



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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*Erythronium caucasicum*!

## **Erythronium caucasicum**



I am no lover of ‘instant gardening’ as featured in many a TV programme garden make-over where a garden is planted, much like a show garden to look good at the time of completion or shortly after.

To me gardening is a long slow journey to be enjoyed. Ever since I became aware of its existence I have had a desire to have numbers of *Erythronium caucasicum* across our garden but its lack of availability allied with its slowness to increase means it has taken many years to get a number of seed raised forms planted out around the garden. Encouraged by the unseasonable weather and record breaking temperatures we

are experiencing the pollen is flowing and with my help the pollen has been transferred between the various flowers and I am hopeful that this year I might get a garden record breaking seed set to further expand our population.



One of the recently planted out small group of seedlings of ***Erythronium caucasicum***, flowering for the first time, in the new bed by the pond where I hope they will form a self seeding colony.

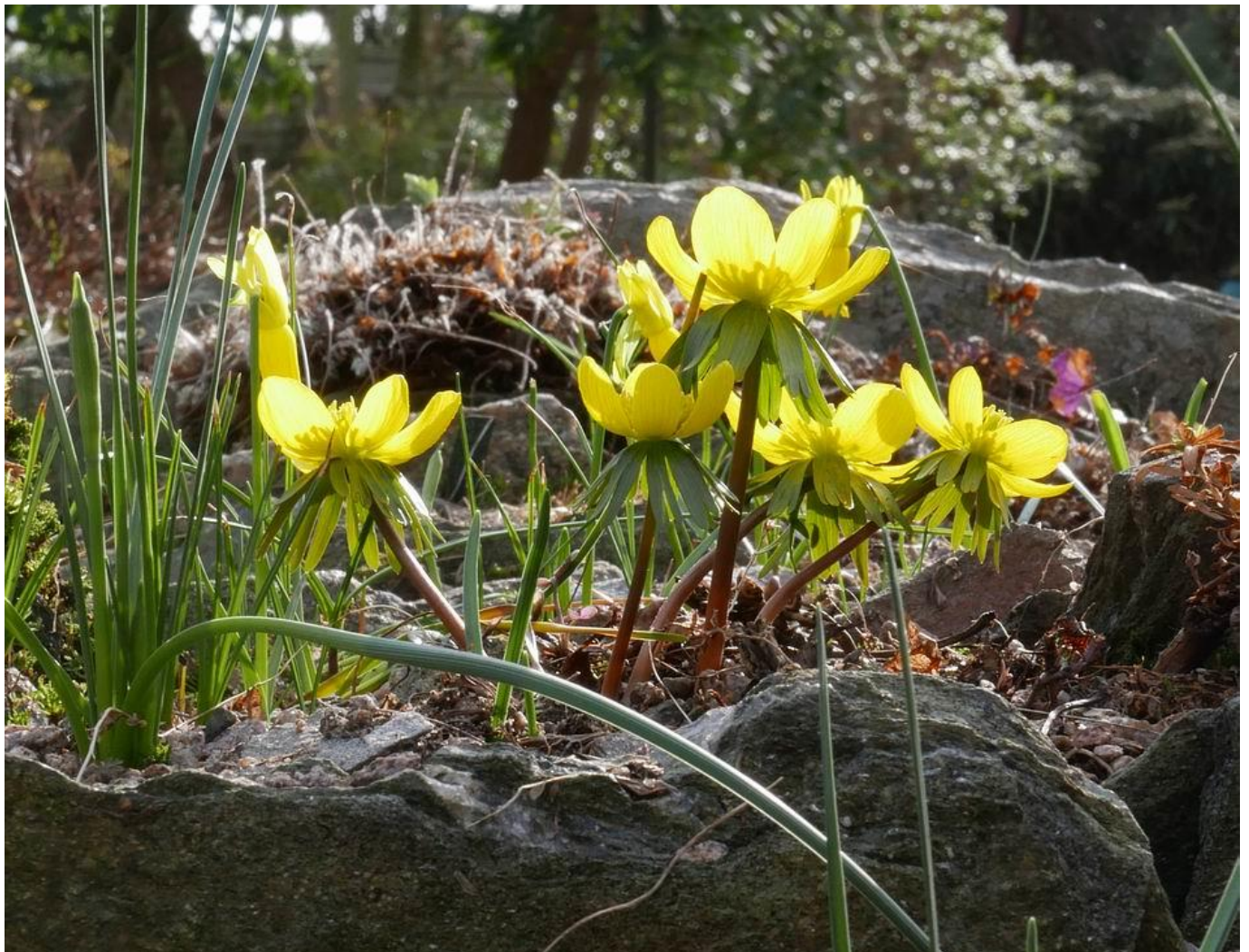
It takes several years for an **Erythronium caucasicum** to form a flowering sized secondary bulb never mind making a clump.



