

## Plant of the Month: *Arisaema taiwanense*

Joe Sime

The hot dry weather has decimated the shade garden with many plants making an early descent into their dormant period. However the arisaemas in general seem to be weathering the heat and lack of moisture better than most. I grow quite a few species and have lost many on the way. The secret seems to be to plant them deeply in good woodland soil, keep them well-drained over the winter and have patience.

I bought two samples of *A. taiwanense* in 2015: *A. taiwanense* f. *cinereum* BSWJ3602 from Julian Sutton and *A. taiwanense* 'silver-leaved form' from Shady Plants Nursery. They look indistinguishable to me. I planted them close together to encourage seed set, and indeed one did fruit last year. The berries had still not ripened by November, and as the plant had died back I brought the fruit inside and let it ripen in the kitchen. This it did by January. We have sown seed and some has been on offer in the seed exchange since then. The process does work. I have used it before on late ripening spikes of *A. speciosum* var. *magnifica*.



*A. taiwanense* is a bold plant with a single, radiate leaf with about ten ovate, tapered leaflets that are silvery-grey on top and green underneath. These started out relatively small, but have increased in size as the plant has aged and are now about 12 ins across and 2 ft tall. The spathe is held low, close to the ground and is purplish. It makes a good 'exotic' foliage plant.

## A year in the life of *Lysimachia paridiformis* var. *paridiformis* NJM 11.067

Judi Deakin

When I went to Pan-Global Plants in June 2017, detouring on my way home from an HPS Trustees Meeting, I told myself very firmly that I could not buy any more shade lovers. Other parts of the garden urgently needed attention and I could not spare time to clear any more space on the woodland edge. For a while – quite a long while



– I listened to myself. But this plant kept calling to me. It wasn't a particularly pretty or spectacular plant, but it definitely grabbed my attention.

Eventually, knowing that this was a one-off sort of visit, I succumbed and dropped it into the trolley with everything else.

July 2017

Back home, it remained in its pot for several weeks waiting for the digging to happen but once planted, it established well and put on good growth.



October 2017

So far as I can discover *Lysimachia paridiformis* var. *paridiformis* is only available from Pan-Global and is described on the website thus:

*“A new introduction (the first?) of the typical variety of this most handsome of ground cover perennials, from Guizhou, SW China, 2011. Four broadly obovate to elliptic leaflets per rosette with a boss of rich yellow flowers at their centres, on low stems to 30cm. Shade. Very different from the var. stenophylla, looking like a Paris out of flower.”*



*April 2018*

This brief description really doesn't do the plant justice. Those evergreen leaflets are quite leathery in texture, slightly ridged and of such a rich, glossy green that they seem to shine even on the dullest of winter days, tempting one out just to look at them. The stems begin to sprawl in late autumn so that the plant becomes more flat than bushy but no less appealing for that.

In spring new growth starts to emerge from the centre of the sprawl. No doubt the tidy among us would cut off the old at this point but I left it be with no adverse effects. On the contrary the deep green of the now prostrate old foliage provides an excellent foil to the wonderful new growth with its upright, deep purple stems and unfolding rosettes in hues of purple, green and bronze.

As the leaflets become a more uniform green, the flower buds start to appear in the centre of the rosette, with a second swirl clinging to the stem about half-way down. The buds seem to take an age to open – for me not until early July this year – but then provide a really bright splash of colour when little else in my shade garden is in flower.



*July 2018*

I have my plant in a bed that is on the eastern edge of established deciduous woodland on a south-ish facing slope in the Severn Valley in Newtown, mid-Wales. Although the area from which this *Lysimachia* was collected has a subtropical, humid, monsoon type climate, this young specimen has not merely survived its first year but has flourished, despite all our own uncertain climate has thrown at it. In both December and March it was completely covered in snow for several days, emerging totally unscathed, then subjected to horrendously cold, wet winds. Now I am writing this in the midst of a heatwave when we have seen no rain at all for a month. Unlike almost everything else around it and despite very minimal watering, my *Lysimachia* has shown no signs of wilting or desiccation. This truly is a plant for all seasons and all weathers. I'm just so pleased that I listened when it called.

