



BULB LOG 07.....15th July 2026





They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and while I accept that statement, we should also open our eyes to different forms of beauty. Even as they faded, we could not bring ourselves to throw out this beautiful bunch of peonies friends sent to Maggi. Instead we watched them slowly transform from the glorious fresh, scented flowers at their peak to the crisp dried remains that I share on the cover. As they stated to disintegrate, I decided to preserve the image by taking a

series of photographs. I am sure the dead flowers will split opinions just as our front drives do.



Many people stop to admire the ever-changing array of flowers that appear from February through to the autumn others dismiss it as weedy and think it should be tarmacked over to make it 'neat and tidy' like so many in the area. Paved and tared front gardens are sadly now simply ugly carparks detracting from the city's green spaces!

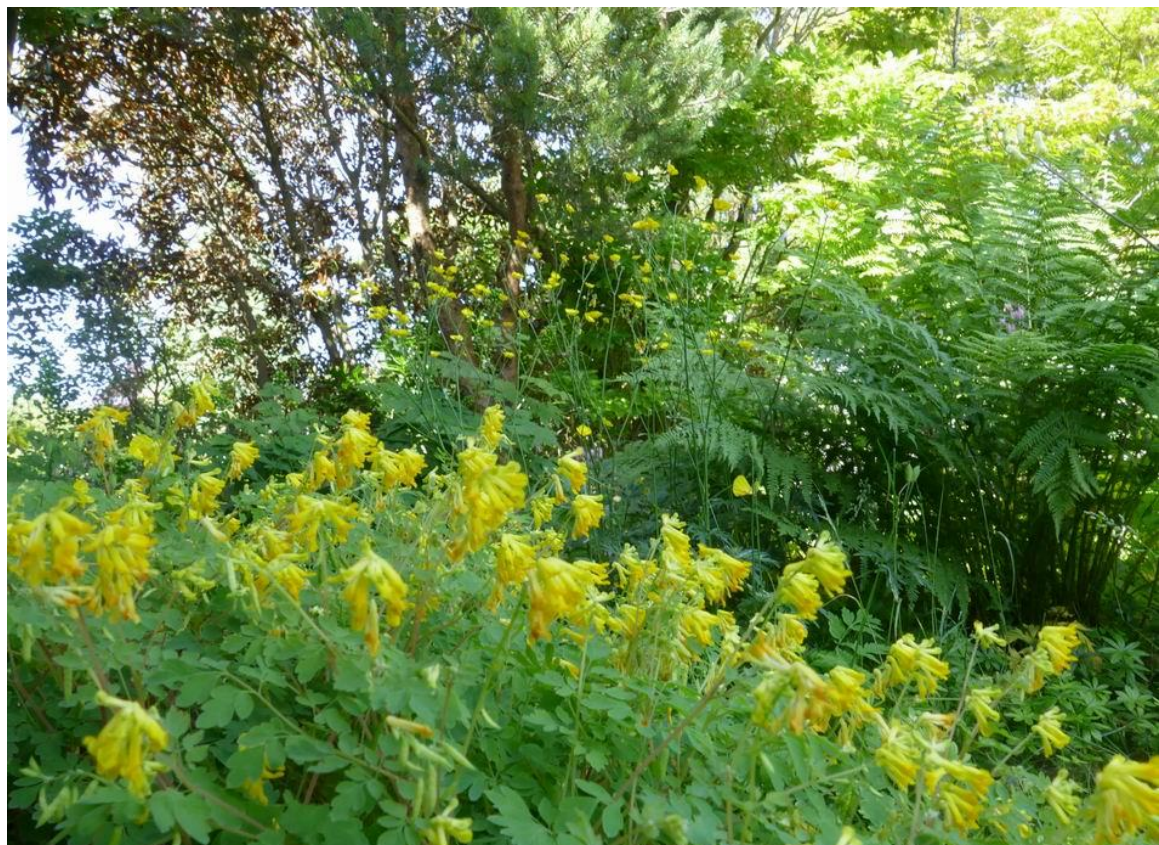


In the drives there are a mixture of plants from the Crocus, Narcissus and Erythroniums that flowered earlier, to the self-seeded *Dactylorhiza* orchids, Geraniums etc, all growing with some introduced wildflowers raised from seed I have gathered on my walks in the wild fields then scattered on the drive. The one plant that I did not want and cannot get rid of is the creeping grass that appeared, blown in on the wind several years ago. It has persisted despite my best efforts - I will not use herbicides to get rid of it nor is it practical to dig it out. A few years ago I accepted the situation and introduced some seed of *Rhinanthus minor*, Yellow Rattle, because its semi-parasitic habit naturally weakens vigorous grasses and indeed while the *Rhinanthus* increases and spreads along the drive the grass around it does weaken.

There is currently a yellow theme around the front path with ***Pseudofumaria lutea*** at one side and ***Ranunculus acris*** at the other.