The bulbs across the garden have responded to the temperature rising to at least 15C, around three times our February average, delivering a mass flowering display unlike any we have had before.



Flowering in a slab bed **Narcissus cyclamineus** and **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'** whose sun worshipping flowers open wide, spreading their sweet scent across the garden.

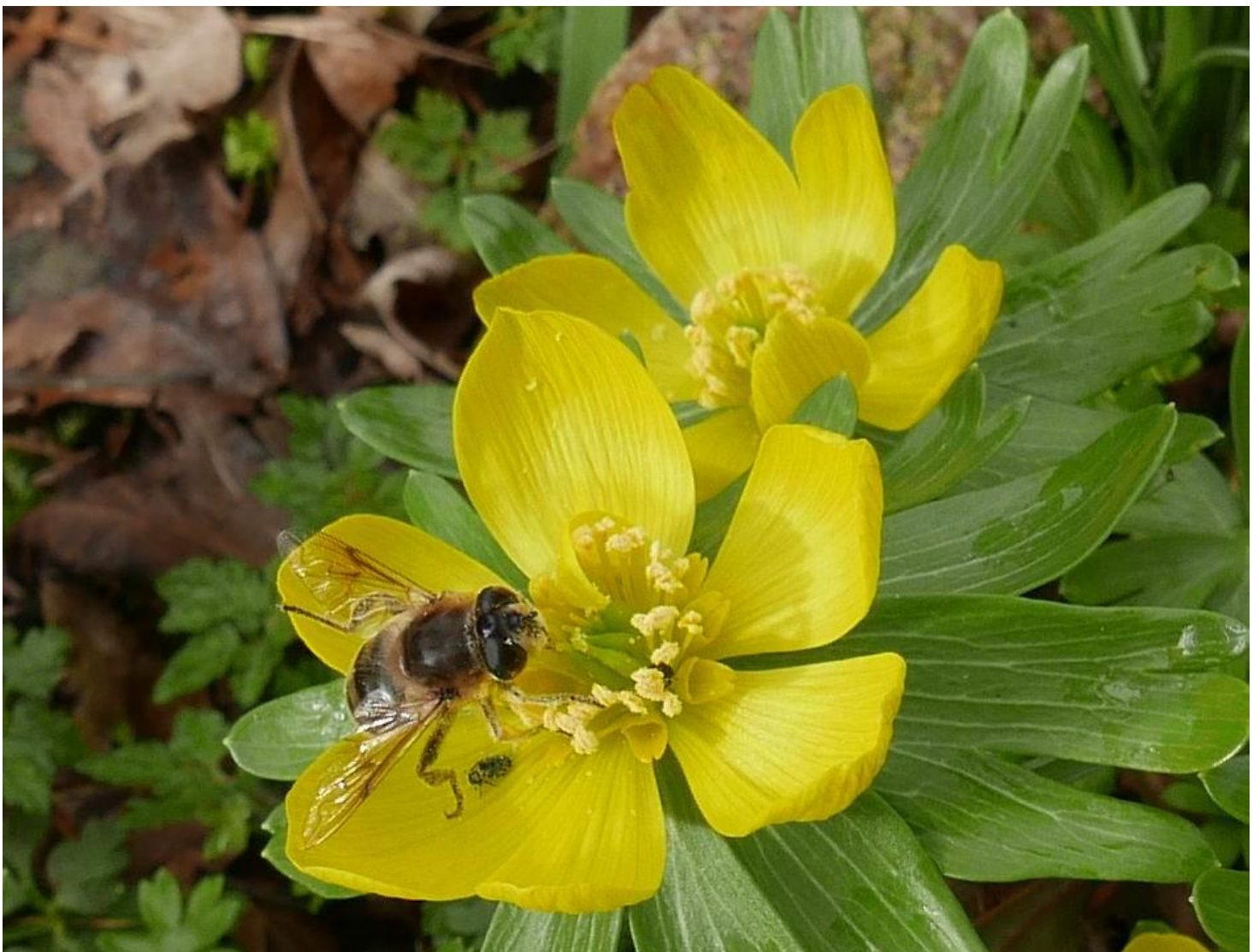


**Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'**



### **Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'**

The fine weather and mass flowering has also brought out some honey bees much earlier than I would expect to see in most years. While we have never had a seed set on Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' it may be that it can be a pollen parent – I would be interested to learn of others' experience of the fertility of this form.



Here a Honey Bee is feeding, simultaneously pollinating **Eranthis hyemalis**, which does set plentiful seed.



*Eranthis* 'Schwefelglanz' is a pale coloured form of *Eranthis hyemalis* the seedlings from which, like the other forms we have, retain a similar colour to the seed parent.



*Eranthis* 'Grunling' is another selection from *Eranthis hyemalis* noted for a green stripe on the petals. I do not find the rather irregular nature of the green stripe very attractive but some of its seedlings, such as these, share the green mark to a lesser degree adding a welcome variation to the garden.



## Eranthis 'Guinea Gold'

This is one of a number of Eranthis 'Guinea Gold' growing in the new bed with what I feel is a naturalistic mulch of pine needles.

The yellow Eranthis spread across the garden add a visual link tying the various areas and beds together.



A pink seedling of *Hepatica nobilis* is one of a long line of seedlings we grow where the colour comes true.



**New Bed**

***Eranthis stellata***

Encouraged by the success of the *Eranthis pinnatifida* I planted out in this new bed and showed a few weeks ago I intend to also plant out our pot of *Eranthis stellata* of which I have only this single plant currently flowering in a pot of seedlings.







The new bed which I only created in the summer of 2017 is still in the early stages of its evolution although there are already seeds germinating from the first year of flowering.

I wait eagerly to see how the other plants will grow as the spring develops – I am sure there will be surprises as the plants appear.

