

International Rock Gardener

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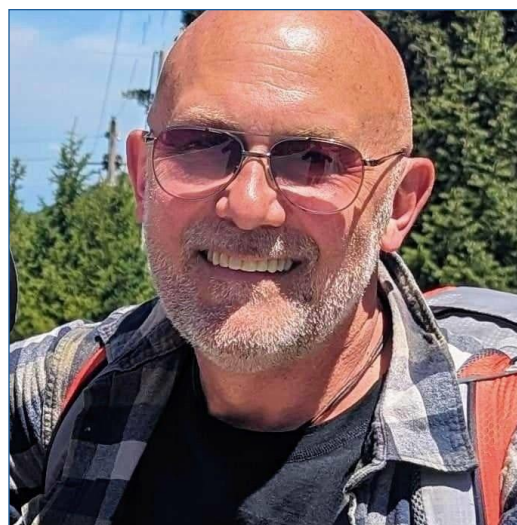
Number 185

The Scottish Rock Garden Club

June 2025



Marloes Adamse works in the Rock Garden at Utrecht University Botanical Gardens and has been fortunate to make several trips to areas of interest to such horticulturalists around the world. Recently she joined a small group, led by Norwegian, Geir Moen (a keen SRGC Member) to Kyrgyzstan. She shares a photo essay with us of some of the plants she saw there. The group included folk from Czechia, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK.



Geir Moen advertises the chance for young persons to take part in his Joint Botanical Tours on his website,

[Plants Above The Treeline](#). "Joint Botanical Tours is a private initiative focused on coordinating affordable and accessible trips for individuals who share a passion for exploring the world's alpine flora. In nature we get the opportunity to see and learn about optimal growing conditions and experience all the species and variations nature has to offer. In choosing to travel with other plants people you also have the chance to make new useful contacts, learn from others and not the least get new friends. The Joint Botanical Tours Grant is aimed at young people who are in a training program, work in botany or horticulture, or are just genuinely interested in alpine plants. The grant includes full coverage of transport, accommodation and food at the travel destination": Learn about forthcoming Tours [here](#).

N.B: it is possible to apply for part-coverage of travel costs from the Scottish Rock Garden Club (SRGC), even if there is no association between Joint Botanical Tours and SRGC. You can find information about SRGC Exploration Awards [here](#).

Also, this month, Alan Ayton gives an introduction to some Australasian plants we might not know well. Alan also posts great videos on [YouTube of his favourite "Adventures in the wild and in the garden"](#) which are recommended.



Cover image: *Trollius lilacinus*, photo Marloes Adamse.

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--- Photo Essay ---

Some Plants in Kyrgyzstan by Marloes Adamse

The first images are from the region of Beiskek:
there were already many fine plants to be
seen....

Right: *Paeonia intermedia*



Left: *Euphorbia* sp.



Above: *Phlomis speciosa*



Hyoscyamus niger



Ligularia alpigena

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Anemonastrum protractum



Papaver croceum



Above: *Pulsatilla campanella*

Right: *Ligularia alpigena*



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Phlomoides oreophila



Rhodiola kirilowii

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Rheum sp.



Saxifraga sibirica



Colchicum kesselringii

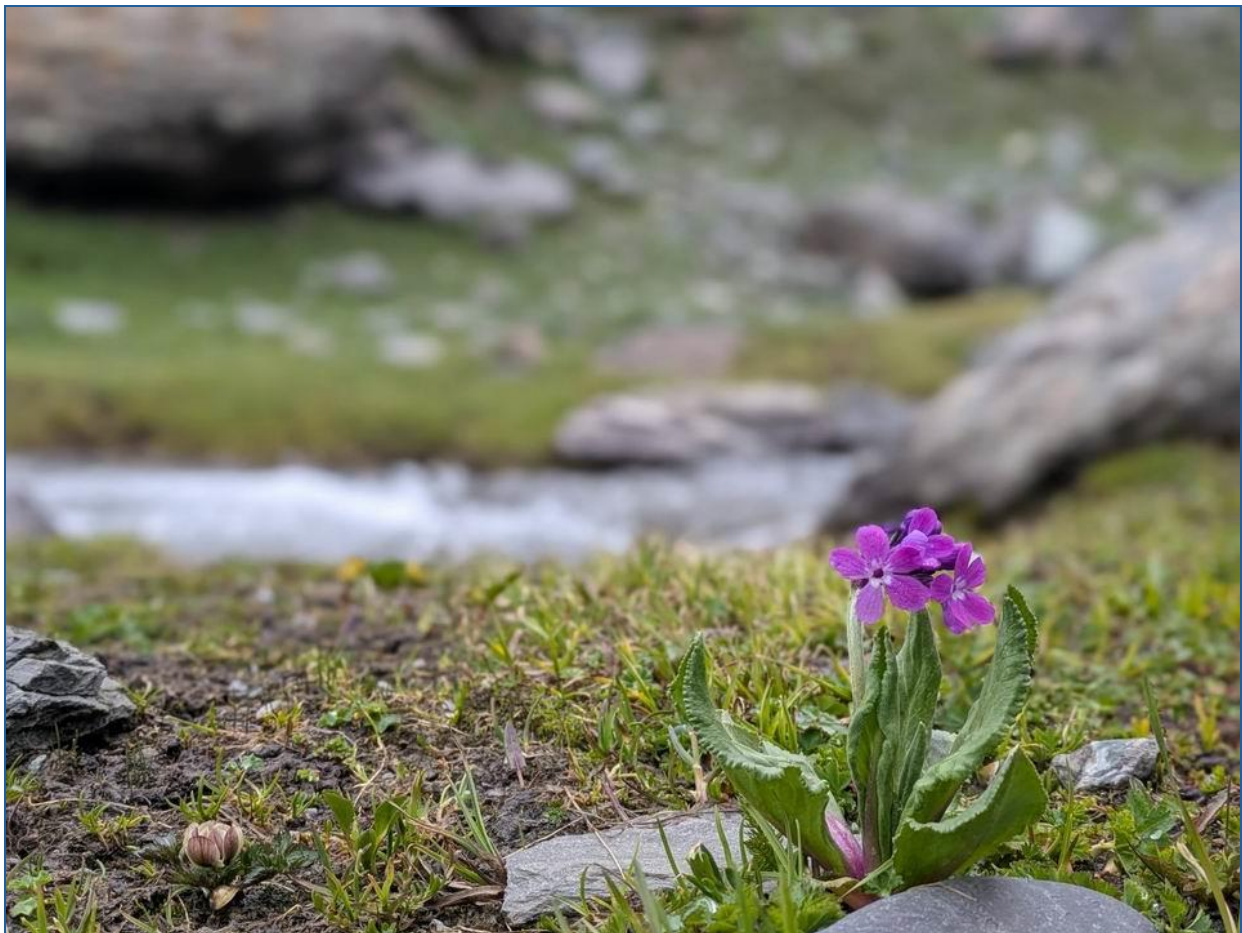
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Tulipa dasystemon



