



SalviaNews

Victorian Salvia Study Group
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A LETTER FROM YOUR EDITOR

I ring around to the wonderful people who write for SALVIA NEWS to remind/beg them to write, no one takes any notice of deadlines. Anyway, I get the opportunity to talk to such a wide range of interesting folk over such a wide range of garden conditions so I don't mind. We are all united by our passion for gardening and determination to grow something beautiful to feast our eyes and feed our souls. I know how hard it is for farmers and my heart aches in sympathy. As a child of the Depression, followed by the war years, I can only remember saving water as a normal part of life, along with Ration Books, collecting metal scraps and giving our 'excess' saucepans for the 'War Effort', and doing without so many things. No matter how tough things got Mum always had her garden and I realize now, how that helped her and indeed the rest of us to cope. There were vegetables grown too of course, but it was her roses, salvias, violets that I remember. Funny, that I took food for granted, but remember the flowers most.

We all have our strategies to help our gardens survive. May we all have success and let it rain! let it rain! Peace Love and Blessings be yours for Christmas and 2007.

Trudi Fry

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007

FEBRUARY 17th & 18th. PLANT COLLECTORS SALE (SEE FLYER)

**AT THE FERNY CREEK HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY GARDEN
100 HILTON ROAD FERNY CREEK MELWAY REFERENCE 66 E 12**

WE WILL BE THERE!!

THE SALVIA STUDY GROUP WILL HAVE SALVIAS FOR SALE

**THERE WILL BE WORKING BEES AT HAMPTON AND NOBELIUS . PLEASE
RING LYNDI PH. 9803 4534 FOR DATES.**

**MARCH 18TH. A VISIT TO LYLE FELIPE'S NURSERY AND GARDEN IS BEING
PLANNED**

MORE GARDEN VISITS ARE ALSO IN THE PLANNING STAGES.

MARK DYMOTIS GARDEN WILL BE OPEN MARCH 2008

SALVIAS IN MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC.

Salvias were a fairly late addition to our garden as when we first married our plans were to concentrate on Australian plants. There were a some very interesting nurseries supplying some wonderful and less well known native plants, Schuberts in Noble Park for example. Over the years we found that many of the plants we liked best did not grow in our conditions. After moving to our present Mount Waverley garden some thirty years ago, we still persisted and imported quite a lot of sand to attempt to replicate the sandy areas of Western Australia but our plants did not flourish.

Gradually exotics were introduced and now, although we have still a smattering of Australian plants they are a very small part of our collection. Heritage roses, hybrid clematis, species geranium, helleborus, heuchera, hydrangea, Japanese maple, cornus, euphorbia, sedum, grasses and so on all became crazes that we passed through until ten years or so ago we found salvias. How have we squeezed over a hundred salvias into this already crowded garden?

Our difficulty is that we have to control the sizes of these plants, but as they grow, we are having some successes. *Salvia Agnes* flowered beautifully for us and has been drastically pruned. It is now showing signs of a second flowering. *S. rubiginosa* was spectacular and flowered over a long period and now is crying out to be pruned back to its fresh basal shoots. *S. 'Costa Rica Blue'* is trying to smother everything in sight, but we have to forgive it with those handsome, brilliant flowers. *S. 'Anthony Parker'*, *S. 'Waverley'* and *S. 'Phyllis Fancy'* all performed well and are looking good with their new growth after having been cut back to near ground level. *S. 'Phyllis Fancy'* has been nipped back twice since that pruning to see if we can keep her compact. *S. semi atrata* responded to a light prune when the flowers started to fade by sending out even larger sprays of flowers. Whilst discussing pruning we have to mention one of the Incanas which is a cutting from a plant at Meg Bentley's garden where it grows over a shed. Each year it reaches about three or four metres mounding over other plants until its flowers fill a corner of the garden in the winter. Then when the flowers are past their best it too is pruned almost to the ground. We are trying the nipping out treatment this year to see if we can give its neighbours a better chance to reach their potential and yet still reward us with its wonderful flowers. *S. aurita* is forming a most attractive carpet of bright green foliage wandering between other plants and has great value even without its flowers.

Of course we also have some failures, quite often as we cannot always give all of our plants their optimum positions but salvias are generally very forgiving.

Neil Keir.

Salvia gesneriiflora

Possibly the most spectacular of salvias is the *S. gesneriiflora* selection named in Australia by Larkmans Nursery Pty Ltd as the cultivar 'Tequila', one of the largest growing and certainly one of the most floriferous.

This vigorous shrub from Mexico with green cordate leaves and scarlet flowers enhanced by dark purple calyces, originated from a collection of seed by botanists from Huntington Botanical Gardens at an altitude of 2,600m on the Tequila Volcano over thirty five years ago. Seed was also collected on that field trip of the more common form of this salvia species with green calyces and more orange in the colour of the corolla.¹ Selections of seedlings in the U.S.A. led to the naming of two similar cultivars 'Tequila' and 'Mole Poblano'². It was from the latter that the Australian salvia specialist Sue Templeton, of Unlimited Perennials, collected seed at San Diego Zoo in 1991, and her propagation of this seed resulted in plants with the variable forms of this salvia species being distributed in horticulture in Australia.

With a consequently somewhat confused nomenclature, that is, the naming of a seedling of a cultivar with that of another, it has, nevertheless, been practice within the industry and amongst collectors over

¹ Clebsch, Betsy. 2003. *The New Book of Salvias*. Florilegium.

² <http://www.huntingtonbotanical.org/WhatsInBloom/dec05/Page4.html>

the past decade to apply the name of 'Tequila' to the particular selection with dark purple calyces³. Since all plants of this species that are in horticulture in Australia apparently derive from that one seed source collected by Sue Templeton, it would be less than accurate to use 'Tequila' for one of this species' variable seedlings. It would be accurate only if the plant had been vegetatively propagated from an original cultivar plant.

I would appreciate feedback from any members of the VSCG in relation to this issue and whether there have been any other sources of introduction of this spectacular salvia. Also, have members noticed variations in specimens resulting from their propagation of this particular species? At the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, in Hobart, we have five plants of the species with green calyces derived from seed material sent to us by Geelong Botanic Gardens in early spring of 2005. Planted out in early summer in a shady bed, they commenced flowering at the end of winter and, interestingly, one plant has a pale pink- orange corolla with a broad white 'throat'. Is this indicative of this species variability or its propensity for hybridisation? Have other members had similar results from seed propagation of *Salvia gesneriiflora*?

