

## Shade Monthly July 2016

We need more articles. Please do write something for us and send it to [wasjsime@gmail.com](mailto:wasjsime@gmail.com)

### (1) Plant of the Month. *Cardiocrinum giganteum*

Yes, I know it is monocarpic slug bait, but with a little effort and about six years you can build up a population of these stately beauties. Growing up to 8 ft tall and topped by huge, sweet-smelling, trumpet shaped flowers they brighten up the shade in June. All they ask for is a cool, moist but not soggy site, a layer of dried leaves in the winter and some protection from slugs when they are young.



Our population started with a bag of seed of *C. giganteum* var *yunnanense* given to us by Liz Carter about 15 years ago. They germinated very well, and at about 2 years old I risked some of them in the garden. It was a mistake. They were eaten. However, at 3 years old they survived. (I think there is some mathematical relationship between rate of growth, stored energy and slug numbers that determines whether herbaceous plants will survive the onslaught. I think this also applies to *aralia*, *ligularia*, *tricyrtis* etc. )

At about 6 years old they started to flower. Whilst the flowering stem dies, if you root around the base you will find offsets of varying sizes. In my experience if these are about the size of a fat daffodil bulb they can be planted out straight away. If smaller, grow them on in pots for a year or so. We now have several patches in which at least 2 or 3 will flower every year, whilst the smaller ones grow on. It is worth the effort and the wait!

### (2) Notes from Seattle – June 2016

Here is Walt's latest update

Still recovering from jet lag after two weeks in Paris, I was still eager to tour the garden and see what may have occurred in my absence. Happily, nothing dead but the most luxuriant growth in years was evident. Cool and damp conditions had prevailed. On to pruning soon! (We feel so lucky to have seen Paris before the flooding).



*Vancouveria planipetala*      *Omeleria cerasiformis* 'Donna's Dream'

With a small garden, pruning and editing are constantly needed. Vancouveria planipetala nicely fills a space beneath two large rhododendrons and a couple of Mahonias. If not watched over though and pulled out, a bird's foot ivy sneaks through and threatens to engulf the Vancouveria. I allow the ivy a toehold here so it can climb up the trunk of a large western red cedar (Thuja plicata) and display the attractive leaves.

A variegated Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) has been with me for years, displaying both white and cream patterned leaves. Try as I might, and that includes enlisting other nurseries to try their hand, cuttings have not been successful. Variegated seedlings appear though from this female plant but the variegation doesn't last beyond two years after potting up. Division of this shrubby tree seems to be the only sure way of propagating it, which helps keep it within decent bounds.



Top: *Epimedium wushanense* Bottom: *Helwingia japonica*



Some plants send out runners that can be left if space allows or severed and potted up. A Helwingia japonica has nicely provided many gift plants as a result of its wanderings. Under another large Thuja plicata, its long arching branches provide an airy boundary to a dry, shaded corner.

Slowly increasing but not yet divisible are an Epimedium wushanense and a Beesia deltophylla. Both are attractive clumps that I am reluctant to open up yet. One plant that resists being rogued is Amorpha heterantha. Any little bit of residual root re-sprouts into an open rambling shrub. Flowers this year were the best ever so it may stay, threading amongst various peonies.



Amorpha heterantha/ Beesia deltophylla

On a sad note, my major professor at the University of Washington in botany just passed away at the age of 96 after a short illness. Dr. Arthur R. Kruckeberg was a world expert in serpentine flora and Pacific Northwest natives, having recently finished a book on the subject. I am on his garden committee of the Kruckeberg Garden Foundation and so kept in touch with this remarkable man. Here is a link to his obituary:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/seattletimes/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=180195209>(3

### (3) HYLOMECON JAPONICA – A WARNING



*Hylomecon japonica*

A note from Judi Deakin about the confusing world of celandine poppies.

*Hylomecon japonica*, one of the Japanese wood poppies, was an obvious choice for me from the 2014-15 seed distribution. Attracted by anything poppy-like and looking particularly for plants to grow in a woodland setting, this seemed one not to miss.