Cortusa brotheri



Primula turkestanica



Trollius lilacinus – this is delightfully fragrant.

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Next, the group moved on to Guesthouse-Jekshen at Kemin.

Today we made a big drive towards Karakol, we are halfway there and continue tomorrow. On the way we went through a very dry area, much was out of flower but of course you always find something. Also, Geir spotted an Orchid grassland. Hawkeyes!.



Iris halophila var. *sogdiana*



Far left:
Dactylorhiza
incarnata

Left:
White and
common
colours of
dactylorhiza.

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Eremurus tianshanicus



Excitement round a white orchid



Scutellaria przewalskyii



Allium caesium, a beautiful blue.

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Dictamnus albus



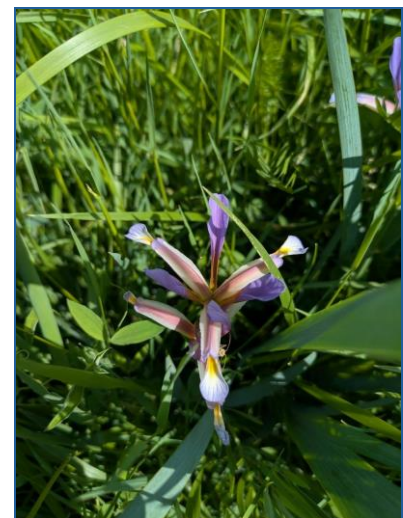
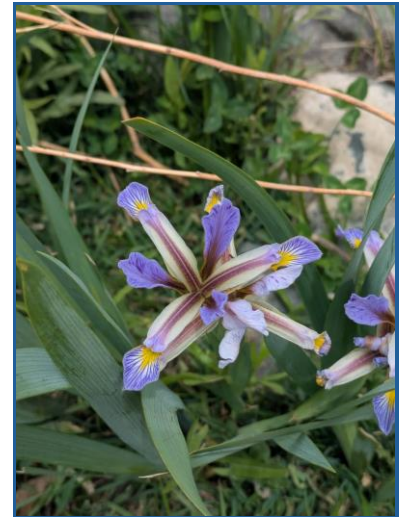
Ulrika admires the food in the Guesthouse.



View near the Guesthouse.

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The natural variations of *Iris halophila* var. *sogdiana*.....



Iris halophila var. *sogdiana* variants

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Iris halophila var. *sogdiana*