With a northerly aspect, in full sun but with reduced exposure to the Roaring Forties due to micro-climate, the specimen of this shrub at the RTBG flourishes with stems arching up to 3 metres. Without flowers for only a short period after the pruning of half of the shrub during November or December, this plant of *Salvia gesneriiflora*, known as 'Tequila', is a stunning display of contrasting red corollas and dark calyces, on flower stems up to 45cm long that increase in profusion from autumn until spring in this relatively mild micro-climate. These inflorescences are presented against light green, aromatic leaves that are sticky to the touch because of the thick covering of glandular hairs, some of which have tips that are dark purple. Such hairs can be entirely purple and while concentrated at the base of the petiole, and the mid-rib vein beneath, can appear over both surfaces of the leaf. These hairs are themselves thicker and more bristly on the flowering stem and the dark coloured calyx, the distinctive characteristic of this selection.

I wanted to grow this salvia in my own garden and determine its ability to withstand frost but, with my concern as to its hardiness, decided to attempt to grow it as a 'climber', that is with a single leader, up one of the posts of the deck where I could provide it with some protection. During late winter last year, I planted a layer in poor, shallow silty soil with a north-easterly aspect so that it was protected from the cold winds from the south and south-west as well as the nightly drainage of cold air from Mt. Wellington through the valley to the Derwent River.

With minimal watering during its growth, in this driest of years, any laterals of this developing plant were generally pinched at two nodes and the resulting shoots similarly treated. By mid-April, it had reached almost 3 metres in height when it began to flower at the top, but the cold soon inhibited blooming despite weekly applications of sulphate of potash and the ceremonial nightly shrouding with weed matting. Over the six months from April to September, we experienced frequent high pressure systems and the consequent lack of wind resulted in seventy-five nights of minimum temperatures of 2 degrees and below including twenty-one of -1 degree and lower with two nights of -3 degrees. Surprisingly, the foliage survived without any damage. It was not until late August that corollas opened and persisted without dropping due to the cold. The top of the plant is 1.5m above the decking and a metre across and composed of mostly horizontal laterals which were in full bloom until late October. An interesting feature has been the emergence on the main stem of a number of short inflorescences, after two or three leaf nodes, from the junction of the main stem and laterals. The flowers were visited daily with small black ants but not nectar feeding birds such as the Wattlebirds, Crescent Honeyeater and Silvereyes that were frequent on the RTBG specimen during winter.

I would appreciate members' feedback as to the cold hardiness of *Salvia gesneriiflora* and their experience in the growth and management of this vigorous and spectacular shrub.

My challenge will be to manage the new season's growth of a shrub which can reputedly reach 7 metres!

John Daniels

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³http://www.plantcultivar.info/descriptions/desc_113.htm



SALVIA FORUM November 06

A place for Salvia discussion, questions, answers, informal or formal just like the Salvia Group pictured.

John Daniels has certainly done some homework with his article relating to the beautiful *Salvia corrugata* which is a most interesting read for everyone.

Salvia corrugata, as far as we know, originally came from the one source, that of Ken Gillanders in Tasmania...even though it may have been sold through various outlets.

The flowers, from what has been observed, all have the white 'bee-line' that John Daniels spoke about.

With regard to various forms of growth, for example, bushy-upright and lax-horizontal:

From observation, *Salvia corrugata* grows upright and bushy if given good loam and moisture. But in an exposed, drier position the plant does perform differently and tends to become lax. Even the way the side shoots grow shows the struggle it's having, and if cutting material (for propagation) has been taken from these particular side shoots, it can result in the new plants following the same pattern of lax growth.

It is always wise to take any propagating material from strong, healthy growth to reproduce strong healthy plants.

Prune or not to prune *Salvia* 'Waverley'?. Because this salvia has such wiry stems with little new growth it has been suggested that it's better not to prune... but if your plant has shown some good new growth, we suggest that you prune to where that growth is coming from. If one follows a rule of thumb, with any salvia, wait until the new growth starts and prune down to it. If you are still unsure, prune just a few nodes above where the new growth appears, giving it time to gather strength and when the growth looks strong, then take off that old part of the stem down to the new foliage.

If you are cutting down to the base of a plant where the new growth is emerging, add some compost, good loam or old manure to feed it and water it in well, this will encourage the plant to keep growing strongly.

With some salvia species, removing dead flower stems is a great way to keep the plant continually flowering and this is where we would recommend not cutting the whole plant down...just the spent flower stem, down to the next set of leaves. It's a bit like deadheading the roses after the spring flush, in readiness for the autumn blooms, that's why roses and salvia grow well together.

Salvia dolomitica could be frost tender in very exposed positions also *S. discolor*, one doesn't always know the best position for plants until it's too late and sometimes just when you think the frosts have gone and it's safe to plant...along comes a heavy frost doing untold damage.

Salvia disjuncta appears to be either a very shy flowerer or rather reluctant to flower heavily in our climate. Having seen only two or so blooms at the one time, one wonders how well it flowers in its original habitat in Mexico. Referring to the book, *Sages for Every Garden* by Betsy Clebsch, this is the habit of *S. disjuncta*.

Re the growth habit of *S. 'Anthony Parker'*, if one keeps in mind the fact that one of its parents is *S. leucantha*... remember how it grows, old flowering stems finishing as the new growth starts shooting from the base. This seems to be the same pattern for *Salvia 'Anthony Parker'*. It puts up a very good performance with the first flush which can be prolonged by constant dead-heading. I have noticed that it can take a long time for the new growth to actually start producing flowers after the spent flowering stems are removed and yes, *Salvia 'Indigo Spires'* is quicker to reproduce a new set of flowers.

As for wind tolerance, one would have thought that with constant nipping, *S. 'Anthony Parker'* would win hands down as a wind tolerant salvia against the brittleness of *Salvia 'Indigo Spires'*. It is always very interesting to read how differently some of the salvias perform in a range of climates and garden situations.

Note: Referring to Forum of Winter No.25. Regarding Sports and Cultivars.

Yes indeed, cultivars can on occasion have different leaf types and flower colours also.

Meg Bentley

NIEUWESTEEG ROSES OPEN GARDEN AT COLDSTREAM

The Salvia Study Group was invited to participate once again by the **Road Trauma Organisation** in this wonderful weekend of Roses and great gardeners opened by Sarah Guest.

