

Meconopsis Group Seed Exchange – Autumn, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Meconopsis Group Seed Exchange List for Autumn 2019, but firstly some housekeeping.

For two years I have sown a few seeds of *M. delavayi*, *M. punicea* and *M. quintuplinervia* in the Autumn and the Spring and, as far as I can see, only the *M. punicea* gave a better germination when autumn sown. Consequently, only *M. punicea* will be available for pre-ordering in future years.

Seed donors will be given priority until **15th November**. All requests must arrive by **3rd December** after which the seed exchange will close

This year there are some alterations to the procedure and as some members may have missed the preamble to the seed list I will repeat it here.

“Indicate your desiderata of 10 packets by placing ‘X’ in the box and **5** alternatives ‘A’.
If you do not provide alternatives it will be assumed that none are required. Seed of *M. punicea* can be requested in advance for August 2020 (assuming that it will be available), as part of the current 10 packet consignment.

Extra packets of seed, at 50p per packet, may be requested from any stock remaining after the main seed exchange has closed by placing an ‘E’ in the box. In this case you will be invoiced by e-mail for the total amount and **you do not need to make an initial payment.** Your initial allocation of 10 packets will be made up, according to your priority, and set aside until all initial allocations have been dealt with. After that your extra seed will be added to the initial allocation and all seed will be sent together.”

Last year we followed current naming policy by changing *M. napaulensis* (of hort) to *M. x complexa*. This year it is the turn of *M. horridula* (of hort) which becomes *M. x setifera*

In 2018 seed was distributed under the name of *M. heterandra*. Please amend your records to *M. balangensis*. The two species are virtually identical, except that in the former the flowers are borne on basal scapes, whereas in the latter the flowers are borne on a well defined raceme. Either way this is a nice plant for the trough.

Initially 2019 was shaping up to be a very difficult year with fewer donors and a decrease in the range of seed made available for distribution. However, in the last few days, five members have come to my rescue with numerous packets of interesting seed, many in very generous quantities. They have my grateful thanks and I would remind members that, as restrictions become tighter, we all need to consider the importance of collecting seed in our gardens. Otherwise some species will disappear from cultivation.

M. aculeata – there are two strains on offer this year. One came from flowers of a pinker hue.

***M. baileyi* (Anchorage)** – the grower writes “this particular plant has survived and thrived for 10 years with prolonged temperatures in the – 40° Fahrenheit range (which is - 40° C), and may be especially suited to northern gardeners”

M. baileyi – MGS#1 is a distinctive small-growing, fertile form or hybrid of *M. baileyi*.

M. baileyi – MGS#2 is a cluster-flowered form of *M. baileyi* which originated in Sweden.

***M. baileyi* (violet)** – Peter Kohl has donated seed of a form of *M. baileyi* which is lighter in colour than ‘Hensol Violet’ and has foliage differences. He has suggested the provisional names of ‘Sue’s Violet’ to distinguish it from others forms. Please trial it and report on its garden-worthiness.

***M. baileyi* hybrid (x *M. latifolia*?)** – this may be the same plant currently circulating as *M. latifolia* in various seed exchanges. The genuine *M. latifolia* probably no longer remains in cultivation.

M. balangensis – this year’s seed came from plants growing in Scotland.

***M. betonicifolia* hybrid MGS#3** – seed of hybrid origin with both *M. betonicifolia* and *M. baileyi* in its make up, and possibly more. Even so, a nice plant which can be stoloniferous and clump forming.

M. x complexa – this is the new name for *M. napaulensis* (of hort) in its various colour forms. The mixed seed was collected from the plants growing at Carig Dhubh, which were much admired when shown at the October Meeting

M. dhwojii – a number of members reported having raised good plants, only to lose them the following winter. So this is one which needs some winter protection for success.

***M. fertile blue group* (purple)** – this year’s seed was donated by a member in Sortland, Norway, and is commercially available in the UK under that name. This form can be traced back to the Tromsø area in 2000, but was not from the Botanic Garden. Seed was distributed by my predecessor as ‘*M. grandis* cf purple’. The seed is bigger than that of ‘Cally Purple’.