Tulipa heterophylla

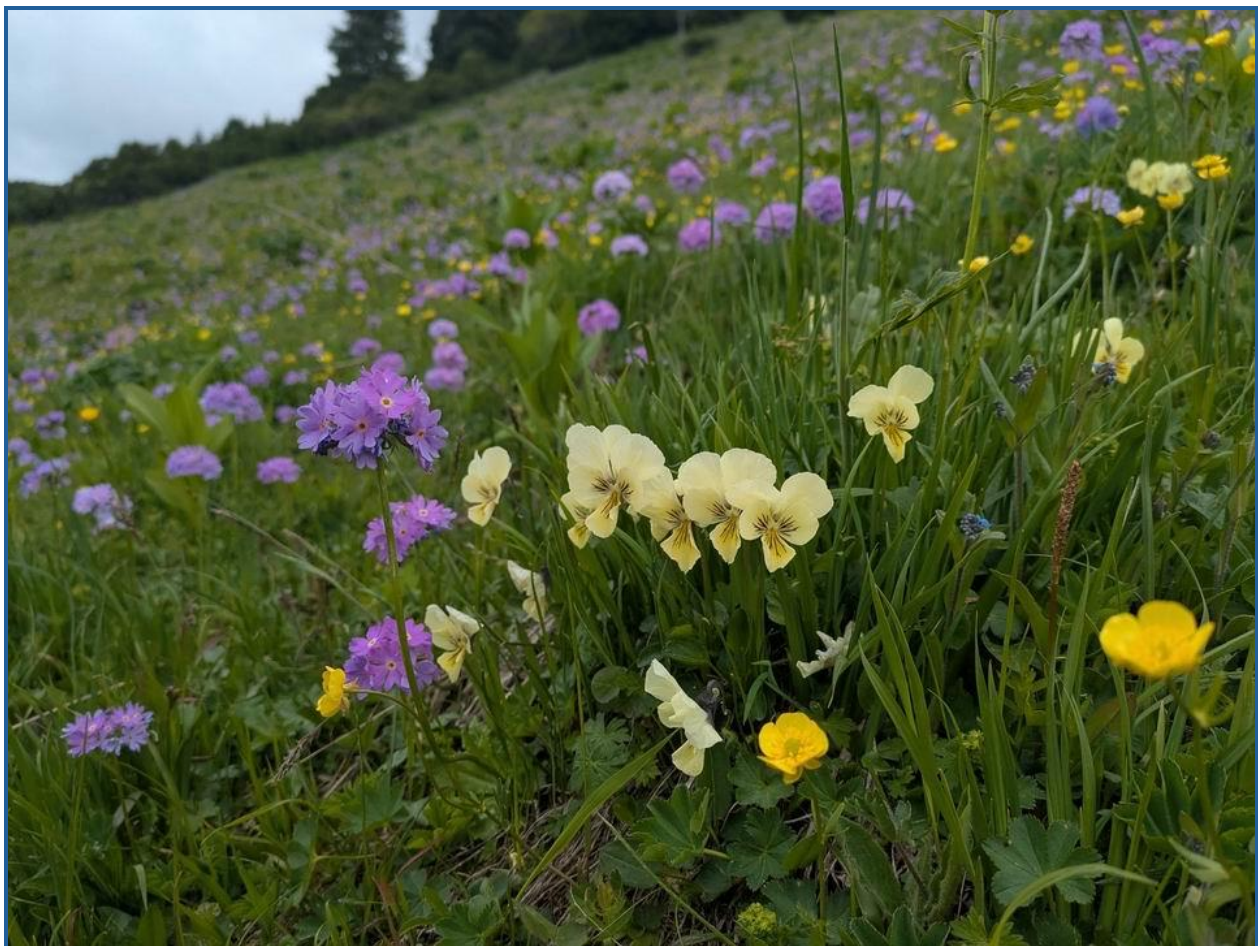
Next came a fantastic day at around 2800 metres altitude, looking for *Tulipa heterophylla*. Alpine meadows as far as you can look with thousands and thousands of *Primula algida*. A perfect day for a sweaty hike to the snowmelt.



---International Rock Gardener---



Marloes among the primulas.



Primula alida, with *Viola altaica*, both blue and yellow forms.

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Iris ruthenica subsp. *brevituba*



Lower down, a beautiful Orchid grassland this time with hundreds of *Dactylorhiza umbrosa*, which has these dark leaves.

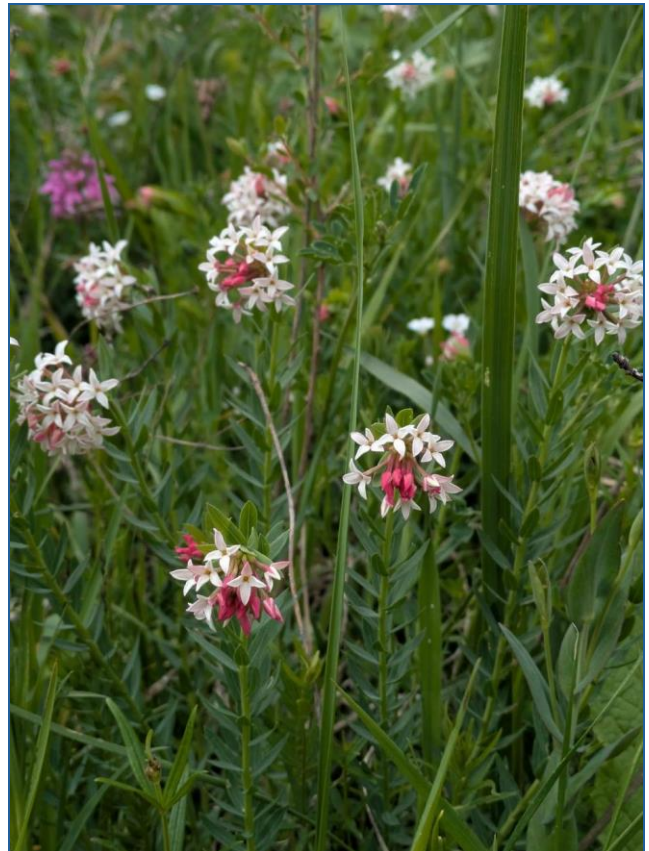
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A new Primula, *P. pamirica*



Taraxacum pseudorozeum



Stelleriopsis tianshanica – nicely fragrant flowers from buds which are dark, red-pink.

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Viola acutifolia



Trollius dschungaricus



Gagea alberti



Allium semenovii



Parrya cf pulvinata



Leontopodium ochroleucum

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Taking photos is always important!

This one deserves several photos! *Corydalis fedtschenkoana*: In the rubble of the screes at 3400 metres altitude. Just popping into flower. The foliage is mesmerizing and incredible how it grows. Stunning and a great memory!