Meg and Gary Bentley, Jeff Crowhurst, Elly and Leon Roos, Lyndi Garnett, Jillian Barkell, Cait Hoogenbusch and Trudi Fry were among the many who enjoyed the experience of seeing such a remarkable Rose Garden and such great rose plants for sale. The sales area is held in the big packing shed. There were swallows flying to and fro to feed their babies, 'fast food' of the proper old fashioned kind provided by hard working volunteers and so many people eager to talk about salvias. We gained some new subscribers, renewed old friend ships and sold salvias. It is a most worthwhile weekend and for such a worthy cause.

Salvias in Ringwood- Update November 2006

It was approximately three years ago, sometime late in 2003, that Jennifer and I first became aware that there are so many different types of *Salvia*, when Jennifer received some unknown salvia cuttings (later identified to be *S. gesneriiflora* "Tequila") and we noticed and read an article in a magazine about such plants. If I remember correctly it was shortly thereafter that we first met Trudi Fry who impressed us with her enthusiasm for and knowledge about salvias. We now wish to acknowledge and express our gratitude to Trudi for the help and advice which she so willingly offered to us at this initial meeting and has continued to give subsequently, and state without doubt that she has been an influential figure in fostering our interest in such plants.

This year in our garden the following Salvias have been particularly noteworthy :-

Salvia corrugata

In 2004 (maybe it was 2005) we planted two *S. corrugatas* one in the front (in a position receiving full sun) and one at the back (in a partly shaded position i.e. morning sun only). Both plants have flowered right throughout the winter months on into the early spring, with the one in the front in particular having put on a magnificent display. Recently when pruning the front *S. corrugata* we discovered that several new plants had formed underneath the main plant, apparently as a result of layering.

Salvia 'Costa Rican Blue'

From a few inches in height when planted in a partly shaded position in our garden (April 2005) it has now grown to over six feet tall, and has been in flower for most of 2006 (there having been only a short period when the flowers were not quite so plentiful). Earlier in the year we noticed that the flowers were providing a real nectar haven for a number of Eastern Spinebills, followed later by the Wattlebirds who caused some damage to the plant when positioning themselves thereon due to their greater size and weight.

South African Salvias

Over the past two months due to a lack of natural rainfall and for various reasons limited hand watering, many of our Salvias have received a set back but nevertheless appear to be surviving. The exception are the grey, grey-green or silver leafed South African ones such as *S. africana lutea*, *S. lanceolata*, *S. caerulea* and *S. dolomitica* which have not shown any apparent signs of stress. These obviously are very hardy drought resistant plants.

Salvia involucrata "Timboon"

Planted in March 2005 this *Salvia* has now grown to a significant size and during the winter months produced an abundance of maroon flowers.

Recently I pruned back fairly hard many of our Salvias i.e. those that had finished flowering and generally appeared to be suffering from a lack of water e.g. *S. karwinskii*, *S. iodantha*, *S. rubiginosa*, *S. gesneriiflora* "Tequila", *S. dorisiana* etc., in the hope that this may help them survive in the extremely dry conditions we have been experiencing.

Geoff and Jennifer Ellis

CHUM CREEK VICTORIA

On February 3rd I moved to a half acre property in Chum Creek just a five minute drive from where I lived in Healesville. I was very lucky that a few days before the move the hot weather broke and a cool change with rain gave me the chance to pot up the few remaining plants still in the ground. I was also fortunate to be able to move my 700 plus cuttings and plants before the actual closing date. Moving day would have been an even more stressful experience had I not been able to settle my plants first.

By autumn I had a couple of new garden beds ready. One had been an established bed measuring 2m x 9m filled with yellow *Iris pseudacorus* so there was plenty of amending done to keep it from getting boggy. I also raised it a few inches. It was great fun filling it with all sorts of things.

Then there were the frosts of June and July that killed quite a few Salvias. My casualties were *Salvia 'Agnes'*, *S. 'Anthony Parker'*, *S. confertiflora*, *S. cruickshankii*, *S. fallax*, *S. glechomifolia*, *S. interrupta*, *S. iodantha*, *S. leucantha*, *S. macrophylla*, *S. madrensis*, *S. miniata*, *S. sprucei*, *S. tubiflora*, and *S. 'Van Houttii'*. And of course the *S. coccineas* didn't make it, either. I was really sad about losing *S. sprucei* as it was a plant I had for a couple of years that never did well wherever it was planted it in the Healesville garden yet in the couple of months it was in the ground here it grew about 6 inches and leafed out beautifully. I was also really surprised that the *S. leucantha* died and expected it to shoot from its base but it never has. Fortunately I still have cuttings of a few of the ones I lost and the three seeds I had collected off *S. cruickshankii* have all germinated and are now growing quickly.

But then came the really bad frost in late October. The warm September and October sun encouraged lots of new growth and the late frost sheared it all. Although I haven't lost anything many plants were brutalized, including Camellias. I also lost all the fruit on my pear and cherry trees and most of the fruit on my nashi. It was pretty distressing to see burned leaves all around but I did find it interesting to see which Salvias coped and which ones didn't. It seems the African species tolerate frosty conditions as none of them were bothered in the least. *S. muirii* didn't lose a flower yet the *S. elegans* 'Pink Honeymelon' sitting behind it crumpled up. A few feet away *S. judaica* was about to burst into flower but all were lost to the frost though their bright purple calyces remain intact. *S. muelleri* was badly burned but the *S. greggii* it sits between didn't seem touched at all. I lost a few buds on *S. miltiorrhiza* but the

inflorescences survived and it's now flowering nicely. Others badly damaged were *S. involucrata* x 'Romantic Rose', *S. karwinskii*, *S. pennellii*, *S. polystachya*, *S. regla*, and *S. 'Waverly'*. The frost even damaged some cuttings in the shade house but these are recovering.

Another interesting note is that I went to the land I still own in Healesville to check on Salvias there and, except for a tiny bit of frost damage on *Salvia karwinskii*, nothing else seemed to be bothered. The huge *S. 'Costa Rican Blue'* was still flowering profusely and the cold brought out the beautiful variegation on the leaves of *S. 'Omaha Gold'*. A friend who lives just a few minutes away from there had no frost damage at all once again verifying that living up a hill has its advantages.

I was talking with my neighbor who said she hasn't seen frost around here in about ten years and nothing as bad as what we've had this year. I'm now in the process of creating a hedged area where all the tender species will be planted and hopefully, protected from frost in the future. While I'm waiting for the hedges to grow I'll continue growing these tender beauties, but in pots that I'll over-winter in my poly-house. I'm not taking chances with this crazy weather again.

