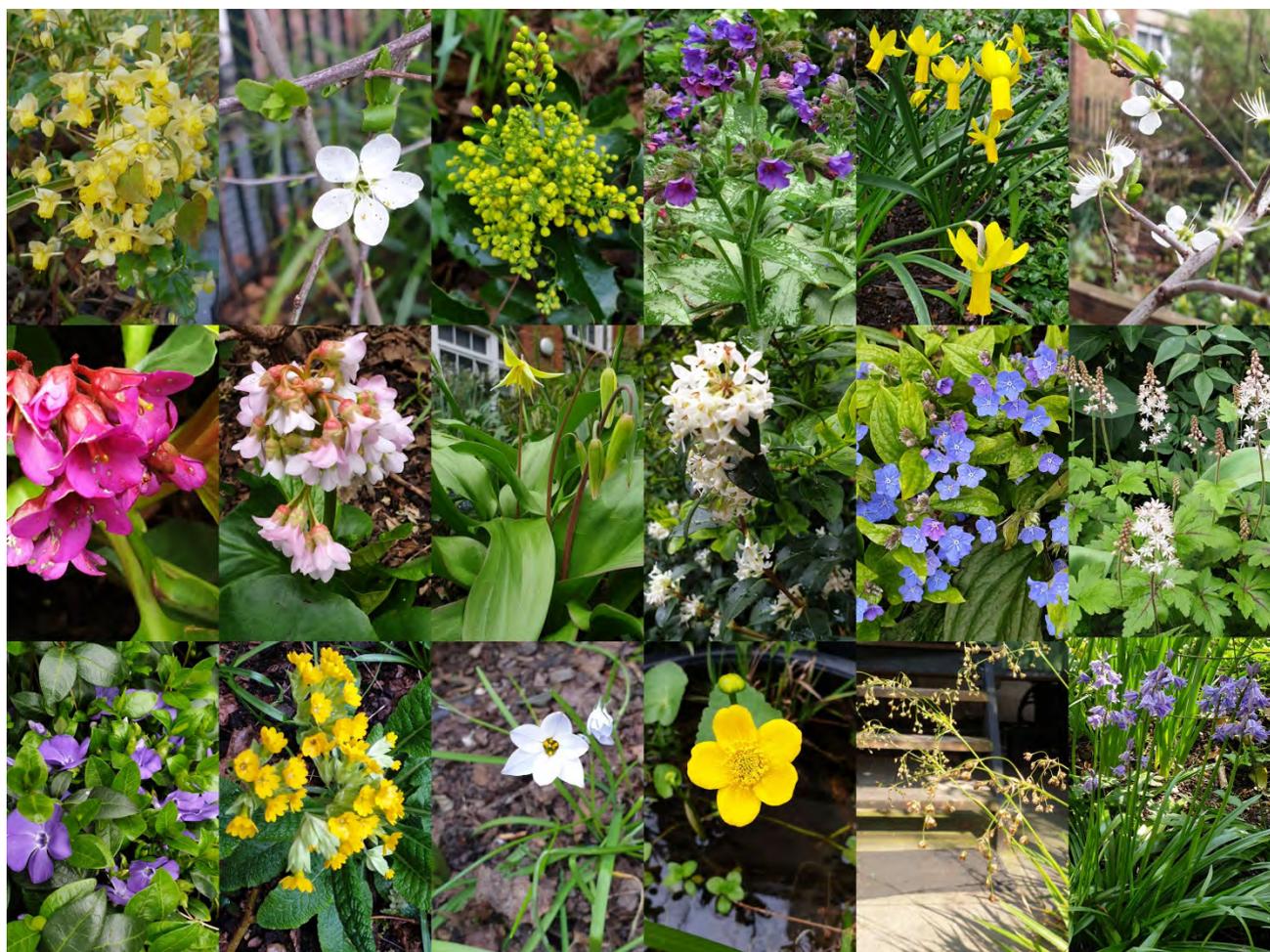


# View from The Southwood Garden March 2019

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



## Late winter, early spring – a woodland's window of opportunity

March and April in a woodland garden are usually the most floriferous and colourful. Flowering plants seize the moment when trees are bare and the light can reach them. The Southwood garden is such a habitat, dominated by mature London planes. Planes are late to break leaf - normally the end of April. This year's unseasonal temperatures have given our gardens an extra boost and all around the Capital flowers seem bigger and brighter than usual.

This month there were 30 plants in flower in The Southwood Garden – here's a roll call of the star performers. Left to right, by row: *Epimedium x versicolor* 'Sulphureum' (Barrenwort) – the toughness of this plant belies the delicacy of its flowers; *Chaenomeles* - its variety unknown (Japanese quince); *Mahonia aquifolium* 'Apollo' (Oregon Grape) - a low growing variety with big sherbet lemon flowers beloved of bees; *Pulmonaria* 'Diana Clare' (Lungwort) - one of the most mildew resistant varieties although now suffering as a result of the exceptionally dry winter; *Narcissus* 'Falconet'; *Prunus spinosa* (Blackthorn or sloe); *Bergenia* 'Baby Doll' (Elephant ears) – we have a number of

varieties in the garden including *Bergenia* 'Bressingham White', *Erythronium* 'Pagoda' (Dog Tooth Violet – the bulb of which resembles a giant fang – these have settled in well, producing eye catching flowers and attractive, glossy tongue-shaped leaves; *Osmanthus x burkwoodii* which makes up the garden's perimeter hedge – the scent of which can be enjoyed by visitors even though these shrubs are at the back of the border; *Omphalodes cappadocica* 'Cherry Ingram' (Navel cherrywort) – an arresting sky blue and despite losing several in the first year of planting, the two that remain have got bigger and bigger and will be divided next year; *Tiarella* 'Crows Feather' – rescued

from near death from vine weevil; *Vinca minor* "Bowles Variety' (Periwinkle) – a larger leaved *vinca minor* which grows faster than others and works well as a trailer in containers, *Primula veris* (Cowslip); *Ornithogalum umbellatum* (Star of Bethlehem or Nap at Noon!); *Caltha palustris* (Marsh marigold) – happy in our new bog garden; *Luzula sylvatica* (Great woodrush) – a sedge with beautiful flowers that need to be seen at close quarters; *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* (English bluebell) – the bees were queuing up for its pollen so hopefully they will spread.

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