As always I researched it on the web and found it described as a choice plant, an herbaceous perennial with bright yellow flowers from April – May and likely to go dormant after flowering. I achieved excellent germination and had plenty of seedlings potted up by the end of May, mostly in ericaceous compost as it was said to prefer a

slightly acidic soil. These romped away in their pots, so I planted some out and gave several more away to members of my gardening group and also to an NGS garden for their plant sale.

Mine were planted in two different locations. Four went in a bed on the east facing side of the house which receives full sun until about midday and none at all thereafter. This was planted largely with ferns and I thought that in future the *Hylomecon* would happily die down as the deciduous ferns were waking up, leaving plenty of room for both. Another half dozen or so were planted with the hellebores and *Geranium sylvaticum* (also from HPS seed) under deciduous trees – a more ‘woodland’ situation but not ideal as it is riddled with tree roots and at the top of a bank so with a tendency to dryness rather than damp. Again I planned that the geraniums would be able to take over from the *Hylomecon*.

When the first blooms appeared I was surprised but delighted; assuming that this out-of-season flowering was attributable to it being their first year, I was prepared to enjoy an ephemeral bounty. When all the plants grew like crazy and were still flowering heavily and producing masses of seed pods in September, I resorted to the internet once again. I found another site which stated that *Hylomecon japonica* does indeed behave as my plants were behaving, flowering from late spring until the first frosts and with the potential to be evergreen.

Now, less than a year after planting out, the clumps are up to 40cms high with as much as an 80cms spread and I have started to dig them out of the fern beds as they are just too big. I had expected a maximum of half that.

As several people who have seen them have commented on it being a plant they don’t know, I thought I would write this warning for *Shade Monthly*, describing my experience with this plant. So I



*Stylophorum lasiocarpum*

went back to the internet to see if I could find my original sources and instead found this article posted by Robert Pavlis from Southern Ontario on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2015 'Hylomecon Japonica – Which is the Real Plant?' <http://www.gardenmyths.com/hylomecon-japonica-which-is-the-real-plant/>

My confusion is resolved. I don't have *Hylomecon japonica*, I have *Stylophorum lasiocarpum*, the Chinese Celandine Poppy, one of 3 plants which Pavlis believes is often confused with the *Hylomecon japonica* and misnamed as such. The other two are *Stylophorum diphyllum*, a native of North America, and *Chelidonium majus*, the greater celandine. From the photographs and descriptions in the article, I was able to distinguish my plants by leaf form and size of seed pod from *Hylomecon japonica*.

Back to the internet! *Stylophorum lasiocarpum* is listed by several seed companies and nurseries, and those I've looked at appear to be selling the right plant, although Plant-World-Seeds wrongly lists *Hylomecon japonicum* as one of its synonyms. If you want

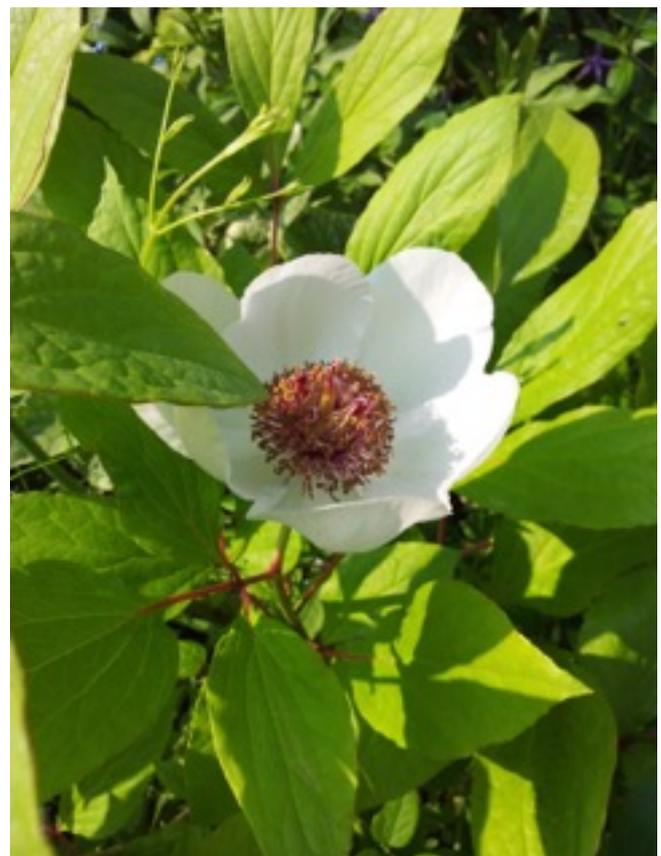
something that will grow quickly, flower for more than half the year, keep its leaves all winter and be very tolerant of conditions, including dry shade, this is a good plant BUT it is not *Hylomecon japonica* and I apologise most heartily to any I may have, however innocently, led astray.