Cait Hoogenbosch

VISITING SALVIAS AT GEELONG BOTANIC GARDENS

Monday 23rd October finally dawned and I attended the illustrated talk on salvias by Des Lawrence, the curator of the OPCA collection at the RBG. Along one side of the meeting room were tables containing named salvia flowers of many species, to set the scene for the talk. Jayne Salmon, the President of the Friends of the GBG and her colleagues had arranged this meeting which was followed by a walk around the salvia beds. Meg Bentley, (the author of *A Manual for Salvia Growers*), with her husband Garry, also joined us to assist Des with his talk and walk. The morning concluded with the Friends offering a light lunch outside on the lawn.

In the gardens the salvias were quite stunning, with a great many in flower, and labeled with their botanical names. These labels also contained their common names, which I found very interesting and informative. They either quote the plant's place of origin, or give a vital description of its identity, or both. Whilst viewing them I was astonished to see that *Salvia officinalis* 'Tricolor', a notorious (for me), cultivar of common sage, had commenced to flower. Certainly there were only about 8 flowers visible, and scattered through the plant, which covered an area of one metre in diameter and a height of 30cm. These were light blue in color and protruding from their pinkish red calyx. The leaves displayed their brilliant colors with their centres a deep green, and a mixed edging of either pinkish red, or of a grayish white. (It won't thrive for me either, Bill. ed.)

My visit was further highlighted by noticing further back in the same bed, a large clump of *Salvia officinalis* 'Berggarten' also just beginning to flower. This is another common sage cultivar which may not flower for its owner; certainly my 'Berggarten' hasn't for the 3 seasons it has grown in my garden. From my distance from its flower they appeared to be the same color as common sage, viz. deep blue. Obviously these 2 cultivars, together with all the other salvia in GBG, appear to have been given ideal growing conditions.

Our thanks are extended to their curator.

Bill Whitehead

NEWS FROM LURG ---VIA BENALLA

This past 12 months has been very difficult for gardeners, with the searing heat of around 40/45degrees C last summer, this terrible drought, and continuous frosts of -5 even down to -- 7.7 in autumn, winter and into spring. But over all the salvias coped fairly well. The dams are only big puddles, so we are relying on limited bore water.

Salvia 'Blue Bird' has been in the garden for over a year but tends to sulk. It has been shifted a number of times trying to find a happy spot for it. *Salvia* 'van Houttii' is in flower and seems to be quite drought tolerant, but needs protection from frost. The beautiful blue *S. guaranitica* (large form) is just

breaking into flower, it might need a drop more water to keep it looking lush, but a great salvia. S. 'Indigo Spires', because of its size and continuous blue flowers, fits in anywhere. *S. multiorrhiza* is a very pretty little plant with lavender-blue flowers, hardy, and needs no special treatment. *Salvia microphylla* 'Margaret Arnold' is very long flowering, fairly drought tolerant, and the frosts did it no harm. *Salvia patens* is struggling with little water. *S. tingitana* is frost and drought hardy. It needs cutting back, and hopefully, will reflower. *Salvia eigii* has to be the toughest plant and if cut back several times flowers all year and looks quite architectural.

Then there are the old favourites that just keep going, S. 'Waverly', S. 'Hot Lips', S. 'Cookie', *S. chamaeagnea*, S. 'Black Knight', *S. greggii* 'Sierra Pink'; the list goes on.

The only salvia that was lost, due to frosts or drought, was *S. viscosa*, but will try again. We have just planted out *Salvia x superba* 'Rubin', and have been unable to find out much information on it. It will be 'wait and see' over the coming months.

Hope we all get the much needed RAIN. SOON.

Mary Lukezic

THE UPWEY GARDEN CLUB SHOW

This was held in the community hall on the Burwood Highway and the change of venue gave more room for display. People remarked on how superb the floral displays were. Prize Winners were hard to choose.

The Salvia Study Group was once again invited to participate and, as always, found this a most enjoyable and interesting day. It is so good to be in the company of garden minded people. We had a striking display of salvia flowers, in tall glass vases, which created much interest. We sold salvias and talked about salvias and heard about other people's salvias, great fun and enjoyed by Ray, Laurelle, Jillian and Trudi as well as other friends both old and new.

NEWS FROM WERRI BEACH NSW

You know when you get to the point of saying 'why do I bother?' I'm sure most of us reach this stage when there hasn't been any worthwhile rain and the wind blows several days in a row and there's only a brief Spring followed by unusually hot weather. But then the rains come and everything picks up and you have renewed enthusiasm! Those of us lucky enough to get rain, of course. We are so fortunate compared to some of you in the still dry parts of the country.

In September I decided that I hadn't bought any new Salvias for a while so I sent an order off to Sue Templeton. I wanted the following salvias, *Salvia verticillata*, S. 'Kathe', *S. lavanduloides*, *S. patens* 'Chilcombe', *S. blepharophylla*, *S. greggii* 'Yellow' and *S. rubiginosa*. I wanted to plant them in a bed where I already had three *S. microphyllas* to one side and in front of a white Banksia Rose surrounded by Lime Helichrysum. So I did, and they sat there and sat there for over a month doing nothing but still alive. Eventually the yellow *greggii* started flowering and now with the rain the others are finally showing signs of getting on with it. I hope they will create a colourful picture.

I had to be sparing with the water during the dry spell and I actually let some of the salvias go and hoped for the best. Some of those on sloping land looked pretty distressed but it's amazing how little rain is needed to perk them up. I have just moved what I think is S. 'Costa Rican Blue' after seeing someone else's covered in flower and my miserable specimen with only one flower stalk. It has never flowered prolifically where it is, so I've now moved it to a more open spot without so much competition. It was competing with a Lavatera and the Lavatera was winning!

While looking through the latest volume from The Garden Clubs of Australia, I noticed a lovely combination of Canna 'Tropicana' and I think *S.guaranitica* so I went out the next day and moved some of the salvia next to a clump of the Canna. There was also a *S.coccinea* 'Lady in Red' against a dark phormium which looked pretty good. There was mention also of the importance of plant collections with salvias named as one of the 60 OPCA collections in Australia.

I had the garden club down yesterday to look at what could become our latest folly. After looking out at dead grass for the last couple of months, my husband has decided to rip it all out and now I have a series of stepping -stones interspersed with drought hardy plants including some smaller salvias. A great time to do it when we hadn't had any rain! However, I think once the plants get a move on, it will look okay but I don't know how difficult it will become in our old age to hop from step to step. May have to replace them with flatter pavers I fear. They were most impressed with the South African *Salvia lanceolata* ? the pink one which has seeded in a couple of fortuitous places and at the moment looks stunning. Many went home with a cutting.

