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Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 35.....26th August 2020



Codonopsis grey-wilsonii



Codonopsis grey-wilsonii

Codonopsis grey-wilsonii is one of the plants whose flowers I associate with the start of autumn. It is a gentle climber that scrambles about probing for any surrounding stems or shrubs up which to climb and better display the beautiful flowers. Just like the insects, we are first attracted to the large colourful petals but their only purpose is to draw the insects in to the more important reproductive centre of the plant. We should take a lesson from the insects and study the many different ways plants have evolved to better ensure pollination, which if conditions are favourable, will lead to fertilisation and seed. The flowers in the pictures above show different stages of maturity from the early stage, right, when the stamens are clasped closely over the stigma which is firmly closed hiding the receptive surfaces. As the flower matures the filaments move outwards, centre, as the pollen ripens then finally the stigma splits into three receptive surfaces to receive pollen.



Androsace studiosorum

Now I need to correct last week's Bulb Log where I miss-called this plant ~~Saxifraga~~ studiosorum. It was one of those occasions when I knew very well it was an **Androsace** but when I was writing it came out as saxifraga. We first knew this plant lumped in with Androsace sarmentosa and I could not remember the specific name studiosorum so I looked up Androsace in our books and then I wrote Saxifrage! I am sure that many of you spotted my silly mistake but my grateful thanks to our friend Cliff Booker for pointing it out.



From late summer this raised slab bed is dominated by three plants this view shows a *Cyananthus lobatus* hybrid at one end spreading out to cover the whole width and reaching all the way down to the ground.



***Cyananthus lobatus* hybrid**

The yellowing foliage of *Corydalis* 'Craigton Purple' which can be seen to the left of the slab bed and in the back ground of this picture, is growing in polystyrene propagation boxes which I will soon be dividing.



This mass of **Cyananthus microphyllus** occupies the central area of the slab bed and is the result of planting out a pot of seedlings some years ago.



Cyananthus microphyllus



**Cyananthus
microphyllus**

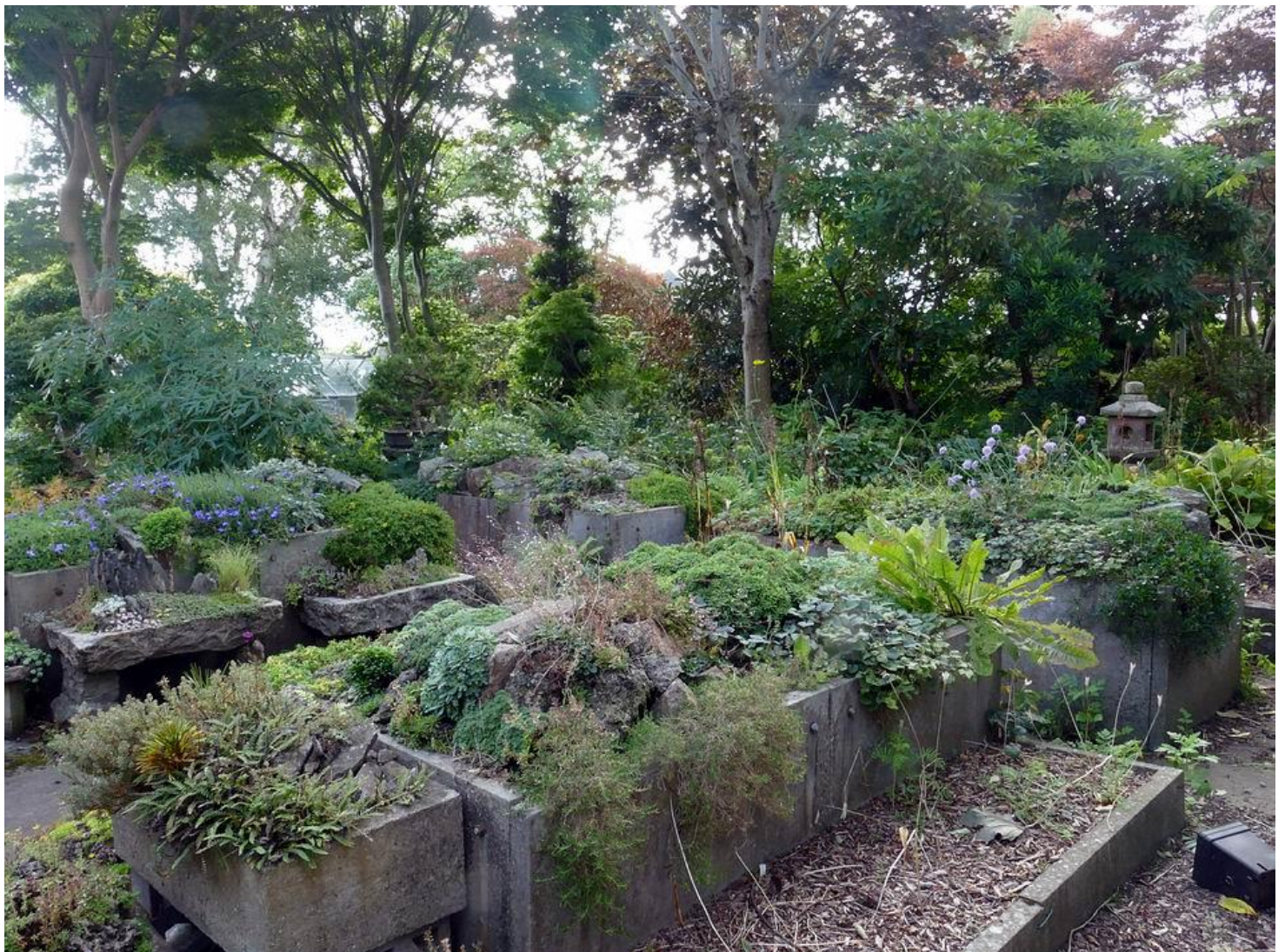
The third plant dominating this bed can just be seen towards the bottom left of this picture.



