

No 14

SalviaNews

Victorian Salvia Study Group
A Branch of the Herb Society of Victoria

September October November 2003

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Spring is here with rain, at last, and hail and gales. And as I write my shade house has a tree from next door on it. The polyhouse is torn by a branch. The insurance people are taking care of the mess but the tree removalists are so busy I have to wait my turn. No idea what is lost yet.

So many interesting people grow salvias, and some of you write to let the rest of us know your experiences.

I feel that we all have something to say and it is this sharing that makes SALNEWS so worthwhile. Please ring me with news or scribble on a bit of paper so we hear from everyone. This is a good way for you folk living too far away to get to meetings to keep us in touch. The deadline for the next issue is early November so I can get underway before Christmas.

We are planning and propagating already for our Salvia Spectacular. The success with salvias in dry conditions make it even more important to show the value of these obliging plants. Propagation workshops are a good way to get to know us, as well as get hands on experience of salvias. Over the page are more details.

Sunday October 19th Country Farm Perennials

Wensley Farm
Laings Road,
Nayook. Melways 528 A5
Vic Roads Country Directory 80 H8

This will be an interesting day and everyone is welcome.

Bring your own picnic lunch: hot drinks provided.

The nursery will be specially opened for us to see the plants and make purchases.

We will all meet at the nursery at 11am.

Anyone requiring transport should ring Jillian Barkell 03 97566361

October Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st Floral Festival Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Hilton Road Ferny Creek.

November 6th Salvias and Survival A talk by Trudi Fry at The Herb Society of Victoria meeting. West Hawthorn Uniting Church Hall, Grove Road (near the corner of Power Street and Barkers Road), 7.45 pm.

November Sunday 16th *November at Nobelius*— This is the last meeting for 2003 and will be our Christmas get together. We plan to set up tables beside the garden under the trees so you can view our lovely salvias. Please bring chairs and picnic food. Members, family and friends welcome.

Sunday November 23rd South Australian Salvia Study Group Salvia Show, Urrbrae House Southern Gardens, Waite Institute. 10am to 4pm. Free entry. Salvias for sale. This will be held in conjunction with the Heritage Rose show.

All Salvia Enthusiasts

Notes for the Salvia Spectacular:

We would like to see participation in our **Salvia Spectacular** on April 3rd and 4th 2004, by all interested members, especially in the display section of 'Salvias for Containers and Small Spaces'!

It will be a fun thing and **EVERYONE** can take part. Let your imagination run wild, show us and the public what can be achieved with the use of a container or hanging basket of salvias.

There are any amount of salvias that lend themselves to pot culture, some examples are *Salvia muiirii*, *S. lanceolata*, *S. semiatrata* and many varieties of *S. microphylla*, see other suggestions below.

I began experimenting on Salvias as pot /container plants and found that there are many that are ideal. Long flowering, good foliage and easy care were the standards I set. The containers were standard 12" black plastic pots and the potting mix a good quick draining type. Because that was an experiment the use of the mediocre looking black pots was just an easy way to start, but the plants are beautiful enough for terracotta. I feed with Maxicrop to start with then Osmocote granules and to give a boost from time to time, with a seaweed based fertiliser. They need water regularly and a sunny spot though some will grow in shade to part shade. All the salvias mentioned have been grown by me in pots for a year or so and of course are equally lovely in the garden where they will grow larger but not huge.

S. Waverly great foliage, pretty pale mauve flowers. Cut spent flowers off and it flowers forever.

S. runcinata insignificant little mauve flowers but wonderful ferny foliage that can be clipped to shape if you wish. I am using it as a border to a formal square Salvia bed.

S. greggii I am growing several with great pleasure. They are all colourful and seem to love pots.

S. microphylla These enjoy pot life too. I have also combined a *S. greggii* with a *S. microphylla* in the same pot to great effect.

S. Marine Blue The bluest of blue flowers and soft looking grey foliage. Nice and tough and also combines well with *S. greggii* or *S. microphylla*.

There is no reason I think, why one can't put two or more different salvias in the one pot to give a contrast in foliage and flowers. At the moment I have *S. dolomitica*, *S. runcinata* and *S. lanceolata* thriving together.

Interest has been shown in Salvia Propagation Workshops. These will be held at Trudi's garden in Selby, in small groups, during October and November. There is ample space, plenty of tables, tubes and appropriate potting mix available and it will be held indoors in the studio. Afternoon tea supplied.

You will learn several propagation techniques, taking cuttings from a variety of salvias from the garden.

Bring secateurs and a box to carry home your trophies. All we ask is that a proportion of these plants will be donated for sale by the Salvia Study Group at The Salvia Spectacular on April 3rd and 4th 2004.

Ring Trudi on 9754 4041 to make a booking. We will welcome you all and arrange times and dates to suit

Visiting Other Gardens

Looking at my salvias in August many were not in flower, having been cut down or pruned. Some pot plants had died, probably from over-watering. I therefore decided to discuss my recent visits to other gardens.

Elly Roos Garden. This was one of the best salvia gardens I had seen when we visited it in June. Some of the wonderful salvias unknown to me were: *Salvia tingitana*, a large sprawling plant which reminded me of *S. sclarea* with its lovely white flowers I was also struck by the beauty of *S. curtiflora* with its deeply red flowers.

