



BULB LOG 08.....14th August 2024





The cover shows a bunch of wild flowers that I brought home from my walk the other day and how beautiful they were. These plants are also known as weeds which seems derogatory to me. I often note that nature has distinct colour themes at different times of the year with yellow and purple being the pallet at the moment. These colours are replicated across the different plants I picture growing in wild areas on my walk such as the **Buddleia davidii** and **Senecio jacobaea** here on a site of a school they demolished a few years ago. While they are waiting to start building the site has been left to nature and in those few years it has become a beautiful haven of biodiversity with

phases of blooms proving resources for pollinators through the seasons. During a winter storm one of the trees was blown down across the perimeter security fence which has meant that I can now get in to record the seasonal growth up close rather than just picturing it through the chain link fence.

I have often written about the attitude of gardeners to wild flowers and will continue to do so.

I think it comes

down to being confident in how you grow them, or allow them to grow in your garden. The more intentional they look the more likely they are to be accepted and admired. I am also encouraged by more commentators encouraging them being accepted and used in our gardens.





This is not a wild scene but our front drive and while I was out there this week a neighbour walking past said encouragingly ‘don’t ever change your drives’ – not everyone approves. Interestingly I am always changing them in the sense of scattering seeds to try and establish other suitable plants.



I scattered some seeds of **Vicia cracca** I collected a number of years ago and now it is flowering here in the drive.