Hypericum reptans starts flowering earlier than the Cyananthus and just keeps on giving more flowers until well after the first frosts of winter. The three stages of the flower are visible here from the red backed buds that open to reveal large yellow flowers which are followed by shiny round seed pods and the number seen in this picture gives an indication of just how floriferous this plant is.



Viewing the bed from this end shows the *Hypericum reptans* trailing all over the side right down to the ground just as the *Cyananthus lobatus* hybrid does at the opposite end.



View across the four slab beds.



Eucomis bicolor is the only species of this genus that has survived long term in our open garden. It appears late in the season where the decorative “pineapple” topped spotted stems bring interest for some time before the individual flowers start opening to reveal their colour which has a similar hue to the dark spots on the stems.





As I make my way to photograph some *Roscoea* I pass by this Japanese style lantern which should be a familiar landmark to regular readers.



***Roscoea* 'Harvington Imperial'**



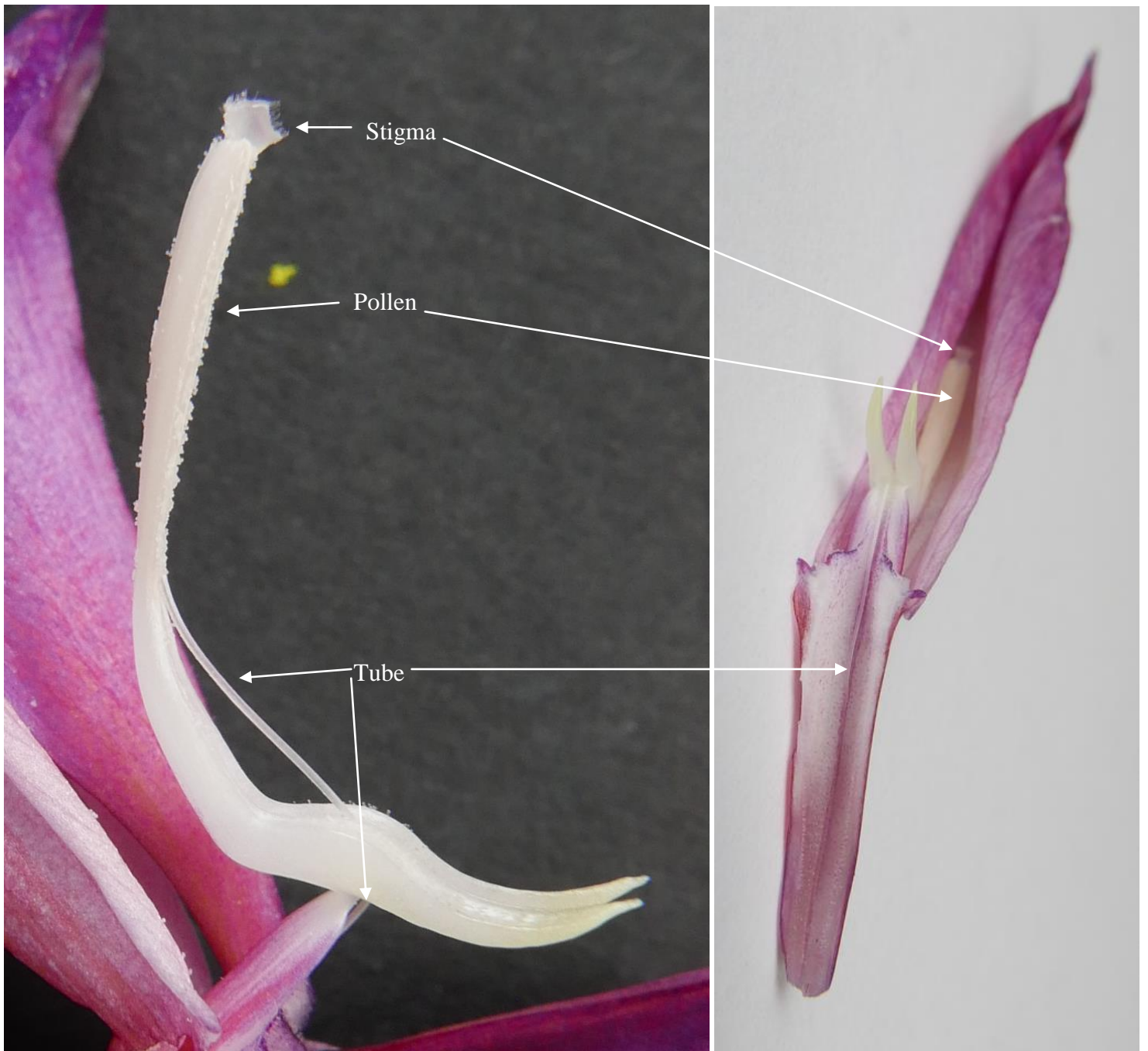
**Roscoe
'Harvington
Imperial'**

As with the Eucomis the slugs and snails love the chance to eat some fresh greenery and they will give these poor plants a real chewing but for now the damage is still minimal.

In damp weather we go slug and snail hunting.



As I mentioned I love to explore the structure of the plants reproductive parts and to understand how they work. Note the white forked lower part of the stamen in the left flower has not been triggered; when an insect lands on it, or in this case my finger, it dips down, as in the flower on right, bringing the pollen laden upper part down to deposit pollen on the back of the insect - the stigma sits at the upper tip of this structure.



