sericea* nearby. The first flowers of *Daphne cneorum* var. *pygmaea* forms are clamouring for attention and are pleasing our nostrils. *Daphne tangutica* (clone B from Robin White) suddenly sprung into the first phase of bloom.

Of a few shy flower s of Phloxes I admire new seedlings of *Phlox caespitosa* ssp. *pulvinata* (collected by Ron Ratko), which are white like their brothers in the White Mountains of California, Mt. Wheeler in Nevada and Mt. Matterhorn in Oregon.



We have only one bulb of *Tulipa armena* var. *armena* in cultivation and it has flowered bravely and long this year.



Cool weather prolonged the flowering time of *Cyclamen pseudibericum*, which we try in different places to see how much sun it can take. We have a good carmine pink form, collected by our Bavarian friend Peter Zeitingner north of Karaman Maras at 1400 m and all the seedlings keep this saturated colour. No *C. pseudibericum* was lost during the last five years of outdoor cultivation without winter protection.



----International Rock Gardener----



A fanfare opening of Spring in the middle March was provided by ***Aethionema caespitosum*** ; a dwarf cushion forming plant from Eastern Anatolia.

It has different winter basal leaves and the later narrow summer leaves change the character of this half known species.

One month later we saw a cushion of this lilac rose plant blooming in the Gothenburg Botanic Garden alpine house on a visit to Sweden.

Two splendid golden yellow flowered saxatile plants (Cruciferae family) are putting on a show now. Both are rare in the wild (limestone cliffs of Croatia) but with a good will to be domesticated to the hot, dry crevices of the Czech Karst.

***Fibigia triquetra***, is a taller subshrub (up to 20 cm) and ***Degenia velebitica*** forms pulvinate cushions, both in full sun. ***Degenia*** is able to sow itself on our slope and we hope that a dense planting of ***Fibigia*** will bring the same results.



*Fibigia triquetra* and *Phlox 'Gypsy Blood'*



## ----International Rock Gardener----



The last plant for rock garden introduction is the charming Albanian perennial *Thlaspi bellidifolium* (the Mt. Korab form). This report could be almost endless with *Veronica caespitosa*, *V. kotschyana*, *Androsace villosa* var. *glabra*, *A. montana*, *Aubrieta glabrescens*, *Gentiana clusii* and others which are extremely offended to have been deprived of more attention.

## ----Natural Helpers in the rock garden----



Dušan Pangrác has a kind heart and the green thumb and as the old guru of the Czech Rock Garden Club he showed his colours by adopting a young male duck which had been attacked by a swan in the Vltava river thus suffering a broken wing. As a single male in Dušan's rock garden it is a mystery how he found a female to share the "mountain pool", polster plants and beauty of the garden in Prague. They eat many slugs or snails, rest on the cushions and beat some paths amongst the boulders. The damage done is acceptable and the crowning achievement of this family was seen on his Easter Greetings card. J.C.