I finally acquired one of the big red salvias. It didn't have a name but I think it's *Salvia gesneraeflora* and I don't care if it grows big as I want it to cover an ugly old stump to the east of the driveway. It's possibly 'Tequila'. I'll have to wait for the flowers. Looking forward to hearing how everyone's coping with gardening in our ever -changing climate. **Maureen Cox.**

SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND NEWS

In our area of southeast Queensland we have had a wonderful start to spring. 50ml of rain fell in September as opposed to the previous ten years when not a drop fell. We have been lucky to have had a couple of follow up showers in October as well. But not all areas have been so lucky. As of 1st of November level 4 water restrictions will be brought into operation in the Brisbane area. (We are in the Gold Coast Hinterland and not on mains water so this will not affect us, thankfully.)

Mother Nature must not have turned the pages of her calendar as a lot of our winter flowering salvias have in the last 4 weeks or so started to flower again. *Salvia wagneriana*, S. 'Pink Icicles', *S.iodantha*, *S. karwinskii x involucrata* 'Winter Red' and *S.purpurea* are amongst them.

We have been trying some new salvias in our garden. We waited in anticipation as we watched for the first flowers on *Salvia macrophylla*. This plant I think I would grow for its beautiful large heart-shaped soft leaves alone. But then the flower spikes started to appear, tall straight branched spires of such a startling shade of blue. A truly wonderful plant but we will have to see how it fares through our summer conditions.

The same goes for *S.oxiphora*. After purchasing the plant at our Cottage Garden Spectacular earlier this year we became slightly impatient as reports came through that others had plants already flowering. But our patience paid off with the first four big fat velvety flowers starting to open just 3 weeks ago. A lovely healthy glossy leaved plant, it is about 1m high. (Although we saw a specimen last week-end that held its flowers at about 1.5m high.)

S.cacaliaefolia is flowering away brilliantly. I find its leaf shape to be something special. We have had this plant previously but it tended to get very ratty. This time we will be more diligent with the tip-pruning. We have also just recently purchased *S. oppositiflora*. We thought we had this plant years back but this is completely different, so we'll have to get it in the ground and see what it does. Here's hoping for a reasonably mild summer with possibly some drought breaking rain.

Happy Gardening
Carol and John Kerkin
The Perennial Poppies Group Inc

The two lime-green salvia fanatics

Every winter my partner, Pat, visits her 97-year old mum in the UK. In her absence I keep myself occupied by doing some lecturing in plant biochemistry to supplement our retirement income.

One of the things that goes hand in hand with lecturing is setting exam questions. I could set essays asking the students to tell me everything that I told them but this only examines their regurgitation skills. No, far better to set questions that are much more searching. One approach is to ask students to compare and contrast two similar, but different, things. For example, by way of analogy, if I was a botanist, I could ask them to compare and contrast the characteristics of *Salvia* and *Perovskia* and comment on the status of these two genera within the family Lamiaceae. To answer the question well, students would not only need to describe the basic features of *Salvia* and *Perovskia*, but they would need to constructively assess this information. Students would need to highlight the criteria that can be used to distinguish the two genera. More importantly they would need to establish that the two genera have so many features in common that they are not only placed within the same family, Lamiaceae, but also within the same tribe, Mentheae, and the same sub-tribe, Salviniae. Very good students might even go so far as to use their knowledge of the biogeography of the two genera to speculate on their likely evolution and phylogeny.

Well, I have long wanted some way of writing about two particular salvia fanatics and it suddenly occurred to me as I was setting my exam questions that I could use the “Compare and contrast” format to address my problem. So here is an essay addressing the question “Compare and contrast the two lime-green salvia fanatics and comment on their likely phylogeny”.

The term “the two lime-green fanatics” is a colloquialism that is used to refer to two fair-haired female forms of a particular subspecies of *Homo sapiens* sub-spp. *salviafanaticum*. In the absence of any agreement about their taxonomic status we must continue to refer to them as distinct forms rather than varieties. The two forms (abbreviated below to f.) are far too illustrious to have common or trivial names and, even if they did, they could not be published in this Newsletter as the editor only permits the use of scientifically correct nomenclature. Nonetheless, to be concise, (another strong point of the editor), I shall refer to the two fanatics by their collective colloquial name wherever possible.

The origins of the names of the two forms are of some interest. The *wolflandii* form takes her name from various connections with wolves. Firstly, she originates from a country in Northern Europe where wolves are common. Secondly, when she went on a salvia expedition to East Gippsland she wore bright lime-green slacks which were the cause of a stream of wolf calls from passing motorists as we had lunch in the park in Yarragon. Thirdly, she has retained her childhood fascination with wolves though this interest nowadays is more in the form of a motherly infatuation with wolves of the small yappy variety. The other form, f. *leucodermis*, is remarkable in that she fulfils her need for food and liquid by drinking enormous lime-green milkshakes, a spectacle I first observed in the park at Yarragon as she sat alongside f. *wolflandii* dressed in her bright lime-green slacks. The *leucodermis* form takes her name from the fact that her skin remains fair even after a massive intake of lime-green pigment. In marked contrast to f. *wolflandii*, f. *leucodermis* has a liking for very large wolves which she uses to patrol the perimeter of her property and which she also claims amongst her best friends. With these exceptions, the two forms have many shared characteristics.

The two forms of sub-spp *salviafanaticum* differ in their biogeography. Neither form is indigenous to Australia. The *leucodermis* form comes from an island off the coast of Northern Europe. Specifically, she comes from a region where rounded bulbous bottle ovens, which are used for firing pottery, used to be a conspicuous features of the landscape. This explains her beautifully rounded speech. As noted above, her fair features must be genetically dominant since she can consume no end of lime-green pigment without beginning to photosynthesise. The *wolflandii* form by contrast comes from a flat region of mainland Northern Europe that specialises in ice, snow, lakes and marshes. Various other

characteristics of f. *wolflandii* can be attributed to the environment in which her form evolved: for example she talks a lot because this is recognised as a very effective way of deterring marauding wolf packs when out skiing in the Northern European forests in winter.

