



SRGC

Bulb Log Diary

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Pictures and text © Ian Young

BULB LOG 23.....3rd June 2020



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'



As with all the cultivars that we have named we took some time to assess the values of *Corydalis* 'Craigton Purple' before we started to distribute it to nurseries in 2015. To facilitate the propagation I grow some in polystyrene boxes which are kept alongside one of the slab beds (see above). The plants in the boxes can be easily divided and replanted when the leaves die back in late summer: it is the surplus material from these boxes that I distribute.



***Corydalis* 'Craigton Purple'** is an open pollinated seedling from *Corydalis capitata* with the most likely pollen parent being *Corydalis* 'Craigton Blue' although *Corydalis flexuosa* is also a possibility.



Corydalis capitata has interesting features in that the deep purple flowers when they open are bunched in a cluster or cap at the top of the stem. The stem then elongates as the seed ripens so the seed capsules become spaced out.



This species seems to be very fertile setting seeds most years which results in many self-sown seedlings appearing around this bed. The one on the left is typical of **Corydalis capitata**, the seed parent, but I started to observe that others were very different.

The most obvious indicator that the seedlings were not just pure *C. capitata* but hybrids was the colour of the flowers. These had changed from the reddish purple to the blue end of purple, they were no longer so bunched in a cap as in *C. capitata* and the foliage also differed. It is clear that these are hybrids with *Corydalis capitata* being the seed parent.



In 2015 I wrote 'We have been watching these seedlings for some years now noting both how well they grow and how decorative they are. This assessment resulted in us identifying this one as the best so far. I will lift some of this plant in the late summer to grow on so we can further assess it for both the rate of increase and to confirm its decorative features - for now we call it **Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'**.'



Peter Korn gave me a similar plant that he named Corydalis 'Korn's Purple' – here I hold it next to ours to show that they are significantly different in colour as well as the leaf shape.



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'

It is difficult to capture the colour we see in real life with a camera plus the colour of digital images are affected by the monitor and the settings of the device you are viewing them on so here is Corydalis 'Craigton Purple' pictured with the nearest purples from an RHS colour chart. It is important to note that unlike artificial pigments natural colours are complex and never just a uniform hue.



Corydalis 'Craigton Purple' and sister seedling

Some years on from making the original selection I am still drawn to the merits of the runner up seedling whose flowers are shown above right. There are a number of features that makes this plant sufficiently different from 'Craigton Purple' one of them being it flowers earlier, that I am tempted to name and share it around also.



