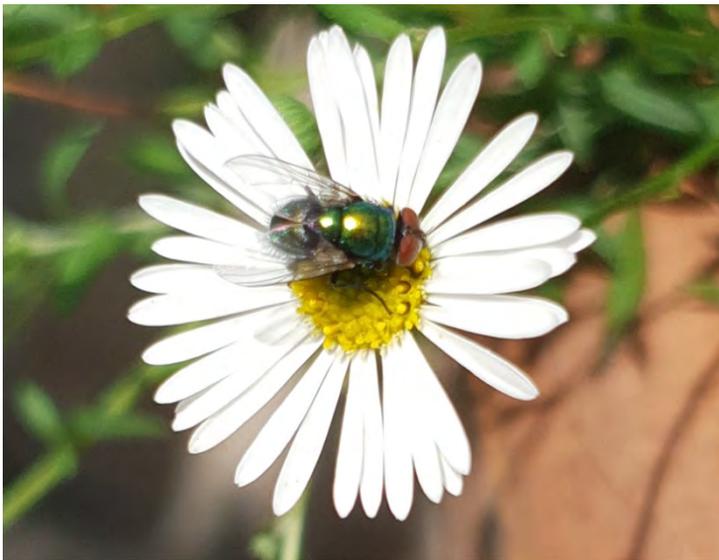


View from The Southwood Garden August 2019

It's amazing what you see when you look ...



Native Mexican species proves popular with insects

For some reason I thought Mexican fleabane (*Erigeron karvinskianus*) wasn't pollinator friendly. It's a tough and long flowering perennial and so a helpful as well as pretty plant to work with. I was delighted therefore to see a green bottle fly and a honey bee feasting on the fleabane in the planters at the Church's entrance. Green bottles are found near fruit and other food waste, faeces and dead animals. They are associated with rubbish and decay. Set that aside and you can marvel at their metallic beauty.



Honesty and the lightness of being

By early August the honesty seed heads had ripened. Back lit by the afternoon sun, brown turned to gold, the seeds becoming actors in a shadow play. A feature of the Southwood Garden's landscape is its multiple levels. This introduces two opportunities – to bring dainty plants up close to the eye and to allow the play

of light through them. Scott and Laura Ogden's inspiring book, *Plant Driven Design* drew my attention to the relationship between light and plants from a design rather than growth, point of view.



Cricket in Piccadilly

This Southern Oak Bush cricket (*Meconema meridionale*) emerged from the wisteria I was pruning, finding refuge on the railings on Piccadilly. I saw another on the jasmine in the main garden. Both plants are climbers with soft matt green leaves of a similar texture. This species was first recorded in the UK in 2001. Flightless, it lives in trees or shrubs and is carnivorous - feeding on insects (including the horse chestnut leaf minor!). This specimen is a female as its ovipositor, the tale like part at the end of its body, is enlarged and slightly upturned. A key distinction between crickets and grass hoppers are the cricket's long antennae.



The skeleton of a dragon fly found in one of the beds.

Plants in flower during August 2019

Anagallis moneii 'Sky Lover'	Blue pimpernel
Alstroemeria 'Summer Sky', A. 'Summer Snow'	Peruvian lily
Astrantia major 'Roma'	Masterwort
Calibrachoa 'Superbells Red'	
Erigeron karvinkianus	Mexican fleabane
Echinacea 'Tomato Sauce', E. 'Salsa Red'	Cone Flower
Geranium nodosum	
Lavendula angustifolia 'Hidcote'	Lavender
Lythrum salicaria	Purple loosestrife
Nepeta racemosa 'Walker's Low'	Catnip
Rosa 'Graham Thomas'	Rose
Salvia microphylla 'Lutea Cerise Form'	
Stachys sylvatica	Hedge Woundwort
Tiarella 'Crows Feather'	Foam flower

Catherine Tidnam, gardener at St James's Piccadilly