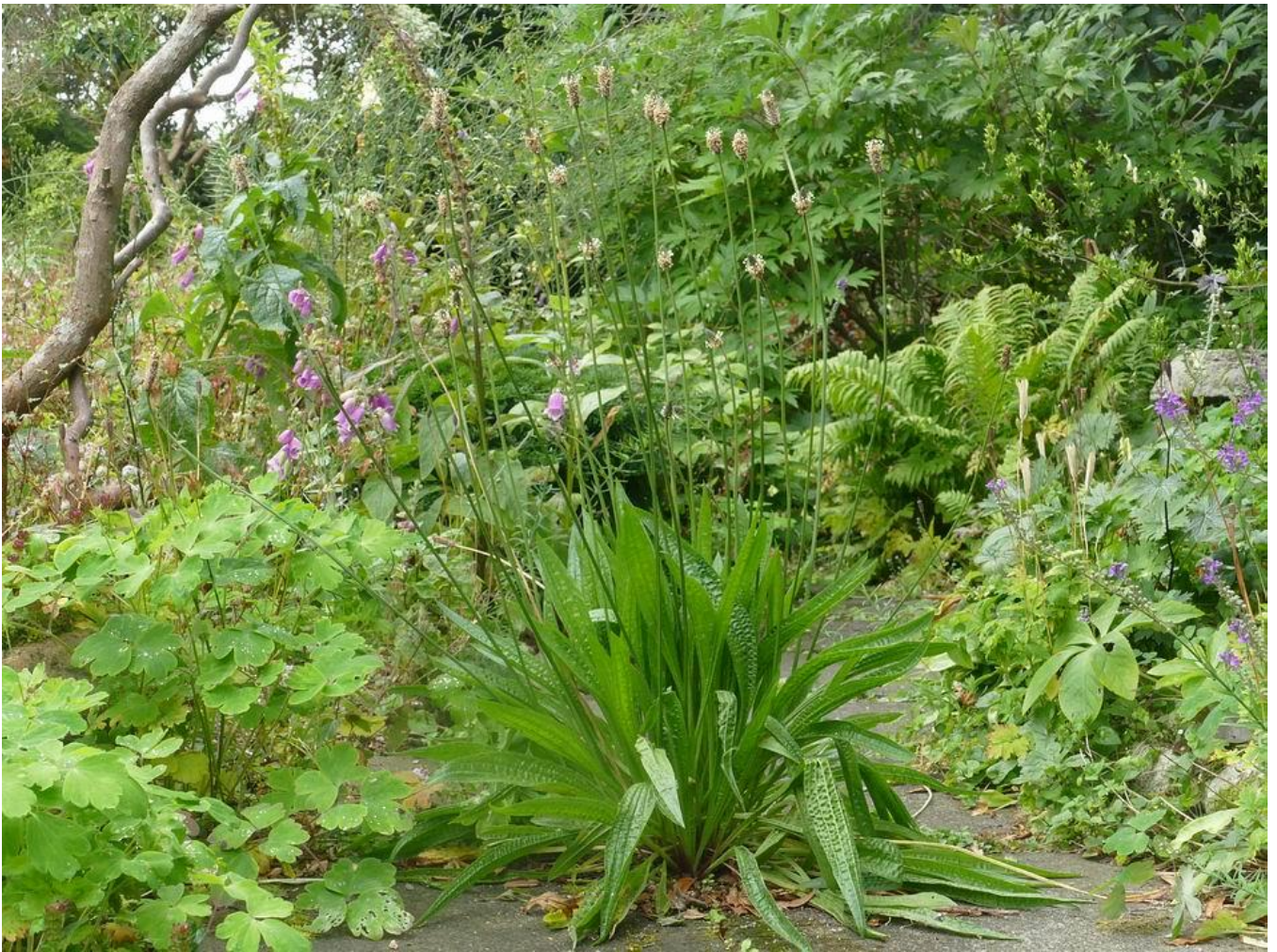


In the fields where I walk the purple flowered **Vicia cracca** and yellow **Lathyrus pratensis** continue the seasonal colour theme. I am currently compiling a botanical survey of this area of fields and wood to help the Community Council fend off the many planning applications that are lodged to build on this protected area.

The planning applications usually come with an environmental survey - conducted over two hours in February!

There is a distinct autumnal feel in the morning air that is reflected in the plants with berries taking on colour as they ripen and the later flowering Hypericum in full bloom attracting a constant stream of bees.





Last month I showed this ***Plantago lanceolata*** and here it is still sending up more flowering stems, something it has been doing since at least May.



Another good plant that seems to flower perpetually even in mild periods in winter is ***Pseudofumaria aurea***.



Campanula persicifolia* and *Aconitum vulparia



***Scabiosa columbaria nana* is also popular with the bees.**



I have completed the annual task of cutting the hedges as evidenced by the piles of shreds waiting to be spread out after a few weeks of composting. I have been using this method of piling the shreds on the beds cutting out the need for me to haul it all the way to the compost heaps only to have to carry it all back again later .



On a visit to the compost area to get some leaf mould I was delighted to find two flowering stems of **Orobanche hederæ** rising from the leafmould heap. Also known as the Ivy Broomrape –we have Ivy growing above the heap. I can only speculate how it got there.



The leafmould was to enrich the potting mix in the Erythronium baskets as while weather permits I must try to replot as many as possible before they start to send out their new roots which will happen very soon.



Ideally I would like to replant the Erythroniums in baskets every year or two but for various reasons it has been some years now since they were last done and I did notice a dropping off of vigour this spring. It is always a good sign to see the dried remains of last season's roots – these are a good indicator that the bulbs have grown well.



Erythronium tuolumnense has the biggest bulbs of the genus and grows well in most conditions - even baskets. I do not replace all the soil but enrich it by mixing in some leafmould and a scattering of bonemeal.



The basket full of bulbs ready to be topped up with potting mix and returned to the plunge bed. Read more details on my methods for growing Erythronium in containers in the chapter from my book [Erythroniums in Cultivation](#)



Lilium lankongense



I like to vary the angles that I photograph plants from giving an alternative view of **Lilium lankongense** flowers.