Sister seedling



Corydalis sister seedling

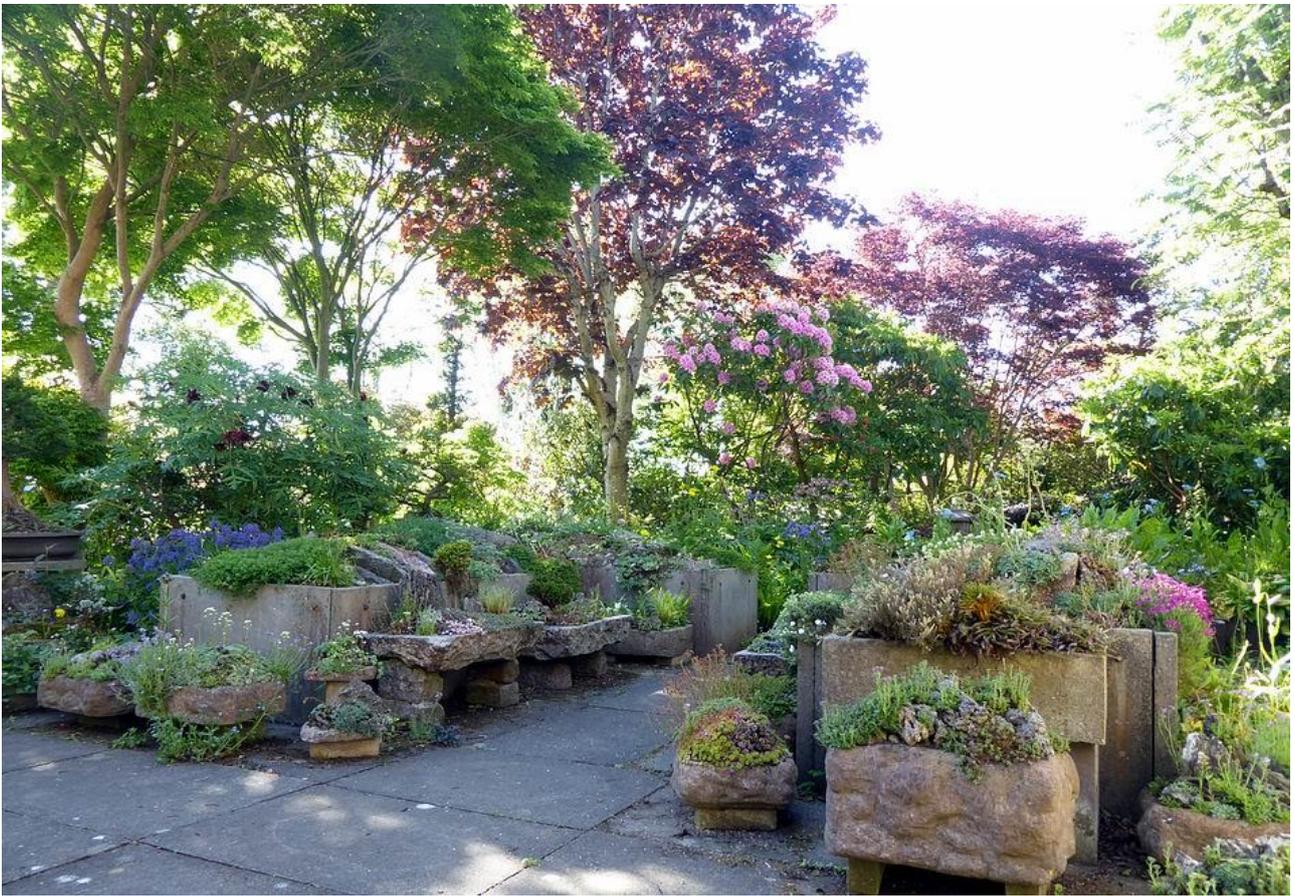


Corydalis 'Craigton Purple'

