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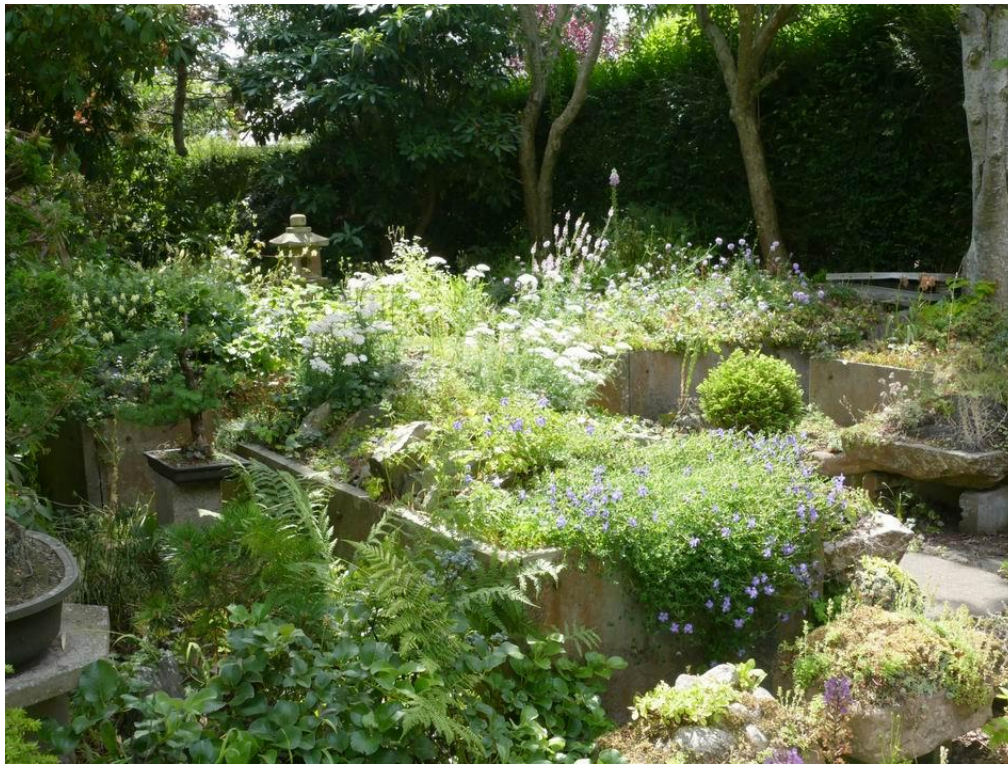
Bulb Log Diary

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BULB LOG 08.....12th August 2026





We must all be concerned about the weather now. Across the world including the UK and Europe we are experiencing extremes of weather droughts, floods and terrible wild fires.

I was asked recently, how these changes are affecting the plants and the garden, when I have regularly been writing about these changes for all the years of the Bulb Log. According to the July statistics at the Met Office our (North East Scotland) temperature for July was up 0.5% while this is low compared to those in the hot south it still has a significant effect on many of the plants we grow. We selected plants to suit our temperate coastal climate which used to mean our summers were

cool and moist but now we are seeing long dry periods, which are especially damaging when they come in the spring, when the plants are in most need of moisture. A common question when I gave talks was what our rainfall is. I have always answered that this statistic cannot be considered without also knowing what our evaporation rate is. We could get the same small amount of rain as someone in a hotter region but it would benefit our plants more because it did not evaporate in the intense heat. We cannot change the rainfall but we can have an element of control over the evaporation rate. Our garden has evolved to provide a woodland type habitat so there are lots of trees and shrubs to cast shade which helps keep the ground cool reducing the evaporation. We also spread home produced organic mulches which also help retain the moisture. It is important that the ground is wet when you apply the mulches otherwise the mulch will lock in the dry ground. The best and most effective way to shade and cover the ground is by using low growing plants that can spread out and trap the moisture below their leaves.



We cannot choose our weather but we can choose our plants and that is going to mean some changes in what we are growing. Bulbs are more resilient in that they retreat under ground to avoid the droughts so they should cope better with the changes, but we need to adapt the plants that come after the spring bulbs. I have always followed nature and will work with the plants that choose us. What do I mean by that? First the plants that we raise that grow well and set seed in our garden conditions. The second group are the plants that just arrive, usually blown in on the wind, often called 'weeds' but are in fact often attractive, produce flowers over a long period, and are very valuable pollen plants for the wild life.