I have fond memories of the old style 'Cottage Gardens' where the plants were not isolated but crammed together and in peak season were spilling out over the front path. That was before the 'neat and tidy' fashion took hold then bare earth was favoured over carpets of growth.

Over the years our garden has gradually become ever wilder much to the delight of the gardeners and the local fauna.

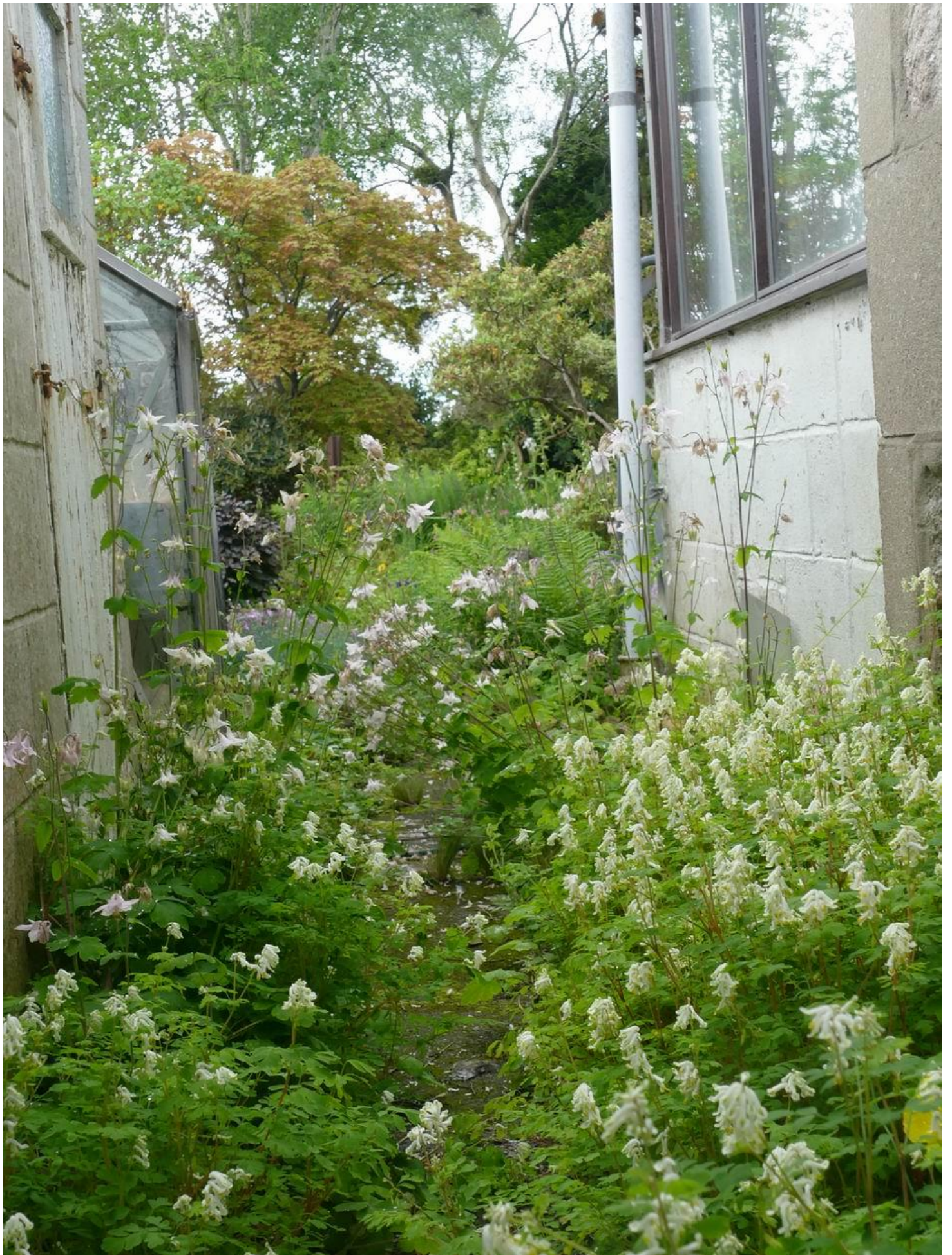




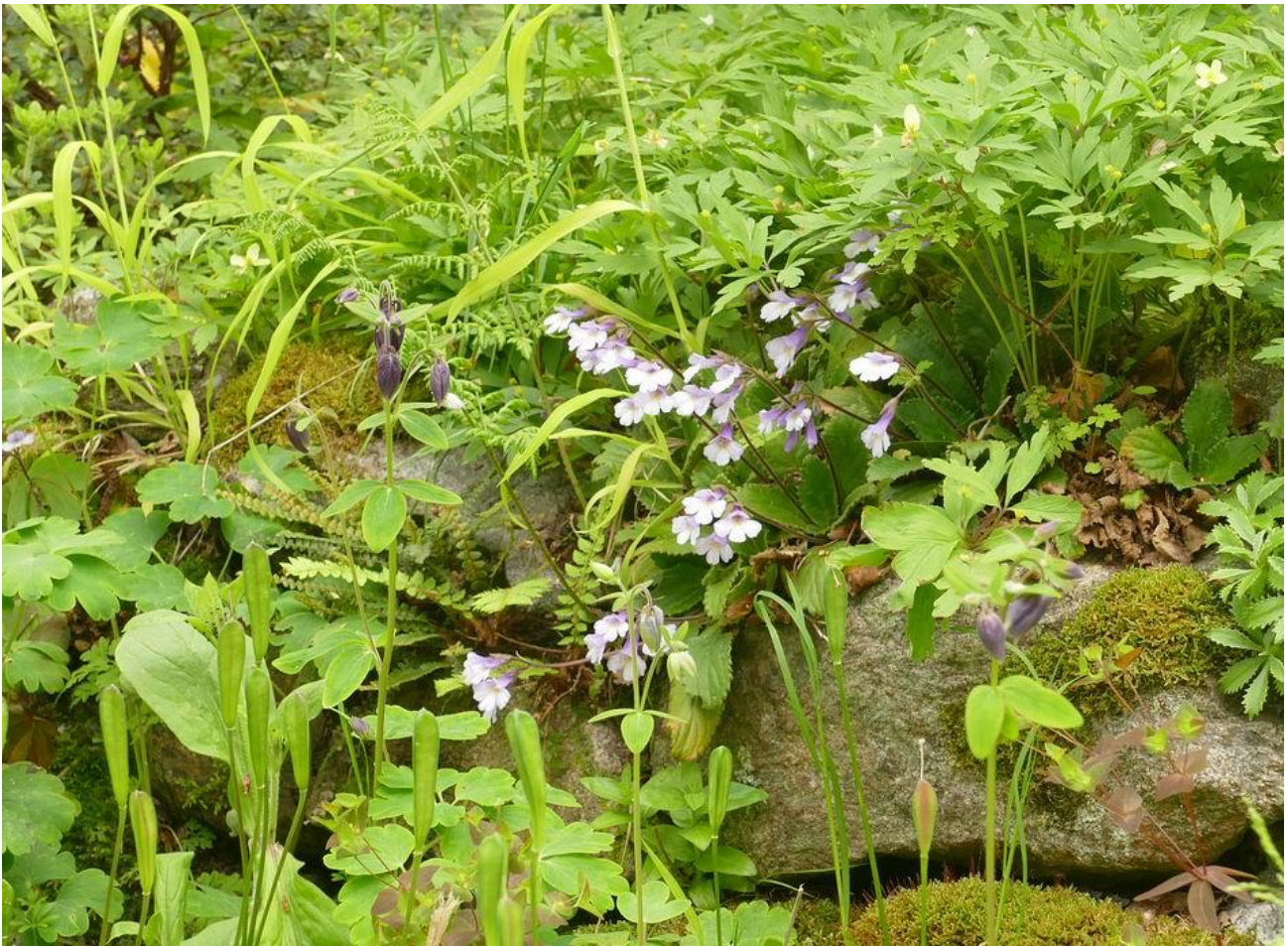
I am not inclined to colour themed plantings, but it is amazing how certain colours do naturally dominate in different seasons. I did try and introduce *Pseudofumaria alba* (below) which persists, along the back path to the garage, to have a mix of white and yellow but with no success it seems that the yellow form likes the north facing front garden while the white thrives in the south facing back garden.



Pseudofumaria alba framing the garage path.