**Joe writes:** I grow the other variety *L. pardiformis* var. *stenophylla* and have included a photo so that you can compare them.



## Not another hydrangea: *H. serrata* 'Kurenai'

Joe Sime



It is a common feature of many hydrangeas that originally white, sterile florets turn pink or red as they age and/or are exposed to sunlight. Thus in *H. heteromala*, once the flowers are fertilised, the sterile florets invert and turn dark, dusky pink, and in several *H. paniculata* varieties the florets age to various shades of pink. A good example is *H. paniculata* 'Vanille Fraise' where they turn to the luminescent pink of the 'juice' that we used to be offered on ice-cream cones in days of yore. In *H. 'Preziosa'* it is sunlight that turns the small mophead flowers from white to pink.

*H. serrata* 'Kuranai' does a similar trick. It is a small shrub to about 3 ft, with lace cap flowers. The sterile florets open white but then, in sun, turn to a true red. Planted at the edge of a woodland garden where it gets some sun it is a true delight.

## Available Seed

If you would like some of the seed offered below, please send a SAE to S.J.Sime, Park Cottage, Penley, Wrexham LL13 0LS.

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

*Arisaema taiwanense* f. *cinereum* BSWJ3602  
*Arisaema candissimum*  
*Pterostyrax corymbosa*  
*Sisyrinchium macrocarpum*  
*Tricyrtis hirta*  
*Clethra monostachya*  
*Hydrangea aspera* ex 'Bellevue'  
*Hydrangea heteromalla* Bretschneideri Group  
*Hydrangea paniculata* ex 'Tender Rose'  
*Hydrangea serrata* subsp. *yezoense*  
*Kirengeshoma palmata*  
*Rhododendron yakusianum*  
*Epimedium* species: varieties from named seed parent  
*Erythronium hendersonii*  
*Paris quadrifolia*

## Name this Plant

Joe Sime

Name this plant I\*\*\*\*\* O\*\*\*\*\*

Plants erect, 30-50 cm tall, with robust rhizome, simple, nodes turgid. Leaves alternate, often crowded at upper part of stem; petiole 4-6 cm; leaf blade lanceolate or ovate-oblong, 8-16 × 4-5 cm, setose between teeth, lateral veins 5-7 pairs, sometimes yellow or red. base cuneate, margin coarsely crenate, apex acuminate. Inflorescences terminal, racemose, 5-8-flowered; peduncles 4-10 cm. Pedicels ca. 2 cm, slender, bracteate at base; bract ovate-oblong. Flowers yellow, large. Lateral sepals 4; outer 2: obliquely ovate; inner 2: falcate. Lower sepal narrowly funnelform, narrowed into an involute, short spur. Upper petal triangular-orbicular, apex rounded, cuspidate, abaxial midvein slightly thickened; lateral united petals not clawed, 2-lobed; basal lobes subtetragonous; distal lobes dolabriform, longer, apex rounded; abaxial auricle broad. Anthers obtuse. Ovary fusiform. Capsule unknown. Fl. Aug-Sep.

Understories of thickets and forests, forest margins; 900-1000 m. Sichuan.



The solution to last month's puzzle was *Trautvetteria caroliniensis*. It is a member of the buttercup family found in moist woods across the USA and also, as *T. c.* var. *japonica*, in east Asia. It spreads by an underground rhizome from which stems arise bearing palmate leaves. The white flower clusters have no petals but conspicuous white stamens. I grow the Japanese variety (see picture). It is pleasant enough, spreading itself around, but not causing too much competition to its neighbours. In his talk at our first group AGM, Keith Ferguson told us that there were much better clones that spread less and flower more in the USA but these are not easily available in the UK.

There is an article by Keith Ferguson on *trautvetterias* in the *Hardy Plant* vol 37 No 1 (2016).

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*SHADE MONTHLY* is compiled by Joe Sime  
and this web-friendly version was produced by Tony Bays.