The many characteristics that are common to f. *leucodermis* and f. *wolflandii* imply that they are phylogenetically closely linked and that the establishment of the two forms must be, in evolutionary terms, quite recent. Our knowledge of European history suggests that this could be as little as 1200 years ago for this was about the time that gentlemen with horns in their ears came across in longboats from mainland Northern Europe (the evolutionary epicentre of f. *wolflandii*) and took up residence in the islands. The geographic isolation of the islands provided the conditions for the evolution, from f. *wolflandii*, of a distinctive and unique form which we recognise today as f. *leucodermis*. Thus, the evolution of a distinctive language and of bottle ovens and a penchant for lime-green milk-shakes has occurred over a period of 1200 years. The evidence also suggests that, in evolving from f. *wolflandii*, f. *leucodermis* seems to have lost a fondness for lime-green slacks but has an enhanced ability to co-exist with large wolves.

Space does not permit a full description of the secondary characteristics and life histories of the two lime-green salvia fanatics. Suffice it to say that they have been introduced to Australia from Northern Europe where they have become domesticated and flower gloriously without showing any signs of weedy characteristics. Here in Australia, both of them have owned and run a nursery and currently they both belong, and contribute, to various gardening groups. Both of them are fanatical about gardens and gardening as well as salvias.

In conclusion, it would seem that the evolution of the two forms of *Homo sapiens* sub-spp *salviafanaticum* as instanced by the two lime-green salvia fanatics provides a model framework for studying evolutionary patterns in other representatives of sub-spp *salviafanaticum*. Finally it should be evident from this essay that the adoption of lime-green provides no defence from the prying eyes of the salvia paparazzi.

John Anderson

Salvia Name Changes

The updated version of name changes.

NOW	WAS
pennellii	'Tammy'
adenophora	pulchella
cruckshankii	'Kathe'
scordifolia	'Harmony'
tubiflora	oppositifolia
fallax	roscida

That is all for the moment. I'm just wondering who named 'Kathe' and 'Harmony' or if not did they have a botanical name with those cultivar names attached or did some botanist finally identify those plants that some one just found a name to suit. Food for thought. Lyndi

Salvias by the Sea:

The culling of old shrubs to make way for Salvias which I started in June is ongoing. I spent Aug/Sept. visiting Innisfail. We may have drought and unseasonal frosts but nothing can cause the devastation "Larry" unleashed on gardens and rainforests as well as Bananas, Paw Paws Mangoes etc. I will never complain about weather again, just get on with it like the people of Innisfail are doing.

Before I left for Queensland I planted out about 20 rooted cuttings into the garden thinking they would survive better in the ground than in pots. But I didn't remember to clip the wings of 2 young pullets who "flew the coop" into the Salvia Beds. They had a wonderful time scratching in the mulch, only 2 or 3 Salvias survived. Luckily I was able to go back to Glenys for another lot of cuttings, which I put straight into the garden adding some peat moss to my black sand at each site. With daily watering for 3 weeks they are all looking healthy.

I have taken cuttings of all my Salvias in the shade of my large Pawlonia tree. These I will plant in the sun to see if they flower earlier and for longer.

I feel it is not so much the lack of rain this Spring as the lower than normal temperatures we are experiencing that is holding plants back. My vegetable garden is really struggling despite ample watering. On the other hand, looking at local gardens roses are flourishing and pelargoniums and geraniums are making a spectacular show. So no matter what nature serves up to us, something in the garden will find it just right.

The succulent bed always has colour and never needs watering or weeding, only cutting back overgrowth. Remembering Trudi's article, 'Survival Gardening' in the Winter Newsletter. I have started using this surplus among the Salvias.

During my culling I looked at a large patch of Arctotis Daisy spreading rapidly without water thinking if I removed that I would have room for 3 or 4 more Salvias. On second thoughts I realised if I just made holes here and there for Salvias I would have a ready made mulched bed. So far the Salvias are looking happy.

In another area I have planted a water wise prostrate daisy that self seeds madly in my neighbour's garden. I am hoping all this living mulch will help suppress weeds while adding colour to my garden.

Coral KennedY

LAURELLE'S GARDEN IN BORONIA VIC.

I have to tell you how very pleased I am to have *Salvia greggii* 'Crimson and Black' (*this is my seedling, well tested by now, Trudi*). It has constantly flowered since planting. The intensity of the red, particularly as it is amongst burgundy Haloraxis makes me always describe it as 'royal red' to enquirers. I don't believe any other salvia pleases me as much although *Salvia fallax* and *S.karvinskii* do come close.

Suddenly there is an area, probably 6' round and not a single root left of *Salvia involucrata*. It wasn't just a threat to remove it (see spring SN). A wonderful luxuriant thing but with its habit of leaning a branch over to alight on any available patch of soil, to raise a family, it did indeed become tedious after a while. Perhaps now, many treasures will gain form and delight, in the coming months.

This garden has not suffered from drought. I suspect the plants know 'mother' isn't coddling the ailing, and besides, the root competition is quite intense so watering wouldn't benefit them.

Spring appeared very early, in fact the roses are well into their second flush and many perennials had finished flowering by November.

I am enjoying *Salvia discolor* and *Salvia semi-atrata*, both never stop flowering. Also, with its wonderful pinkish flowers *S. lanceolata* rates very high on the favourite's list. Still waiting though for *S.corrugata* to perform, in fact to even really show colour in six years. Seems to swan around layering everywhere yet doesn't produce flowers. Incidentally she/he is the reason I became interested in Salvias! (*Suggest hard pruning., The ones cut to a 'hedge' in Geelong Botanic Gardens were a mass of flowers. Ed.*)

Laurelle Willis

NEWS FROM BENALLA VICTORIA

When I last wrote the frosts had only just begun—there was much worse to come. The 15 small-growing salvias Jillian selected for me in December 2005 are however, survivors. Unfortunately, *Salvia* ‘van Houtii’ and the light red seedling I mentioned last time were fatalities, although one made attempts to shoot at the base. The weak growth has since died off. Maybe some more seedlings may emerge, as was the case last year. *Salvia* ‘Purple Majesty’, in a protected spot, but against a steel fence, was unaffected by the frost. At present it is in bloom.

Around the garden, the *cliveas*, in sheltered locations suffered severely but still managed to bloom. The yellow one that cost \$50.00 fared the best and bloomed for the first time. The *plectranthus* in the carport was absolutely blackened, while the *zygocactus* blooms either fell off or failed to open, but at least they’re still alive. Perhaps I should cull the later-blooming *zygocactus*! The tropical *justicia*, the one with the beady, red blooms, was damaged to ground level, but is now producing new growth.