#### (4) Mini Group Meetings

Reports from two recent gatherings.



The first mini-meeting of the year for the Southern region was held at Gill and Peter Regan's garden, Frith Old Farmhouse in Kent recently featured in the Spring 2016 journal of the Hardy Plant Society. We had perfect weather, sunny but not humid, to explore the garden with Gill and Peter, discussing their plants along the way.



As we came up the drive to the left we were greeted by large mounds of *Euphorbia* featured in the article, winding paths flanked by self seeded aquilegias, happily flowering in the shade of a *Dipelta yunnanensis*. Opposite in the shade backed by a brick wall we saw *Euonymus cornutus* var. *quinquecornutus*, discovered in China in 1908 and introduced by Ernest Wilson, having small indiscreet flowers which turn into 5 horned bright orange seeds, long lasting into autumn. It does well in a shady spot preferably protected from the wind.

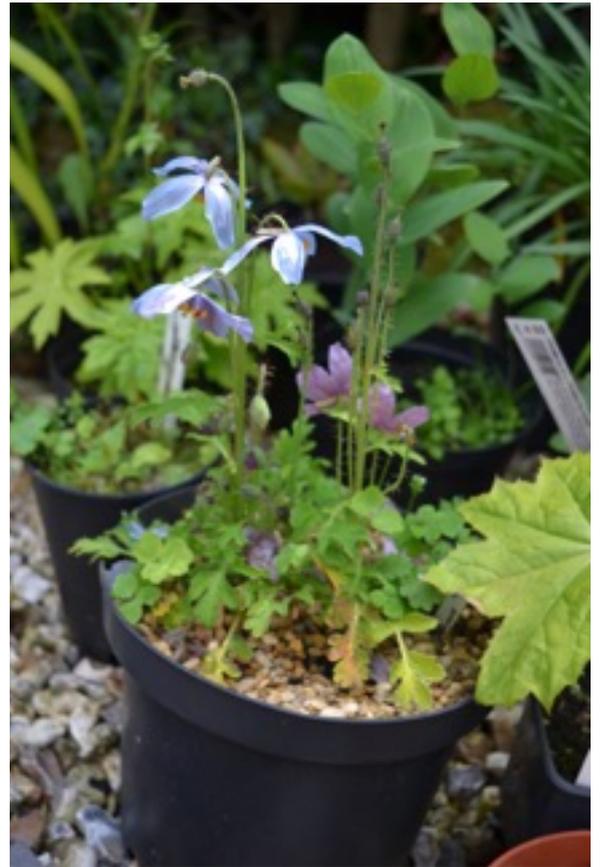
The main garden consisted of many informal beds with winding narrow paths, mainly in dappled shade which was host to Gill's favourite woodlanders. Amongst the more unusual was *Lysimachia paridiformis* var. *stenophylla*, not often seen which reminded me to search for it in my own garden once home. Various shrubs and trees formed the overhead storey including variegated *Cornus*. *Lilium martagon* had self seeded amongst the beds and also *Cardiocrinum*. Gill had succeeded with a form of *Paris* and we saw her stunning *Paeonia obovata* var. *alba* and *Trillium kurabayashii*. Scrambling roses and clematis adorned the trees and shrubs. One stunning rose was, I believe, *Rosa* 'Scharlachglut', German for scarlet fire.