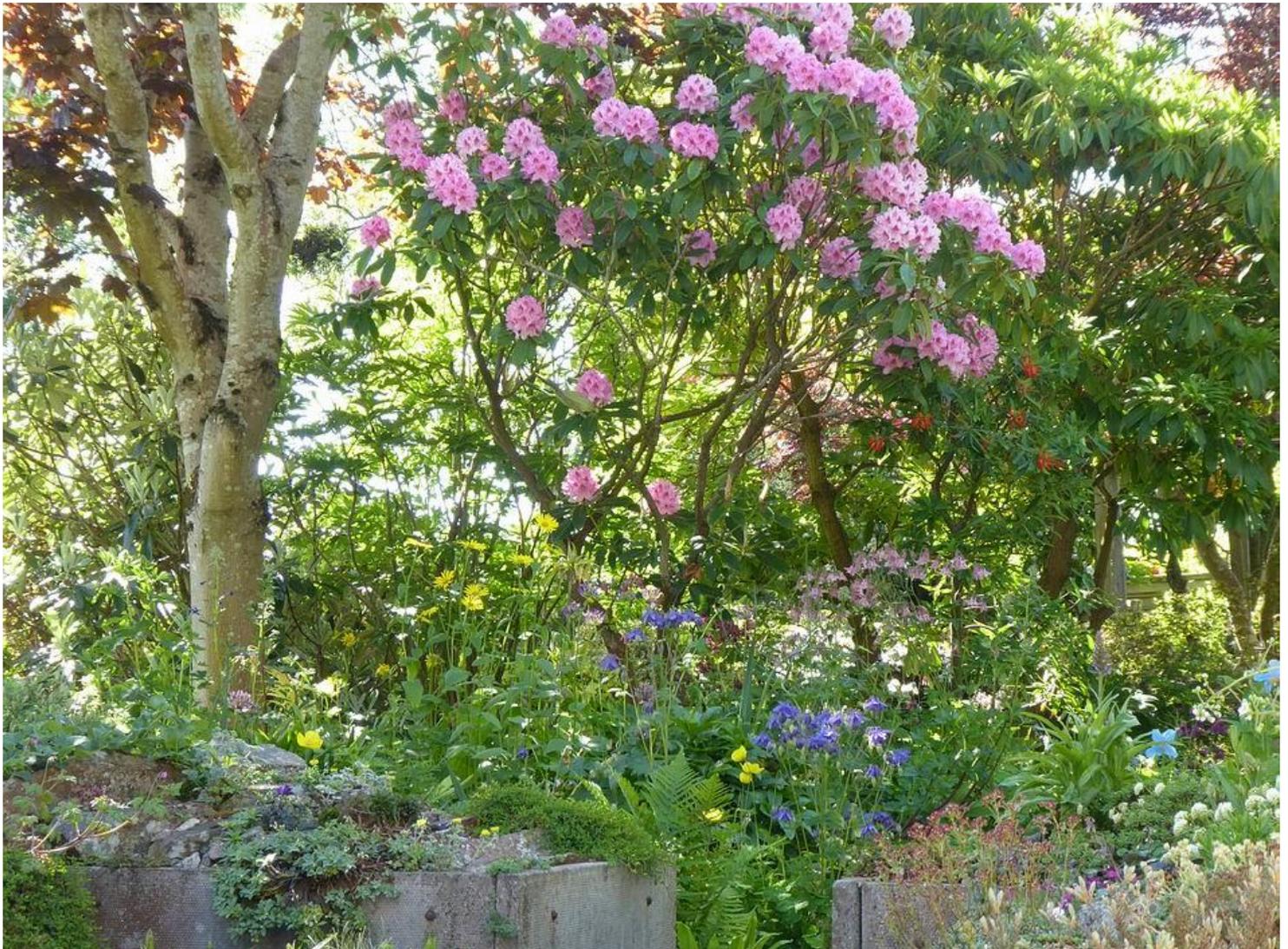


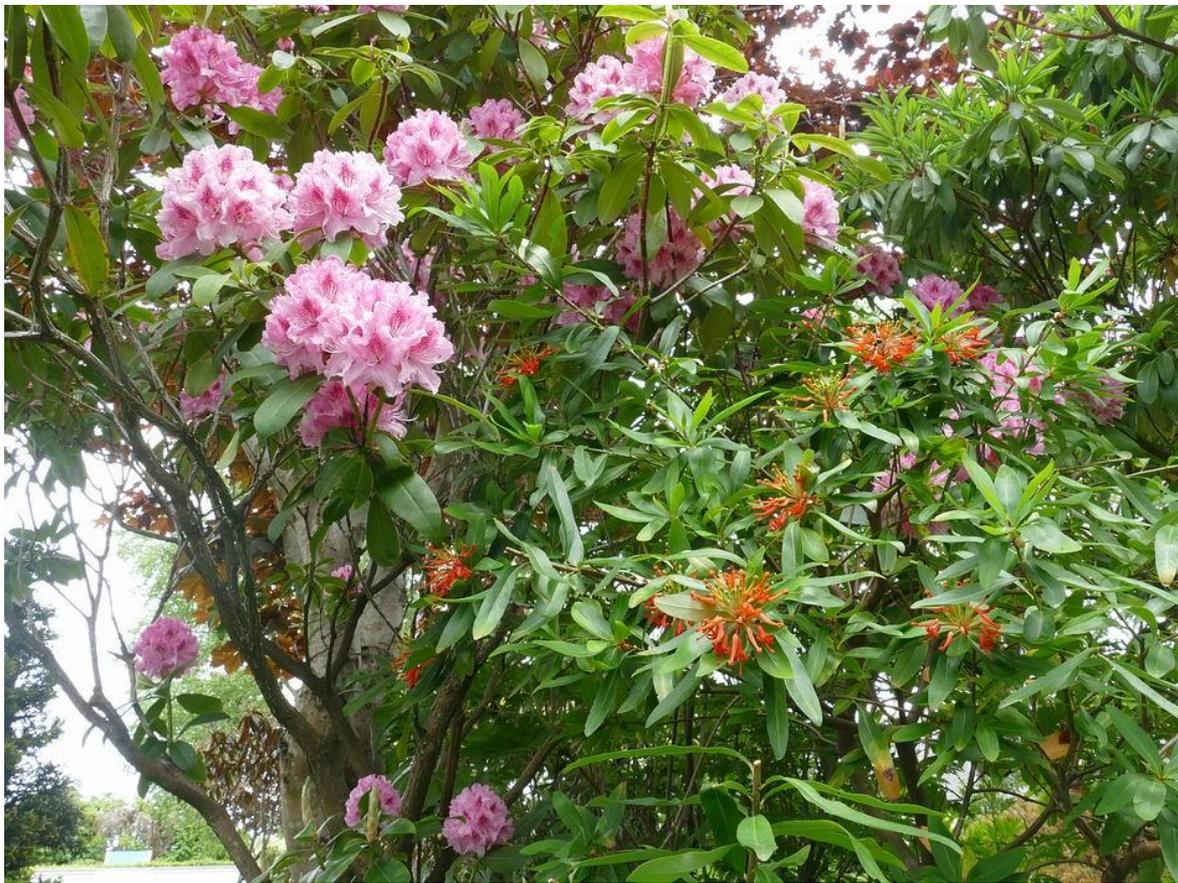
Corydalis 'Craigton Purple' is on the left with the second choice sister seedling on the right.

