



Alpine Garden Society Ulster Group

Plant of the Month, January 2020

Fritillaria camschatcensis - by Harold McBride

This is very variable Fritillary both in flower colour and size.

The flowers may be Yellowish Green, Brown mottled or Black. It has been my experience that the black flowered form reaches around 60cm in the garden while the yellow form rarely exceeds more than 30 cm when in flower.

F. camschatcensis is a native of Western North America from Washington northwards to Alaska, it is also found in Northern Japan, and of course eastern Russia including Kamchatka.

Its preferred habitat is moist open woodland.

I found a Brown mottled form in Oregon flowering in early July; however in my County Antrim garden it flowers in late May or early June. I was once given an attractive dwarf yellow flowered form by the late Eric Watson; he explained he had grown this form from seed collected in Alaska.

Eric, a superb plantsman who gardened in Hexham, had gained major honours on the show bench with this much admired plant. Sadly this form is no longer in my garden; however the black form is well established and seeds around in my humus-rich beds.

Bulbs of *F. camschatcensis* are frequently offered on bulb nursery lists and seed is usually obtainable from the AGS or SRGC seed exchanges.