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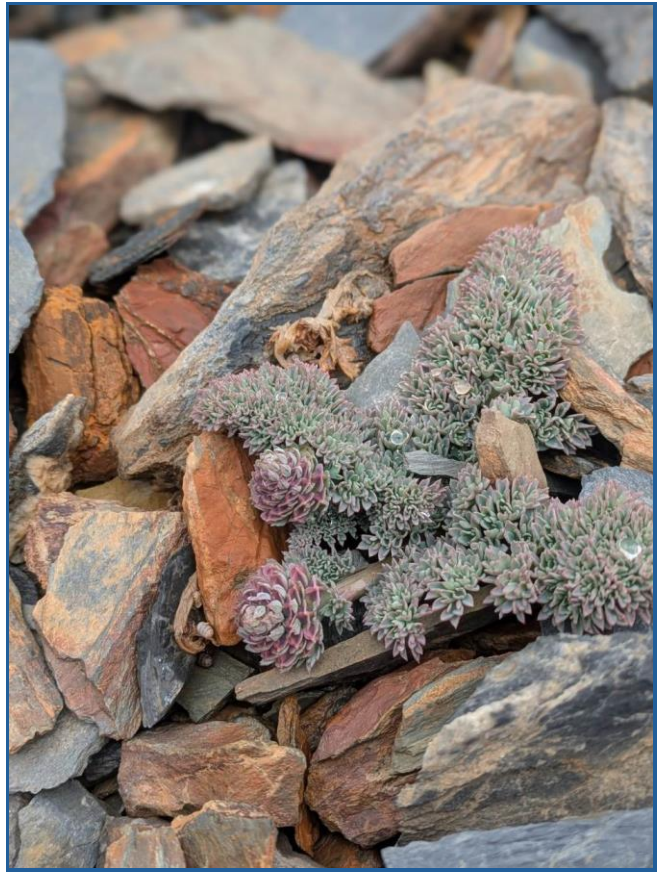
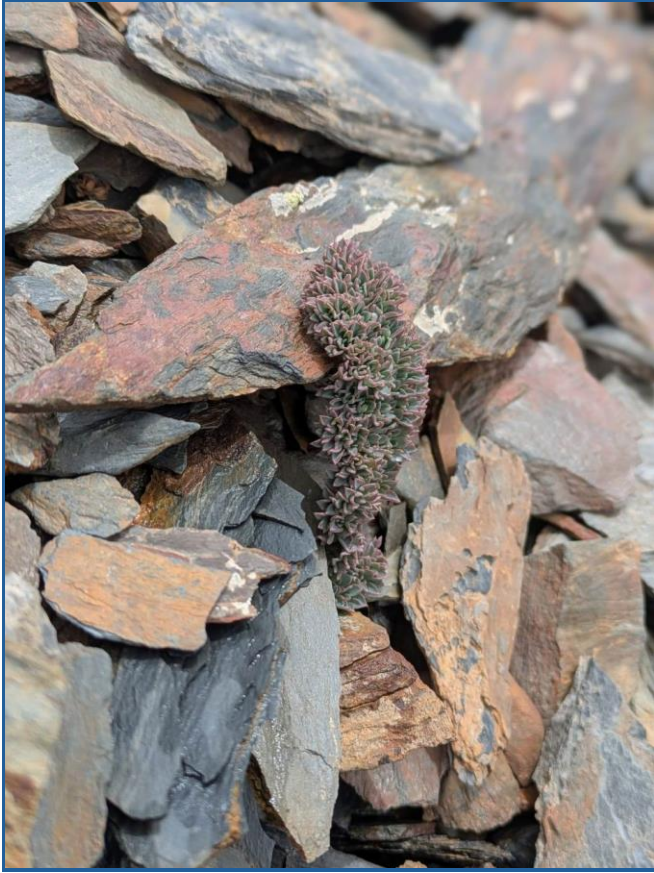
Marloes with *Corydalis fedtschenkoana*



Corydalis fedtschenkoana



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Corydalis fedtschenkoana - leaf emerging and with buds.

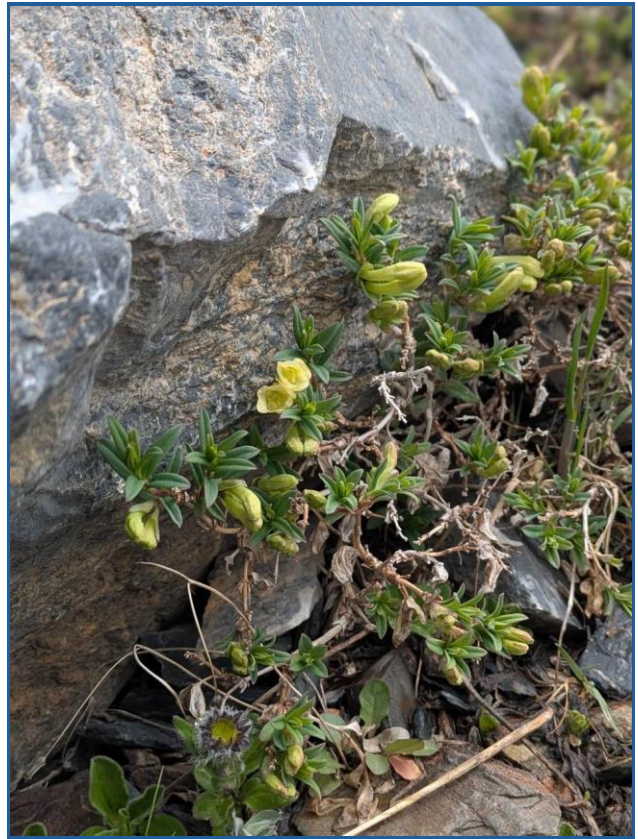


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Next to the beautiful *Corydalis fedtschenkoana*, we found all of these other gems in the area, partly in the same scree environment and some a little bit lower down in a more meadow-like environment. All around the 3000 metres altitude.