I was also delighted to see in her garden most of the common sage (*S. officinalis*) neatly planted beside each other in a group. But I was quite stunned to see *S. officinalis Tricolor* growing amongst them so healthily and happily, when I have been trying for 12 years to grow it without success. It seemed to be saying to me : "Look , these are the growing conditions I need to survive". Of all the cultivars known to me in Victoria, the only one missing from this group was *S. officinalis Berrgarten*. Because I have one of these to spare, I have arranged for it to be transferred to Elly for inclusion in her collection.

Geelong Botanic Gardens. I recently visited these superb gardens to see the salvias planted in several large new beds were confined solely to this genus. I was delighted to see many splendid salvias which I did not myself possess. A staff member told me they were considering an approach to the OPCAA to have their collection processed for registration. If achieved it would certainly put salvias on display for the public in Geelong.

Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens. It was a pleasure to meet other Salvia Study Group members, together with a staff member of these gardens, whose major interest was the Herb Garden there. We were shown around this area and then escorted through the garden complex to see the isolated salvia species scattered throughout its huge area.

In the Californian section we saw a large group planting of *Salvia apiana*. These plants appeared to have been there for some years and the ground was so dry it made me feel thirsty and they looked wonderful. Also called 'BeeSage' and White Sage. The species name is obtained from the Latin term "apis" meaning bee, and Clebsch in her book states that apiarists, or bee keepers have long known of the bees love of the nectar in its flowers.

Another group of plantings in the same Californian sector contained *Salvia mellifera*. Again Clebsch suggests the species name is derived from the Latin term "mel" meaning honey. The local beekeepers were again well aware of the nectar and pollen source from *S. mellifera*. I cannot determine why it was also called Black Sage and I wonder if anyone knows. (Maybe just because there was a white sage?). It appears from reading Clebsch's book about these two salvias, they don't need any water in order to survive. They certainly don't appear to need any where we found them in these gardens.

Bill Whitehead

Eltham News

Well, I've had my first winter with my salvias and we had quite a few frosts in my area but they didn't fare too badly. *Salvia discolor* was the worst hit but still looks as if it will recover quite well. I had pruned some down a fair bit so there really wasn't a lot to be affected and now they are already starting to put on a little growth.

Salvia dorisiana bloomed for the first time and it is BIG. Because I thought it wanted some protection I planted it in a less than suitable position so it taking up much more space than I allowed it but it is a really lovely plant, very lush. My two plants of *S. gesneriifolia* have been delightful and much admired by everyone who sees them. (I had some overseas relatives who couldn't believe their eyes at the colour combination). *S. 'Omaha Gold'* was completely unaffected by the frosts and looks great, as does *S. apiana*. I've added several *S. iodantha* to my garden, just little ones, so it will be a while before I see anything exciting from them.

I was fortunate to procure a large trailer of cow manure for nothing which I spread over the whole garden, the only trouble is the 'nothing' has turned into the thickest crop of green from the grass seeds you have ever seen. Because of the amount of rain we've had over the last few months it is too wet to pull them out yet as it takes half the soil as well. Oh, well - live and learn. I'm really looking forward to my first full summer of my salvias.

Paddy Childs Green

Salvias through the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

Our walk through the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, Sunday August 17th, was conducted by Renee Weirzbicki, who looks after the Herb Garden, amongst other areas. A wonderful day which got off to a great start with Renee greeting us in the Herb Garden with piping hot Sage tea served in a china teapot and cute little china cups.

Although it was the last month of winter one could see evidence of spring just around the corner, new shoots about to burst on everything, even dormant salvias like the Chinese Red Sage, *Salvia miltiorrhiza* showed the emergence of bronze new leaves. *Salvia uliginosa*, having been cut back real hard, was springing back to life but no signs of *S. przewalskii* or *S. trijuga* who must be sulking because of the cold.

The Herb Garden held much interest with a backdrop of larger trees and shrubs of great value to mankind one way or another, some are listed here because one wouldn't normally think of useful trees and shrubs when in the herb garden.

Prunus serotina, Wild Black Cherry; *Illicium parviflorum*, Yellow Star Anise; *Chimonanthus yunnanensis*; *Leptospermum patersonii*, Lemon-scented Tea Tree; *Illicium anisatum*, Japanese Anise; *Cercus siliquastrum*, Judas Tree; *Cinnamomum camphora*, Camphor Laurel; *Pittosporum phylliraeoides*, Weeping Pittosporum and of course what herb garden would be complete without a Bay Tree, *Lauris nobilis*.

Amongst other plants were: *Canna indica*, *Elettaria cardamomum*, Cardamom; *Eupomatia laurina* 'Bolwarra' and the beautifully fragrant *Heliotropium arborescens*, 'Lord Roberts', Cherry Pie with striking dark leaves and purple flowers. There were all the usual plants one would expect to find in the herb garden and then there were the Salvias!

