



SRGC -----

Bulb Log Diary

ISSN 2514-6114

Pictures and text © Ian Young

BULB LOG 29.....20th July 2022



Mutisia spinosa

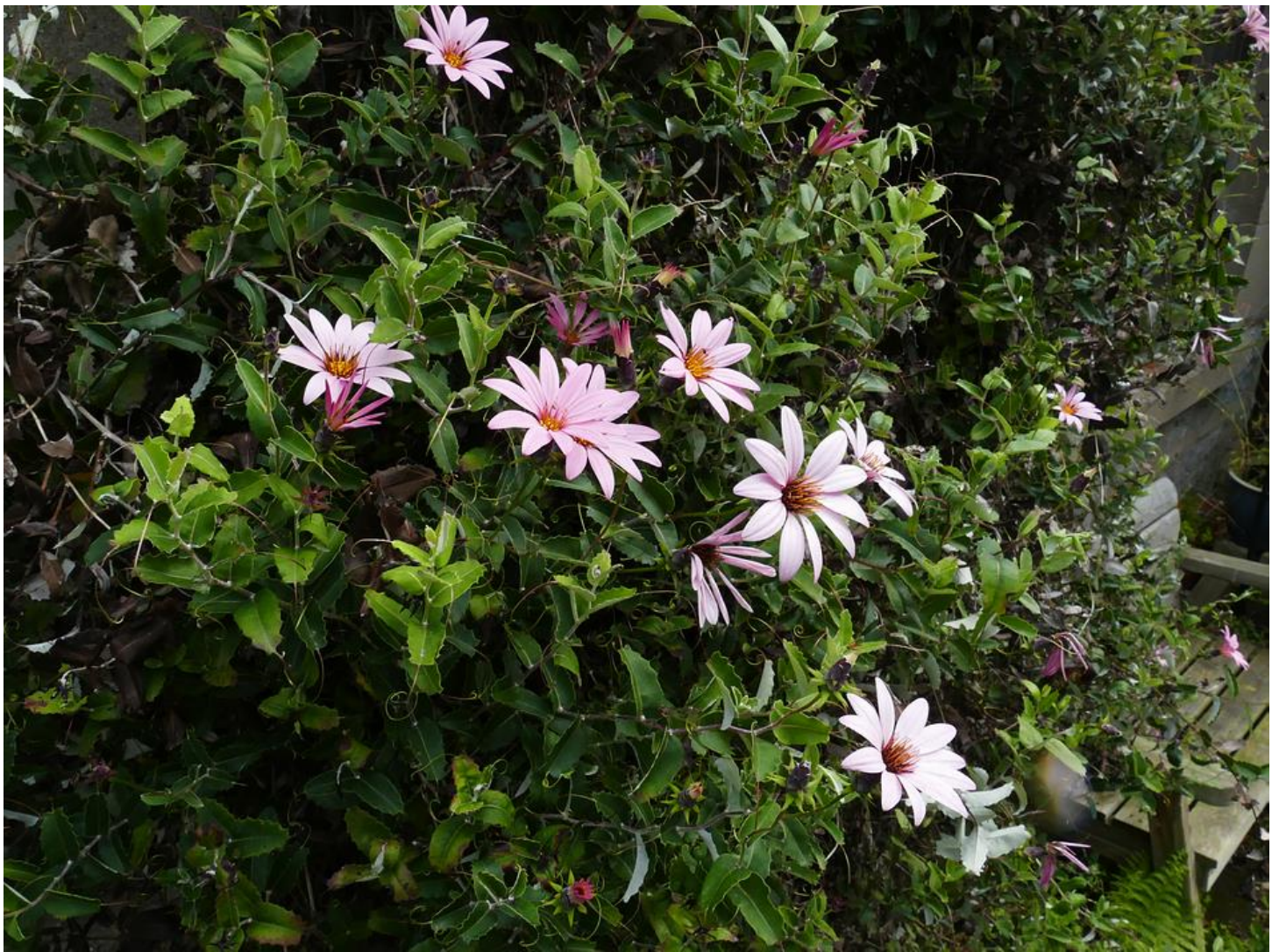


I have emphasised, in recent weeks, the importance of capturing the wider view when taking pictures of plants. For this week's cover I have zoomed in close where we will discover the stunning beauty and details that make up the reproductive parts of the flowers. There is a tendency to refer to the 'simple daisy like flowers' but when we look closely they are far from simple.