In mid-September I cleaned up the salvias, took cuttings, and noted plenty of vigorous growth at the base of the plants. I had intended to make some divisions but never got around to it. (No doubt, this was due in part, to the various fund raisers that I have supplied plants to over the past two months.) Many of the salvias have since bloomed, and because I tend to put these large pots too close together, the growth is rather leggy. A very warm October contributed to the rapid growth. Some cuttings struck readily, while others were a disappointment. Surprisingly, some of the cuttings that I took away from the seminar in July were successful. I put the potted cuttings on a low window ledge in an unheated bedroom.

At the Gardeners Inc Seminar in July, Trudi identified for me a plant that I thought could be a salvia. It germinated from a packet of mixed annual seed that was more than five years past the use by date. It had light blue iridescent papery petals/bracts and medium-sized grey leaves and was unaffected by the frost. All winter, (and out in the open) it continued to bloom and was unaffected by the frost. Certainly, well-worth growing! Then in early spring, I decided to re-pot it into a larger container. A short time later the plant expired and I forgot to save the label. However, I have been delighted to discover about two dozen seedlings flourishing in nearby pots. (*It is salvia viridis, an annual with colorful bracts that last well as cut flowers as well as being a good dried flower. There are a few cultivars available these days of this old fashioned plant. The papery bracts are the colorful bit. The flowers are tiny and inconspicuous but produce seed nicely. Trudi*)

About six weeks ago Jess Kay from Glenrowan gave me a small plant of *Salvia* ‘Costa Rican Blue’. In the warm spring conditions it has flourished and now is in full bloom. I know it grows tall. That will be a challenge in my small garden. A wind-damaged stem was removed for Ian McIntosh, who had little difficulty in getting it to strike.

In the north-east of the state it has been sad to see the cereal crops fail. I have lived in the area since 1965 and experienced a number of droughts, in this favoured region we’ve been fortunate to still get a crop. But this year many of the taller crops have been cut for fodder. Late frosts damaged the seed-pods of the canola crops so they too have been cut and formed into large rolls. What a disaster it was in October--.4mm of precipitation for the whole month and temperatures several degrees above average.

At the start of November, most towns in North-East Victoria moved to stage 1 water restrictions, although several villages were already on more severe restrictions. Fortunately I have a bore that is still working. Water was located at 23 feet in white sand. In recent years, many of the bores in Benalla have failed. Because of this, I have decided to run just one hose off it. At times I use it continuously for up to ten hours. If I am working in the garden, shifting the hose is not an issue, but it’s not fun when inside, getting into boots and out of boots each time the hose needs to be moved. To date I haven’t had a visit from the water police. Perhaps I will be dobbed in one day as I water a little of the nature strip each side of the driveway in order to avoid a dusty entrance. The bore water leaves a white residue on leaves, windows and the car, and the leaves of the crepe myrtles and the maple tree develop brown tips if they come in contact with the water. Rhododendrons, daphnes and azaleas will not tolerate it and will slowly

die. Several years ago, parts of the orange and lemon trees lost leaves from the odd branch where there was greater contact with the water. Luckily, there has been no reoccurrence of this problem. Without the bore, I would be unable to grow lots of potted plants for fund raisers for local charities. To date, the water restrictions don't appear to have deterred people from buying plants that I supply weekly to the local Red Cross shop.

Stewart Coutts

Christmas gathering of salvia fanatics

I awoke early on the morning of Sunday 10th December expecting to be able to get up and bring my partner a nice cup of tea in bed as she had only recently returned from the UK after a very exhausting visit to care for her mum and brother. But Pat was already up busying herself in anticipation of one of the more important days in her diary. She was preparing a yummy cold meat dish, packing up boxes of plants raised in the nursery, and collecting specimens of various plants from the garden. By 11.00 am, after selecting some appropriate bottles of wine, we were on our way to collect another salvia fanatic (Jan) and her partner en route to the 2006 Salvia Study Group Christmas Corroboree. Under no circumstances could we be late (it started at midday) as we had to be there when everyone else arrived with their plant contributions so that Pat and Jan would not miss out on the best and rarest offerings which are always the first to go.

The day was hot, very hot, reaching 42.3 C in Melbourne. As we left Warrandyte it hardly seemed the sort of day to be sitting around socialising outdoors, especially for those of us who are not salvia fanatics.

Our journey took us to the home of Jillian Barkell at The Patch. Upon arriving the salvia fanatics made a dash to the area set aside for plant exchanges and it was pleasing to note that there were no punch ups. After the fanatics had hidden away their caches of loot we all had time to take in the beautiful setting that Jillian had provided. Under the massive upper canopy of eucalypts and lower canopy of tree ferns, was a beautiful bower in which she had cleverly placed tables and chairs with just the occasional umbrella to shield us for those few moments when the sun found the occasional gap between the fronds as it passed overhead during the day. The setting was exquisite and everyone was able to find a corner to share with some congenial soul and talk about salvias (or in some cases nothing in particular) as the circumstances (and interest) required. We marvelled at how pleasant the temperature was compared to the conditions we had left behind in Melbourne. We all filed indoors past the great shelves of books to the tables and benches where the savoury dishes, plates and cutlery were set out in style, and then retreated to the garden where the corks were removed from bottles and glasses filled. Conversation seemed to follow easily and, as I ate, I was conscious of a large blue trifid trying to consume the savouries on my plate with a fork. Leon, with whom I was sharing a bottle at the time, is very knowledgeable about these things and explained that that was why the trifid is known in botanical circles as *Salvia forskaohlei*. Anyway, I managed to fend it off and I had to do the same again when I returned from indoors with a bowl of red berry fruit topped with cream and ice cream to accompany the remainder of the bottle of shiraz.

It was a great day out and the perfect place to be on such a very hot day. Everyone had a wonderful day and we would all like to thank Jillian and those who assisted her for making the occasion so memorable.

John Anderson

A Garden in Tyabb Vic

As I write this in only the second week of summer the bushfire season is causing devastation across the state. Here on the Mornington Peninsula where fire has not yet threatened the smoke from the north east gives some perspective to my problems of a drying garden. There are many in the state who would be delighted if their most pressing problem was a dry dying garden. However as this is a publication about salvias I should write about them.

To the end of November the rainfall here is 215mm below that of the same time last year – another 280mm in the next 18 days is needed to match the rainfall of 2005. This is not very likely as we normally receive about 700-750 mm per year. As a result the small dam is very low and again likely to become saline. The salvia garden has been neglected and not mulched as it normally is. This has been due to the time devoted to an extension to the house and reworking of the garden in that area. There is no doubt that I will lose most of the salvia collection over the next three months as today is likely to be the only time they will be watered (apart from any rain) until this time next year.