There is a good range of Salvias throughout the gardens and quite an extensive range of medicinal Salvias in the Herb Garden as one can see by the following list:

Salvia scabra, *S. stenophylla*, *S. runcinata*, *S. fruticosa*, *S. fruticosa* 'Greek Skies', *S. miltiorrhiza*, *S. chiapensis*, *S. involucrata*, *S. lyrata*, *S. elegans* 'Pineapple' and *S. elegans* 'Honeymelon', *S. sclarea*, *S. officinalis*, *S. off.* Purpurescens, *S. off.* Icterina and *S. off.* Berggarten, *S. pratensis*, *S. microphylla* var *neurepia* commonly known as Grahams Sage or Grahamii, *S. disermis* and *Salvia tiliifolia* (an annual) has seeded and died off, hopefully there will be hundreds of babies coming up in the spring, a worthwhile salvia to have in any garden.

The Botanic Gardens have plenty of scope for additional salvias which will take place in the future, the ones we saw are listed below.

[Personal comments marked with an * are detailed at the end of the article]

Salvia apiana, *S. africana-lutea*, *S. canariensis*, *S. corrugata* *, *S. discolor*, *S. dolichantha*, *S.* 'Indigo Spires', *S. karwinskii*, *S. karwinskii* 'Verdi' (the green calyx form of the species), *S. leucantha*, *S. leucophylla*, *S. mellifera* *, *S. munzii*, *S. nemerosa* 'Ost Friesland', *S. mubicola*, *S. polystachya*, *S. pratensis*, *S. spathacea*, *S. plectranthoides* * and *Salvia wagneriana*, was found in the Residence Garden, hidden from view.

There were many repeats of *Salvia* species growing throughout the gardens adding leaf contrast to existing plants and looked quite happy and at home.

- *Salvia corrugata*: Having seen a very good plant of *S. corrugata* up in the *Pinus radiata* bed, one plant with a very wide spread which had layered in many directions but there was shock, horror when a few people saw the same species in another area that had been hard pruned and I mean hard. In fact it had been cut right to the ground. This is going to be a very interesting ongoing observation to see how well it recovers! [After two weeks there were signs of new shoots emerging from the base, ideally it was in the right position, part shade with slight moisture which is always a bonus when plants are hard pruned; so far I would say it was quite successful and an experiment we can all learn from.]
- *Salvia plectranthoides* has been removed from the Southern Chinese Collection because of its weed potential in these conditions ie. full sun, good soil and water. Check this species out in your own gardens!! We all have to watch out for species that may be prone to weediness and not spread problems to other gardens. *Continued over page*

* *Salvia mellifera* which grows beautifully up in the Californian Garden looks quite different to the species we have in our gardens. I have read that some species can be quite promiscuous eg. *S. munzii*, *S. clevelandii* and *S. mellifera* and trying to sort them out can be a very daunting task. Anyway, the plant of *S. mellifera* in the RBG looks different in several ways; flowers are much bluer (ours are palest blue-white wash), fragrance lacks the camphorous odour but has a hint of *S. clevelandii* fragrance and leaf shape is somewhat shorter and of a thinner texture. The clumps of *S. mellifera* nearby are from propagated pieces and from seed of the parent plant, these too are quite different; very compact growth and leaves wider than the parent, glossy, bright green and with very little fragrance.

It will be interesting to view these at a later date when they start to flower.

The Salvia Study Group will keep in touch to see the results and to swap species.

Other salvias in the Californian bed were well complimented with quite a number of hardy, unusual plants from Nth America, one in particular was the Buckeye, *Aesculus californica* and a range of interesting *Ceanothus* varieties including one with white fluffy flowers and there were many other plants, too numerous to mention.

The White Sage, *Salvia apiana* looks like it has been growing in this area for many, many years, especially when you see the thickness of the trunk. Matt Flynn, the minder of this section has done a great job with the pruning and several clumps of *S. apiana* are happily reshooting from the base and along the stems. Wisely, Matt has cut alternate stems which gives the rest of the plant time to recover and grow... especially considering the age of these plants.

Salvia munzii is a relatively new addition, so too is *Salvia spathacea* which takes pride of place at the entrance to the Californian Garden.

The day was also a great get-together not only to see the plants but to catch up with friends. Once again we caught up with Des Lawrence from Geelong Botanic Gardens who brought along his son Alexander and our good friend Bill Whitehead... this little trio is becoming a popular sight at many of the Salvia Study Group activities and it is great to see! You too can bring a friend... get involved... enjoy plants together.

Anyone visiting the Gardens should also take a look at the hardy plants used throughout these gardens, get ideas and see the range of plants that will adapt to our dryer climate especially up in the Grey Garden where all manner of grey hardy plants are utilized. *Salvia canariensis* and *Salvia discolor* have adapted really well as grey-leaved plants, other hardy salvias could be included like *Salvia chamaedryoides*, *S. africana-caerulea*, *S. africana-lutea*, *S. chamelaeagnea* and *S. lanceolata*, all of which flower for extended periods, throughout the year.

It is interesting to note that while the Royal Botanic Gardens are exempt from water restrictions, they do monitor their water use and have certain garden beds laid out with plants that use a minimum of water, like the Water Conservation Garden for which they play a leading role in water conservation.

Having been nominated in two categories in the recent Save Water awards, the RBG Melbourne won The Sustainable Garden and Garden Design/Construction category for its Water Conservation Garden. Well done!