We have grown **Mutisia spinosa**, a South American scrambling daisy, up the southern wall of the house, for a very long time, where it appears to like the maximum exposure to heat and sunshine this habitat gets in our northern latitude of 57.1499°

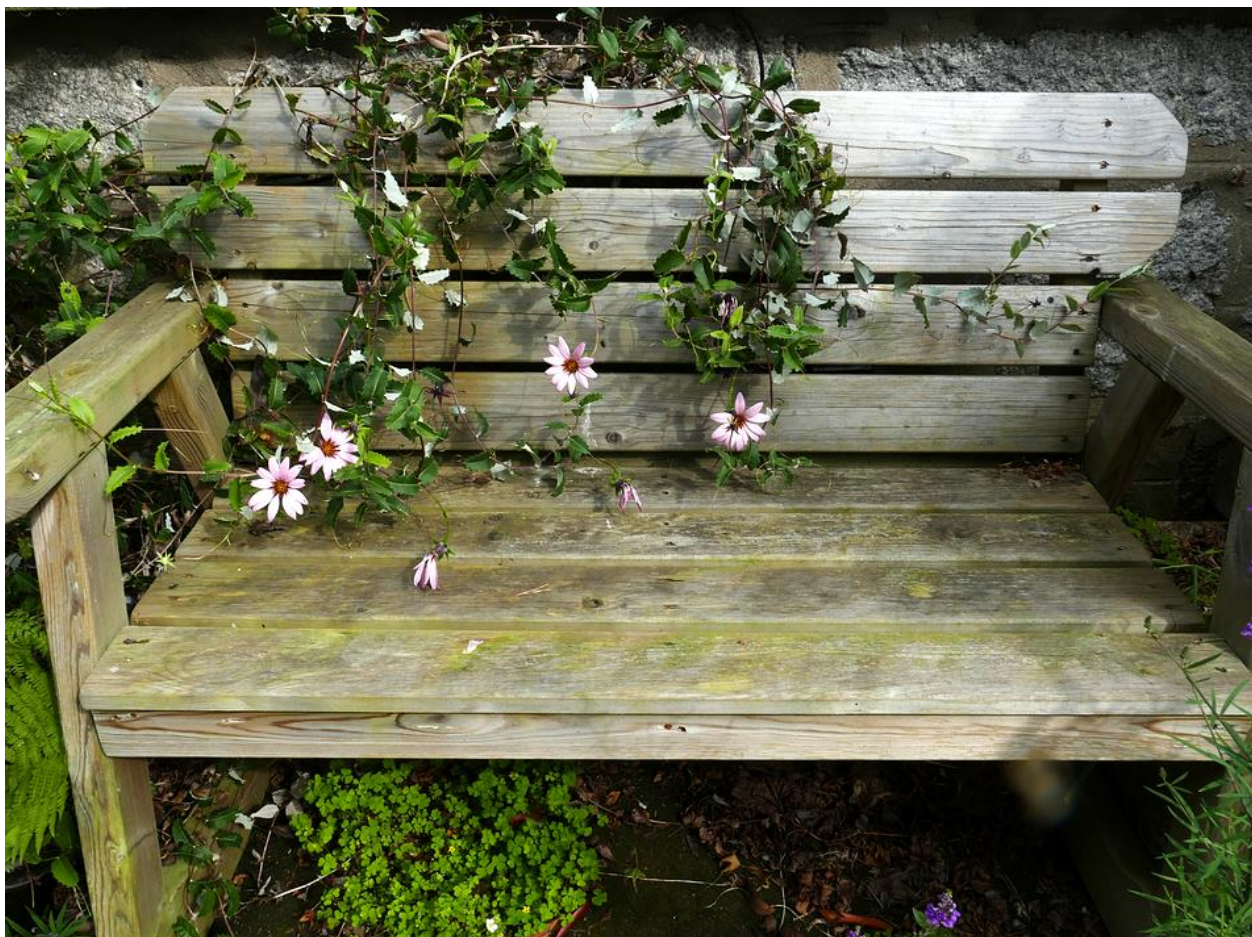


Mutisia spinosa produces a succession of large pink daisy-like flowers throughout the summer months which continue appearing until the hard frosts of winter arrive.