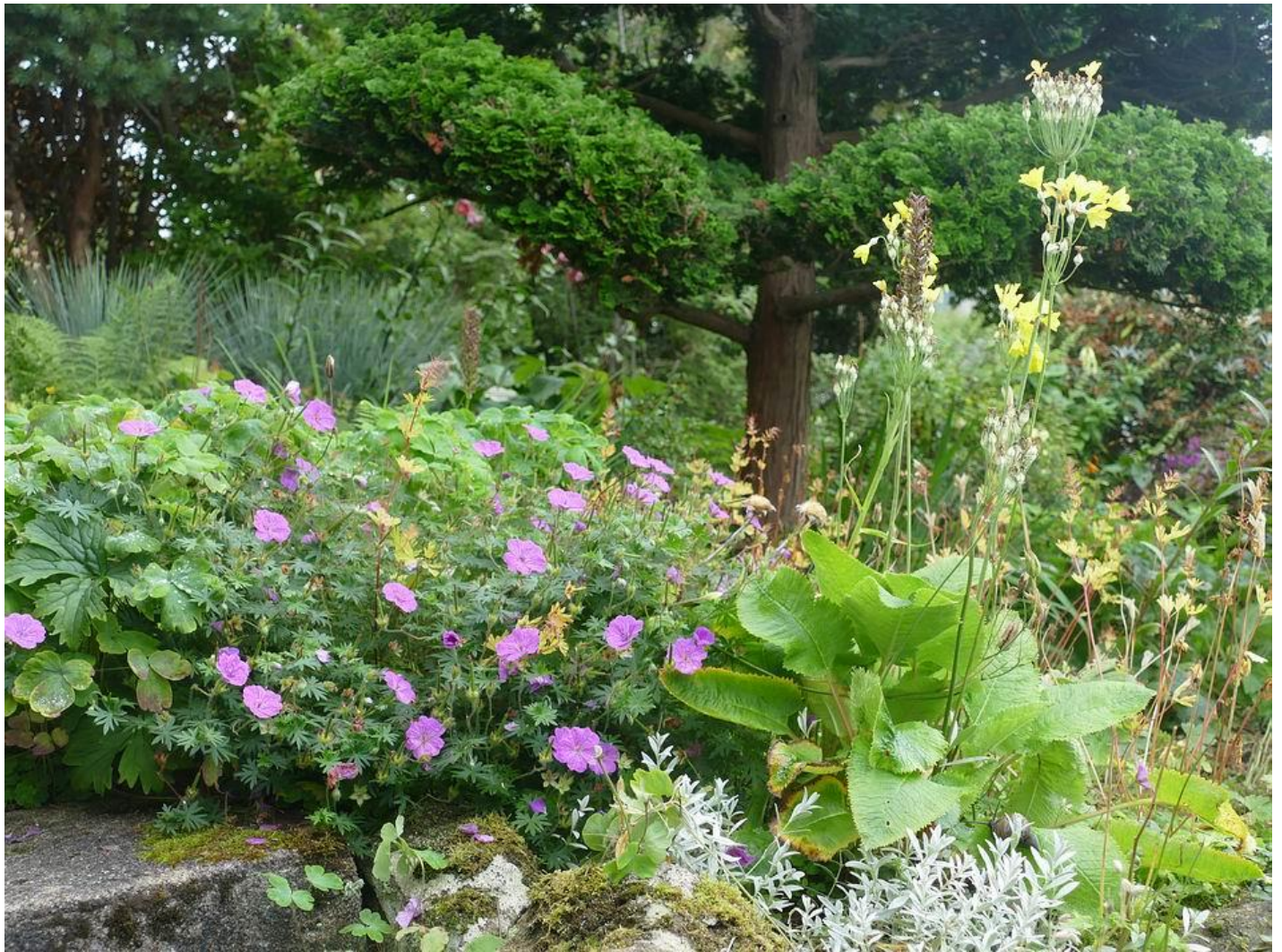
Once pollen is on the stigma which is located at the upper tip of this structure it grows down through the thin white tube running through the fulcrum to reach the ovary held down in the leaves.





Acer griseum

We have two *Acer griseum* trees - the larger one is in the back garden, this one is in the front garden.



Geranium sanguineum and **Primula florindae** are still providing flowers adding colour to the front while near by some of the large flowered hybrid lilies are in season- see below.





Rhodendron saluense

A number of plants whose main flowering season is in spring can, in favourable conditions, have a secondary flowering in August - two dwarf shrubs *Rhodendron saluense* and *Rhododendron* 'Curlew' flower twice most years.



Rhododendron 'Curlew'

**Haberlea
rhodopensis**

Another plant that is enjoying our cool moist summer conditions so much that it is flowering again is this Haberlea rhodopensis.



Back with the plants in season this autumnal picture features *Codonopsis grey-wilsonii* with a crop of fungi.



Gentiana septemfida



The first of this year's ***Cyclamen hederifolium*** flowers are also starting to appear around the garden.