Meg Bentley

A Garden in Tyabb

As the salvia section of our garden is not yet 12 months old, this has been the first winter for these plants. With rainfall back to normal and heavy soil it has been a real test, one I suspect several plants have failed.

Our garden is situated about midway between Port Phillip and Western Port, slightly elevated on a hill, just under 100 metres above sea level. Consequently the winter is quite mild and the cold air drains down the hill leaving the area near the house frost-free. (only 1 frost on the ground in 7 years).

Although the 900m² Salvia garden is surrounded by a 2.4 metre hedge, it gets little protection from the wind and damage is constant. Due to illness I was not in the garden for about a month from early June and when I finally got out again I was confronted not only with a weed garden but a fine collection of prostrate salvias, most of which are normally upright!

Salvia longispicata, *S. urica*, *S. pulchella*, *S. mellifera*, *S. lyrata* and *S. iodantha* are all showing signs of distress but will probably recover. However the future of *S. mexicana* 'Lolly Jackson', *S. splendens* 'Van Houttei' and *S. buchananii* is much less certain. *Continued next page*

Now for the good news! Both *S. microphylla* 'Huntington' and *S. elegans* 'Honey Melon', in spite of being knocked down almost to ground level have flowered constantly throughout the winter, continuing into September. (Huntington from early April and 'Honey Melon' from May) Others to have flowered in at least 4 months of autumn/winter includes *S. leucantha*, *S. Agnes*, *S. Anthony Parker*, *S. corrugata*, *S. Costa Rica Blue*, *S. dolomitica*, and *S. semi-atrata*. Of course not all of these have been in full flush for the entire period but they have continued to produce. *S. gesneraeflora* 'Tequila' has been quite spectacular since June and is still going although another planted not all that far away has been pretty ordinary.

One of the very few salvias I have had for several years, *Salvia africana lutea*, started to flower again in late August. I do like its unusual colour. I am still inexperienced enough not to have seen the flower of some of our salvias and as they begin to form, I often check them daily – *S. spathacea* is currently teasing me. I hope it flowers before the wind causes too much damage.

Bevan Whelan

News From Werri Beach NSW

Since our 30ins. of rain, we have had very little more. Plus we've had some of the most violent wind we've experienced here, which you may have read about. Luckily, we escaped without too much damage but lots of debris which I have since mulched. However the last couple of weeks have seen very drying westerly winds which have taken away the green tinge and left us longing for some decent rain to freshen up the garden. I am down to my last drops of tank water so hopefully it will rain again soon.

Not many salvias are flowering apart from *Salvia dolomitica* of which I have a few propagated from the original, and *S. africana-lutea* with its unusual rusty flowers. Another plant similar to *S. africana-lutea* but with what I call 'antique pink' flowers is seldom without a flower but its name escapes me. (*I think it is S. lanceolata*. *Antique pink is a good colour description.. Trudi*)

I think I have finally found the right place for *S. Costa Rican Blue*. I had been watering it too often until I realised it might need a semi-shaded spot here and moved one plant one metre to a new spot and it hasn't looked back.

The same with *S. purpurea* which was close to a *Melaleuca* and needing far too much water. I have moved it next to a white native *Hibiscus* and I hope they will complement each other.

S. Purple Majesty has been badly burnt by the wind so I have cut it right back to its new shoots and it will be okay. *S. involucrata Bethelii* and *S. madrensis* have both been pruned after flowering for some time. Two deciduous plants of *S. rubicola* and *S. regla* have not reappeared yet but I am still hopeful.

There is new growth on all the *S. microphyllas* with some beginning to flower and *S. mexicana* lime calyx has recovered after I had given it quite a severe prune.

S. melissadora is still flowering but suffering a bit from the wind and lack of water. I think I will have to mulch more heavily for the coming summer if I am to keep some of the salvias growing well.

I recently purchased some of the herbaceous species like *S. superba* East Friesland and also *S. taraxacifolia*, *S. forskahlei* and *S. spathacea* to plant in a new bed at the bottom of the garden. I'm hoping that being lower growing and clumping they will be able to cope with the winds that seem to plague us from every direction.

Luckily most of the salvias seem to cope with the wind and the salt and it's only the really big blows that affect some.

Having watched for some time the little honey eaters flying back and forth between *S. madrensis* and *S. Elegans Purple*, I collected some seed from both, to see what happens. I have struck several varieties to give to friends and as contributions to the Trading Table at Garden Club.

Not many members of our club or other gardeners in our town seem to grow many salvias but I have been walking past a garden on my way to the shops which has a tall 'lolly pink' plant which I don't have. I have been waiting for someone to appear so I can ask for a bit but there never seems to be anyone there. I will have to ask around ; some one will know them! I think they're new although the garden was already planted.

When we get some rain, I'll give all of my plants a boost of some blood and bone and a decent mulch to help them through what's looking like a hot summer. **Maureen Cox**

News from Stratford in Gippsland

Glad to see the end of frosts but wish this wind would stop.

