

This week's cover image is of a group of **Ramonda nathaliae** and **Jankaemonda vandedemii** flowering in a trough which forms part of the edge of the new bed by the pond - it has a crevice landscape formed from broken paving slabs which I continued into the new bed. The rosettes in the foreground are those of *Ramonda myconii* which flowers a bit later and there are also some *Haberlea* further along.



Jankaemonda vandedemii



**Ramonda
nathaliae**

We raised these Ramonda nathaliae from a Jim Archibald collection of seeds many years ago.



We have propagated Ramonda and their relatives by our own seed, division and leaf cuttings and these scans from old slides illustrate the methods

If you are careful it is possible to pull side rosettes away from the main plant complete with some roots as shown in the rosette on the right of the picture these are planted up and treated as a cutting until the roots extend further.

The other leaves are pulled off the plant carefully to retain the base - they do not have to be the newest leaves the old ones work equally well. Place the leaves so the stems are covered into a sandy mixture and keep the always moist, I use the mist unit for this, after a few weeks to a month dormant buds will activate and a new small plant will form (see also picture below).

In addition you can slice the leaves across placing each cut section into moist sand and new plants will form where the veins have been cut.



Here you can see a tiny growth forming at the base of the leaves; one large, the other small – when there are sufficient roots pot the cuttings up individually but do not be in a hurry to cut away the old leaf until the young plant is well established, unless of course, it is rotting.



In this view you can see the violet colour of the Ramonda in the middle distance which is repeated in the violets in the large pot around the base of an acer The Pinguicula growing on the rock island in the pond shares this colour.



I started the Pinguicula island some years ago when the moss started to grow on this rock and now they are forming quite a nice colony.



Other plants have also seeded in and I am selective of what I leave to grow. The large leaves are of a *Dactylorhiza* which is now in its third year of growth and has amazed me by the size it has reached so quickly growing only in barely 1cm of moss – I think it may flower this year.



At the other end of the pond is the narrow marginal bed I created in autumn of 2017 to give a more natural look to this edge. I have planted it with grasses, sedges, ferns, dactylorhiza, primula, meconopsis, etc as well as scattering various seeds - I am looking forward to see which plants thrive in these wet conditions.



The wild look is something that I aim for in our plantings and using suitable ground cover plants greatly enhances this effect – here in the front garden **Galium odoratum** forms a unifying carpet that is sympathetic to the growth of the other plants.



Rhododendron yakushimanum is coming into full bloom now.



This (Rhododendron) **Ledum palustre** is one of a number we raised from seed collected in Japan.



View looking up the front garden showing the *Ledum* and *Rhododendron yakushmanum*.

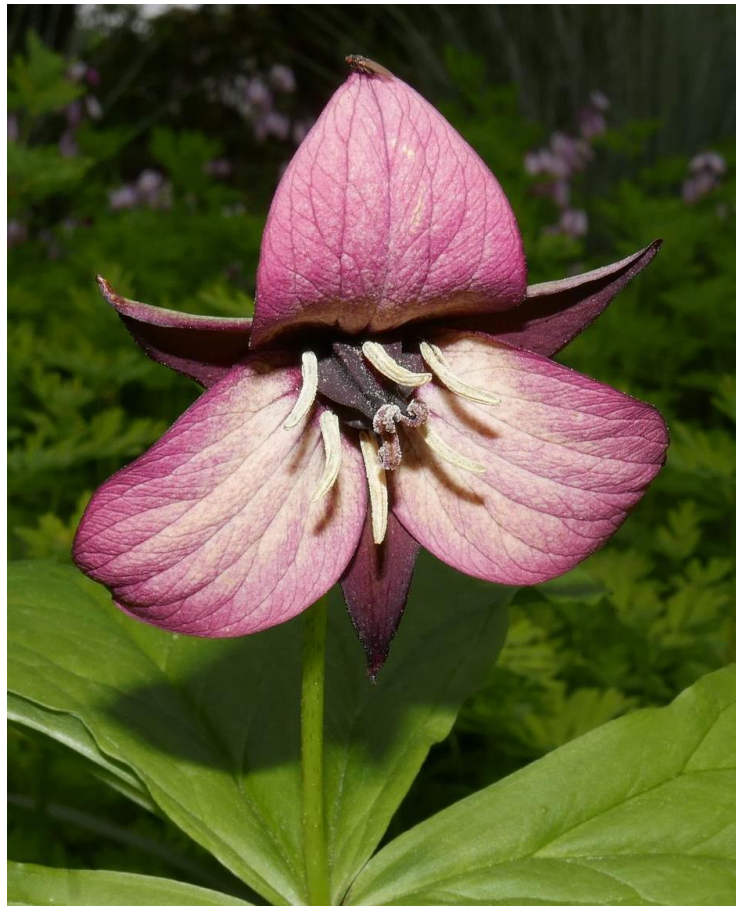


These *Trillium* in another part of the front garden include ***Trillium kurubayashii***, ***sulcatum*** and ***grandiflorum***.