Allowing selected plants to seed around naturally is my antidote to ‘instant gardening’ and I often wonder if it is nature that is guiding the hand of this gardener or if I am guiding the hand of nature –in reality it is a mixture of both of these.



The first flowering reveals some of the planting I have done since cutting back a dense overgrowth of shrubs to open up the ground at the top of the garden. I will now wait before I plant any more to see how it develops as the other plants, mainly bulbs, appear through the season. I often compare my art to my gardening – to me they are just different mediums, and the flowers seen here can be compared to a preliminary sketch which I will add to, amend and enhance as I think fit by a different colour which in turn will influence my next actions. So I will continue to add plants along with nature's process of self-seeding to develop this area into a well-stocked bed that will provide a long period of interest.



I think the best plantings are built up slowly like this allowing the plants to seed naturally and adding small plants rather than trying to quickly fill the space up by planting great blobs of colour.



Miss Molly enjoys the flowers in her garden and as the fine weather continues the garden is enticing me away from writing this Bulb Log so while I go off to the garden enjoy the following photo essay of some of the Crocus currently flowering.



**Crocus tommasianus**



**Crocus tommasianus**



**Crocus tommasianus**



**Crocus thirkianus**



**Crocus heuffelianus** with a group of seedlings growing in front of the parent where they fell from the capsule – here I will give nature a hand by spreading the seedlings around the garden.



**Crocus tommasianus**- this species is a favourite, can you tell?!



**Crocus tommasianus**



**Crocus tommasianus**



**Crocus atticus**



**Crocus atticus**



**Crocus thirkianus**



**Crocus sicula and chrysanthus hybrids**





**Crocus, Cyclamen and others in a sand bed.**



**Galanthus 'Elizabeth Harrison' with Cyclamen coum.**



**Crocus tommasianus**



We should not ignore the large **Crocus vernus** cultivars, which have been in cultivation for so many years, just because they are widely available - they are fine plants worthy of a place in any garden.



**Crocus vernus cultivars**



A group of seedlings resulting from the Crocus vernus cultivars.