Chorispora bungeana



Lonicera semenovii



Waldheimia tridactylites

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Rosularia coccinea



Saussurea glacialis

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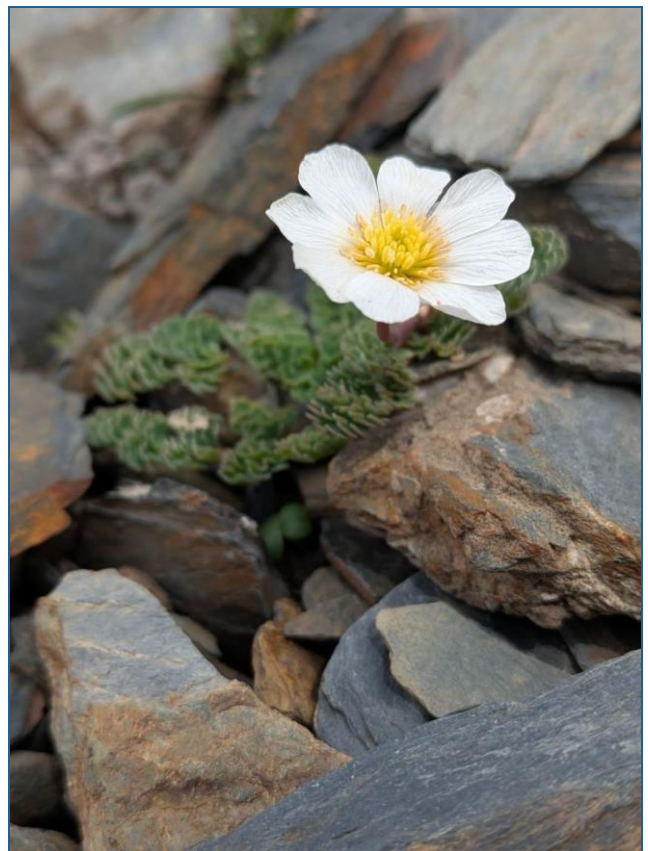
Leontopodium ochroleucum



Dryadanthe tetrandra



Richteria leontopodium



Callianthemum alatavicum

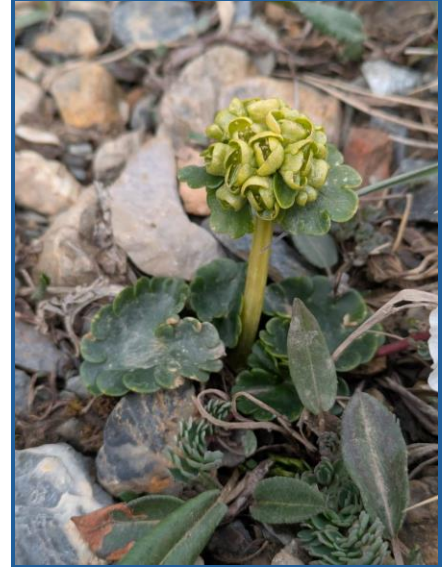
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Tiny Gentiana sp.



Cerastium lithospermifolium



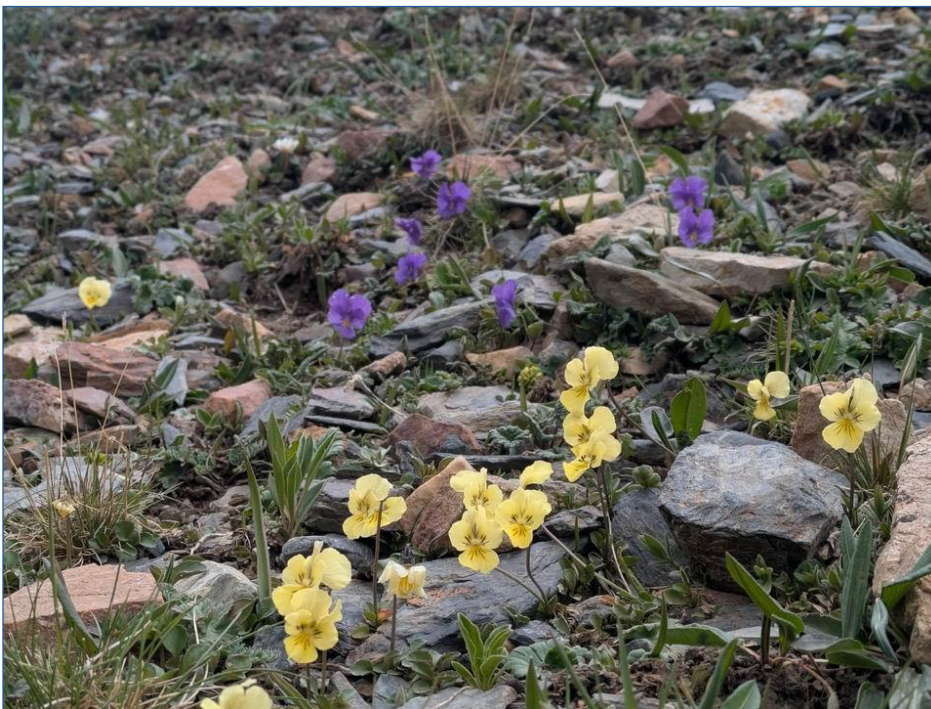
Chrysosplenium nudicaule



Saussurea leucophylla



Fragariastrum biflora

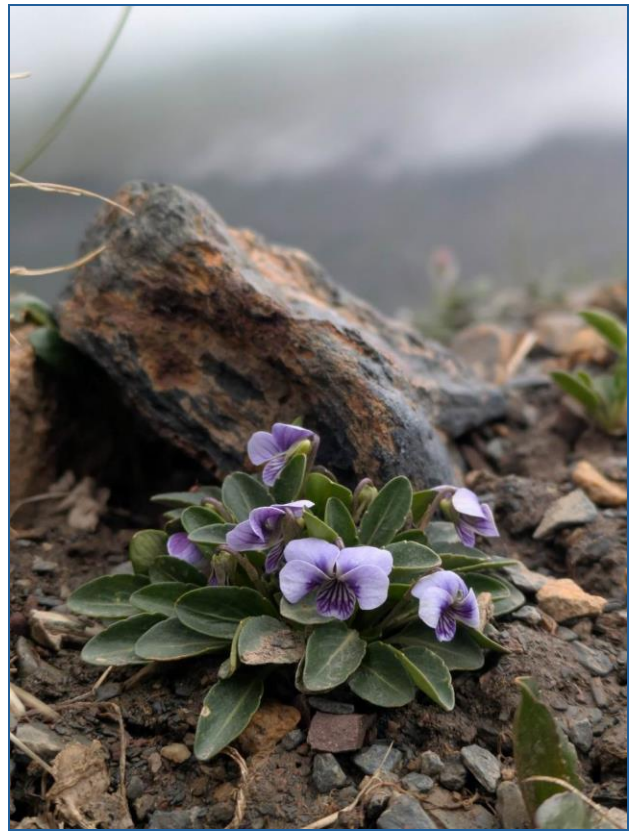


Viola altaica – again in two forms, yellow and blue.