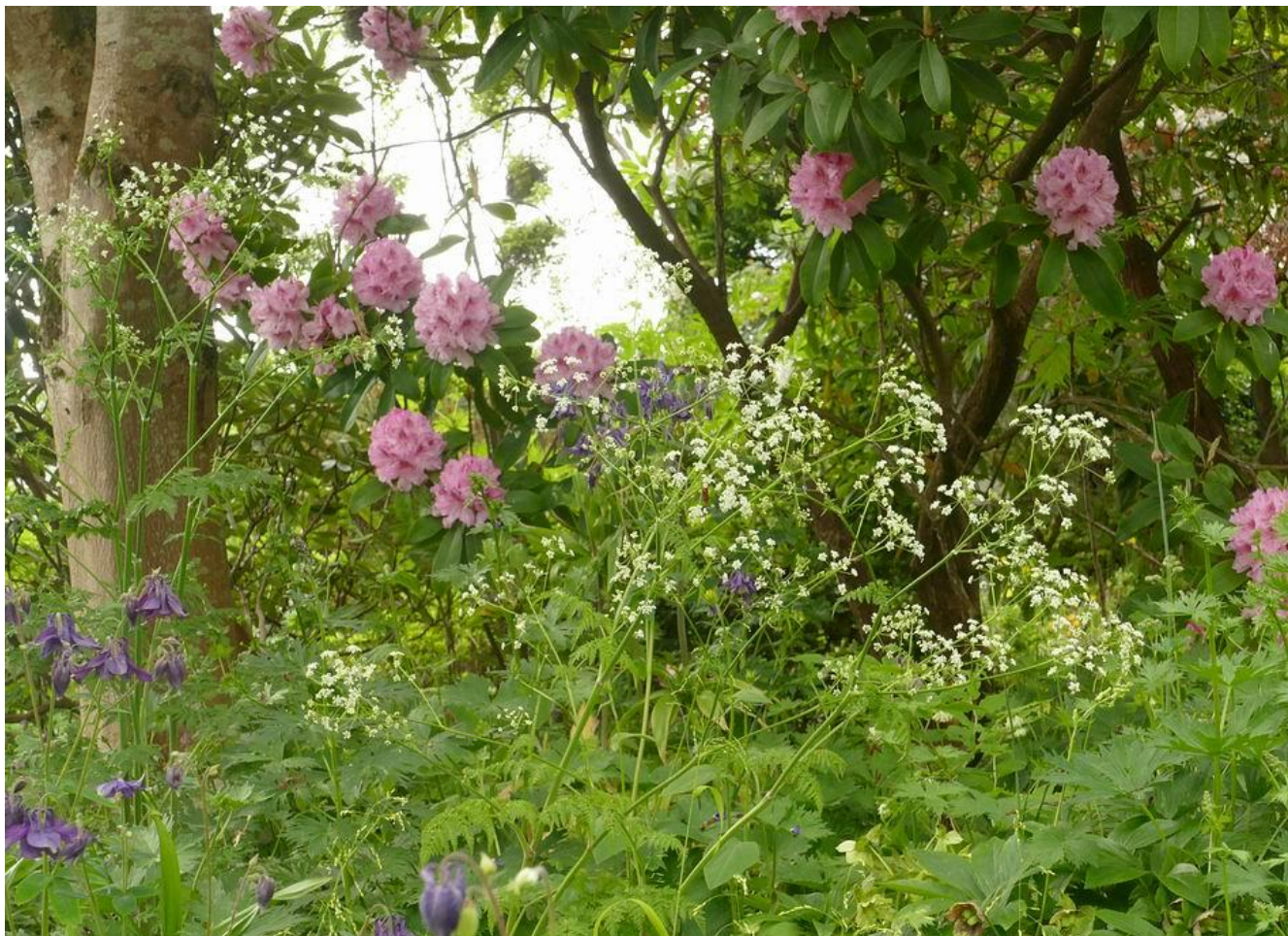
After over fifty years there is no space in and around the garden that has not been commandeered by plants. It may be an unkept, untidy garden to many but a carefully curated wild garden to us where most plants are welcomed.



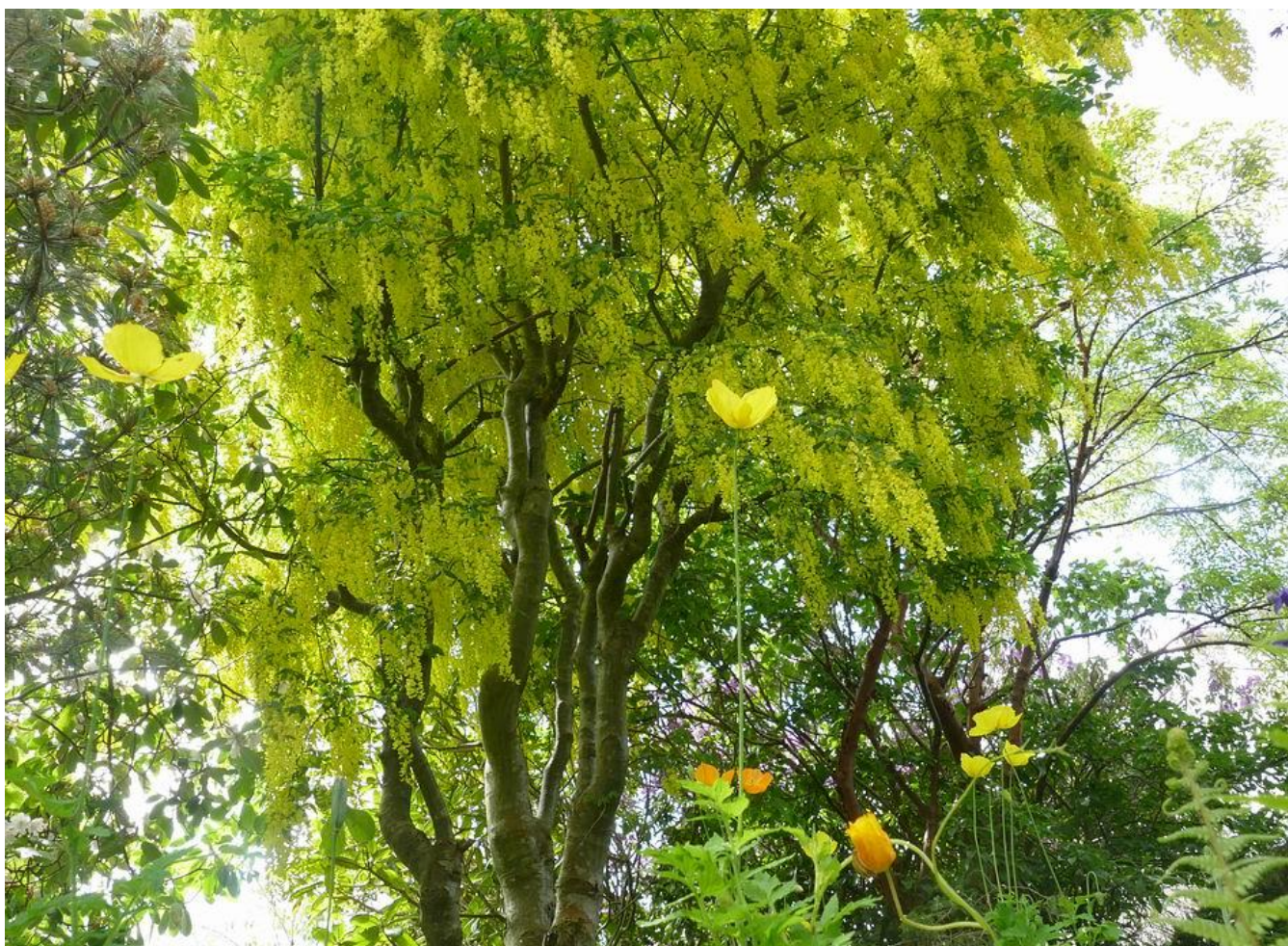
Many plants like **Haberlea rhodopensis** grow happily tucked away in among the self-seeders rather than being isolated and exhibited as a specimen plant.