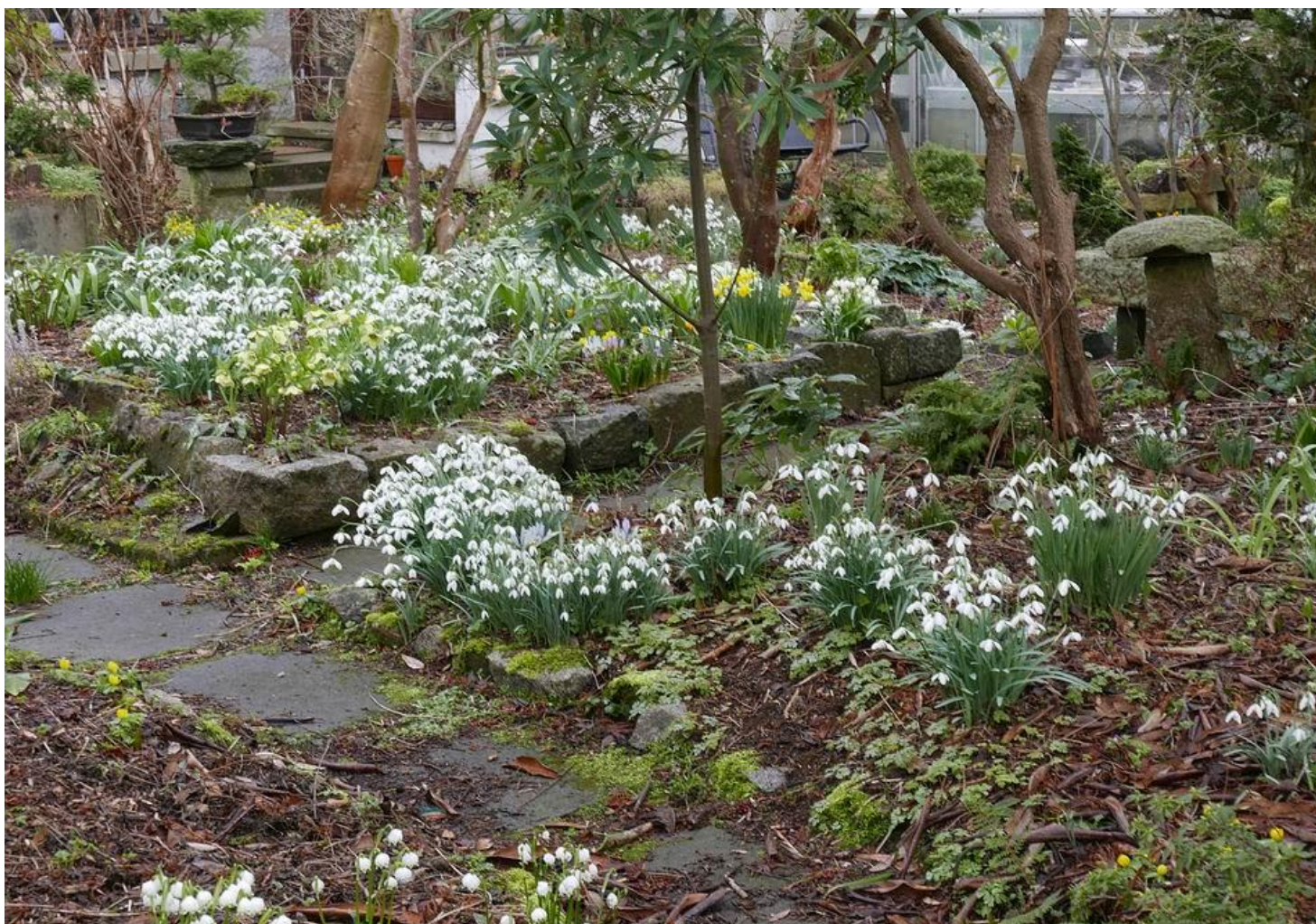


**Crocus cultivars**





Crocus, Eranthis, Iris among the Galanthus and Leucojum





The forecast is for our weather to return to the seasonal average with a daily temperature of around 5C this weekend plus records show there is a possibility that we can get snow and freezing conditions for a number of months yet so I am off with Miss Molly to enjoy the warm sunshine.

Molly the Westie can also be seen in the latest [Bulb Log Video Diary Supplement](#) I recorded on one of the warmest days just after I had posted last week's Bulb Log if you have not yet seen it you can click the link above.