

Meconopsis Group Seed Exchange – Autumn, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Meconopsis Group Seed Exchange List for Autumn 2021, and hopefully you are all keeping well in these uncertain times. Seed donors will be given priority until **10th November**. All requests must arrive by **1st December** after which the seed exchange will close. It would be appreciated if members could e-mail me when their seed arrives, so that I can track any packages which may have been lost in the post.

The procedure is the same as last year - **there is no charge for your initial allocation of 10 packets** – this applies to both UK and non-UK members. Members requesting extra seed (at 50p per packet, plus £1 P&P) will be invoiced by e-mail after 1st December. Please do not attempt to pay in advance, as extra seed may not be available. A list of remaining seed will be sent out just before closure. Please keep a record of your sowings so that, if you donate seed in the future, you can tell me from whence it came.

This list shows how many members donated the seed of each item on offer **this year**, and last year.

M. aculeata ..(5, 6),
M. baileyi .. (5, 21),
M. baileyi MGS#1 .. (1, 1),
M. baileyi MGS#2 .. (1, 0),
M. baileyi alba .. (5, 7),
M. baileyi 'Hensol Violet' .. (2, 8),
M. baileyi hybrid (x *M. latifolia*?) .. (1, 0),
M. balangensis .. (2, 4),
M. betonicifolia .. (1, 0),
M. betonicifolia hybrid MGS#3 .. (2, 1),
M. xcomplexa .. (5,13),
M. delavayi .. (2, 2),
M. dhwojii .. (3, 0),
M. Fertile Blue Group .. (4, 4),
M. Fertile Blue Group (purple) .. (2, 1),
M. 'Lingholm' .. (7, 11),
M. gakyidiana .. (2, 5),
M. grandis .. (3, 5),
M. horridula .. (1, 0),
M. integrifolia .. (4, 6),
M. merakensis .. (1, 0),
M. napaulensis .. (2, 0),
M. paniculata .. (1, 4),
M. prattii .. (1, 2),
M. punicea .. (3, 6),
M. quintuplinervia.. (5, 5),
M. racemosa .. (5, 4),
M. robusta .. (0, 1),
M. rudis .. (3, 1),
M. x setifera .. (0, 1),
M. simplicifolia .. (2, 1),
M. staintonii .. (3, 5),
M. sulphurea .. (3, 5),
M. superba .. (1, 3),
M. venusta .. (0, 1),
M. wallichii .. (1, 2),
M. wilsonii .. (1, 2),
M. yaoshnensis .. (1, 1),
M. zhongdianensis.. (4, 7),

M. aculeata – this is an attractive item for a raised bed or trough and will self-seed in the right conditions. It should not need winter protection. There can be some natural variation with petal colour.

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 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 (mauve) – Peter Kohl’s second coloured form of *M. baileyi* has been given the provisional names of ‘Margaret’s Mauve’ to distinguish it from others forms. Early reports from Branklyn suggests that it breeds true to colour and is a performing well in the garden.

M. baileyi (pink) – Cyril Lafong has donated seed from a fine pink form of *M. baileyi* which arose spontaneously in his garden. Firstly we need to know whether it will breed true to colour and, secondly, is it soundly perennial?

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* no longer remains in cultivation.

M. balangensis – for the third year running we have seed from garden plants. Even so, we need more members growing it in raised beds or troughs to ensure that it remains in cultivation. There seems to be quite a variation with petal colour – some a slate blue and others sky blue.

M. balangensis var. *atrata* – possibly a bit trickier than the normal species, and with dark red flowers.

M. betonicifolia – the true species, so this needs to be given the utmost care and attention. It needs to be hand pollinated and kept free from hybridisation. Originally, this seed was collected for the Meconopsis Group on the Laojun Shan in NW Yunnan. Please label this as ‘MG-2021’ as there has been a subsequent collection of this species (W/O 8098), from the same location, but they may be slightly different. As a word of warning, this species may be short lived, as is the related *M. baileyi*.

M. betonicifolia hybrid MGS#3 – seed of hybrid origin with both *M. betonicifolia* and *M. baileyi* in its make up, and possibly more. This is an attractive plant which can be stoloniferous and clump forming.

M. x complexa – this is the accepted name for *M. napaulensis* (of hort) in its various colour forms. The mixture labelled as Carig Dhuh is from a wonderful selection of mixed colours. For the other donations, the seed may produce flowers of the same colour as the parent plant, but this cannot be guaranteed.

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 appears to be larger than previous seed donations, so there may be differences between the resulting plants.

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 2003 (Nagaland Arunachal Pradesh Expedition).