Mutisia spinosa

To allow you to appreciate the growth type of this plant I need to widen the image from which you can get a better idea of the scrambling bushy nature of the growth. It grows quite vigorously up a trellis I fitted to the wall and if we allowed it to grow unchecked it would cover the windows and take over the path so every year I have to cut it back which I usually do in February. It grows from cuttings and it also sets some viable seed.



Here you can see it is reaching out and threatening to take over the seat below our sitting room window.

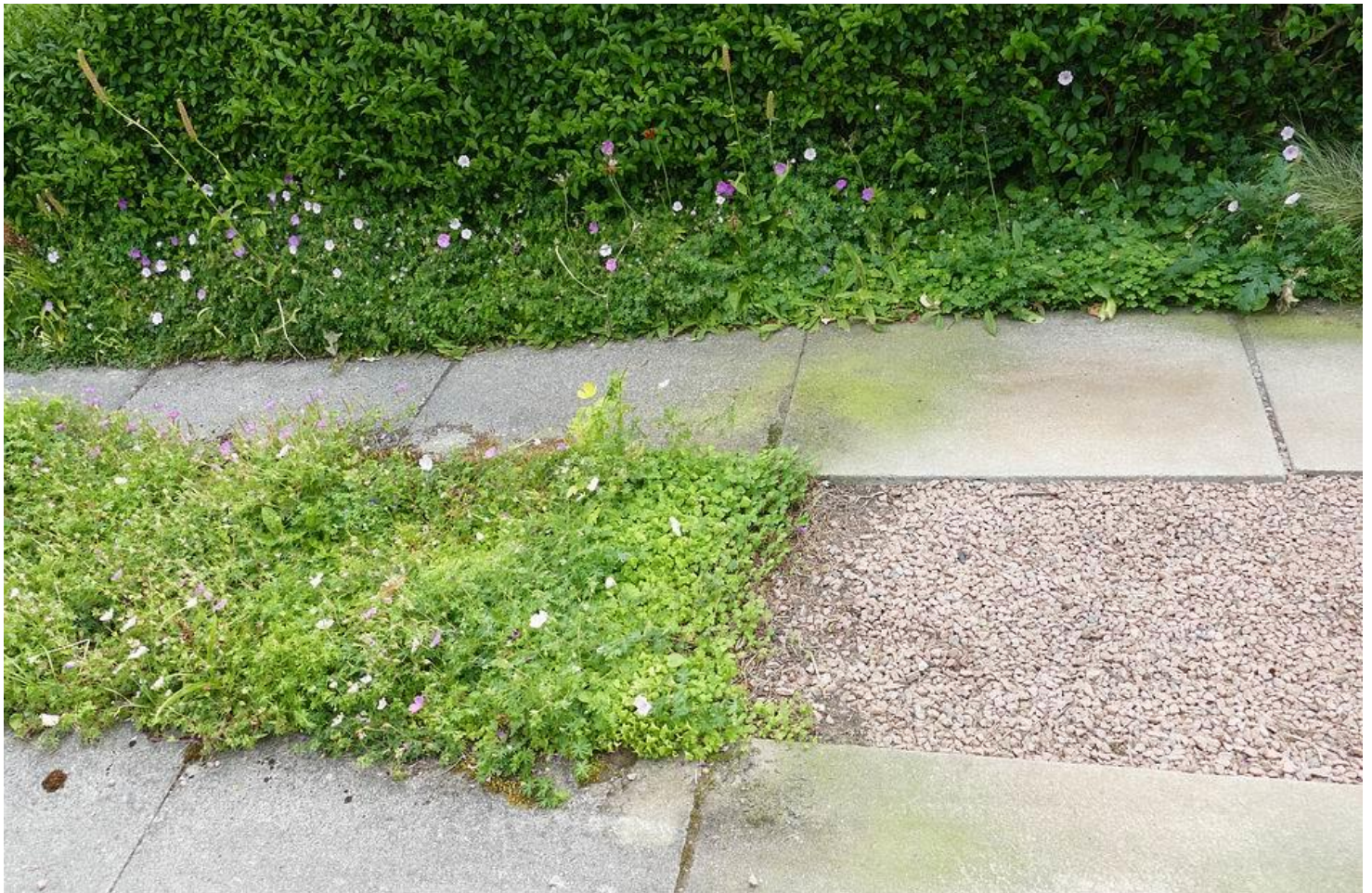


On the topic of cutting back; regular readers will remember the pictures earlier in the year of a large **Rhododendron yunnanense** that got blown over in one of the storms leaving half the root ball sticking up in the air. Despite my best efforts to prop it up, it got blown over again a few days later, so I decided to cut it back to a stump. Now vigorous new stems are growing from buds down the trunk so I am hopeful that we will be able to reform it into an attractive shrub.

By mid to late July the growth on the hedges is good and shaggy and the birds have finished nesting so I start to cut them hedges.

I always start at the front drives and with my wee car moved onto the street to give me room shows clearly how nothing grows under where the car sits for most of the time.





It is obvious from the previous picture that no plants have been able to grow under where the car is parked for pretty well all the time. I find it interesting how *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood Sorrel) is the only plant growing at the edge approaching where the car sits. The narrow partially shaded strip seems to suit this creeping woodlander.



***Oxalis acetosella* (Wood Sorrel)**



As always the hedge trimmings are harvested then shredded to be returned to the soil as a mulch after a short period of composting.



We also had to cut back some of the growth of Rhododendrons that was growing out over and starting to block access on the other drive.



We always find it hard and have to steel ourselves to cut back such beautiful foliage but once again the cuttings are not wasted but get shredded and recycled back as an organic mulch.



The much larger hedges in the back garden are next on my list.



On one of my walks I was attracted to the yellow flowers of **Hypericum pulchrum** growing in a wonderfully dense and mixed planting – thinking that I will gather some seed later to introduce it into our garden.