Trillium sulcatum

The specific name, *sulcatum*, refers to the boat-shaped tips to the sepals but is confusing because there are a number of related species that share this feature however as this plant was raised from wild collected seed I am as confident as I can be that it is the correct species - something I cannot say about most of the plants of the *Trillium erectum* alliance we grow.



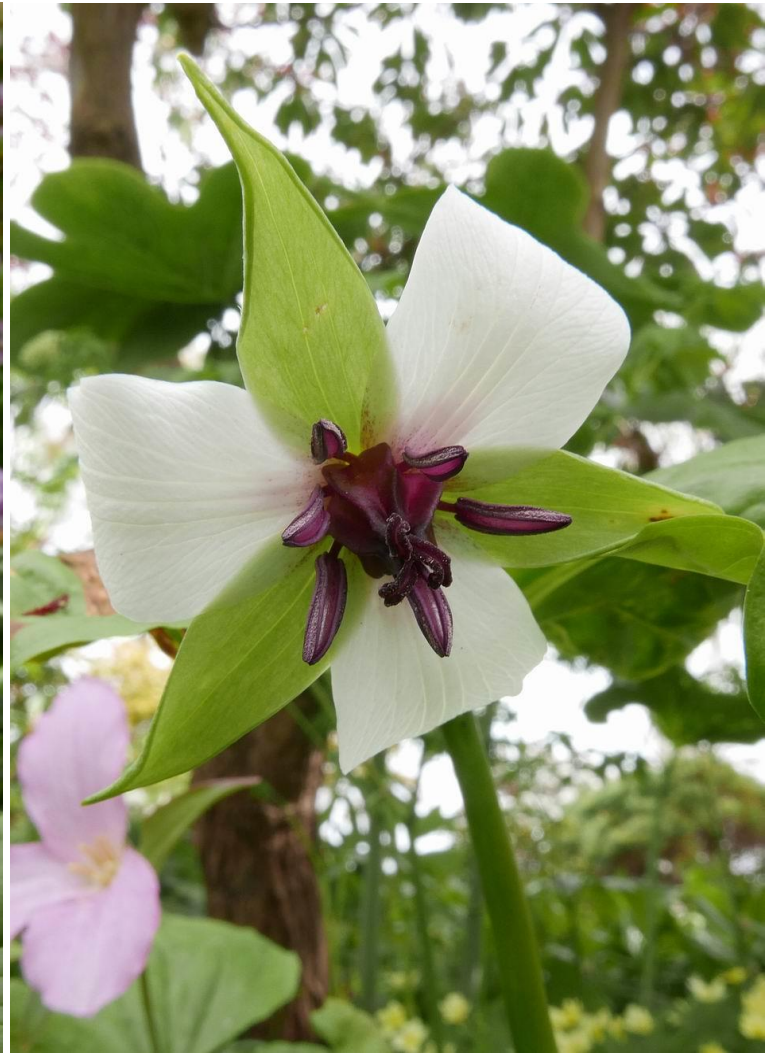
The following sequence of pictures show just some of the many *Trillium* forms/hybrids from the *erectum* alliance, all raised from garden seed, which are flowering just now. Their parentage will include *Trillium erectum*, *flexipes*, *sulcatum*, *rugelii*, *vaseyi*, *simile* and *cernuum*.



