



BULB LOG 32.....8th August 2018





I do not remember seeing so many hoverflies in the garden in previous years - it is one of the effects of the warm sunny weather we are having. I found it hard to find a flower in the garden that did not have a hoverfly on it and many, like the orange **Papaver rupifragrum** on the cover, had a whole cluster of them feeding on the pollen. It reminded me that the prime purpose of flowers is to attract pollinators however their multiple colours and forms also attracts gardeners. We should look beyond the basic shape of the flowers, taking the time to look closely at the structure.

Hypericum androsaemum has a similar flower structure to the poppy with a superior ovary (one that sits above the attachment of the floral parts) surrounded by a pollen laden boss of anthers.

If asked to draw a flower most people would draw a simple daisy flower such as seen in this

Leucanthemum however what seems like a yellow pollen laden centre surrounded by white petals hides a fascinating structure of multiple individual flowers huddled into the central yellow boss.

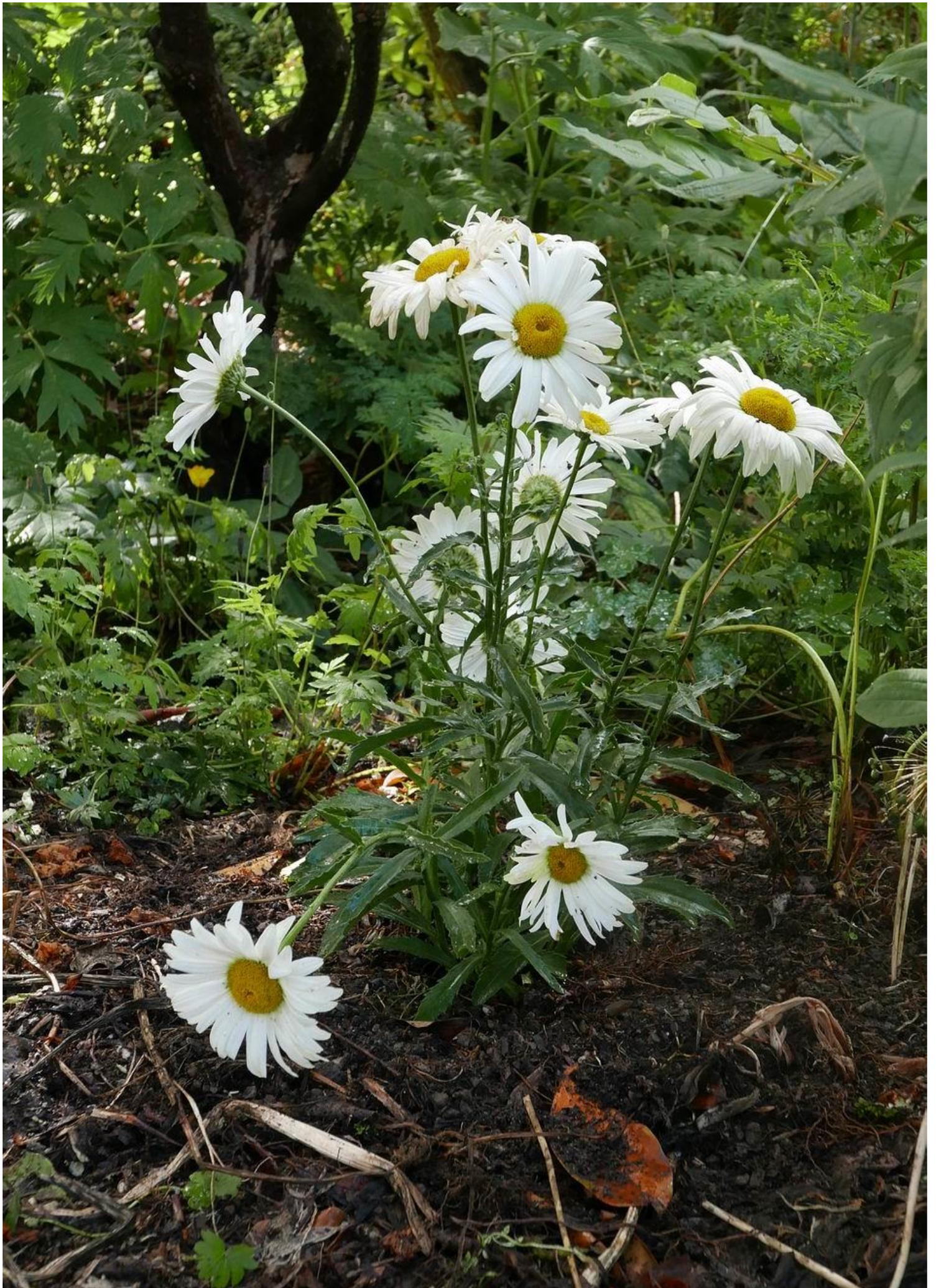




Leucanthemum is a flowering plant in the daisy family, Asteraceae, and each of the tiny yellow flowers in the centre will, if fertilised, go on to produce a seed.



Various *Leucanthemum* and *Anthemis tinctoria* bring some summer flowering interest to the bulb bed - in addition they provide some food for the pollinators



Leucanthemum



A white flowered **Cyclamen hederifolium** is an early indication that it will not be long before the autumn flowering bulbs come into bloom, the brown dried remains of this seasons leaves can still be seen on the ground around these plants



Anthemis tinctoria



Tanacetum parthenium

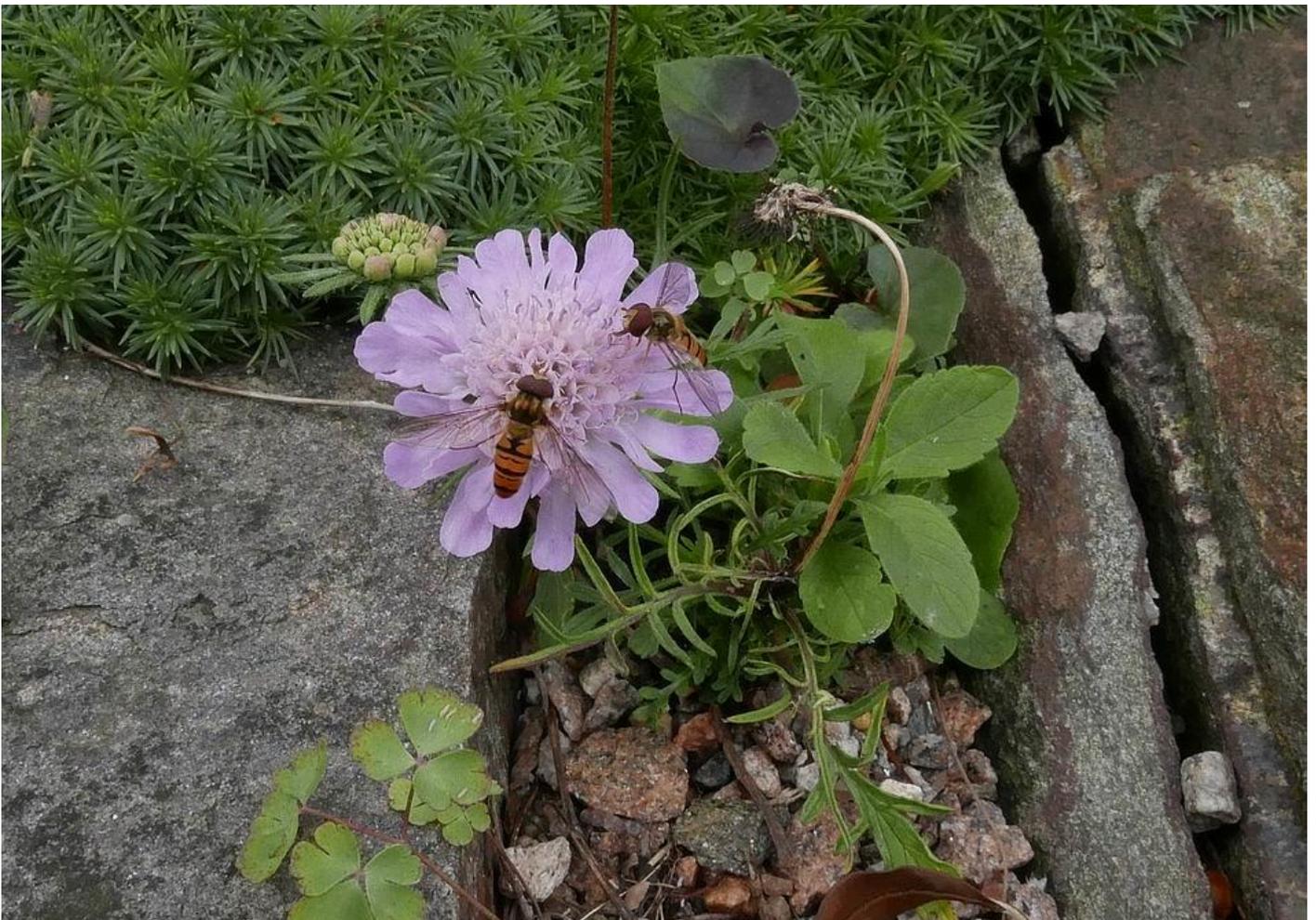
We also allow the common plant Feverfew to seed around and grow in places where it is compatible with other plants - there we can enjoy its succession of daisy flowers that go on for several weeks.