Hypericum pulchrum with Rubus fruticosus



Hypericum pulchrum



We grow a number of these lovely yellow summer flowering plants such as the low growing **Hypericum reptans** that spreads out across the top as well as trailing down the sides some of the raised slab beds.



This group of plants appeared a number of times, in different variations, at the end of last week's Bulb Log but now from a slightly different angle the scene is joined by the blue flowers of a **Cyananthus lobatus hybrid**.



This is just the start of the *Cyananthus* flowering season which will continue until the winter cold comes.



Cyananthus lobatus hybrid



This is not the most floriferous time of year in our garden, that is spring, but I head off with my camera to take pictures of some of the plants that are in flower including **Campanula garganica**. I am not alone in being attracted to the flowers - there are plenty of bees enjoying a feed.



A late flower on **Meconopsis baileyi** braves the heatwave.



Papaver somniferum is more of a sun worshiper and we welcome its flowers in the summer. It is allowed to seed around and it often surprises us by where it chooses to grow.



An Allium



Campanula cochlearifolia

Many of us are experiencing an extreme heat wave just now bringing much higher temperatures than we are used to. In Aberdeen our highs are in the mid twenty's which may sound cool to some of you but it is all relative. As a Scotsman I have evolved to operate best between -10C and +15C and our garden has been designed and planted with plants that also appreciate these cooler usually moist conditions. If with



global warming these are the new conditions we can expect on a regular basis we are all going to have to adapt and that includes the plants we grow. Many of our plants are, like us, under severe stress from this heat and may not survive if these conditions continue. I have been growing more of the 'wild' plants such as **Tanacetum parthenium (Feverfew)** which seem to be able to cope with the heat better than others and by imitating the dense plantings I see in nature: see the pictures of Hypericum on page 8, where the plants form supportive communities casting shade on the ground reducing the evaporation rate helping any moisture stay in the ground.



We may have to grow more plants that are adapted to hot dry conditions such as Sedums.