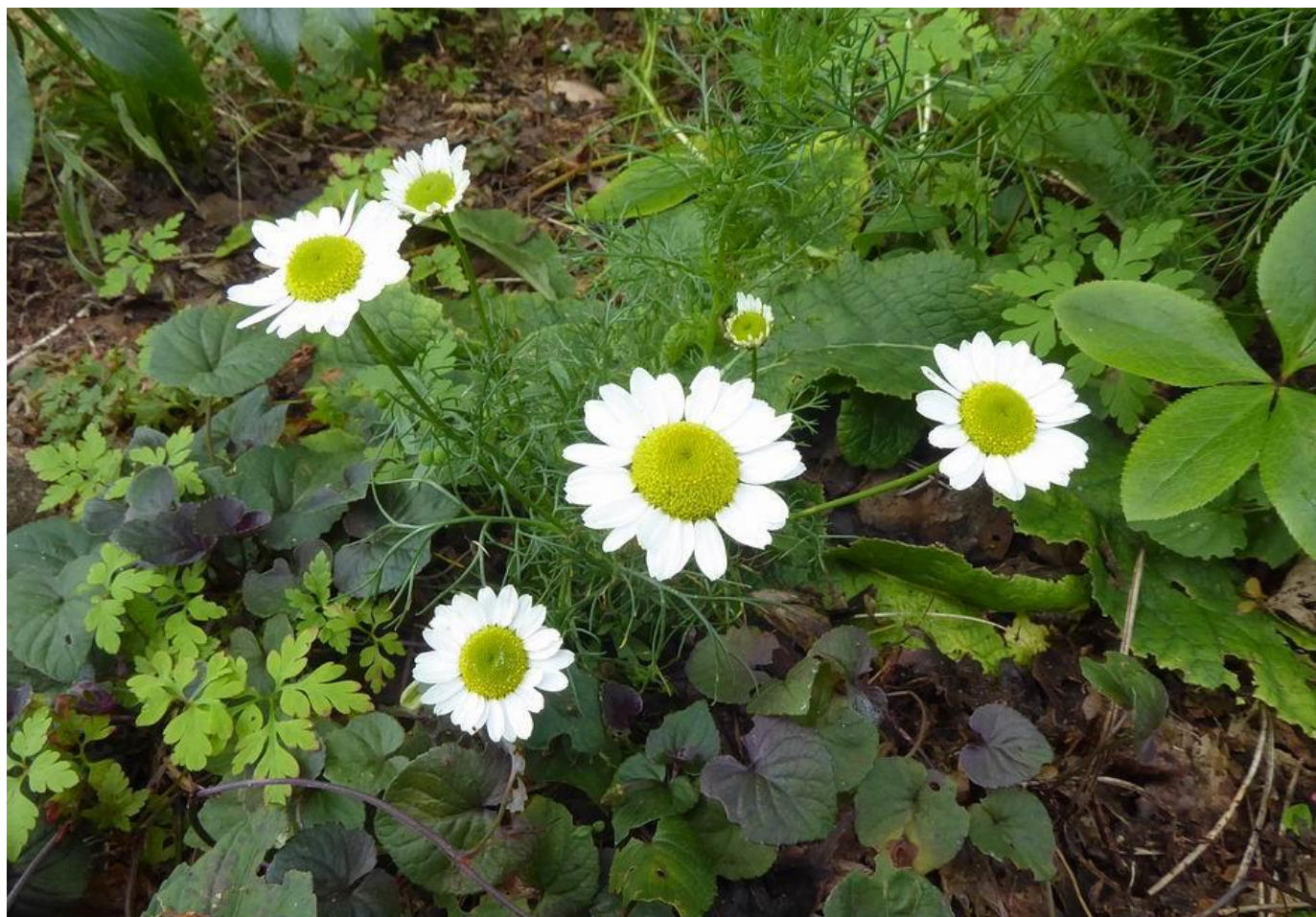
Likewise an unfamiliar view of **Aegopodium podagraria**, (Ground Elder or Bishop Weed in Scotland).



I had a trip down to the seaside where white daisies were on display with **Tripleurospermum inodorum**.



There is something very attractive about the basic 'daisy' flower seen here as ***Tripleurospermum inodorum***.



I have a few small plants of it growing in the garden but I must go back to the seaside and collect more seed in a few weeks time.



Many plants can mutate like this one in the garden with a fasciated flower. It is just the primary bloom that is deformed the other flowers on the same plant and stem are normal.



Not all mutations are attractive I find the previous one quite ugly when compared with the perfect flowers but these semi-double flowers on a **Tanacetum parthenium** (Feverfew) growing at the side of a building site are quite nice.



Tanacetum parthenium grows and seeds around the garden especially at this time of year when many of the plants in our garden are in retreat.



Another plant I have introduced from seed collected around the wild areas is **Achillea millefolium**.



Achillea millefolium



I have been showing wild flowers that we have brought into the garden but it goes both ways as cultivated plants can also end up in the wild. This is a *Leucanthemum* cultivar of some kind that must have been irresponsibly dumped over the steep bank leading down to the shore and has spread out. While this is not desirable it is a pretty image.



The clusters of small flowers on **Origanum majorana** attract a constant stream of bees. Although I am not knowledgeable about bees I have seen at least four different species at one time on these flowers. It seems that the smaller flowers such as these and the *Linaria* have the strongest attraction to bees.



The scatter of morning drawings that surrounds me as I have breakfast, looking out to the garden.