Doronicum orientale



The pink flowered climbing daisy **Mutisia spinosa** along with its seed head.



Hoverflies on a dwarf **Scabious**



Herbs such as Marjoram have small flowers which have a strong attraction to the pollinating insects.



A small range of the different flower types open just now – the hoverflies were even attracted to this arrangement.



Peacock and Painted Lady butterflies attending the Butterfly Bush, *Buddleia davidii*.



Thalictrum delavayi



These hybrid lilies have the largest flowers we have in the garden just now but size does not seem to matter to the pollinators as some of the plants with flowers that are tiny in comparison seem to have a greater attraction.



***Roscoeae purpurea* 'Wisley Amethyst'** – this pale coloured form was collected in Assam by Kingdon Ward (KW 13755) in 1938 and has been grown at Wisley for 70 years it was one of the 200 plants selected to celebrate 200 years of the RHS.



Some of the other *Roscoeae* that I showed in flower a few weeks ago have swelling seed pods that push up through the leaves as they ripen.



From the smallest *Roscoeia alpina* to the largest of the *Roscoeia* flowers we have in flower, just now a form of *Roscoeia purpurea*.



Roscoeia purpurea



I enjoy studying the structure of flowers and often the only way to view and understand all the parts is to pull one apart.

Below I photographed the stigma on a black surface to make it stand out and you can see the two stamens with ripe pollen at the top of an 'L' shaped structure, If an insect lands on the bottom legs of the 'L' when it is in the flower the ripe stamens rock back and forward.

The stigma can be seen sitting between the anthers and it connects to the ovary by a long thread like tube which can also be seen in the picture below.



Stamen and Style of *Roscoeia purpurea*.



The next sequence of pictures shows some of the other flower types out in the garden this week starting with this Aconitium.





Kniphofia



Arisaema jacquemontii



Eucomis autumnalis



Eucomis bicolor leaves emerging through the decaying remains of this year's colchicum leaves



This hardy Himalayan form of **Parochetus communis** has the unexpected combination of a blue pea type flower over clover shaped foliage



The weird flowers of the New Zealand **Fuchsia procumbens** are so small and subtle that they are easily missed.



Euphorbia sp.



I am not spending all my time looking at the flowers - seasonal garden work continues with repotting intermixed with pruning and cutting back, then shredding.



I will round off this week's Bulb Log with another colourful picture of butterflies on a Buddleia.....