Lilium macklinae



And so our garden is a blend where plants from around the world mingle with Scottish wildflowers. Here the lovely starry white umbellifer flowers of **Anthriscus sylvestris** (Cow Parsley) dance about in a sea of herbaceous growth all under a hybrid **Rhododendron 'Albert Schweitzer'**.



For a few weeks the air carries the lovely lemony scent of the Laburnum flowers which hum with pollinating bees.



I am constantly reminded where all my inspiration came from –nature. On my local walks or my foreign travels I have always been fascinated and inspired by the way plants grow when left to their own devices.



Ask a child to draw a flower and the result will more than likely look like a daisy. Not surprisingly the Asteraceae is the second largest plant family next to the Orchidaceae. We grow many representatives such as **Celmisia walkeri**.



Gallium oderatum is a great wildflower that we use a lot to provide a layer of low ground cover that does not inhibit or hinder the many plants and bulbs that share the same spaces.



The tall stately **Valeriana pyrenaica** stands tall among its companions.



Anthriscus sylvestris



Like mini-sunflowers the yellow flowers of **Doronicum orientale** brighten any corner of the garden where they will grow.



A few easy and reliable plants for a container first the alpine Dianthus, there are several cultivars, this one has been growing in its container for several years without watering and the only attention it gets is a good trim back round the edges in the autumn. The trimmings can be rooted to provide further plants.



Considered too easy and common to grow by some we should celebrate this classic **Erinus alpinus**. I cannot get enough of it and encourage it to seed around the slabs and trough area.



In this well planted bulb bed that I feature a lot in the Bulb Log it is the time for **Arisaema ciliatum** to take over, as herbaceous plants growing around it get ever more rampant.