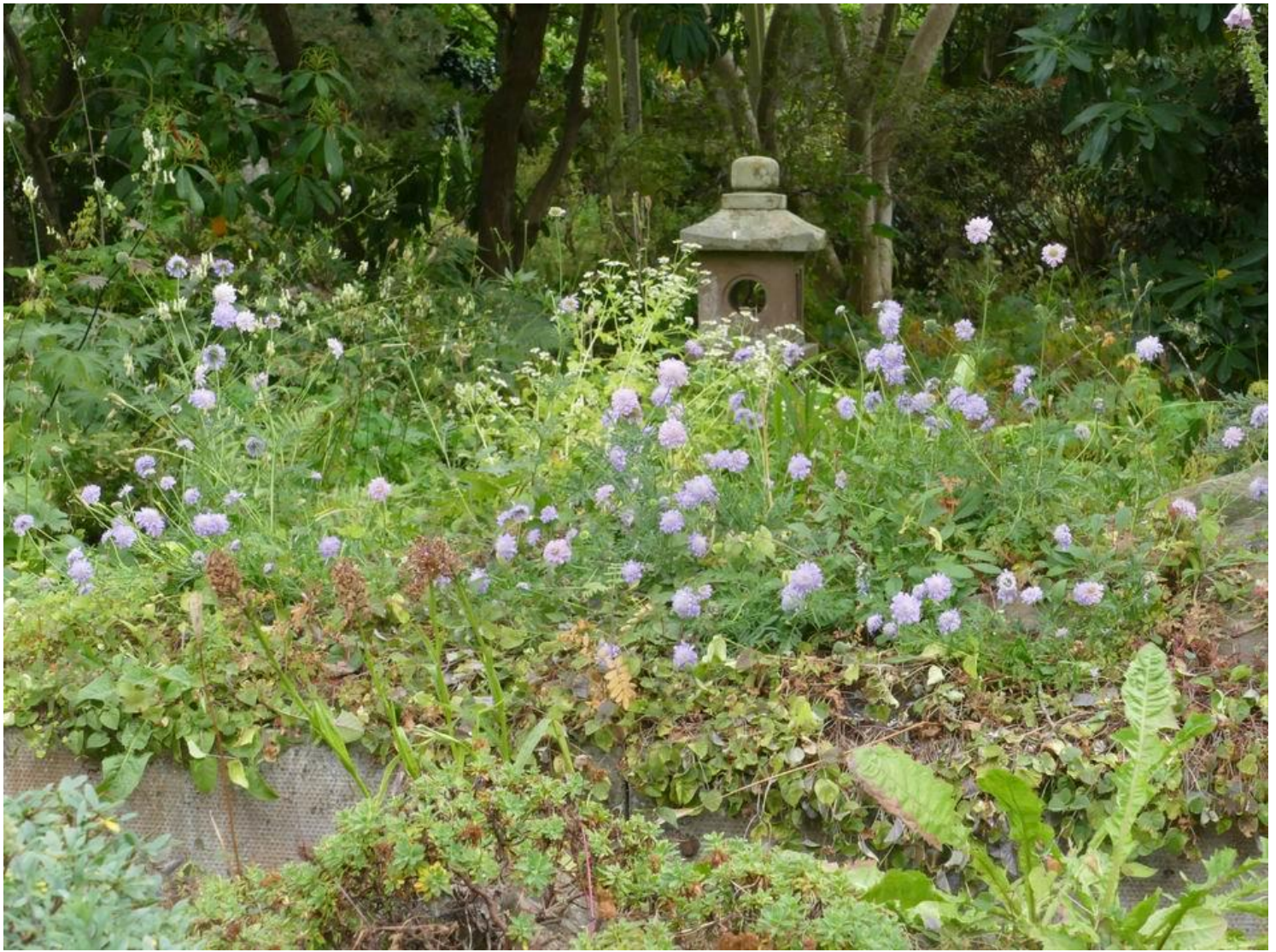
There are many coloured selections of **Achillea millefolium** commercially available, but I like the natural form and introduced this one from a small cutting I collected on the local seaside cliffs.



Achillea millefolium



The ***Cyananthus lobatus* hybrid** started to flower very early this year with the first blooms appearing before mid-July. This form is tolerating the changing climate better than *Cyananthus microphyllus* which has all but died out in the same bed.