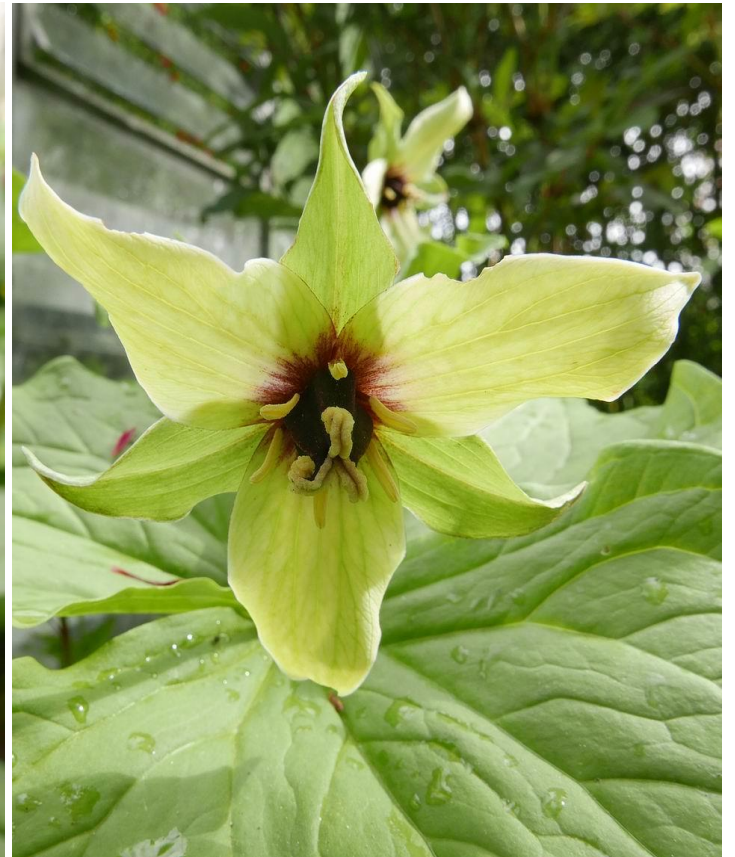
Trillium hybrids



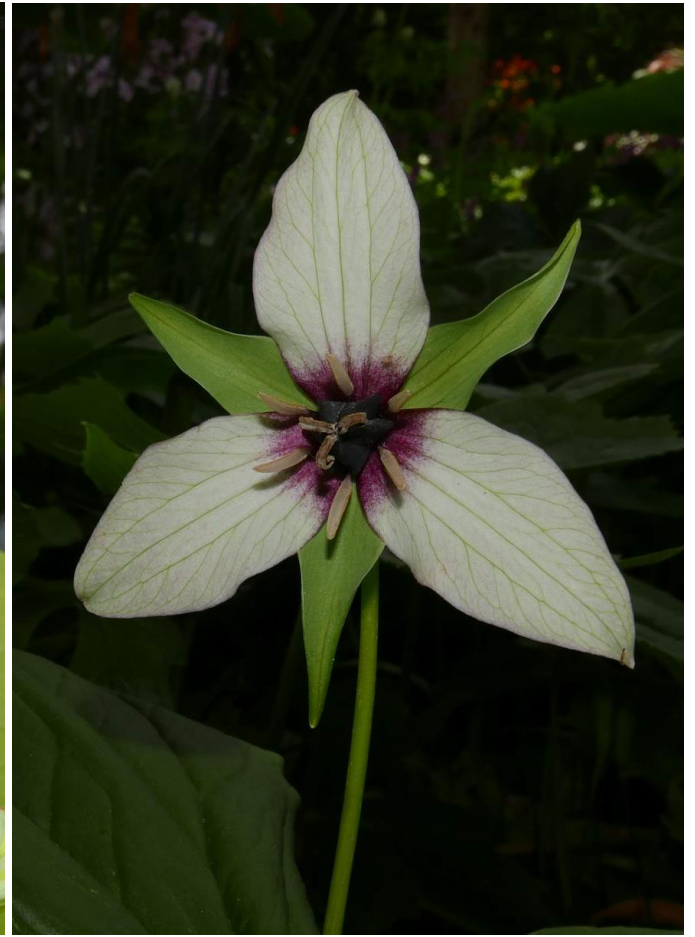
There is a wide range of variations and all make excellent garden plants forming clumps and setting seed.



Trillium hybrids



Trillium erectum and Trillium erectum hybrid.



Trillium forms and hybrids



Trillium simile



Trillium flexipes



Uvularia grandiflora grows happily in shade this is part of the plant I divided last autumn and planted out in the area at the top of the garden where I cut back some Rhododendrons a few weeks back, re-opening the ground below.



A different clone of **Uvularia grandiflora** with paler yellow flowers is seeding around.



Uvularia grandiflora gently seeds around in the shade of acer trees.



Podophyllum hexandrum is another excellent plant that grows well in either sun or shade in our garden.



The Erythronium flowering season is almost over. This form of *Erythronium oregonum* is always the last, now in full flower along with a few of my *Erythronium revolutum* hybrids which are also later flowering than most - the dark pointed shoots are an emerging *Arisaema*.



Late flowering *Erythronium revolutum* hybrid.



In the raised beds *Oxalis*, *Dactylorhiza* and *Phlox* come into flower.



A colony of *Viola labradorica* seeds around the slab beds here growing through the foliage of *Hypericum reptans*,



Armeria juniperifolia



I showed this plant of ***Cochlearia officinalis*** four weeks ago when it had already been in flower for some time and here it is still making a good display – illustrating that you should not ignore easy plants considered weeds by some.