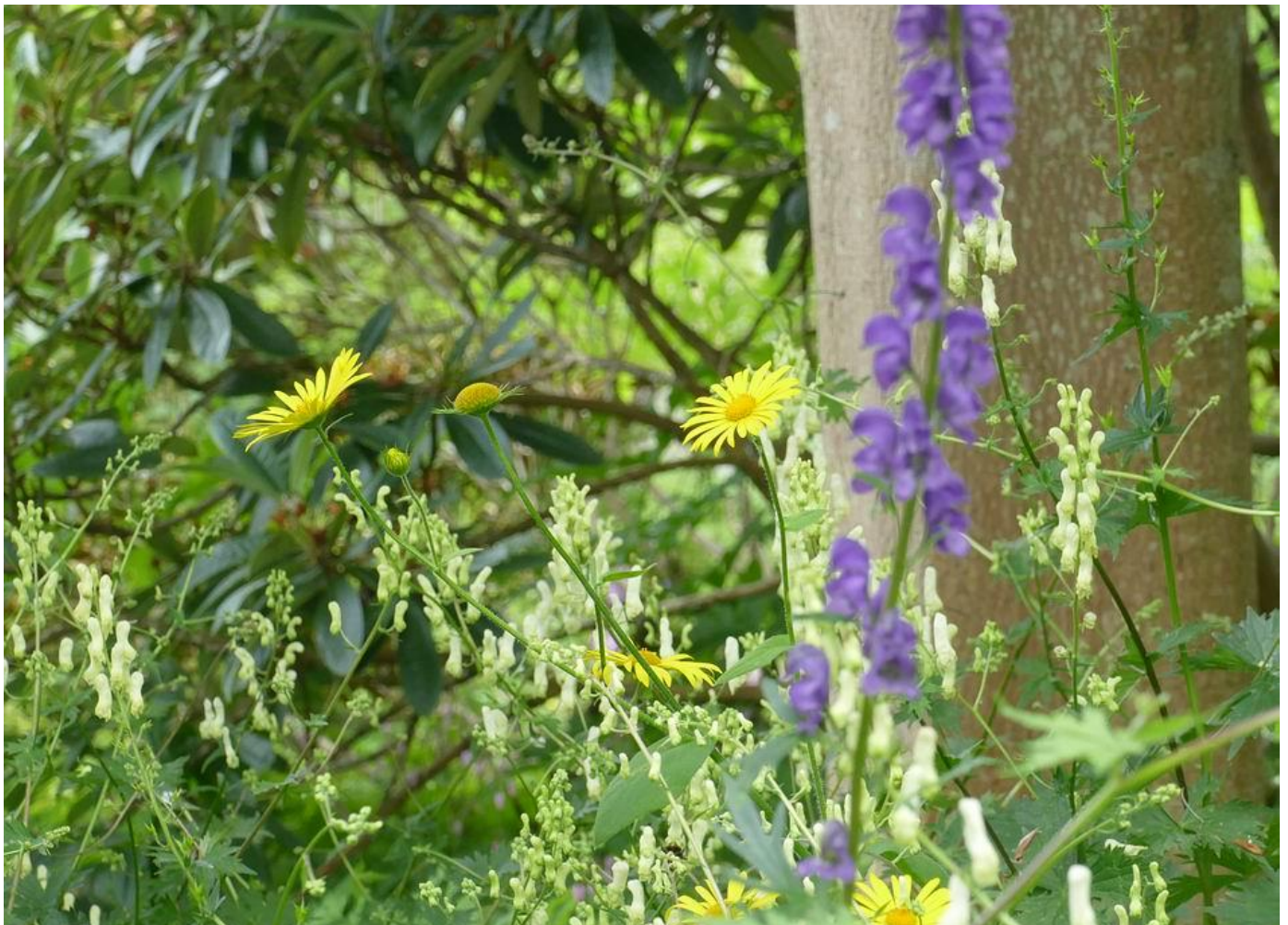
Arisaema ciliatum



Another bulb bed has a different selection of plants that grow larger.



Silene dioica



***Doronicum orientale* with *Aconitium vulparia*.**



I make no excuse for repeating the pictures because these plantings are repeated around the garden.



Our *Dactylorhiza* seem to be making a recovery after the attack of the 'black death'. Brian and Maureen Wilson wrote about this "black death" of orchids - *Cladosporium orchidis* - a fungal pathogen : 107/168

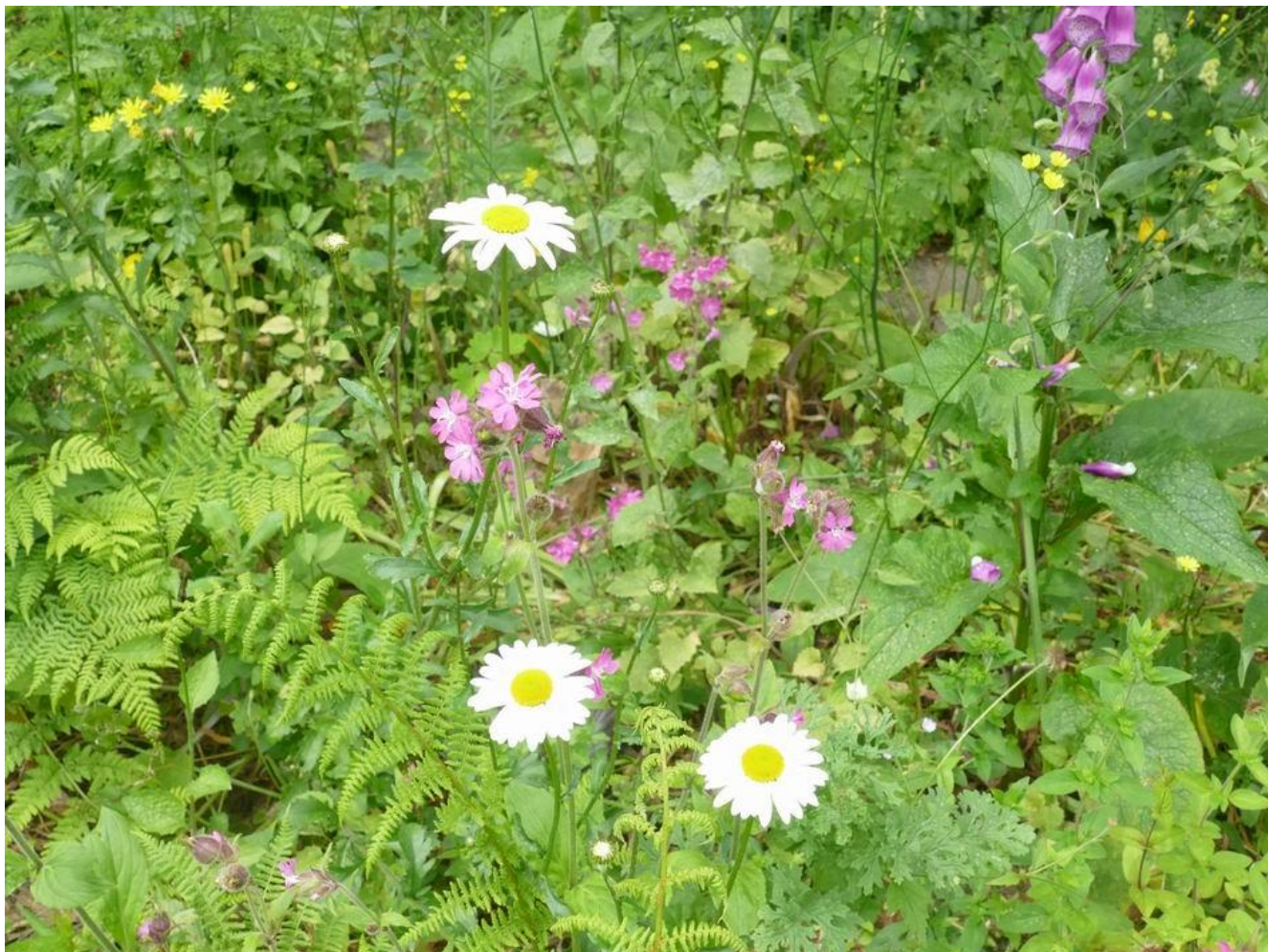
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Rather than reverting to chemicals I always rely on nature for the solution and hope that as they seed around, natural selection, will eventually deliver a population that is at least resistant to this pathogen, and so far, most of this year's flowers look okay.