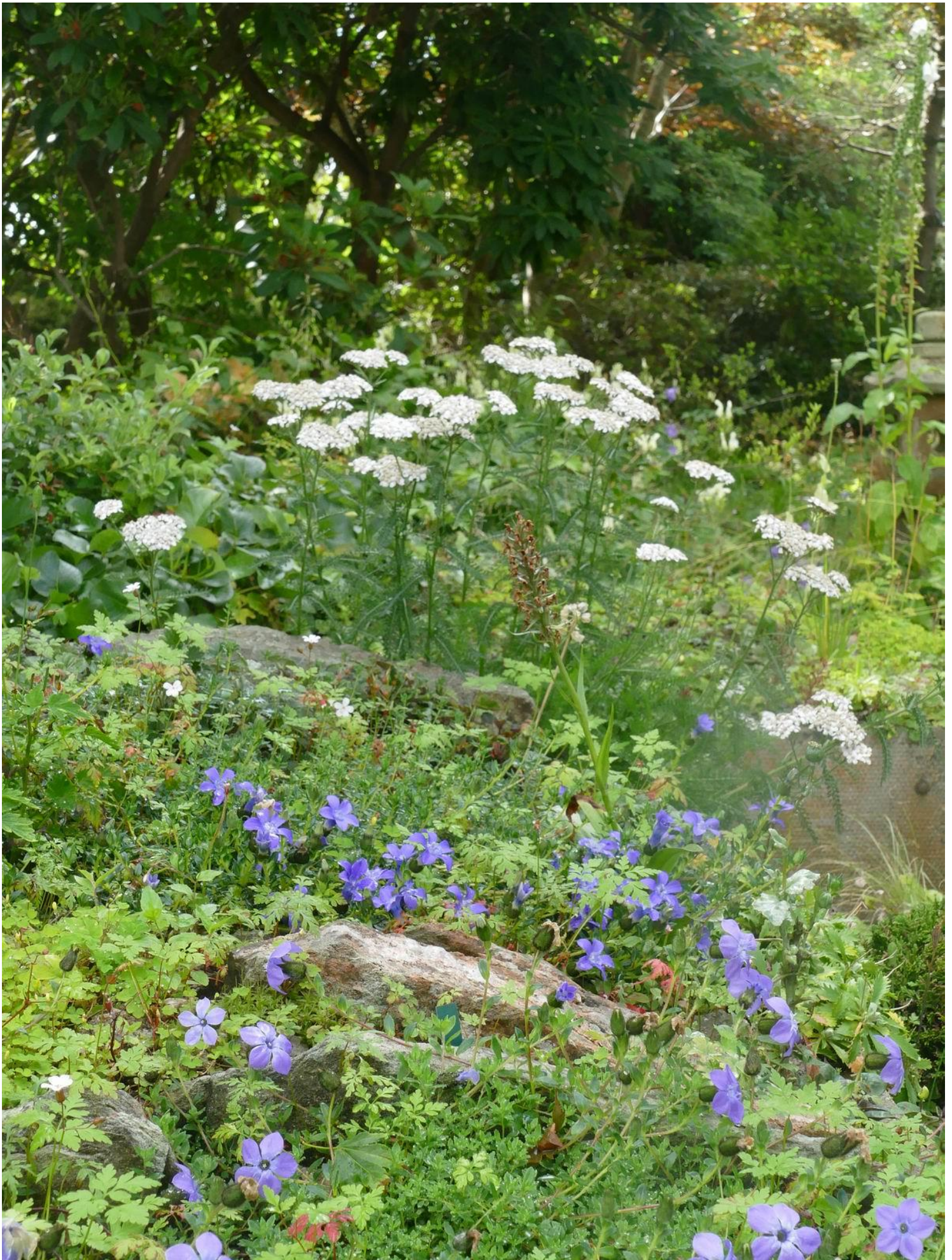
I am not and never will be a botanical artist, my work is more abstract or expressionist but I occasionally draw plants to force me to look at the detail as ***Crepis capillaris*** a lovely summer dandelion.



I have already collected some more seed of **Vicia cracca** and am waiting for these pods of **Lathyrus pratensis** to ripen before I collect, responsibly, just a few.



The plants in the garden are all derived from the wild flowers of somewhere on the planet. I believe we should appreciate those that grow all around us as much as the those from the far flung remote landscapes.



Cyananthus lobatus and **microphyllus** from the Himalaya with the local **Achillea millefolium** equally appreciated and growing happily in our garden here in Aberdeen.....