I found this winter the frosts hit my bigger salvias whereas the new ones I planted out in May from tubes have all survived. I put green shade cloth on 4 sides of the garden bed and the little salvias all seem to be protected from jack frost. Tomorrow we head off to Mt Macedon to rare plant fair with over 18 nurseries. Hopefully I will find more salvias I haven't got. I hope everyone's salvias survived winter. Till next time.

Jane Lee

Salvia Seed Available		Books for Sale
<i>Salvia nubicola</i>	<i>S. sclarea</i>	<p>We have the 2 books of Christine Yeo for sale at \$20 each to members. Christine has a NCCPG Salvia collection in South Devon and has been collecting and growing salvias since 1978. She is generous with her knowledge as we discovered when she visited several of our gardens a few years ago. The books contain clear, concise description of the plants.</p> <p>A guide to Growing Salvias In Southern Australia</p> <p>A Reference to Medicinal & Culinary Uses of Salvias Currently Available in Australia</p> <p>Booklets from SA at \$2 each</p>
<i>S. coccinea alba</i>	<i>S. viscosa</i>	
<i>S. greggii 'Fulham's Red'</i>	<i>S. officinalis</i>	
<i>S. coccinea 'Lady in Red'</i>	<i>S. officinalis rosea</i>	
<i>S. 'Pink Sunday'</i>	<i>S. discermis</i>	
<i>S. jamensis Sierra Pink</i>	<i>S. greggii bicolor</i>	
<i>S. lyrata</i>	<i>S. coccinea bicolor</i>	
<i>S. mexicana 'Limelight'</i>	<i>S. fruticosa</i>	
<p>Contact Lyndi Garnett ph 9803 4534 or buy at a VSSG Workshop 844 Highbury St Seeds 50c with a stamped self addressed envelope Glen Waverly 3150</p>		

5 Star Salvias

This of course, is a totally biased opinion as will be future articles in this series, unless other people write in with their views. So *Salvia chiapensis* from the Chiapas Province of Mexico, flowers bright, hot pink, leaves dark green and glossy is the first candidate. It is, in my garden a sprawling bush about 75cm tall and has won battles with various weeds including couch, unwatered, unsheltered and treasured for its ability to cheer me up. It is producing some suckers and good propagating material ready for the Spectacular. Grown as a pot plant it really stars and forms a very pretty bush. One of its greatest charms is that it flowers all the year round. Easy to propagate, easy to grow, charming to look at and absolutely no trouble. A star but not a prima donna!

In NSW I saw it growing and thriving in several gardens in the Illawarra and in my sisters cottage garden west of Sydney. Now my sister pets her plants, (as she does her little sister), so this *S. chiapensis* was a glossy hot pink metre x metre and laughing at frost.

I can imagine it combined with *S. Purple Majesty* or *S. Black Knight* to add real impact to a garden. Mine has to make do with a lovely dark blue plectranthus as well as assorted dark green foliage plants.

I say it is tough but in other countries it is regarded as very tender and to be brought in to shelter in the winter. What do you think?

Trudi Fry

News From The Otways

We are having a classically wet winter here in the Otways, 1000ml so far, right on target for our average 1500ml, after several drier years. However this does not necessarily mean good salvia growing conditions, so all you who want more rain, as Paul Kelly sings "be careful what you pray for, you just might get it". As I have said, it's easier to add water than to add sunlight, which is what most salvias prefer.

My current list is 103 species, several of which are sheltering in the glasshouse. I have also done a 'lost list' of about 50, mainly the smaller, pretty ones. In fact looking at Christine Yeo's books I realise this includes almost all the Old World group 1, basal rosettes, including all my Chinese species, many of the Old World Group 2, shrubby perennials and annuals from Morocco around to Turkey and Greece, and 22 New World, such as *Ss.vaseyi*, *sonomensis*, all the *greggii*'s, etc. The chief problem is heavy soils and constant winter wet, even though being at the top of a big hill, it does drain away. Strong winds also play havoc, and more cold and rain in spring just as the dormant ones are sticking their heads up, or getting new leaves.

On the plus side I am planting more salvias into the main garden, *Salvia rubescens* is doing well in two places, *Ss. munzii*, *somalensis* and *S. lanceolata* and *S.chiapensis* are happily re-established, The bower birds broke S.Anthony Parker's arms, but they are reshooting, S.Agnes is shivering nearby, S.Marine Blue is bright even on grey days, but *S.miniata* and *S.glechomifolia* are now leafless.

Now for news of those I grew from seed collected in Europe. *Salvia glutinosa* [or is it *napiifolia*?] flowered well without setting seed and is now shooting. *S.forskaloehii alba* is proving as tough as her blue sister, and did set seed, as did the *S.sclarea alba* [or is it *macrosiphon*?] which grew into a huge snowy white cloud before collapsing in a mouldy heap. *S.algeriensis*, which is an annual, grew quickly with its cute blue sickle shaped flowers but died without setting seed. I lost *S.patens* lavender lady, syn chilcombe in the garden early to slugs but still have one in a pot, The *S. fruticosa* or *triloba* from Sicily grew splendidly on the rock wall until someone cut a piece off it in wet weather, which is frequently terminal in this species, and it has died off apart from one shabby shoot. Fortunately I have struck strong cuttings and collected seed, but this is likely to have crossed. The *S.fruticosa* types from Switzerland are looking similar to Greek Skies and will flower soon, as will the extra vigorous forms of *S.officinalis* with very strongly textured and scented leaves.