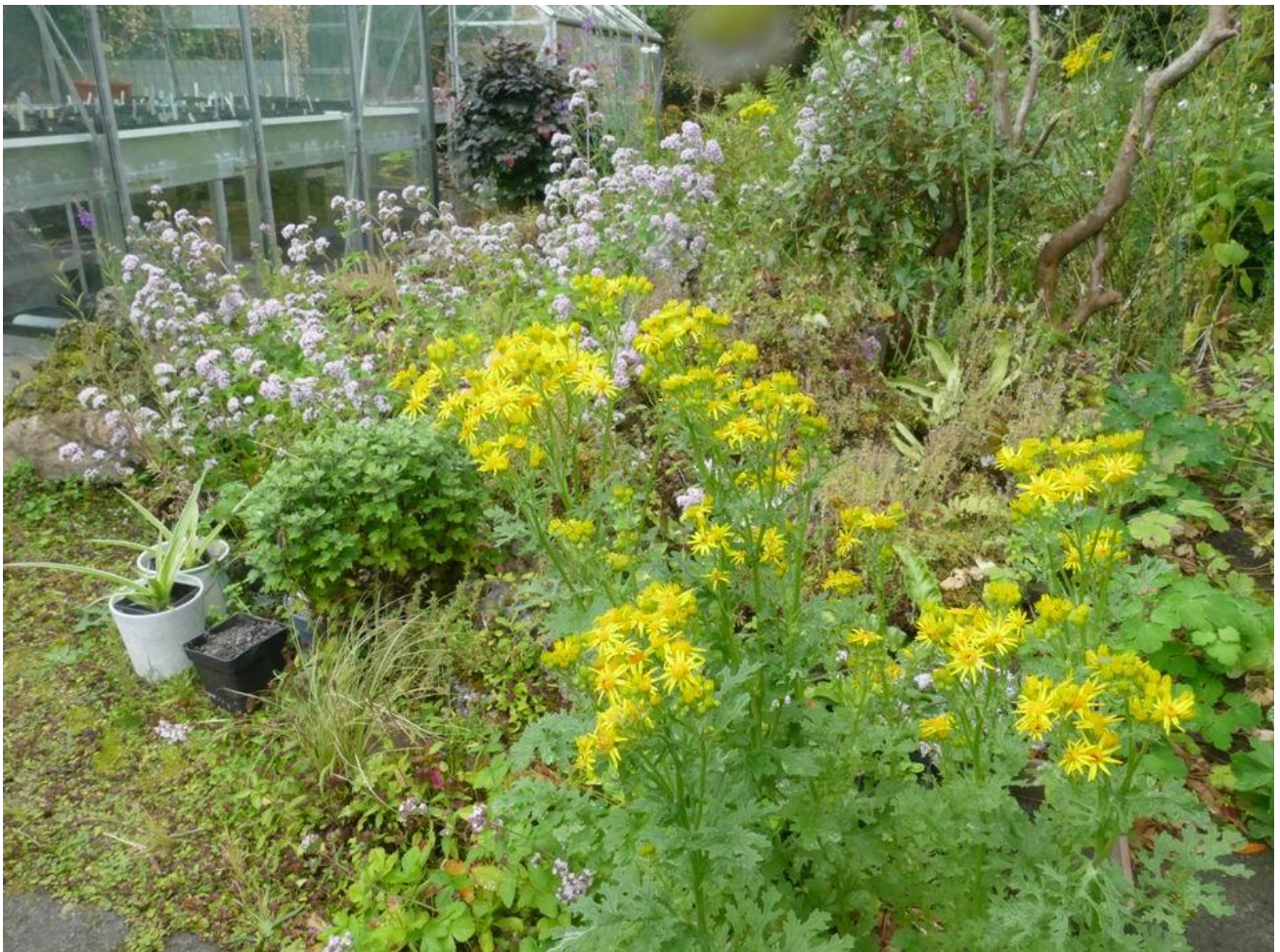
When a plant starts to seed around like this **Scabosia columbaria 'Nana'** that is a success.