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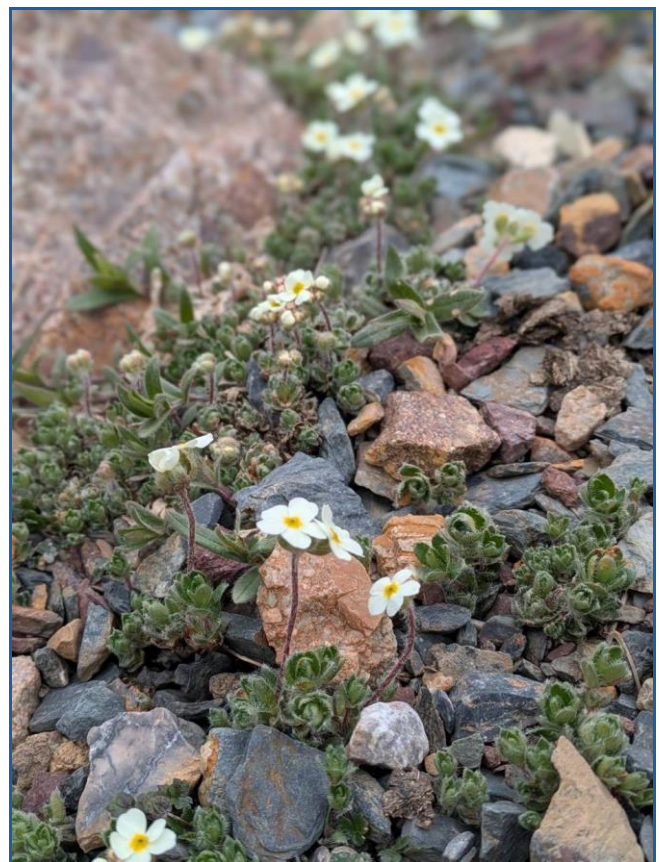
Erigeron allochrous



Viola kunawarensis



Callianthemum alatavicum



Androsace lehmanniana

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Caragana jubata

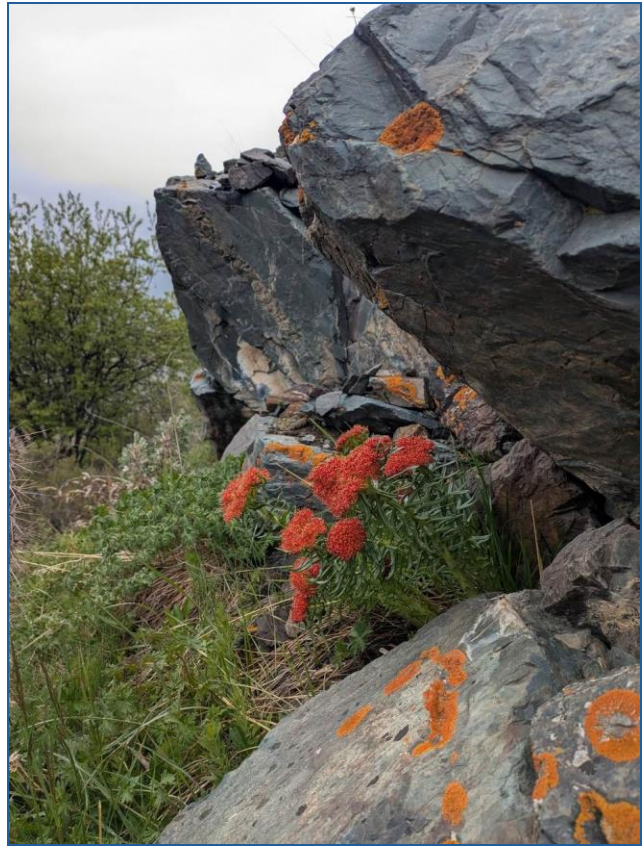


Thermopsis alpina

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Paropyrum anemonoides



Rhodiola liniarifolia



Arnebia euchroma in the grassland, and in close-up.



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Acantholimon alata



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It was a magical moment to see thousands of *Acantholimon alatavicum* in flower. Next to this spot we went into an old military truck to go onto a bumpy road towards *Primula nivalis*. Many plants were out of reach on the other side of the river, but luckily, we found one or two on our side after all!



Josh, admiring the truck!



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Onosma irritans – and close up.



Primulas - out of reach....

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Primula nivalis -
and its amazing growing habitat.

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One day we drove all the way to an altitude of 3900 metres. Here we were in the middle of some fresh fallen snow, looking for more flowers!



Trollius lilacinus – with Marloes for scale – in the snowy habitat.



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Trollius lilacinus emerging from snow - One of the most beautiful things I have seen.



The plants give heat away to melt the snow around it (Thermogenesis) – the same thing happens with this *Pedicularis*.