And the little rosette which came from the prickly seed head from Monte Sicula in central Sicily has defied my odds and grown slowly but steadily, and is now about to flower.

Judi Forrester

Judi Forrester's Salvia List September 2003

S. Agnes	S. "Margaret's Rose"	S. africana lutea	S. cacaliafolia
S. 'Bluebird'	S. "Phyllis Fancy"	S. apiana	S. canariensis
S. "Anthony Parker"	S. "Red Dragon"	S. bertowii	
S. "Black Knight"	S. africana lutea	S. buchananii	
S. chamedryoides	S. karvinskii	S. muelleri	S. rugosa
S. chameleagnea	S. lanceolata	S. munzii	S. runcinata
S. chiapensis	S. lavandulifolia	S. murrii	S. scabra
S. cimabarina	S. lavanduloides	S. nilotica	S. sclarea var
S. clevelandii	S. leucantha	S. nutans	turkestanica
S. coahuilensis	S. leucantha white form	S. officinalis	S. scutellariodes
S. confertiflora	S. leucophylla	S. officinalis 'icterina'	S. somalensis
S. corrugata	S. lycoides	S. officinalis	S.sp Chiapas Mtns
S. discolor	S. lyrata	"Berggarten"	S. sp Monte Sicula
S. disjuncta	S. madrensis	S. officinalis albiflora	S. spathacea
S. dolomitica	S. mellifera	S. officinalis	S. sprucei
S. elegans	S. mexicana 'Limelight	purpurescens	S. taraxicifolia
S. elegans	Samexicana 'limelight'	S.officinalis rosea	S. thymoides
'Honeymelon'	S.mexicana 'Lolly'	S. officinalis tricolor	S. tomentosa
S. fallax	S. mexicana major	S. officinalis Willow	S. uliginosa
S. forskaloehii	S. microphylla 'baby	S. Omaha Gold Costa	S. wagneriana
S. fruticosa	sage'	Rica Blue	S. 'Waverley'
S. gesneraeiflora	S. microphylla 'graham	S.patens	S. x fruticosa
S. glechomafolia	sage'	S. patens 'Chilcombe'	'Adriatic'
S. glutinosa	S. microphylla	S. plectranthoides	S. x fruticosa 'Greek
S. greggii 'Coral'	'Huntingdon'	S. polystachya	skies
S. guaranítica	S. microphylla var	S. puberula	S. xalapensis
S. hirtella	microphylla	S. pulchella	
S. 'Indigo spires'	S.microphylla var	S. repens	
S. involucrata	neurepia	S. roemeriana	
S. involucrata 'Bethelii'	S. miltiorrhiza	S. rubescens	
	S. miniata	S. rubiginosa	

NOTES FROM GRUYERE September 2003

Spring has sprung, things are definitely on the move, daffodils, jonquils, bluebells and the ever-faithful freesias are blooming along with the last of the Daphne and Winter Buddleia. Everything seems to be so very early including the deliciously fragrant blooms of the Native Daphne, *Pittosporum undulatum*. I really must get a another plant of *Boronia* to replace the few we lost, they did have a good innings as far as boronias go giving us joy for five or six years in the native garden.

The ants too are stirring, now that the ground is starting to warm... the Echidnas know this and some areas of the lawn and the bush are beginning to look like mini excavation areas where they've been digging large holes and caverns, feasting on ants.

Birds have also been busy, chasing each other, serenading their partner and building nests. Especially the little bush wrens who have a fondness for nesting behind me in the potting shed, whether it be in pots or baskets, they nest there every spring.

There are a great many salvias still in flower in the garden, others just starting to flower, the winter dormant species are showing signs of new growth along the stems and basal shoots emerging from the herbaceous perennials although the winter rains have been very light (almost like drizzle) the garden has had a drink and the water tanks are all full so spring is starting out a little in front compared to other years when we've had to wait and wait for the rains to come.

This is the list of salvias flowering at the moment:

Salvia sprucei, *S. corrugata*, *S. karwinskii*, *S. lavanduloides*, *S. wagneriana* including the pale form, *S. Costa Rican Blue*, *S. scutellarioides*, *S. gesneraeflora* and *S. gesneraeflora Tequila*, *S. africana-lutea*, *S. africana-caerulea*, *S. chiapensis*, *S. munzii*, *S. fallax*, *S. dorisiana*, *S. confertiflora*, *S. discolor*, *S. rubiginosa*, *S. semiatrata*, *S. involucrata*, *S. elegans* Honeymelon, *S. iodantha*, *S. Van Houttii*, *S. involucrata x karwinskii* 'Romantic Rose', *S. 'Blue Bird*, *S. involucrata x karwinskii* 'Timboon' and 'Winter Red' and the remaining few blooms of *S. 'Anthony Parker*', *S. 'Phyllis Fancy*', *S. 'Indigo Spires*', *S. leucantha*, *S. Waverley*, *S. glechomaefolia* and *S. involucrata* 'Pink Icicles'.