To date I have not divided the now reasonably large clump of the second seedling but when it goes down in the summer I will lift and divide it planting some into other areas of the garden as well as trying some in a box to see if it also increases well.



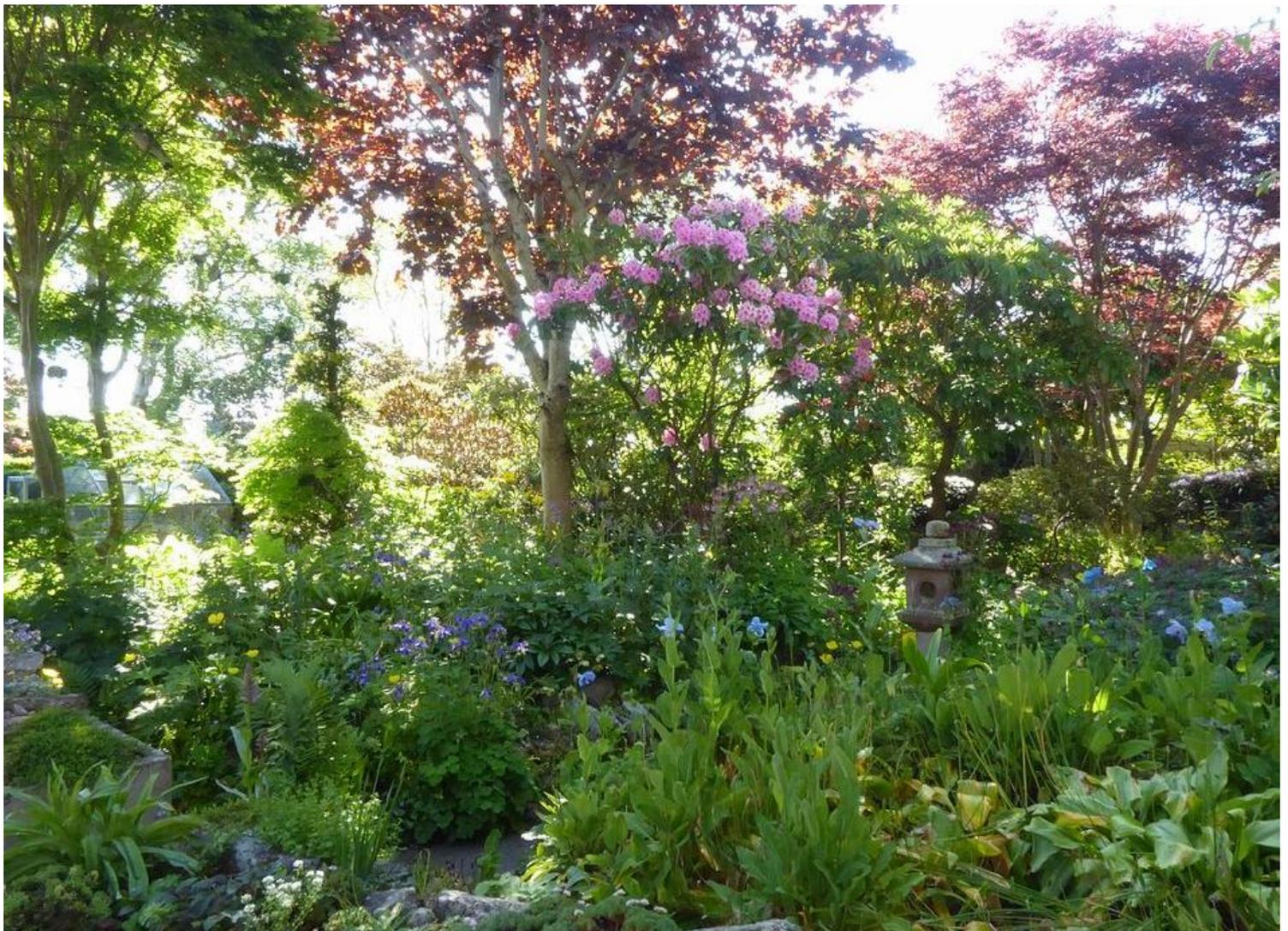
The garden is taking on its summer colours and atmosphere with the trees in full leaf, the bigger Rhododendrons in flower and the ground level plants rising to their full stature.