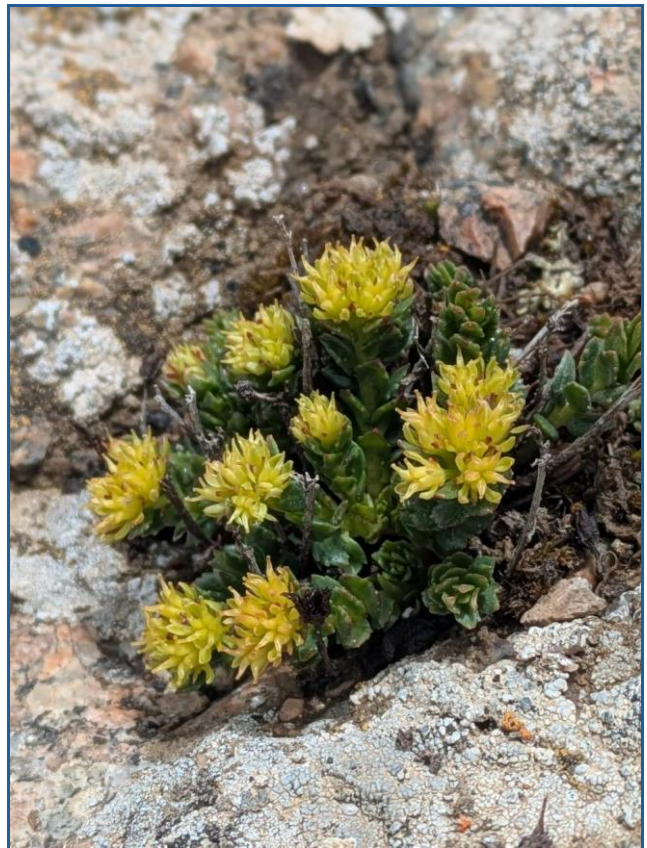
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Snow on the mountainside



Allium semenovii in snow



Rhodiola quadrifida

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Saxifraga macrocalyx



Eritrichium tianshanicum



Snow covered rocks

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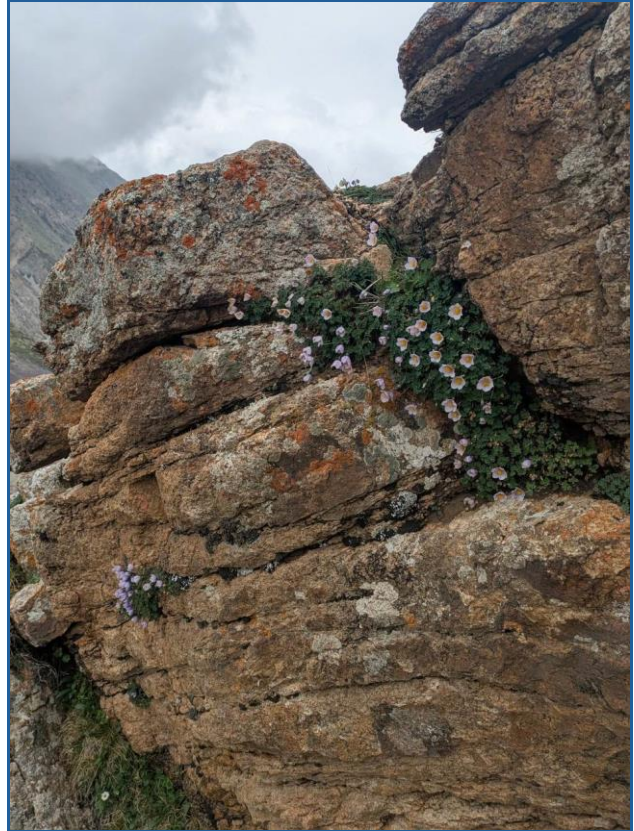


Thousands of *Callianthemum alatavicum*

After that we drove down the pass for around 20 minutes when we reached rocky outcrops with the beautiful *Paraquilegia*. The species is most likely *Paraquilegia caespitosa*.



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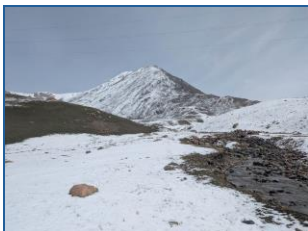


Paraquilegia caespitosa.

The next images will be dedicated to the beauty of snowmelt in the mountains. I think many people do not realise yet how quick plants react to moisture, as the dry snow turns into water, which feeds and activates the plant growth. Here at 3900 metres, we were still able to witness this, as there was still snow here. My trip will come to an end here, and I look back with incredible sights, experiences and memories. I wonder where my next trip will go to!

M. A.

Saxifraga oppositifolia



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Primula turkestanica in snow



---International Rock Gardener---

--- Plant Preambles ---

Alan Ayton gives an insight into some more Australasian plants:

Asterolasia trymalioides ssp. *trymalioides*

The Alpine Star Bush is a low spreading bush to 50cm high but it's mostly prostrate. Leaves and branchlets are closely indumented with stalked stellate hairs, leaves are narrowly to broadly elliptic or obovate, 4-10mm long by 2-4mm wide

With revolute margins, upper surface glabrous, smooth or with scattered tubercles, lower surface white to brown. Flowers are terminal and solitary, closely subtended by reduced floral leaves, yellow in colour with 5 petals 5-6mm in length, flowering during November-January.

It can be found in heathland and grasslands above the treeline in Victoria, it is fairly common but an extremely beautiful alpine shrub.



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Hovea montana - Alpine Hovea

This is a spreading multi stemmed compact shrub up to 50cm tall, outer branches usually decumbent. Leaves are narrowly ovate, elliptic or oblong, 0.5-3cm long by 0.2-1.1cm wide, margin is revolute, lower surface has dense coiled or curled hairs. Inflorescence normally 2 flowered and sessile, colour is deep mauve to deep purple, white forms are also seen, though rare. It flowers from October through to December and is found in open alpine heath, and grassy slopes also subalpine heath and Snow gum woodland, altitude range is 1200-1830 metres. The only other thing to say is that it is a stunning Pea! Photos 1,2 and 3 show it in habit covering slopes in the alpine zone behind Falls Creek around Pretty Valley, Tawonga huts area and out towards Mt Jim.