Salvia patens is chuffing along at full steam from the ground so too is *Salvia transsylvanica*, *S. hians* is up and away. It is always a joy to see *S. regia* reshoot after winter. You always wonder if in fact it has really gone to heaven.

A final note re *Salvia runcinata*... it has now been confirmed by Ian Hedge of Edinburgh Botanic Gardens, Scotland, that what we have been growing as *S. namaensis* is in fact *Salvia runcinata*, this species is very variable and the specimens of *S. namaensis* sent to him were slightly different forms of *S. runcinata*.

The true *S. namaensis* looks very similar except it is shrubby and the new growth can be quite furry along the stems.

Meg Bentley

Remark News

My original Salvias are still in their pots and I now have a clutch of young ones as well. They have all survived the frosts including the potted on cuttings placed under my one and only tree. It looks like they will soon have a permanent home at last as the house that I have had my eye on, is about to come onto the market. Hurray! I hope we don't get any more frosts as ever impatient I have gone round and trimmed the plants of old bedraggled foliage ready for spring. Most have already started to shoot again. *Salvia dolomitica* has flowered for the first time and *S. karwinski* and *S. pulchella* have looked stunning all through winter.

Mary Ann Dyer

Spring has Sprung at Lemon Tree Cottage

The garden is now unrecognisable from five months ago. The only salvias left unpruned are the five Karvinskii forms I have. *Salvia involucrata x karvinskii* has been deleted. I was not happy with its shape and growth pattern. Beautiful flowers but the birds broke nearly all the branches off. The *Salvia karvinskii* have less brittle more flexible branches.

With *Salvia involucrata x karvinskii* gone the new corner area in the front has *Camellias japonica* 'Lemon Drop', an unnamed pink variety and 2 *C. sasanqua* for privacy. The *lasiandra* is still there but I am contemplating its removal. The next layer planted is *Salvia* 'Phyllis Fancy', *S. guaranitica* 'Black and Blue', *S. semi-atrata*, *S. microphylla* deep pink form, *S. longispicata* and *S. disermis*. This garden bed has been hedged with *S. scabra* ready to be a picture in late spring.

With nice new healthy shoots coming from the base of *Salvia leucantha* it was time to cut back the old growth. All the *S.* 'Marine Blue' have been cut back, divided and some transplanted to other areas of the garden. This is an absolutely fabulous plant, the small grey foliage with the deep blue flowers makes a great low hedging plant and is very drought tolerant. I would recommend it this one as an alternative to lavender, less maintenance and one pruning a year preferably mid to late August. I have pruned most Spring/Summer salvias to between ground level and 3 feet in height depending on the variety. Otherwise you end up with large woody oversized shrubs. Pruning encourages lots of fresh new basal growth and keeps the plant visually at its optimum.

Mind you, there are some I would not prune so severely unless I could see new growth coming from the base. The temperamental ones include *Salvia greggii*, *S.* 'Black Knight' *S.* 'Purple Majesty' amongst others.

Over the past month with all the prunings I've propagated as many as possible leaving the grey leaved ones until the warmer months. I don't have the facilities to do any of these earlier. Putting all the pruning through the mulcher is such a waste so I try to propagate as much as possible ready for the Open Garden as well as for friends and relatives.

On the first day of Spring I visited some local nurseries looking for something new on the market but alas came home only with 2 new miniature camellias; *C. lutchensis* x *C. sasanqua* 'Scented Gem' and *C.* miniature 'Wee Lachlan', both white. I have become very fond of white camellias. I now have ten!

Now that the salvias are pruned the collection of daffodils have a chance to show their happy faces. I am literally bursting at the seams with excitement with the coming of spring and looking forward to the changes in the garden. There is always some hidden surprise.

Happy Gardening. Elly Roos

Write This Date In Your Diary

SALVIA SPECTACULAR April 3 & 4. 2004. at Ferny Creek.

The Herb Society of South Australia Incorporated.
Post Office Box 140, Fullarton, South Australia 5063.

The South Australian Salvia Study Group Report

Thankfully the rain has finally arrived. Our gardens have heaved a collective sigh of relief. We are now on stage one water restrictions for the foreseeable future. Although it is still to impact on most as we are still in winter and the rain has been plentiful.

At our Salvia Show on 23rd November, we will be emphasizing dry tolerant salvias more. We believe that many people will begin to review the types of plants in their gardens as a result of the water restrictions.

One of our community garden projects was the planting of a selection of salvias at a local primary school (Kidman Park Primary). They have here an 'Indian Village' which is used by schools throughout the state in teaching about the Indian sub-continent.

We planted mostly dry tolerant salvias from around the world. The site faces north in full sun. A planting of vetiver grass acts as a windbreak. The area was tended regularly by one of our members with periodic working bees by the Society. However, time constraints and other activities have now resulted in us leaving it to the grounds-man to water and weed the area. Continued over page

Since leaving it to the staff to tend (18 months), the area has not been weeded, fertilized or watered at all. Of course some of the salvias have died. It is interesting, however, to see what has remained. When you consider that Adelaide receives an average rainfall of 585 mm, last year we received only half that! Many of the salvias were seemingly on their last legs but with the recent rains, many have sprung back to life.