**Scabosia
columbaria
'Nana'**



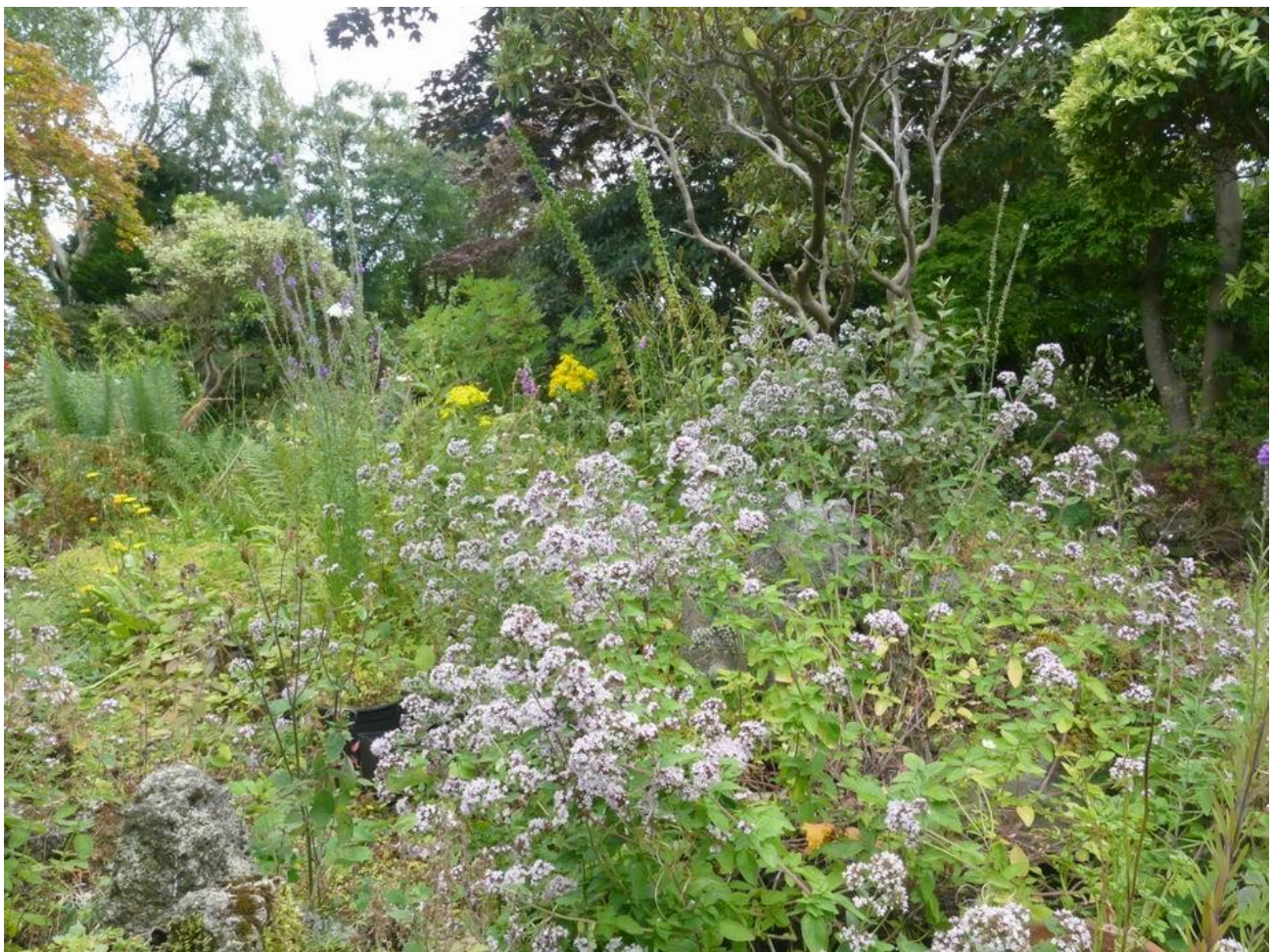
These plants are all growing in the raised slab beds but now it may get a bit challenging to some of the purists as I put on my ‘weedy gardener’ hat.