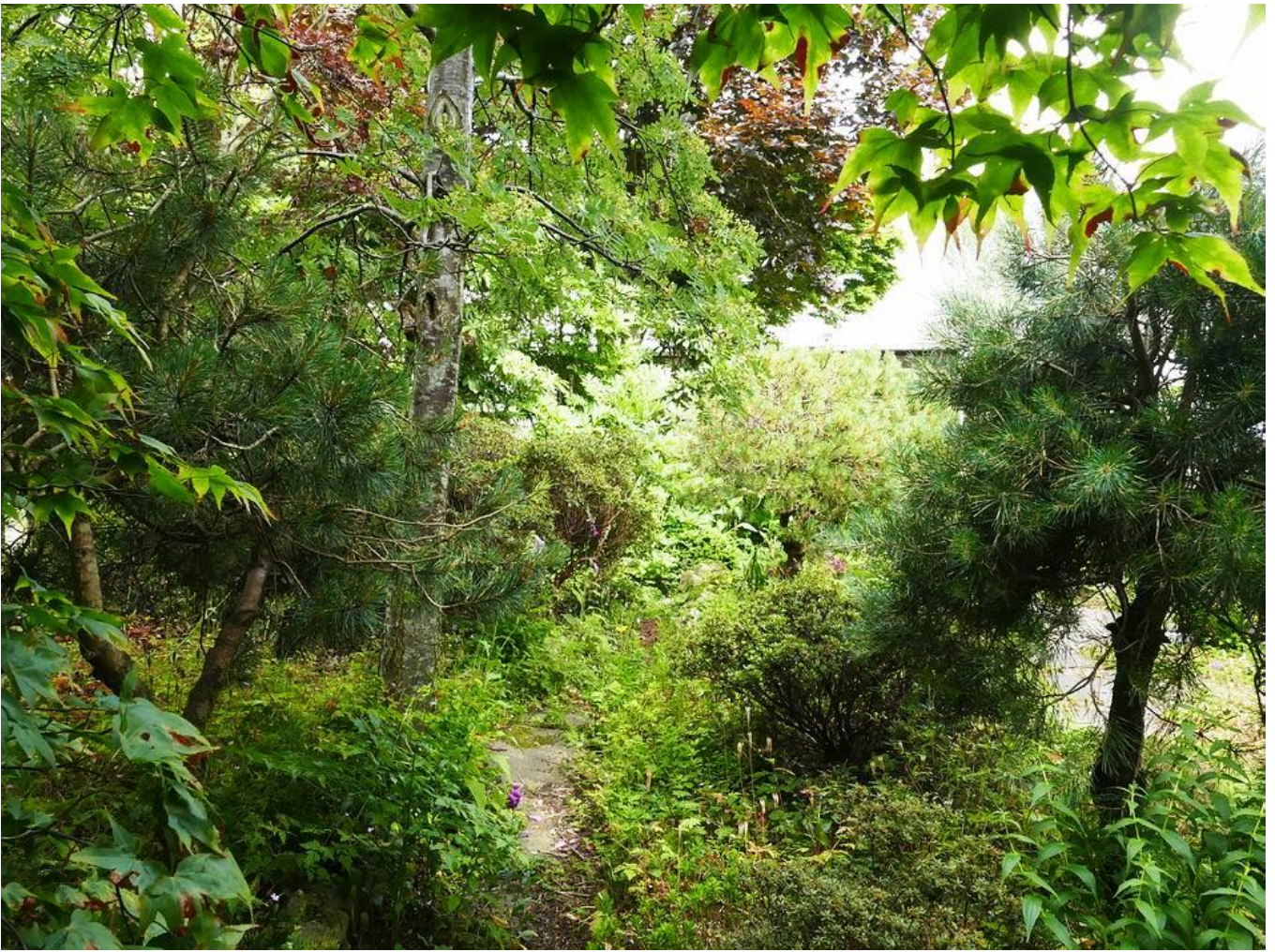


Geranium robertianum is a great plant to have seeding around -it brings so much to the garden. Its benefits to the garden include the red stems, delicate dissected leaves, which shade the ground while allowing enough light for the other plants, the leaves turn red in dry conditions, it is loved by bees and other insects, the birds eat the seeds off the plant plus it is very easy to remove should you want to do so.