Nearer the house were raised beds and seats upon which we sat and had tea and cakes, discussing what we had seen in the garden. Gill had a selection of plants we could take home including *Iris confusa* 'Martyn Rix', which can run but in dry shade flowers perfectly happily and stays a manageable clump.

Our thanks go to Gill and Peter for being so hospitable and for hosting our first Southern garden. Sue Lander

The West Midlands Group had a meeting at Ruth and Clive Plant's garden on Thursday 17th July to view Ruth's collection of meconopsis and to discuss their propagation and cultivation. Meconopsis is a genus renowned for hybridisation, and regardless to the names given to them, many of the plants in general cultivation are hybrids. Ruth has been

growing plants from seed provided by the Meconopsis Group and the Scottish Rock Garden Club, which probably come closest to the original forms. They are growing well. Three are shown below. The first a plant that may be the true *M. grandis*, the second the very rare *M. aculeata* and the third *M. 'Hensol Violet'*



One rare species that Ruth grew from seed two years ago is *M. dhwojii*. She gave one to us last year which we have grown on in a pot. In an attempt to get good seed set we brought this for a 'hot-date' with her plant.

Over tea and Clive's delicious sponge cake we discussed methods of propagation. The most reliable methods for the genus is by seed, and various methods of trying achieve good germination and healthy seedlings were covered. Ruth favours pre-germination on coffee filter papers, transfer to small modules until the first leaves are produced and then potting on ( see [www.hardyplants.atwebpages.com](http://www.hardyplants.atwebpages.com) ). This prevents the losses that often come on pricking out. She has had problems with aphid predation on young seedlings, and as they are sensitive to any chemical treatment, she uses sellotape to remove the offending insects! Joe Sime

(5) Available Seed:

If you are a paid up member of the Shade and Woodland Plant Group and would like any of the seeds listed below, please send a SAE to S.J.Sime, Park Cottage, Penley, Wrexham LL13 0LS.

If you have woodland seed to donate, please send it to the same address.

Akebia quinata  
Arisaema candidissimum  
Arisaema ciliatum  
Gentian asclepiadea  
Geranium psilostemon  
Kirengeshoma palmata  
Actaea cordifolia ex 'Blickfang'  
Adenophora takadae var. howazana  
Astilbe rivularis CC6857  
Cardiocrinum giganteum var yunannense  
Cornus capitata  
Fothergilla major Monticola Group  
Hydrangea paniculata ex 'Tender Rose'  
Iochroma australis (both blue and white forms)  
Phytolacca japonica  
Disporopsis aspersa  
Abies koreana

Epimedium from named seed parent  
Vancouveria hexandra  
Mitella breweri

(6) Name that Plant

I have run out of ideas for Shade Charades, and thought it may be interesting to give you the puzzle of identifying a plant from its initials and a botanical description.

L\*\*\*\*\* M\*\*\*\*\*

'Bulb broadly ovoid, ca. 5 mm in diam.; scales oblong, 2--2.5 cm × 8--10 mm, apex acute, not articulate. Stem with purple streaks, 45--90 cm, glabrous. Leaves whorled, rarely scattered, lanceolate, 6.5--11 × 1--2 cm. Bracts 2--4 cm × 5--6 mm, Flowers 2--7 in a raceme, nodding. Tepals purple-red, spotted, narrowly elliptic, 3.2--3.8 cm × 8--9 mm, nectaries papillose on both surfaces. Filaments 2.2--2.4 cm; anthers ca. 9 mm. Ovary 8--9 × 2--3 mm. Style ca. 1.5 cm. Capsule obovoid-oblong. 2--2.8 cm. Fl. Jun--Jul, fr. Aug. Forests, thickets, shady slopes'

The solution to last month's Shade Charade was *Polystichium braunii*, a good, hardy, evergreen fern growing to 2 ft by 2 ft. It is also easy to grow from spores. The photo on the right shows one of many grown from spores from the HPS seed exchange.