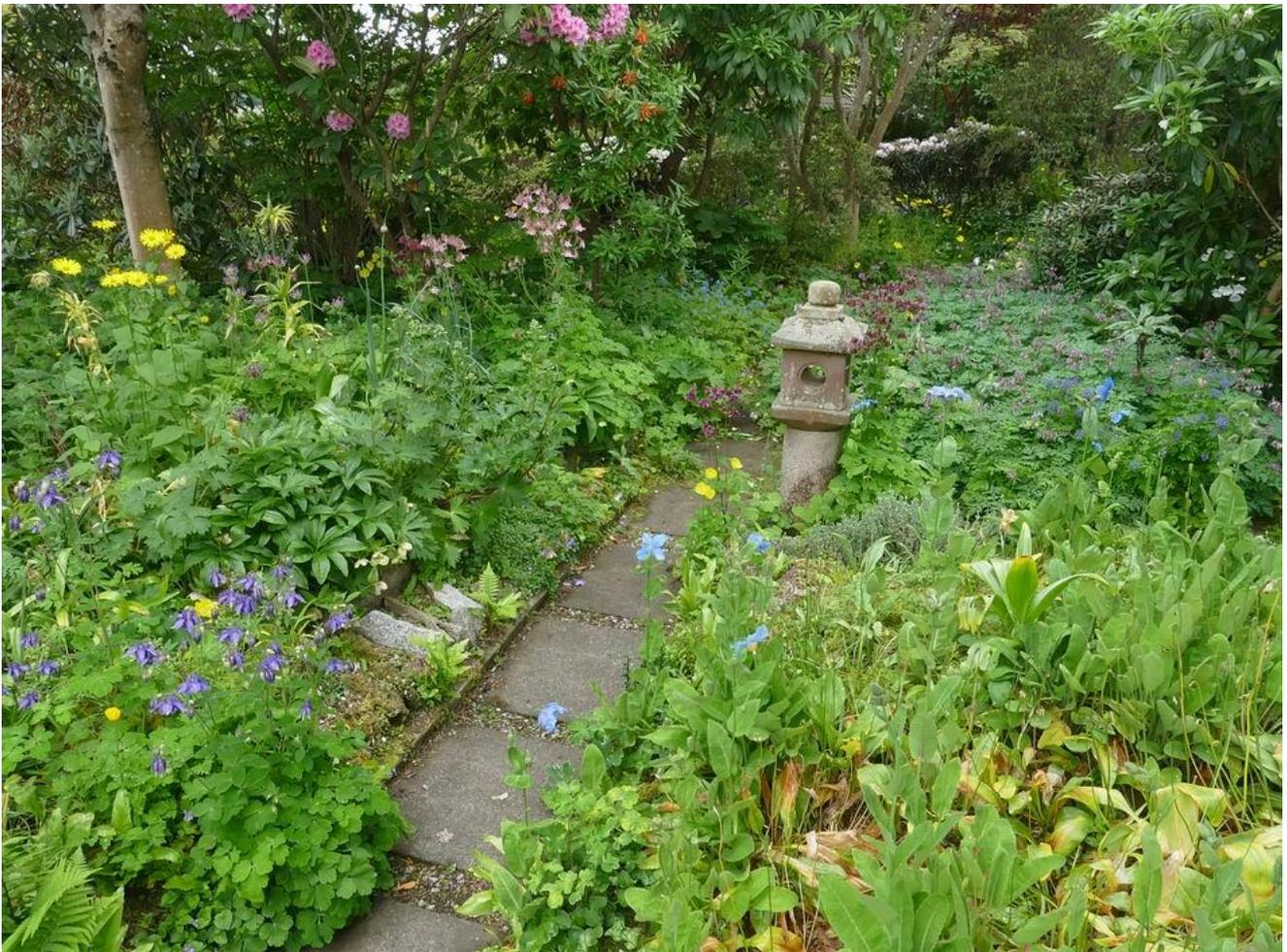


**Rhododendron
'Albert Schweitzer'
pink with
Embothrium
coccineum, orange!**

Our approach of mimicking nature in the garden has reached such a stage of maturity that we have moved more from making the decisions of what to plant to one of deciding which of the many seedlings we should leave.