Cyclamen purpurascens is usually the first of the genus to appear and has been flowering for around a month.



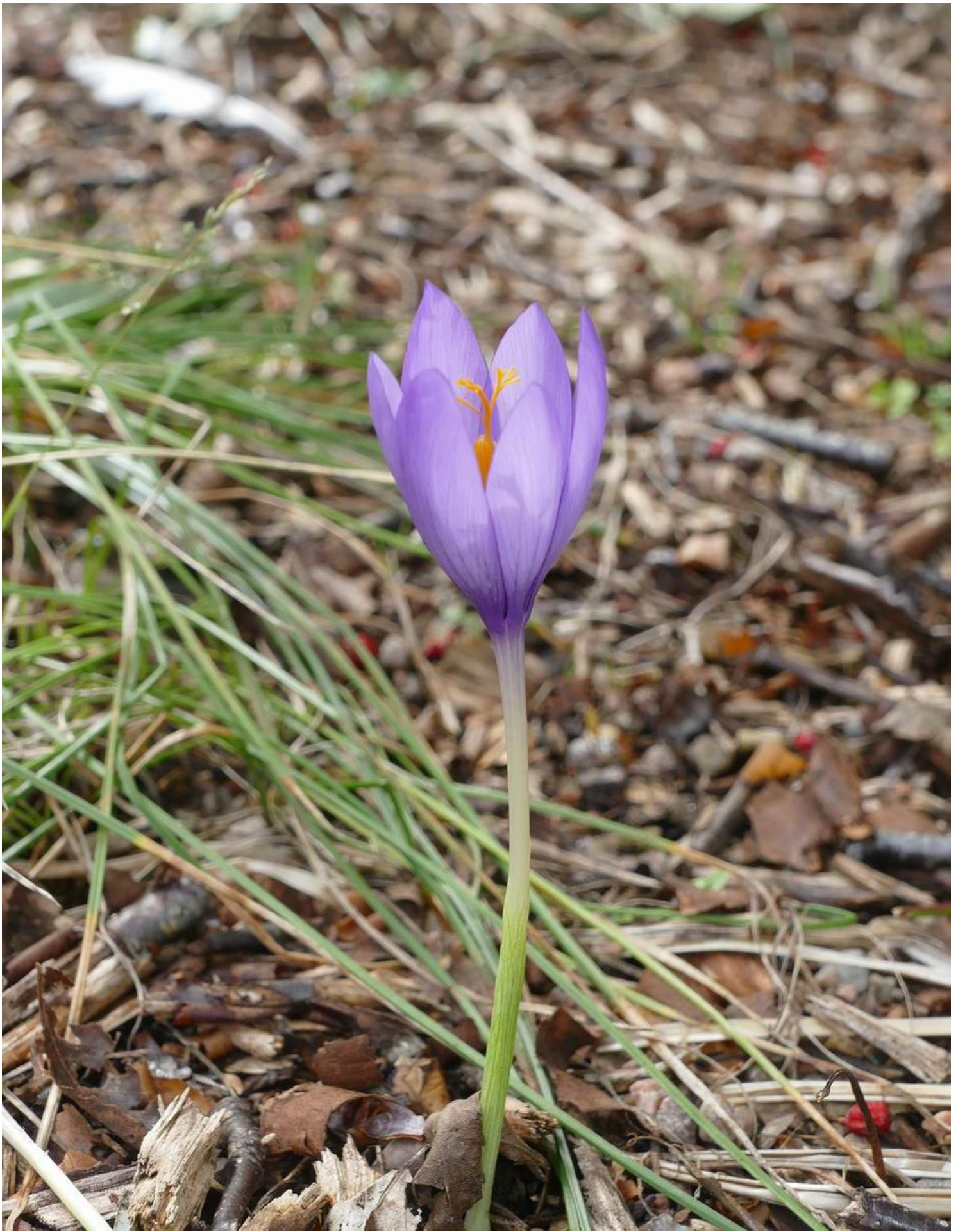
Cyclamen purpurascens



The flower buds on the stems of **Veratrum fimbriatum** are swelling and will soon open - we have enough of **Actea rubra** so soon I will remove the red berries to prevent too many of them seeding around.