M. gakyidiana – this was previously known as *M. grandis* ssp *orientalis* but has been elevated to species status and re-named. The long established plants (ex NAPE) were raised from seed collected in Arunachal Pradesh by Peter Cox and his colleagues in 2004 (Nagaland Arunachal Pradesh Expedition).

***M. grandis* ssp *grandis* ‘Himal Sky’** – seed of this named form is in very small supply. If you are growing it then please hand pollinate it for next year’s seed exchange, otherwise it may be lost. The same applies to ‘Astral Blue’.

M. henrici – this is a real beauty with rich purple flowers and dilated filaments, but one for a trough or raised bed rather than the open garden.

M. integrifolia* ssp *souliei – the original seed came from a known locality and the plants have been grown in isolation. We have two members who are maintaining these plants at sub-species level, rather than incorporating them into existing stock, or mixing them with *M. integrifolia* ssp *integrifolia*.

M. ‘Kingsbarns’ – if correctly identified, the seed capsules should be broad and hairless.

M. merakensis –Seed of this newly discovered species from Eastern Bhutan was donated by Tromsø Botanic Garden last year. It is described in ‘Sibbaldia’, but some members consider that it is a form of *Meconopsis prainiana*. See link below:

<https://journals.rbge.org.uk/index.php/rbgesib/article/view/193/163>

M. punicea – those who pre-ordered this species were sent seed in the autumn. Some members reported that they had a better harvest in 2019 compared to the previous year. Once again, please ensure that you find time to hand-pollinate your plants.

M. quintuplinervia – this is a first rate species which can be used to produce excellent dwarf hybrids. It is a pity that so little seed has been collected this year. Perhaps most people are splitting clumps and need to introduce a different clone for successful seed-set.

M. racemosa – this year’s donor also grows *M. zhongdianensis* and said that they appeared to be different. The seed capsule should be no longer than 17mm and the stigma should be a greyish white.

M. rudis – it is always difficult to know whether plants are pure or hybrids, however seed has come from plants with blue-green leaves and spots of purple pigmentation at the bases of leaf spines, so it appears to be the true species.

M. simplicifolia ssp grandiflora (Cuona) – It is wonderful to see that seed from Cuona, which was distributed a couple of years ago, has produced healthy plants in Norway. The grower protects the crowns with dry leaves over the winter.

M. staintonii (red form) – apparently the true species normally has white flowers!

M. sulphurea ssp gracilifolia – if correctly identified, the leaves should not be more than 26mm wide.

M. sulphurea ssp sulphurea – several gardens including Branklyn have fine displays of what used to be known as *M. pseudo-integrifolia*.

M. venusta – this is another tricky Chinese species which seems to have been in cultivation for just a few years. It is rather slow growing and dislikes being disturbed, so grow it in a trough or raised bed with some protection.

M. wilsonii – although there were two of the three sub-species available last year, we only have *ssp australis* on offer this time. It would be a shame to see this magnificent species disappear from cultivation, so do your best.

M. zhongdianensis – there is still a lot of confusion with this species and *M. racemosa*, so look at the final plants with a critical eye.

M. sp ex BO-16-081 – unidentified but may be *M. sulphurea*. The original seed was collected on the Biluo Xue Shan in Yunnan.

M. sp CC 48, CC 15a, and CC 17a – all are original unidentified seed collections made by Chris Chadwell which have been in cold storage for several years.

M. sp ex CC 3317 – the ‘Great White’ which flowers into late October. It has been suggested that this might be a white form of *M. paniculata* which grows in the same locality as CC 3317 was collected. The fact that it can flower into October suggests that it may be a natural hybrid with *M. wallichii* ‘blood’ in its make-up. Hopefully all will be revealed when we have DNA analysis completed.

M. sp ex CC 7714 – an original unidentified seed collections made by Chris Chadwell which has been in cold storage for several years. It may be *M. wallichii*, from the size and shape of the seed, but this is not certain.

M. sp ex Mian Shan – described as a beautiful, but unidentified, small species with deep blue flowers on a purple-tinged scape.

M. sp. ex W/O 7160 – the original seed was collected as *Meconopsis rudis* but the leaves lack purple spots and resemble those of *Meconopsis prattii*, a species which grows in the same collection locality.