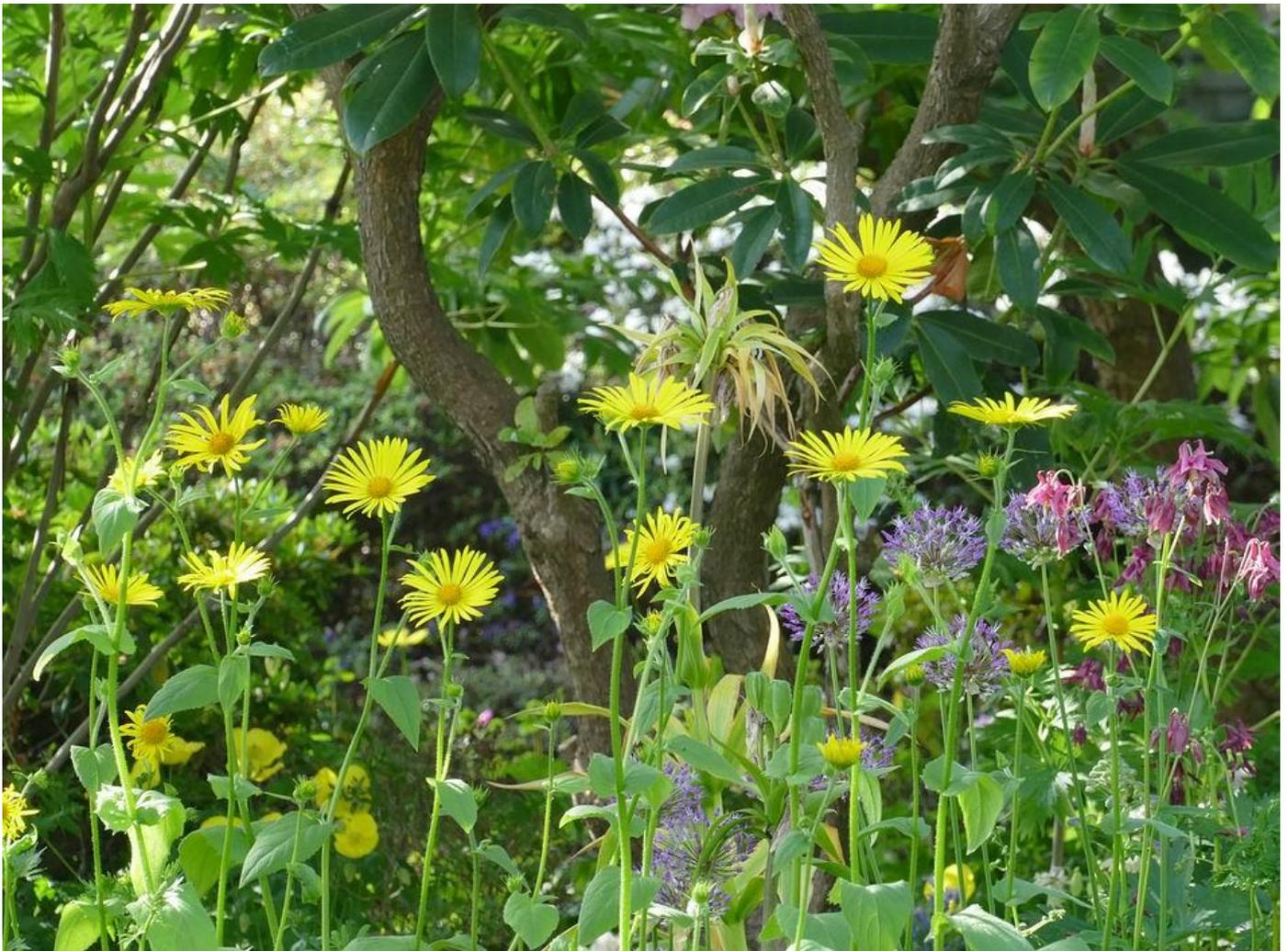


Many of the plants whose colourful flowers decorate the garden are allowed to plant themselves by the way of self-seeding including the blue of **Meconopsis** which can be seen in various locations across the garden



The look of the Bulb bed where the smaller bulbs flowered earlier in the year has changed completely as the ground is completely hidden by the dense growth of taller flowering plants and bulbs.





Doronicum, Allium and Aquilegia flowers are among the larger plants that now have their time in the bulb bed.



Papaver cambricum is a generous self-seeder that many people try to eradicate but we welcome its colourful yellow and orange flowers which provide a visual link across the various areas of the garden. It is easy to limit the spread of seed by deadheading the plants after the flowers have dropped their petals. I also love the way that Bowles's Golden Grass, **Milium effusum**

'**Aureum**', seeds around adding a very natural wild feel to the plantings mimicking what we might see in nature.



In shadier areas green is the dominant colour but it should not be boring there are so many shapes and textures of foliage that it is easy to paint fascinating combinations

Dicentra formosa is native to the Pacific coastal areas of North America and it spreads through the humus rich upper layers of our garden soil by pushing out stolons.

It will also seed around where we leave the seeds to develop on the plant.





Dicentra eximia is native to the Appalachian Mountains and when grown together in the garden these two species hybridise freely. As shown above this hybrid swarm makes a very attractive ground cover displaying a wide variation in the form and colour of the foliage which I find much more interesting than just having a single type.