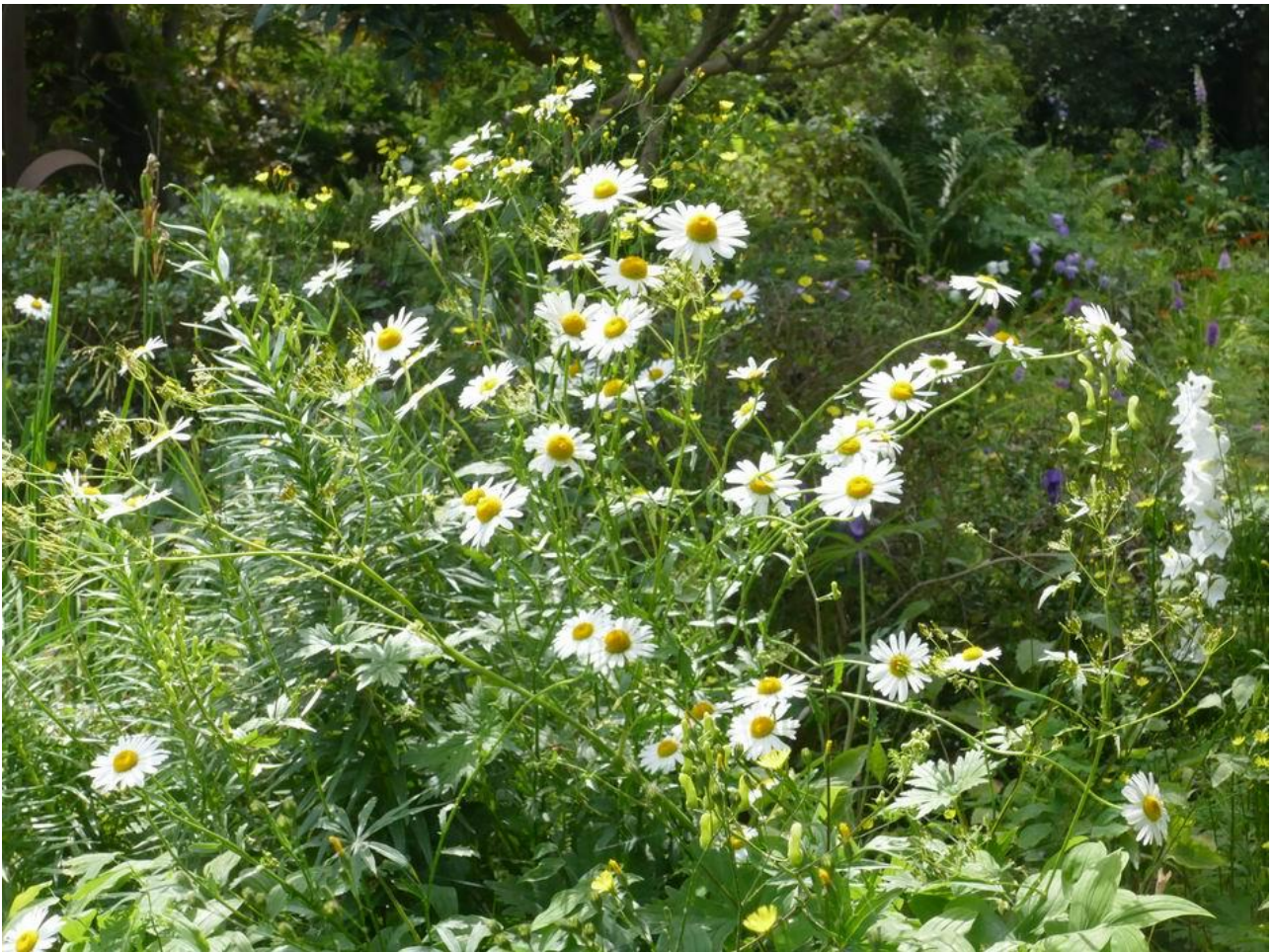
I think **Jacobaea vulgaris**, (Ragwort) is a very attractive plant which flowers over a long period and attracts swarms of pollinators and it can be controlled by removing it before the seed emerges. I see this plant appearing all around the town where I appreciate its cheery yellow flowers as I am sure the pollinators also do.



Jacobaea vulgaris



Origanum majorana



I collected seeds of **Leucanthemum vulgare** locally and the resulting plants are now well established and looking great growing above the resting bulbs.



You can always create a weedy patch or wildlife planting by grouping some of these plants together – I can recommend it whatever you want to call it.



Linaria purpurea



Campanula persicifolia



Many of these plants are growing in this bulb bed, where at this time of year we are used to seeing the *Roscoeanazjaz* flowering, but for the first time ever while there is plenty of leaf growth there are no flowers. I guess it is one of those plants that needs more summer water, which our weather used to deliver, and while in recent days we have had long periods of rain which is good for these plants but it is too late for any *Roscoea* flowers this year.



Roscoea purpurea with leaves only this year.



Lysimachia nummularia is a plant we grew when we first started the garden, but, because it spread and was too easy we kept pulling it out. I am now a wiser gardener and pleased that some of this plant was stubborn enough to hold on in a trough and now I am happy to see it providing some summer ground cover across this bulb bed.



In the front garden it is again some of the volunteer plants, Hypericums, that have been providing the slower colour.



I see these Hypericums have grown in many gardens but also notice that ours attracts lots of bees while there are fewer on the same plant in other gardens. It could be that we have a bee's nest in one of the bird boxes or it may be the diversity in our garden is a more attractive to the bees and other pollinators. I have said it before and I will keep saying it, to remind myself if nothing else, to let nature in. Work with nature not against her and you will have a more diverse garden.