



# The Scottish Rock Garden Club

## Forrest Medal Perth 2017

### Jeffersonia dubia alba

### Shown by Cyril Lafong



Even as part of his 3 pan entry in Class2 which won the Dundas Quaich, Cyril Lafong's *Jeffersonia dubia alba* stole the show. It was accompanied in its class by a pan of *Trillium grandiflorum roseum* and *Lewisia tweedii alba*. Either of these in previous years might have won the medal. Thus we had two American plants flanking an Asian winner. Cyril imparts a quality to his plants which is easy to see but difficult to describe. His entries are immaculately presented. The pots are clean and the top dressing chosen with care. His labels are neat and legible. Every flower and every leaf will be perfect, Cyril having taken care to examine each entry before abandoning it on the show bench. Perfect plants, yes! What else? He chooses species which others may find difficult to grow and he grows them to perfection. Regular show go-ers will recognise some of his plants as they get bigger from year to year.

The winning *Jeffersonia* is a case in point. Many people grow the normal blue flowered plants but the white variant is just that bit more choice and special. Well cultivated? Yes. Look at the leaves. See how they sit just below the flowers. If the leaves were any longer, we would lose the beautiful balance of the plant. The leaves themselves are unique being almost perfoliate, each one a mini-parasol.

*Jeffersonia dubia* is native to Korea, Japan and China. It is a member of the Berberidaceae. In the open garden it should be grown in dappled shade and a moist but well drained alkaline to neutral soil. Leaf mould in the compost mix would be good. Both this Asian *Jeffersonia* and its American cousin [*J. diphylla*] make good partners for *Trillium* and *Helleborus*.

Chinese herbalists recommend using its roots for strengthening the stomach and bringing down fevers. Much better to keep it growing and prosper in the garden. Thank you Cyril for showing us this beautiful plants. It well deserved its medal.