The best performers are: *Salvia broussonetii* - growing well and in full flower. *S. namibia* - in full flower and spreading. *S. somaliensis* - 2 metres high and well grown. *S. disermis* - flowering and spreading. *S. 'pseudo mutans'* - 1.5 metres high. No one knows the true name of this salvia. *S. microphylla* 'White Blush' - nearly died but now growing well and in flower.

The following have survived and are slowly recovering: *S. canariensis* - very small. Was shaded by a neighbouring tree branch but now that has been removed and it is receiving more light. *S. 'Marine Blue'* - small but beginning to flower. *S. africana-lutea* - only ½ metre high with flowers. *S. microphylla* 'Cyclamen' - 40cm high. *S. microphylla var. neurepia* - ½ metre high with flowers.

The salvias listed above can be relied upon to perform well in very dry areas. With the addition of some TLC and water they would of course do better. They are all highly recommended.

Best wishes from South Australia.

Anthony Medcalf

SE Queensland Salvia News - 6/9/03

The winter flowering salvias are almost finished – what a display they make. I have been busy planting some of the salvias I acquired whilst visiting Melbourne in June. I enjoyed meeting Arja Toivanen at her nursery at Hurstbridge where I was able to find a few salvias I didn't have. The next day I enjoyed a visit to Elly Roos's delightful garden at Upwey. What a display for a winter garden in Melbourne! I suggested to Elly that she should open with Australia's Open Garden Scheme at this time of year to show what can be achieved in a cold climate during winter. There were still some standard roses flowering and under these sheets of salvias – what a sight!

Some of the cuttings and plants that I have been able to introduce into Queensland are:

S. karwinskii x involucrata Romantic Rose, *S. karwinskii* winter red, *S. karwinskii* tall grey, *S. jamensis* la luna, *S. thymoides*, *S. taraxacifolia* – these two will need a well drained and dry spot I suspect. Also *S. curtiflora*, *S. greggii* Fulhams red, *S. microphylla* Ever Red Ruby (this seems to be more pink than red and looks very similar to *S. microphylla* cyclamen).

It was great to catch up with another member of the Victorian group, Pat Anderson from Warrandyte. Our children were at school together many years ago! I didn't have time to see Pat's garden but she was able to give me either

cuttings or plants of *S. Bluebird*, *S. spathacea*, *S. nilotica*, *S. verticillata* Purple Gem, *S. hirtella*, *S. semi atrata* and *S. roemeriana*. All looking healthy at the moment however the humid weather is the test!

I'm looking forward to a trip to the south island of New Zealand in November with The Cottage Garden Club in Sydney. Sue Perkins will lead the group so I am certain it will be a lot of fun. Hopefully I will see a good selection of salvias.

Barb Wickes

Nurseries Supplying Salvias

Suburban & Country

Nurseries

Apple Cottage
RMB 834 Beaufort 3373
Ph. 53492396

Briarwood
15 Eastmead Rd.
Croydon 3136
Ph. 03 97252651

Cloverleigh Cottage
PO Box 8000 Neerim Sth. 3831
Val Jones Ph. 5628431
Marg Den 56284259 / 56281321

Cloudehill Nursery
Olinda/Monbulk Rd.
Ph. 97511009

Country Farm Perennials
96 Laings Rd. Nayook. 3821
Ph. 56284202

Diggers Seeds
105 Latrobe Pde. Dromana 3936
Ph. 59871877

Gentiana Nursery
138 Olinda/Monbulk Rd.
Olinda 3788. Ph. 97512163

Good Scents Nursery
RMB 5977. Buln Buln 3821
Ph. 56268561

Herbs and Cottage Plants Nursery
Arja Toivanen
Main Rd. Hurstbridge 3099
Ph. 97182249

Larkman Nursery [Mail Order]
Di's Delightful Plants
7 Jurat Rd. Lilydale 3140
Ph. 97354286

Mistydowns
5/5 Dalesford / Clunes Rd.
Kingston 3364. Ph. 53456575

Otway Herbs
Biddles Rd via Wild Dog Rd.
Apollo Bay 3233
Ph. 52376318

PGA Nursery [wholesale]
3 Harris Rd. Wonga Park
Ph. 97221444

Rosemont Nursery
Stephanie Storey
Mt. Dandenong Tourist Rd.
Montrose 3765
Ph. 97282222

NSW Nurseries

Hazelwood Gardens
Ferguson Crs.
Mittagong 2575
Ph. 02 48722458

Cooramilla Farm & Cottage Nursery
Browns Creek 2799
Ph. 02 63665094

Unlimited Perennials
369 Boomerang Drv
Lavington 2641
Ph. 02 60254585

South Australian Nurseries

Hillside Herbs
Sand Rd. McLaren Vale
Ph. 08 82328385

Perfumed Garden
559 Portrush Rd.
Glenunga
Ph. 08 83971596

Richardsons Garden Nursery
Naroo Tarn
Lot 37
McLaren Vale
Ph. 08 83238804

These are just a few nurseries who stock Salvias, let us know if you come across other suppliers and we can add them to the list.

Salvias are also sold by members of the Victorian Salvia Study Group.