Dicentra eximia* x *formosa

Time share is another big feature in our garden - some months back these areas were full of colour from the early bulbs which have finished their growth cycle and gone underground for the summer leaving the space for the next sequence of growth including ***Corydalis*** 'Craigton Purple' and ***Trillium luteum***.



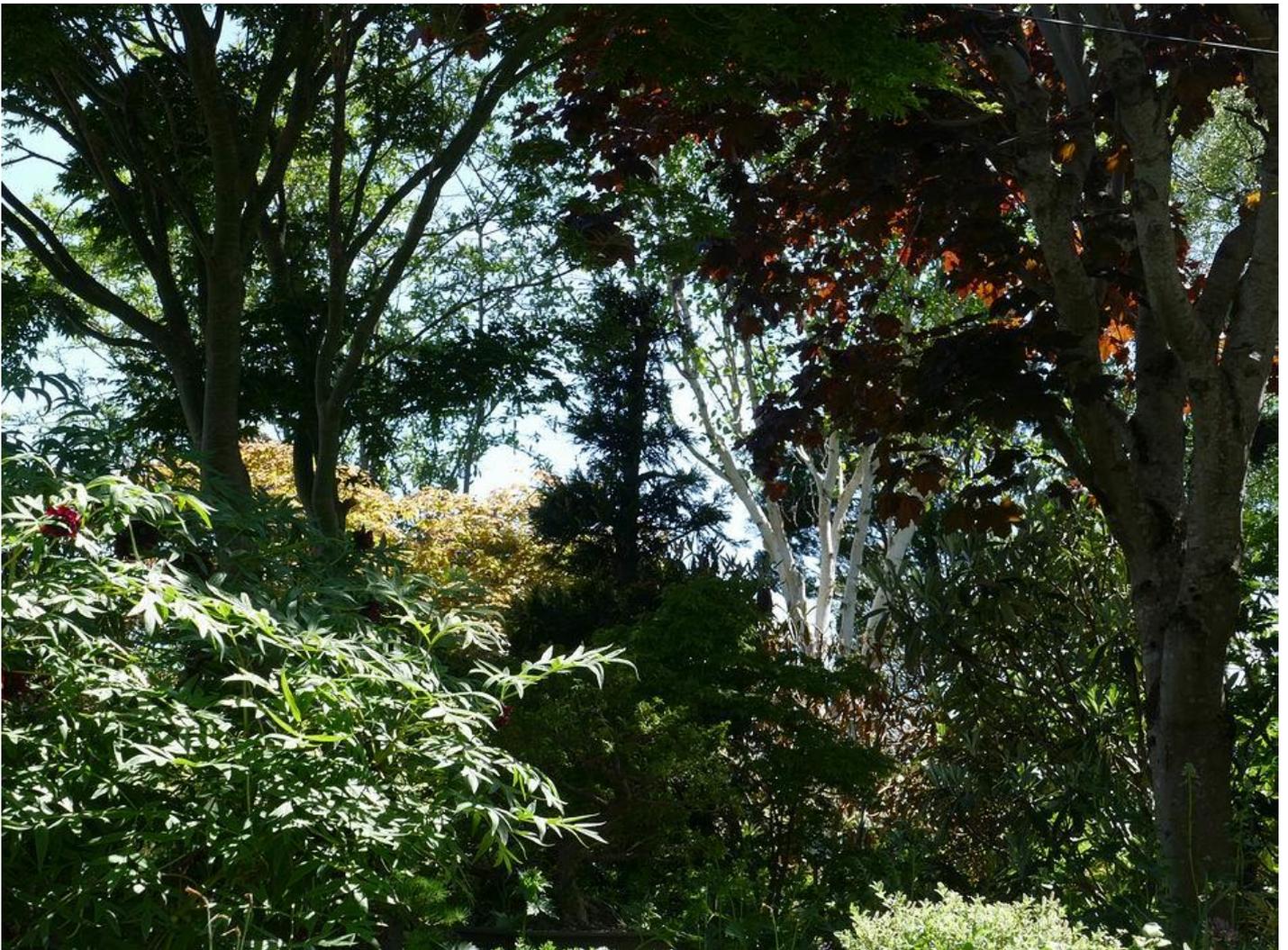


Dicentra eximia x formosa



Art in the garden and the garden as Art are one and the same thing to me. Gardening is just another medium to practise and express our creativity. In these mixed media works I try and combine both some botanical detail as well as expressing the sensation of looking at some of the plantings, all the creative process bring pleasure and frustration in equal measure. One thing being an artist teaches you is not only to look but also to see what is before you – that is to observe carefully.





