

The Seed Exchange

Stuart Pawley (Seed Reception Manager)

First – a reminder of our procedures. Seeds for the Exchange, all

scrupulously clean and dry please, should be sent to me by October 31st, at Acres of Keillour, Methven, Perth, PH1 3RA, UK. This closing date is as late as possible so that we miss nothing waiting for ripening. On November 1st the list is finalized and emailed to the printers. The worst part of my job then starts as more donations, often of considerable value and quality, land on my doormat. I urge overseas members with less than a week to go to email me a list at gsp.srgc@tesco.net so that their donation may be included. US members, if they wish, may include their essential APHIS permits and labels when sending seed. Please send the seed as soon as you can, or otherwise it will miss the journey to Ian Pryde who organizes the packeting.

I encourage more UK non-donors to apply for a list, as there is usually plenty of seed. Please send me a stamped addressed envelope before December 15th; the correct C5 (229 mm x 162 mm) rather than the larger size that has mistakenly crept into our literature simply needs an ordinary second-class stamp. Lists should be posted out about 10th November, so email me if you think yours might have gone astray.

Requests from the list should go to Alan Hayes at 31 Liberton Brae, Edinburgh, EH16 6AG, UK or alan.hayes31@blueyonder.co.uk before 15th January, with payments as detailed in the list. Australian, NZ and US members should remember to send a list of names of requested seeds unless ordering on-line. We aim to post the main orders by 21st January, and the surplus seed by 11th February.

Trillium ovatum



Some members might wonder why their donation has not appeared in the list: this is usually my error! Errors increase considerably when my routine is interrupted by things like re-labelling a packet clearly or reducing packet size to fit into our system. I often plead in the list notes to avoid this extra work but donors need to remember for almost a year! However, I know that some of you read these notes, that also allow me to communicate both important and trivial things.

Last year, one of the trivia was the near loss of all my *Trillium ovatum* seeds while waiting for the capsules to open – and then I caught the thieves red-handed.

In our first spring at Acres of Keillour we found in our



The Great Thaw

Primula maximowiczii



derelict woodland a single white flower that must have been planted by an itinerant wasp as seed from the famous Keillour Castle garden of the Knox-Finlays. Our Canadian member who told me of the role of ants in dispersing trillium seeds was quite delighted to see the note about our wasps doing likewise. He asks to know the species of wasp, so to be sure I'll have to catch them at it again in the fall. I was concerned that the trillium might not survive the winter, but all is well, as my picture shows.

Why should the trillium not survive? One night at the end of November we had 45 cm of snow, lasting until a sudden thaw in mid-January. This made a river a metre deep in places right across the woodland, churning out into the road and down the hill. I feared for more than the trillium, as in the middle of the river was my new raised bed with *Meconopsis* and lots of my beloved *Primula maximowiczii*. Luckily it was just sufficiently raised to escape.

This primula had been out of cultivation for decades until Ron McBeath had a new collection for sale in the year 2000. My purchase contained two fine specimens, a pin and a thrum, giving lots of seeds and a regular entry in the list.

With about a hundred plants in the garden I am doing my bit to keep this beauty in circulation, easy to grow in rich moist (not boggy) soil in partial shade, but I couldn't do this without the Club and the Exchange; so there's your challenge – if you have a unique plant worthy of a future, please be sure to let me know so that I can alert everyone through the notes in the list.



Dianthus superbus

worthwhile form distinct I put it in the last list as *P. sikuensis*, which is the most probable match. Maybe a taxonomic error, but it would be a mistake to lose its purity!

As I finish writing, the wasp's trillium has turned a plum colour!

Primula sikuensis



Here's a possible future example: wild-collected seed of *Dianthus superbus* from the Pyrenees gave this surprising pure white specimen, so donor, grower and some others are now investigating whether this is a sustainable form.

The wild collection of *Primula* cf. *polyneura*, offered as number 5511, 57th list, gives plants smaller than the usual *P. polyneura*, and flowers a month earlier. To keep this

Trillium ovatum, now purple



Does this mean it is pollinated? I'll get there before the wasps, and pack the seeds moist, following the procedure that the New Zealand *Trillium* Group uses, which is to rinse the seeds in 10% chlorine bleach solution to prevent fungal attack and pack it in a sealed plastic pouch. This is the way this seed will be sent to members, so please let me know of any success.