I call this my weedy-zone not in a derogatory sense because I love these plants so much that in many cases I introduced the seed. It is not just me that likes them as these areas attract more pollinators than the bigger flowers from far flung places.



***Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Silene dioica* and *Lapsana communis*.**



Digitalis purpurea* and *Lapsana communis



Digitalis purpurea* and *Lapsana communis



Looking across the bub bed with *Arisaema* towards a large clump of *Lilium pyrenaicum* and *Iris siberica*.



Arisaema ciliatum flowers rise up above the *Primula* leaves.





Iris sibericum* and *Lilium pyrenaicum



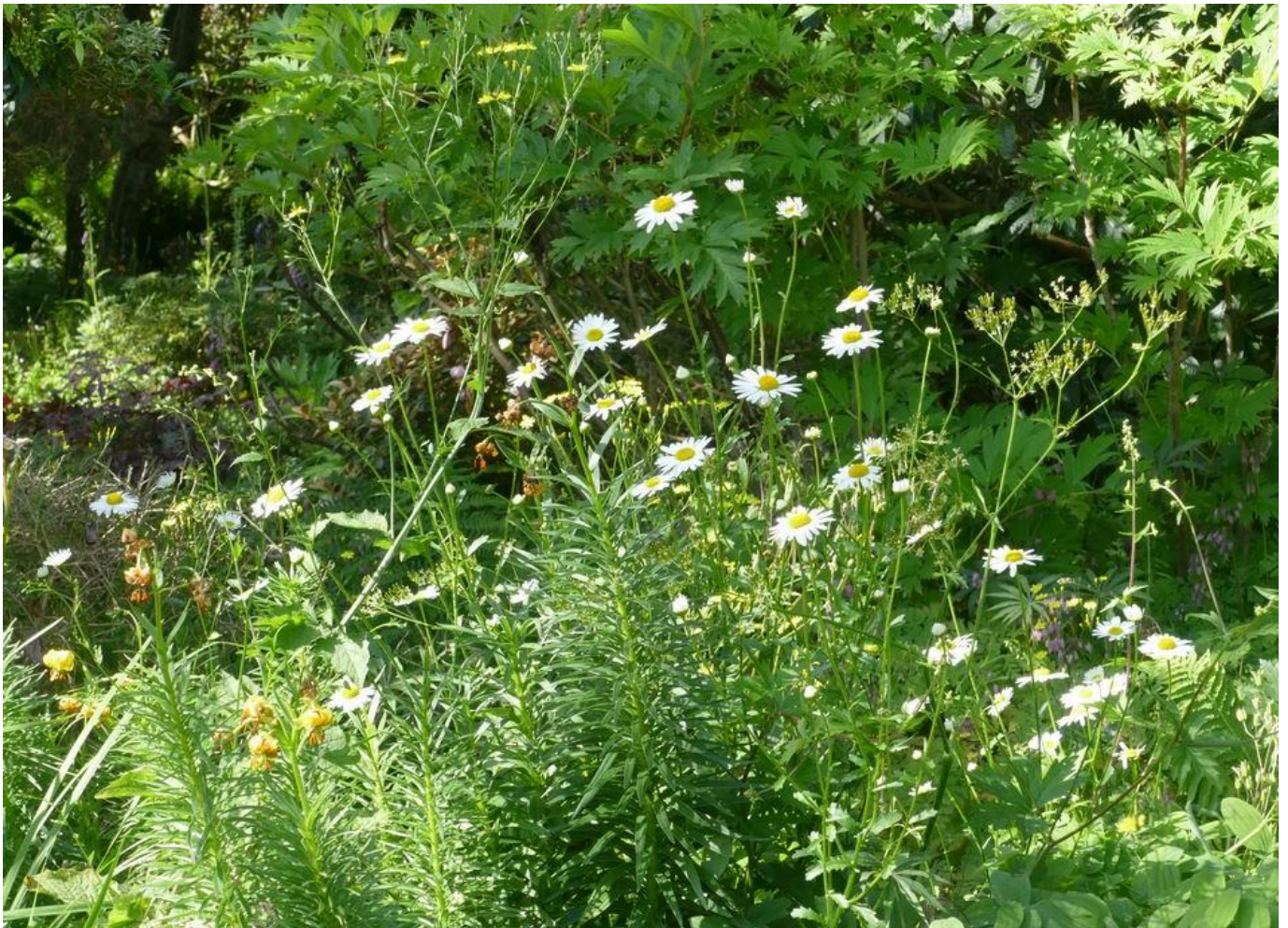
Another of my weedy-zones - in the gravel where I am delighted to find flowers on *Lotus corniculata* that I scattered seeds of last year.



