



Plant of the Month, May 2020

Erythronium tuolumense - by Mac Dunlop

This spring beauty is also known as Tuolumne dogtooth violet.

Erythroniums get the dogtooth name due to the bulbs being the shape of a dog's tooth. This member of the family is endemic to a limited area of California where it is becoming increasingly rare due to logging and off-road vehicle activities destroying wild colonies. Originally being found in Taiwan and Japan.

Here it flowers with me in late March to early April, the flower stems carry four or five and possibly up to ten bright yellow star like flowers with recurved petals above glossy green foliage.



E. tuolumense along with *E. californicum* 'White Beauty', have the distinction of being the parents of the much better known *E. pagoda*, but really all three are all worth a place in anyone's garden.

A humus rich, moist but well drained soil is preferred by these bulbs and some shelter helps prevent wind damage to the flowers. Soon after flowering the foliage dies and disappears until the next year, leaving no trace, so when you spot the gap for your new purchase just remember what sleeping beauty lies below the surface!