The contrast between light and shadow is very strong in the bright sunlight – this image shows how much of a woodland type habitat there is in parts of the garden.



Aquilegia and Papaver cambricum are among the self-seeding plants that combine in a colourful early summer display.

The next sequence of images gives a photographic impression of the garden in bright sunlight.





Note the difference in the contrast now the cloud cover is back.





Disappointingly **Celmisia walkerii** is not one of the plants that seeds around however it grows vigorously and I propagate it by rooting cuttings most years.



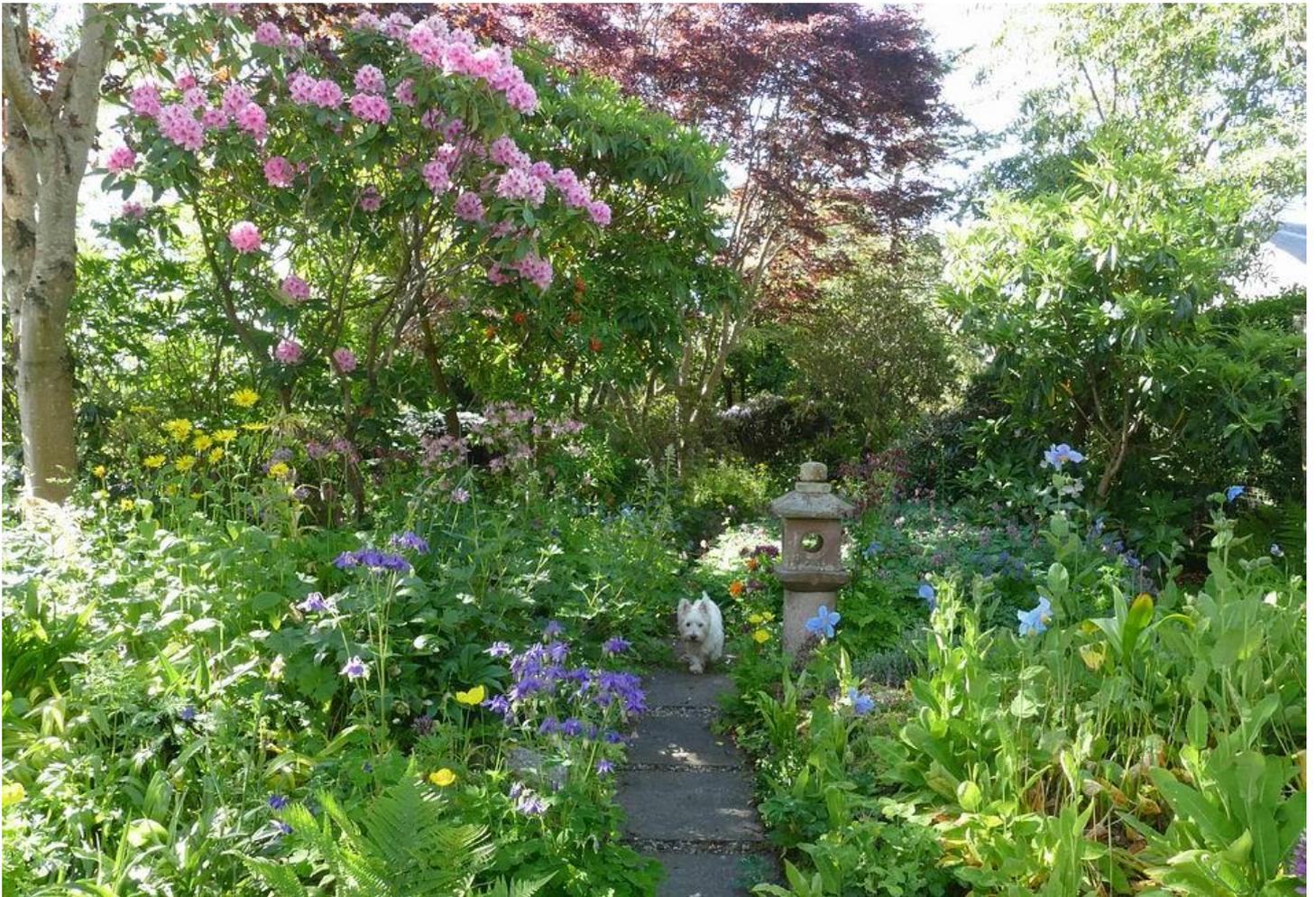


Allium, Aquilegia and Doronicum.





Gate by the pond



I will leave you this week with a reminder that AGS Members can join me on their members [Facebook page](#) for a live Discussion and Q&A session on Thursday 4th June at 6pm British Summer Time which is GMT+1.....