

# Three Alpine Tulips in Eswyn's Alpine & Rock Garden

by Karen Unruh

As we admire the spring tulips in our gardens, I would like to invite you to get to know three alpine tulips in Eswyn's Alpine & Rock Garden. These are such little gems . . . I am sure that they will 'steal your heart away'. So far, using some deer spray regularly in the garden, they have not been the delighted feast of our community deer. It is said that species tulips are a little more deer resistant but I am not willing to give the deer the opportunity to try a small taste. As we are familiar with so many of our tulips being bred in Holland, these tulips come from farther afield. All three of these tulips will naturalize, so we can expect our small clumps to grow over the years.

*Tulipa aucheriana* is a starry pink tulip with a yellow to yellow-brown central blotch. It is only about 2 inches high. Blooms are usually solitary but there can be a cluster of two or three. The leaves are interesting . . . they are curled, almost tubular and sage green in colour. Species alpine tulips are native to certain areas of our globe and have not been hybridized to create specific characteristics. This tulip originates in Afghanistan and western Iran. Ours is located at Eswyn's garden in front of the small lilac tree, easily viewed from the walking path in front of the garden. It is a consistent winner with the Alpine Garden Society in the United Kingdom and we have this treasure in the garden at Nanoose Place.



*Tulipa aucheriana*



*Tulipa praestans* 'Unicun'

*Tulipa praestans* 'Unicun' was donated to the garden by Grahame Ware of Owl & Stump Rare Plants in the Yellow Point area of Ladysmith. It is the tulip in the upper garden by the Memorial Bench under the pine tree. The petals are a scarlet red rising above the variegated, cream-edged, upright leaves, which are as attractive as the flowers. It stays under 6 inches tall. The bloom is long lasting in the garden and these have been blooming since the last week in March. It also has a reputation of being very likely to continue to bloom for subsequent years. We have had this tulip in the garden for three blooming seasons over three years. My references tell me that each plant could produce up to 3 stems with several blooms on each . . . so we have much more to look forward to with this tulip.

*Tulipa* 'Little Princess' is referenced as a vigorous dwarf with remarkable colouring. It has coppery red petals with a bright yellow ring and dark, blue- black markings in the flower centre with black anthers. The outside of the petals is all a coppery red colour. A slight fragrance can be noted from the petals. The plant may reach 3 to 5 inches in height. Before opening, the buds are a beauty in themselves with a green stripe blended in with the coppery red colour. In Eswyn's garden, *Tulipa* 'Little Princess' is located in the front garden on the left of the centre rock path . . . very visible from the walking trail in front of the garden. We can enjoy several weeks of bloom.



*Tulipa* 'Little Princess'

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