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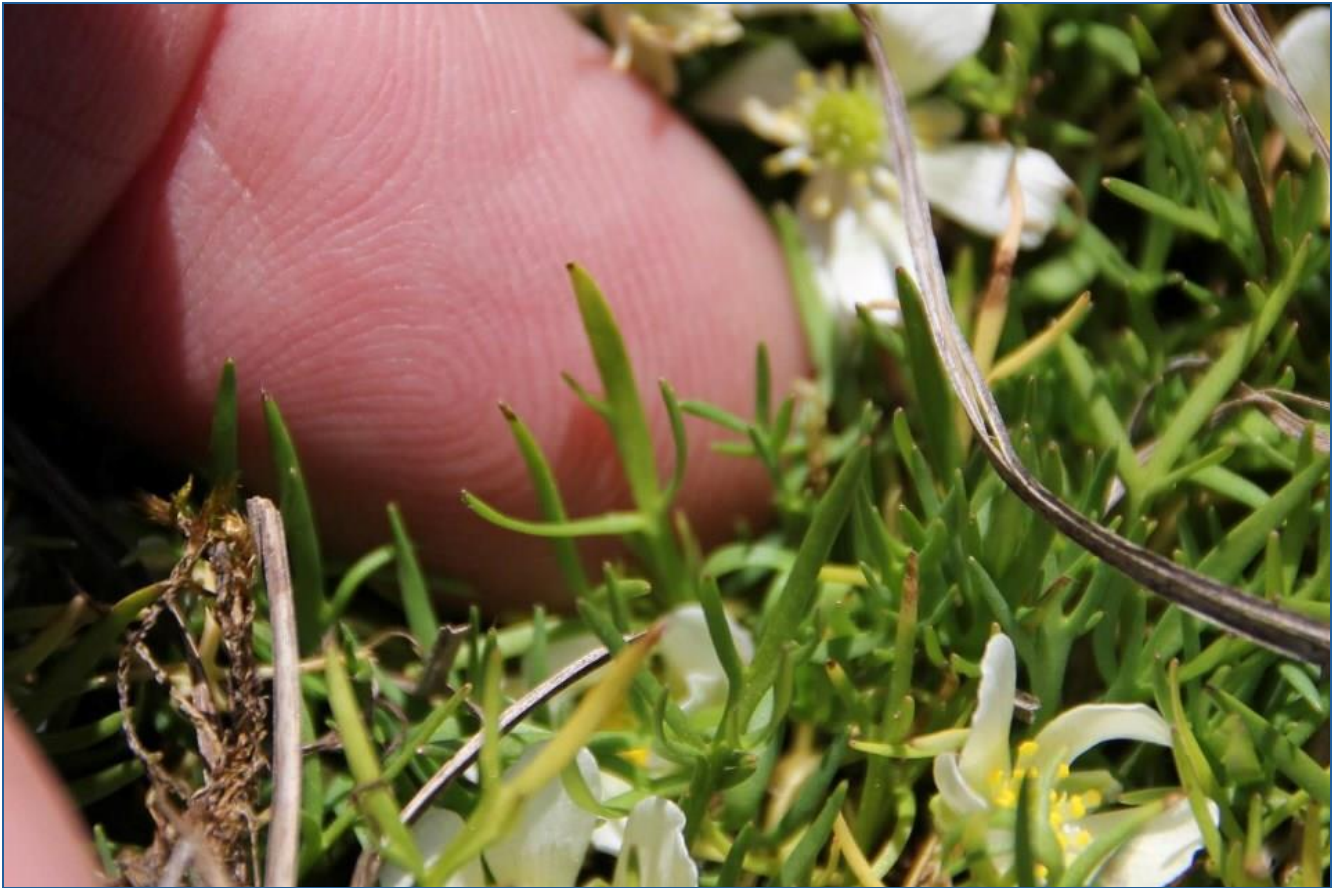
Ranunculus millanii - Dwarf Buttercup.

This is a tufted stoloniferous perennial that can form very large patches, the two different locations I saw these they were covering areas at least 4 x 4 metres.

Leaves are deltoid to ovate in outline, 1-2 x 1-2cm, pinnately divided into narrow linear segments. Flowers are white-cream or yellow, (yellow forms are considered to be hybrids with adjacent species) with 5 petals 3-8mm long by 2-5mm wide, it flowers from November to February. It is quite widespread across the Victorian alps but usually restricted to shallow pools or depressions that get inundated. It is also found in the ACT (Australian Capital Territory) and NSW (New South Wales) mountains. I would consider this species to be very cryptic when not flowering, but when it does it certainly stands out!



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Ranunculus victoriensis

A gorgeous perennial with tufted leaves from the base (mostly), 5-15cm in length and covered in fine appressed hairs, 3 lobed to trifoliate, rarely subentire, segments toothed or further lobed and normally directed forwards. Flowering stems to 30cm tall ending with a yellow glossy flower containing 5 petals, 8-14mm x 6-8mm in size. I have seen flowers with way more than five petals though-hybrids or mutations probably. Flowering between November and January. *Ranunculus victoriensis* is endemic to Victoria and found on the Bogong High Plains in damp grasslands and open heath habitats. These were in full flower or close to on my recent walk at Pretty Valley and Mt Jim, they made for a stunning sight flowering amongst *Hovea montana* and *Asterolasia trymalioides* ssp *trymalioides* (photo) or thick swaths by themselves.



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