

Leucojum - Growing Guide

Leucojum Aestivum - Guide

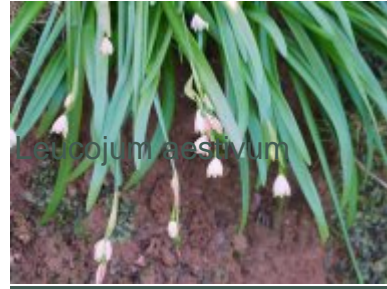
The London lily or 'summer snowflake' is an attractive, robust and somewhat unusual bulbous plant to grow. It sits well in a border but is actually a native perennial from moist meadows and woodland in Britain and Ireland (as well as Europe). As such it will happily clump up and self-seed itself in a woodland garden. We grow it along and above a bank on the main drive at Caerhays where it attracts interest. Care is needed not to cut the grass in which it sits until the leaves have properly died down by, say, mid July.

L. aestivum has glossy dark green leaves 15-18in long on bulbs which are of flowering size. We have found the timing of flowering of this plant to be variable. After a mild winter it is sometimes just out in late March. In other colder years it is mid May before the flowers appear and, if the weather is hot then, they do not last for long.

The flowering stems are 18-24in tall and stand proud to the leaves. Each stem has between two and eight individual white flowers which are faintly scented and have six segments. Each of the segments is attractively tipped with green and faintly recurved when fully open.

These bulbs are similar to snowdrops and dieback quickly after flowering. Indeed they grow well alongside later flowering *galanthus*. They are very easy to grow well and will readily flower away in pots where you may need to support the flower stems when they are full out.

The clumps can be divided in autumn or seeds can be sown in containers in a cold frame in the autumn although they will probably have been collected earlier in June.



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