Crocus nudiflorus

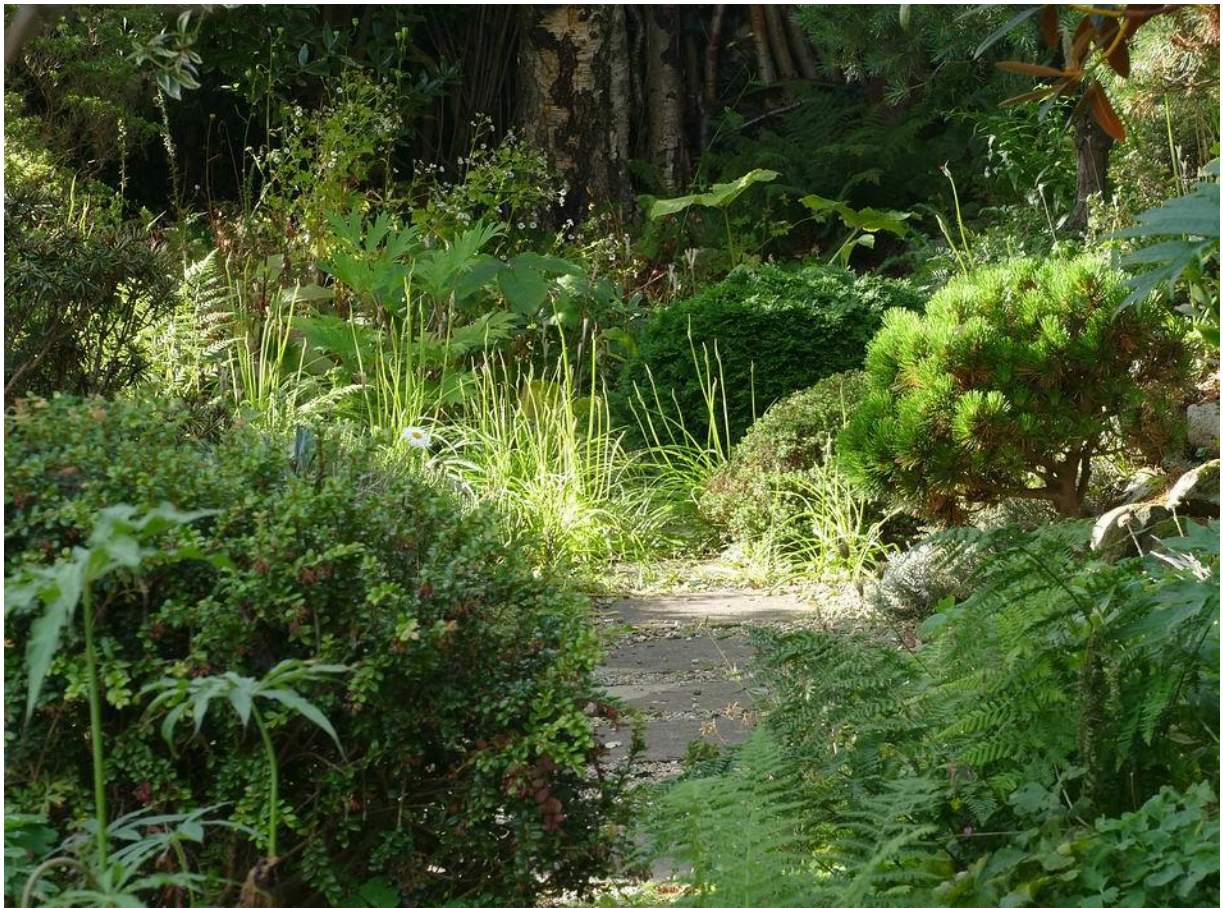


Crocus nudiflorus

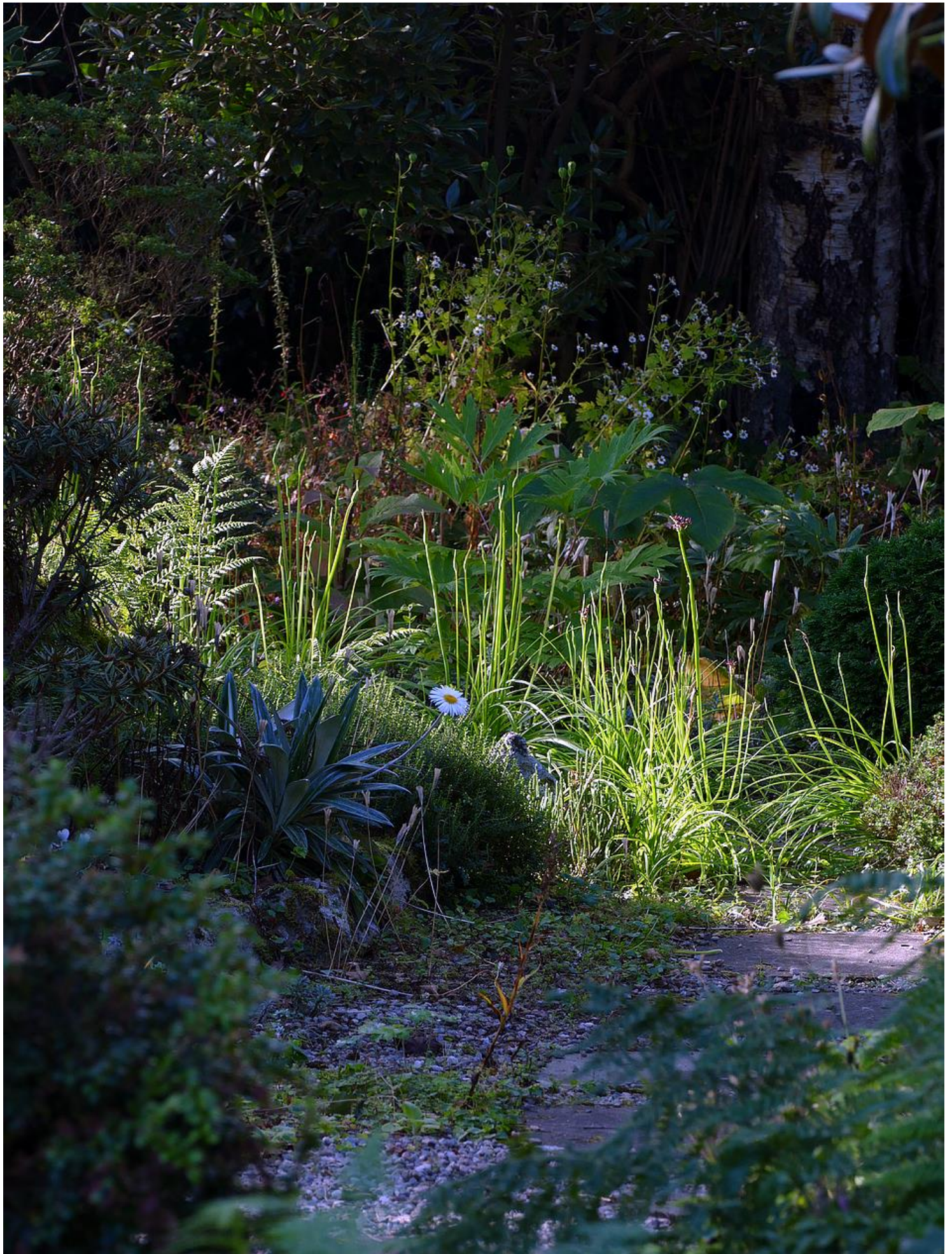
It never ceases to amaze me how the autumn flowering *Crocus nudiflorus* appears from nowhere – one day there is not a sign of them then the next day I find one in full flower – then the next day three flowers have appeared plus I can spot a few buds just pushing through the ground see picture below.



Crocus nudiflorus



Garden view



There is a fleeting moment in the morning when the sun light illuminates the stems and leaves of the **Allium wallichii** seeding around the path making them stand out from the rest of the scene which is in shade – it only lasts for about 5 minutes so I have to be quick to get the picture.....