

Banging the drum for "Honeysuckle"

Lonicera is a large family of shrubby plants, it contains a number of climbing species most of which have beautiful flowers or powerful fragrance, more than a few have both.

It's sad therefore that some gardeners write them off with a "I've got a Honeysuckle" in part its our own fault that they can sometimes look dishevelled and not flower very well. they do benefit from being pruned to keep the wood

young and productive. Its also worth remembering that some of the very pretty Honeysuckles from hotter parts of the world can go into a summer dormancy so its best to grow these with a supporting cast of other climbers

With 35 species and hybrids growing here its hard to pick favourites, but here are some suggestions for various jobs in the garden, these are some of our must haves at Roseland House.

For early scented flowers **Lonicera caprifolium (1)** or one of its hybrids **Lonicera x italic (2)** . These two will cover April to end of June period.

For summer scented flowers our native woodbine **Lonicera periclymenum** is hard to beat, this has many named forms, these pale yellow types are hard to tell apart, 'Belgica' (or 'Early Dutch') remains a great plant if some colour is required as well as the scent.

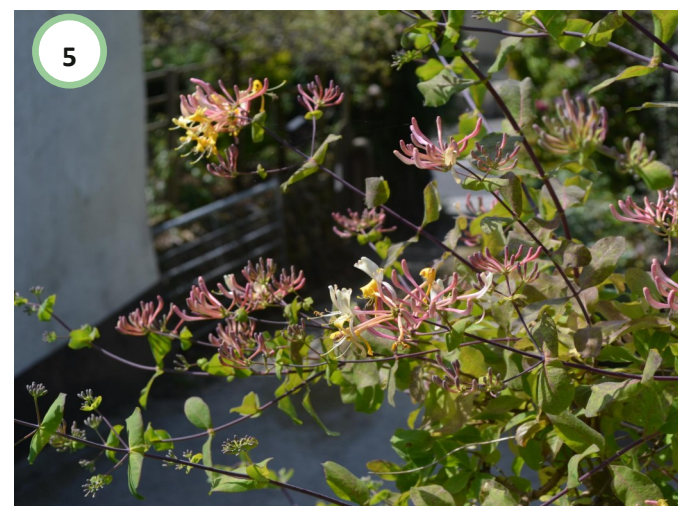
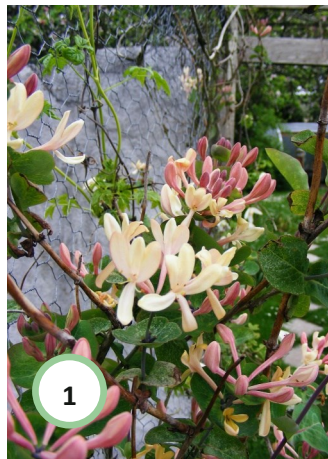
For later summer flower and scent **Lonicera periclymenum 'Serotina'** (or Late Dutch) is at its best in August and September, again there are many named forms, one of the best of these is 'Red Gables'.

There are also a couple of good evergreen species with scented late summer flowers **Lonicera similis delavayi (3)** , and a brand new and as yet unnamed species **Lonicera KR10608 (4)** This also has wonderful colouring in the new growth.

Most Scented honeysuckle give of their best scent wise



Charlie Pridham of Roseland House Nursery



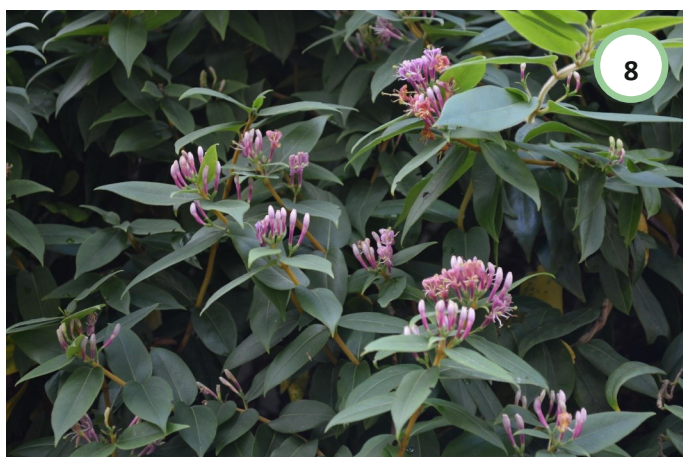
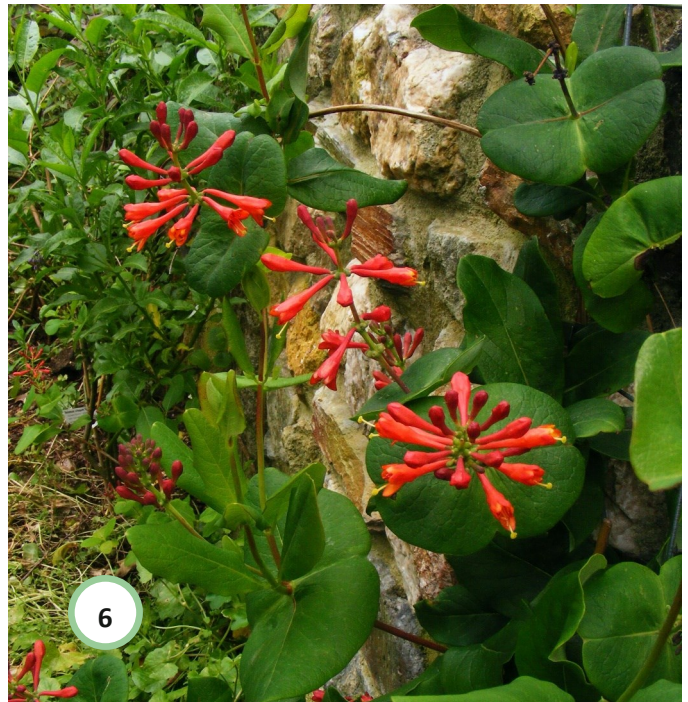
in cooler but well lit places, They don't tend to release scent during the heat of the day, but if the spot you have is sunny then summer flowering **Lonicera etrusca (5)** is the best bet, passing by this on a summers day is a wonderful experience.

If what you are after is colourful flowers over a long period then some of the species from the America's are a good choice, there are some lovely forms of *Lonicera sempervirens* and its easy going hybrid **Lonicera x brownii (6)** from the USA which can flower for 6 months if happy, and I am particularly fond of **Lonicera pilosa (7)** from Mexico which flowers for a long period in summer (and yes like all these so far mentioned its perfectly hardy) although pollinated by Hummingbirds so far we have had no luck attracting these to the garden!

If all you want is to cover something unsightly up, there are some attractive evergreens like **Lonicera henryi (8)**, **Lonicera alseuosmoides (9)**, and *Lonicera japonica* in the form 'Acumen' (10) (which does not suffer from mildew and aphids like other japonica forms)

I must finish with the only species we grow that is not reliably hardy (although some gardens down in Cornwall do get away with it) **Lonicera hilderbrandiana (12)**, this is a huge grower the flowers on mine can have individual scented tubes 18cm or 7" long in whorls and large evergreen leaves.

So if you have "Got a Honeysuckle" consider giving some more a home.



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