M. grandis subsp *grandis* ex Tibet – the resulting plants should be typical of this subspecies in the wild with multiple peduncles above the false whorl and therefore have a longer flowering season than ‘Himal Sky’ or ‘Astral Blue’. The donor has asked recipients to label them as ex Tibet and to keep them separate from other forms of this subspecies.

M. grandis ssp *grandis* ‘Himal Sky’ – seed of this named form is in very short 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’. Both of these forms should have seed capsules which are virtually devoid of hairs.

M. horridula? – the donor informs me that the parent plants were grown from seed distributed under this name by a European Botanic Garden, so it might be correctly identified. The flower boss should be a golden colour, not cream, grey nor white.

M. integrifolia - as plants of the two sub-species do not seem to conform to the species distribution map in ‘The Genus Meconopsis’, it might be wiser to label them by their collection location, rather than at sub-species level, while the problem is under investigation. Hence we have a *M. integrifolia* ‘Balang Shan form’ and a *M. integrifolia* ‘Zheduo Shan form’. Please record which form you are growing.

M. lijiangensis - if growers could take digital images of this rarity during its stages of growth and development, it would be of great importance for our understanding of how the yellow Meconopsis taxa are related.

M. napaulensis – this is the true species, so try to prevent it from hybridising. A couple of years ago, the donor volunteered to take care of this particular species by maintaining a pure colony and this seed is the result. Well done, Frank!

M. paniculata ssp *paniculata* ex Sikkim – the original seed was collected in Sikkim in 2015 and the plants have been growing in the absence of anything which could cross-pollinate them, so please ask label the plants as ‘ex Sikkim’. It is likely that they are distinct from some other forms of this sub-species.

M. punicea – those who pre-ordered this species were sent seed in the autumn. Luckily, more seed was forthcoming for the main seed exchange. Once again, please ensure that you find time to hand-pollinate your plants when the petals start to fall from the pollen donor plant so that the pollen is ripe.

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 is ever collected, but it probably requires more than one clone for successful seed-set. I have been told that the ‘Kaye’s Compact’ form will produce seed, unlike the taller and rather ganglier form. Is there evidence for this assertion?

M. racemosa – As for last year I will add a code letter to each packet so that we can see if any of the seed produces the true species rather than *M. zhongdianensis*. Please make a note and report back on your success for both the 2020 seed and the 2021 seed..

M. robusta – although this is seed from 2020, it still should germinate well and we need to establish a strong seed line to preserve it for the future.

M. rudis – plants should have blue-green leaves and spots of purple pigmentation at the bases of leaf spines, if the true species. I would welcome images of the adult plants to confirm their identity.

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. It is essential that we keep this species in cultivation so please give it special attention.

M. staintonii (red form) – several donations of seed this year, with two originating from collections made by Chris Chadwell and have been hand pollinated plants so the packets are marked ‘HP’. Those which are not marked ‘HP’ might produce various shades of pink, despite which they still make an attractive addition to the open border.

M. sulphurea ssp *sulphurea* – several gardens including Branklyn have had fine displays of what used to be known as *M. pseudo-integrifolia*. I would be interested to see images of the ‘eastern form, just to see the degree of variation.

M. wanbaensis – a new addition for our seed list. Many thanks to the generous donor, now it’s up to us to get it established!

M. wilsonii – there are two separate sub-species on offer this year, but they are grown by very few members. Majestic plants and quite distinct from anything else, so give them a go!

M. zhongdianensis – as previously mentioned, there is still a lot of confusion with this species and *M. racemosa*, but both are great additions to the garden.

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

Research Seed (MGS#100 series) – this seed is intended only for research and hybridising purposes.

Seed from a form of a species (e.g. *Meconopsis baileyi* ‘Hensol Violet’) should breed true, within the range of natural variation. However, Big Blue Poppies which are hybrids (e.g. *Meconopsis* ‘Jimmy Bayne’) tend not to breed true from seed and usually produce inferior plants. True plants of *Meconopsis* ‘Jimmy Bayne’ can be produced only from vegetative divisions - a slow process, which explains why named clones are expensive. The same applies to named purple clones, such as ‘Keillour Violet’.

Until 2016 the Meconopsis Group seed exchange did not include such seed as there was the possibility that, through human error, these inferior seedlings might get passed on, misnamed as the original clone plant, which could undo years of hard work by the Meconopsis Group. At the same time it was recognised that the seed could be important for selectively breeding a superior plant, which might be of such quality as to merit being a named clone in its own right.

Please contact me for further details if you have such a research project in mind.

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