

***Meconopsis wilsonii* subspecies**

Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *wilsonii

I believe that seed collected by Peter Wharton is of this subspecies, which comes from SW Sichuan.

Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *australis

I believe that the plants that Peter Cox has grown for many years are of this subspecies, and they have also been grown by Henry and Margaret Taylor, who have circulated seed. Seeds of subspecies *australis* and *wilsonii* have been circulated under incorrect names – even by the *Meconopsis* Group!

Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *orientalis

Material originating from Jamie Taggart was originally collected in NE Yunnan. It has circulated under the names *Meconopsis wumengensis*, *Meconopsis wilsonii* and *Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *wilsonii*. This collection has pale purple flowers.

Seed of this subspecies was also collected by Yoshio Toshida in 2010. It was at first circulated as *Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *wilsonii*, and was labelled as such in seed exchanges. It came from a site where the flowers of all plants, at least in 2009, were much darker purple than those of the Taggart collection.

I have also recently received two lots of seed collected in 2010. One is from NE Yunnan, probably the site visited by Toshio Yoshida, and is therefore subsp. *orientalis*. The other came from near Pianma, on the China/Burma border, a known site of subsp. *australis*.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to find any unequivocal way of distinguishing the subspecies by the appearance of their seeds.

The following key to the subspecies is included in the description of *Meconopsis wilsonii* subsp. *orientalis*, which is to be published in Curtis's Botanical Magazine in March 2011.

KEY TO SUBSPECIES OF *MECONOPSIS WILSONII*

1. Basal and lower leaves closely spaced, acutely angled to the main stem, with 9-12(-15) pairs of primary segments (NE Yunnan plants):

subsp. ***orientalis***

+ Basal and lower leaves widely separated, obtusely angled to the main stem, with 4-8(-10) pairs of primary segments: 2

2. Basal and lower leaves with 6-8(-10) pairs of primary segments, the middle and upper cauline leaves and bracts deeply divided with up to 8 pairs of segments; peduncle and pedicel hairs ascending to subappressed (W Sichuan and NW Yunnan plants):

subsp. ***wilsonii***

+ Basal and lower leaves with 4-6(-8) pairs of primary segments, the middle and upper cauline leaves and bracts shallowly divided, with up to 5 pairs of segments; peduncle and pedicel hairs patent (W Yunnan, Myanmar plants):

subsp. ***australis***

It may also be useful to note that the stigma in subsp. *australis* is normally white (rarely purple), whereas it appears always to be purple in subsp. *wilsonii* and *orientalis*.

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