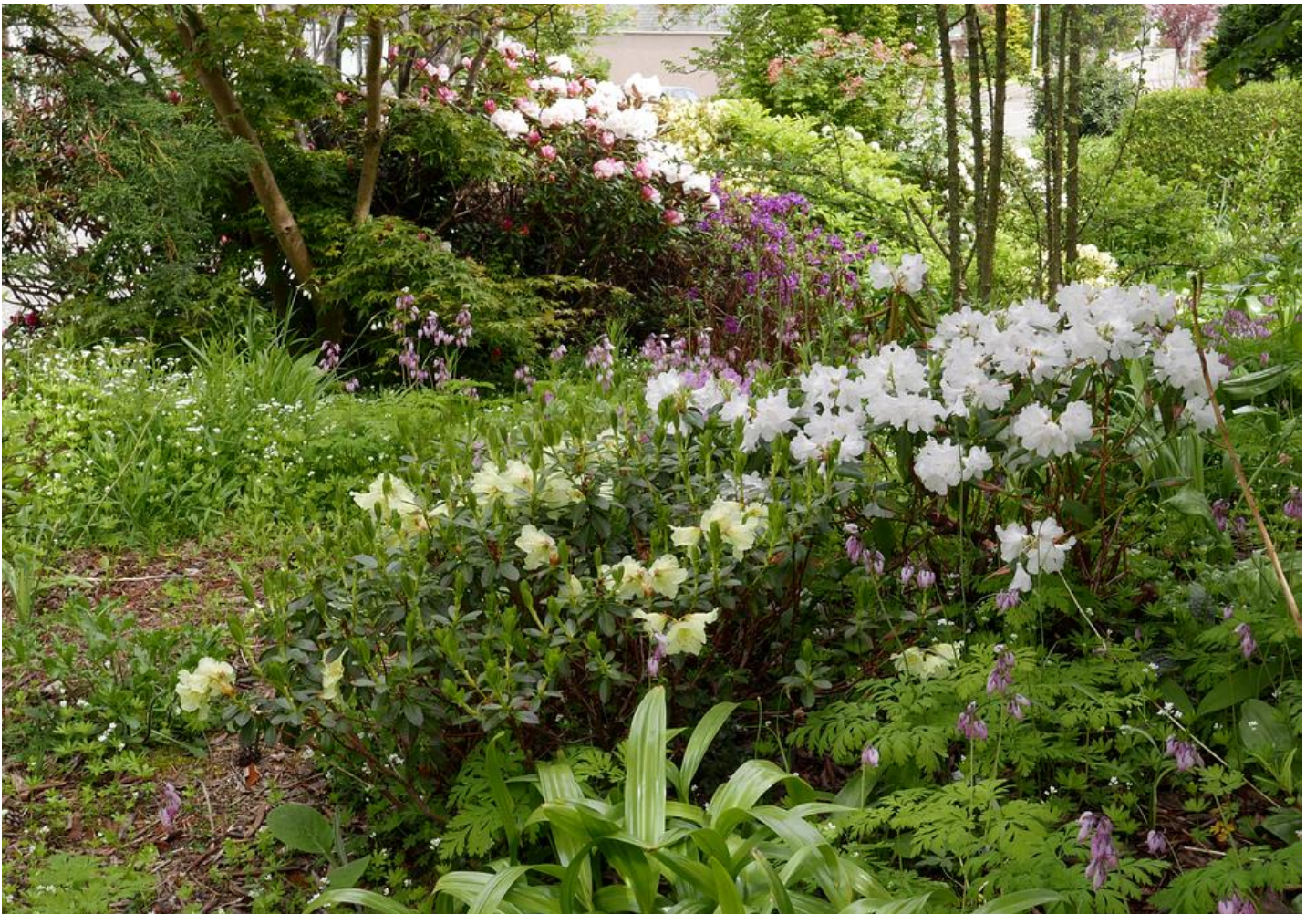
Sometimes we have to wait a long time after sowing seed before we see the first flower and the large white flowered Rhododendron seen right of centre in this picture must have our record. We got the seed, collected in China, as part of the ACE distribution which was in 1994 – 24 years ago.



A number of other large Rhododendrons we raised from the same collection have been flowering for many years and I suspect the reason this one has been so slow is that we planted it under the shade of a Cotoneaster tree which we cut down a year past January so I don't think it is a coincidence that it flowered after it grew in good light for the first time last year.



It is difficult putting names to Rhododendrons raised from collected seed but I think from the type of leaf and the large trusses of white scented flowers that it is *Rhododendron fortunei* or something very close.



Another view of rhododendrons in the front garden.



For this week's last image I will return to **Jankaemonda vandedemii** growing in another part of the garden.....