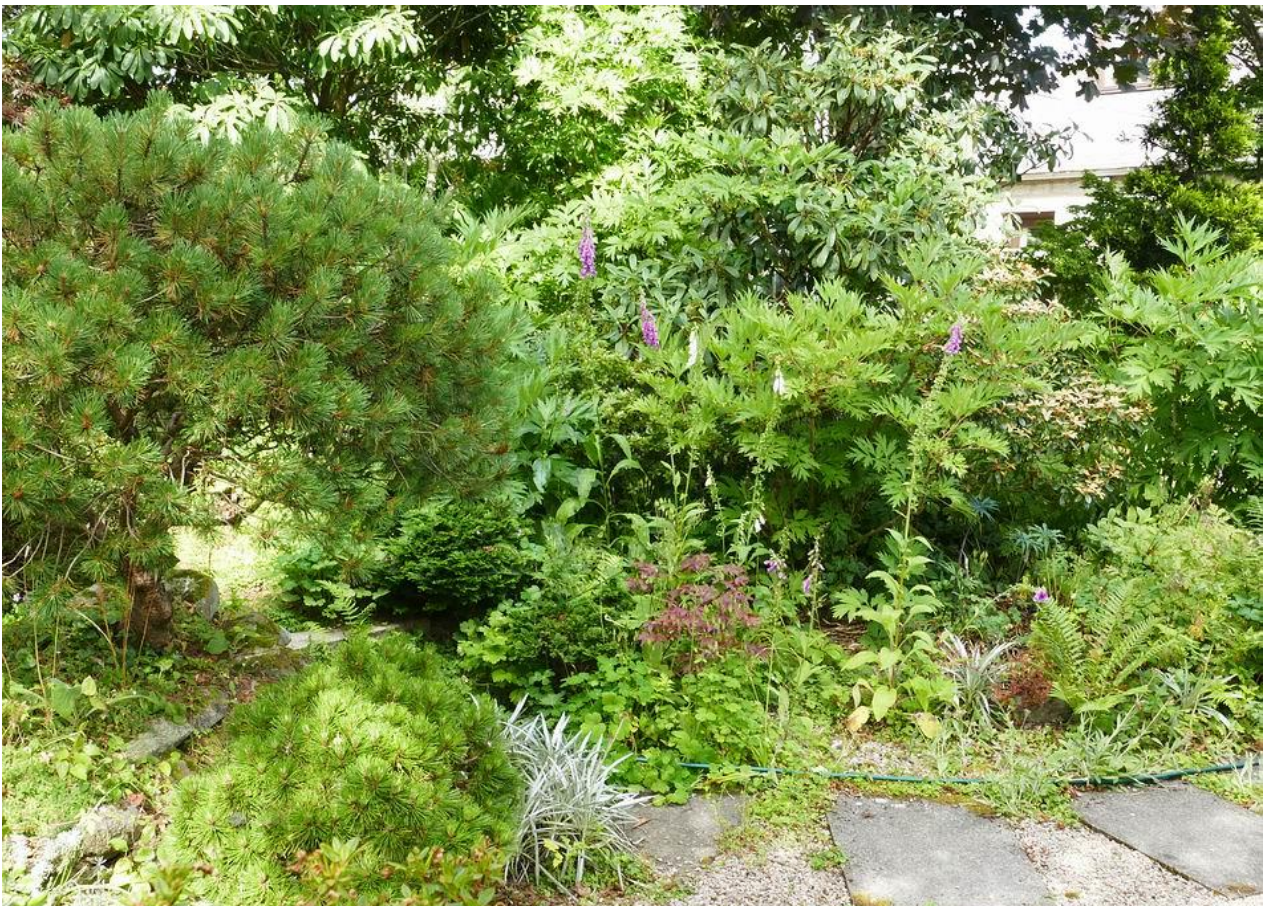




Geranium robertianum



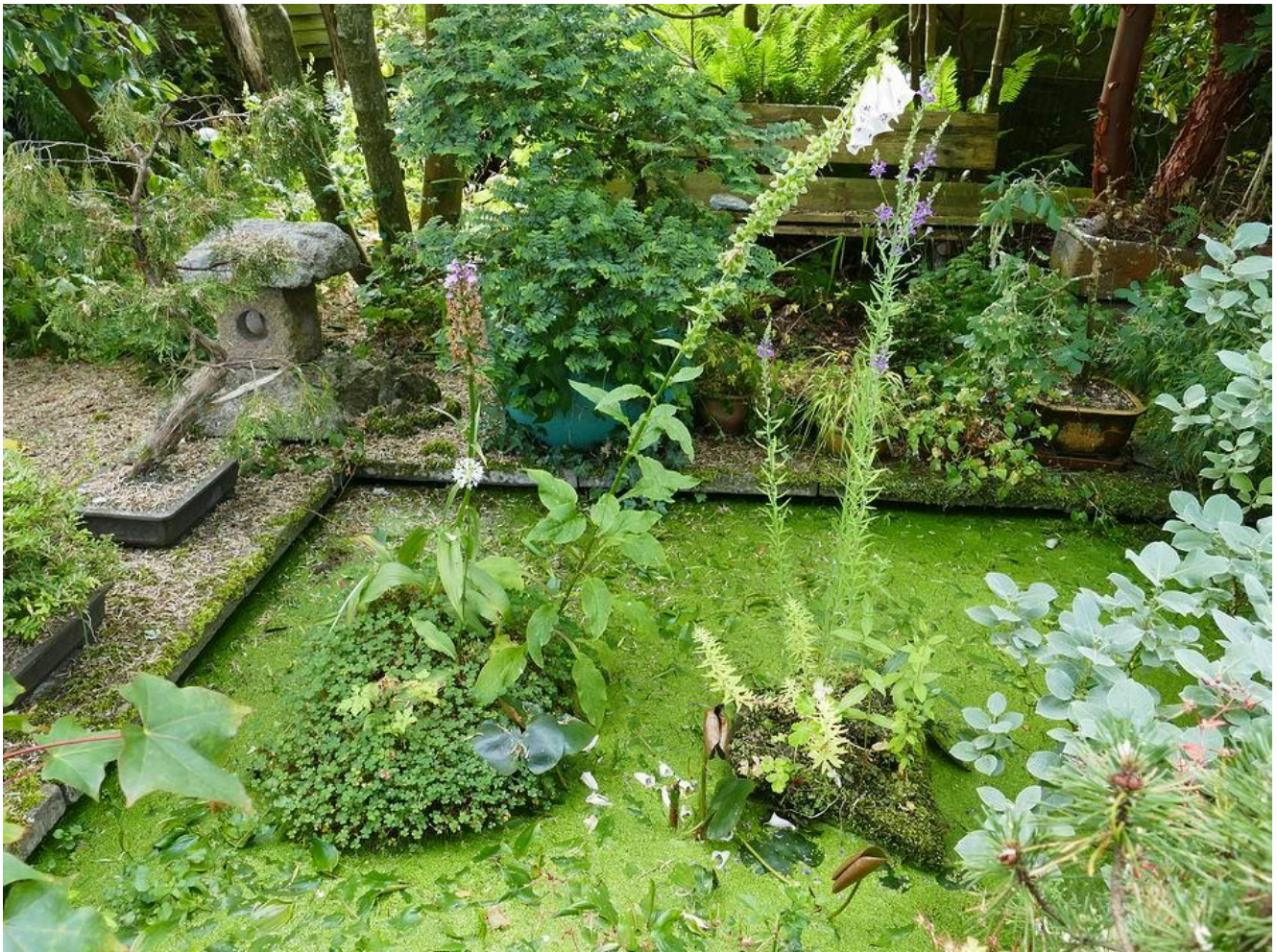
We have had some very welcome rain to refresh the garden bringing some relief to the plants.



Compared to gardens in hotter drier areas of Europe our garden must still look very green but we see the stress that our relatively hot dry conditions are causing to many of our plants and I fear some may not survive or will sustain lasting damage.



This view is looking towards the pond.



I have to water the plants growing in pots around the pond but there is no shortage of water for those growing on the island beds set directly in the pond. For three years now we experienced warmer drier weather in spring and summer so we are to adapting and seeking ways to help our plants grow or perhaps find others that can.....