In spite of the conditions there are some success stories - *Salvia africana-lutea*, *Salvia dolomitica* and *Salvia chamelaeagnea* are all thriving. New plants will be kept in pots and under shade in the hope they can be planted out in the autumn.

In these tough conditions, the roses (some 200+) are thriving and of the 20 odd different banksias, few are showing any signs of distress so as with any garden there is always an opportunity to maintain a positive outlook.

Bevan Whelan

HELP WANTED

Is there anyone able to help propagate Salvias (mixed species) ?

This would help enormously to ease the load on the few who do this for the group.

We need a constant supply of plants to meet our sales needs throughout the year eg... Pakenham, Benalla, Coldstream, the Rose Show etc...

Salvias are still ' the flavour of the month' and in demand – so we need a continuous supply . We would appreciate more help with propagation . Some people are good at propagating some species, while others are good at other species, not everyone is good at propagating all species.

Attending Garden Groups and bigger functions is a huge promotion for Salvias, and as there are so few nurseries that sell them, these occasions serve as the main Victorian source for the public.

If you are interested in propagation, materials and help supplied.

Please contact Lyndi on Ph 9803 4534.

We would really like to hear from you.

We are mindful of the fact that many gardeners are losing their gardens to fire and drought. We need to be able to replace their plants for them. As we are a 'not for profit' group we can do this, money from plant sales goes to supporting our OPCAA Plots and preserving the species.

Lyndi Garnett

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR PHONE NUMBER, YOUR ADDRESS, OR EMAIL
PLEASE LET US KNOW

KEEPING IN TOUCH

From time to time our friends are too busy to write. We miss them and want news. So, I have decided to print the bits of news I glean as I see people or have a phone call. This will appear regularly and you can phone or email scraps as you wish.

From information gleaned from other gardeners and from observation in my own garden the salvias with the highest survival rating, both to frost and drought are; *Salvia africana lutea*, *S. africana caerulea*, *S. muiirii*, *S. lanceolata*, *S. chamelaeagnea*, *S. scabra*, *S. namaensis*, *S. somalensis*, (all Africans) and *S. canariensis* (from the Canary Islands) also *S. discolor* (from Peru) has grown and flowered constantly for 16 years without water. The toughly grown plants survive, the woody stemmed plants survive and *S. corrugata* does very well.. Other salvias such as the *mexicanas*, *gesneriiflora*, *karwinskii* and *karwinskii x*, do die back only to sprout when conditions improve. Rocks placed to give a cool root run are invaluable. Very rarely will a salvia really die. It will “go to sticks” or underground then shoot again from the base or lower down the stem when life up top is better. Often such a shock, “a near death experience” gives a great explosion of flowers later. *Trudi*

Meg Bentley is planting succulents around the base of her salvias. She is using *cotyledon orbiculata* with its lovely silver foliage in as well as *aeonium 'Schwartzkoff'*. Her *Salvia canariensis* 'white form' is particularly lovely now.

Cait Hoogenbosh's garden in Chum Creek was hit with frost about ten times this past winter. She said that *S. disermas*, *S. judaica* and *S. palestina* were all great survivors. *S. judaica* did lose the buds when the last frost hit at the end of October, but new inflorescences sprouted and it flowered beautifully. She also mentioned the Salvias with basal foliage, such as *S. virgata*, *S. transylvanica*, *S. pratensis*, and *S. barrelieri* all passed the frost test. She has land in Healesville she visited recently and was suprised to see *S. uliginosa*, though wilted, actually flowering but was not sure if frost caused damage there. Cait admitted that she has been watering because she's establishing her Chum Creek garden and believes newly planted *Salvias* need the regular watering.

John Daniels writes about the response of the Royal Tasmanian Botanic Garden's salvias to the drought (we have had only 255mm so far this year!), everything is growing well although perhaps a little slower than normal. *Salvia* 'Black Knight' and *S. leucantha* only grew from the base of the plants and *S. iodantha* had remnant flowers until later into spring, but otherwise we have no water restrictions and no obvious frost damage which is different to my own garden.

The Hampton garden has had attention, pruning, re-positioning plants and re-planting. Some very big plants were removed ready to be transferred to Nobelius later. The garden has also been mulched.

The new Nobelius display garden area, which is 40m in length and sited just below the packing house, has been triple rotary hoed and paths marked out.

The old plot at Nobelius has been pruned.

MARK DYMOTIS HAMPTON GARDEN WILL BE OPEN MARCH 2008

MAUREEN'S GARDEN

The loveliness of this garden begins at the footpath where there is a colourful massed planting. A crammed garden of healthy beautiful plants is a sure sign of a very good gardener. The garden is so full of interest that I find it difficult to know where to begin. The eye of an artist is very apparent. Pale lemon roses echoed in the next garden across by *Salvia jamensis*, and repeated across the path. Purple and lavender shades play their part too.

This is basically a no lawn garden, the paths are granitic sand and gravel with rocks skillfully placed to give a cool root run or to protect the tender, and to great sculptural effect with the succulents and cacti. There are many salvias, including *Salvia* 'Costa Rican Blue', *S. semi-atrata*, *S. 'Black Knight'* and varieties of *microphyllas* and *greggiis*. Skilful color co-ordination and clever use of leaf textures, shades of green and plant heights is a feature. This is a plantsmans garden with many special plants. I particularly liked the cardoon and the clematis obelisks.

Maureen waters only if a plant is in great need and then only with a bucket.

THE WASH-STAND

On the farm we had a wash -stand outside beside the tank. There was an enamel dish, towel, soap, (made by Mum, harsh, horrible but effective, not Mum, the soap, though she was surely effective), a nailbrush and a towel. We washed our hands and poured the water on the garden. It was, of course cold water, warm water was for city slickers. That was the small dish, the second dish, a big dish, was used to wash the vegetables, and the water from that was used on the strawberry bed. As for the soapy water poured on the roses the caustic soda seems, in retrospect, to have made them thrive.

Trudi

The Victorian Study Group provides speakers. If your group is interested please contact Lyndi Ph. 9803 4534

HELP WANTED

Trudi really needs some one to help edit the *Salvia* news. Without Trudi you wouldn't get a *Salvia* news. She does a wonderful job, I'm sure you all agree, so now she needs some help to keep it going, some one with computer skills, not necessarily advanced, (Trudi can show you all sorts of tricks of the trade), someone who has email and fax facilities, Someone who can spend 1 – 2 hrs with Trudi at various times of production. If there is some one who is able to help, please contact Trudi on Ph 9754 4041