Allium stipitatum



I also love the summer dandelion type plants but struggle to identify them I think it is **Crepis capillaris** but not sure of the species -this one is not hairy and flowers up to 75cms on branched stems.



Another great daisy is **Leucanthemum vulgare** a great addition to any garden.



Lilium pyrenaicum



The view across the weedy-zone and the bulb bed to the garden beyond.



Tanacetum parthenium



I have to mention another of the great self-seeders **Papaver cambricum** that will grow anywhere.



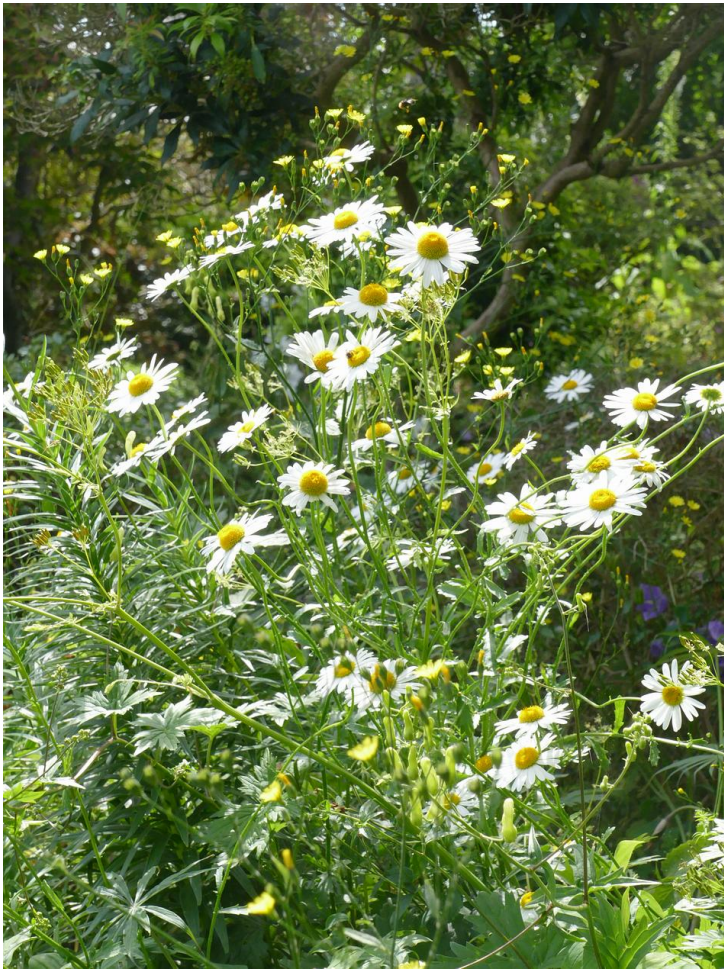
Campanula persicifolia also falls in with the self-seeders.



Campanula persicifolia



Over the years we tried to the gravel clear, however, it proved to be the best seed bed we had and as it slowly disappeared under a host of plants we have learned to accept the situation and work with what nature delivers.



I see the plantings I make in the garden as art which I can capture in my photographs and sometimes in a series of expressionist paintings (detail shown) I did expressing my vision of flowers and nature.



I encourage you to open your eyes and see the beauty of plants- they are fascinating, whether they are alive or dead.
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder please keep an open mind.....