

SalviaNews

September/October 2001

THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

The Victorian Salvia Study Group

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The Salvia scanned into the July/August issue was *S. africana lutea* and the issue before that, I forgot to say, *S. microphylla* var. *neurepia* was our red beauty. Please be kind about my editorial ineptitude. I mean well but am learning on the job! The scanner and printer I have are proving not up to the task so this time no flower for you.

Also News & Views from you are important. Tell us about your Salvias, good or bad news, what your soil is like, 'how does your garden grow'?, etc. by phone, writing or email.

A future topic of study for the group will be a series of articles on Salvias for small gardens and containers, so watch out for that.

Report on Official Collection

Nobelius Heritage Garden, Emerald - Working Bee Saturday October 20th

The proposed trip to Otway Herbs has had to be postponed to next year. However an opportunity to have 'hands on' experience with Salvias is not to be missed. Bring a picnic lunch about 11.00am and some tools and learn and enjoy in idyllic surroundings. This Park is a little known paradise even to locals. Yes, there are toilets!

This is wonderful salvia propagating weather. I have some lovely plants getting ready for new homes at our working bee. I hope to have enough for our willing workers to have as well as to add to the Collection. To work in the Salvia Plot is a great way to learn about our favourite plants. There will be plants for sale also.

Nobelius Heritage Park is in Emerald. Turn into Beaconsfield Rd. at the Emerald Community Hall, then turn left into Creighton Rd. Follow this road through the Park entrance following directions for the Heritage Museum. The Salvia Garden is immediately below the Museum. (Melways Ref 127G4)

Hampton

A welcome delivery of horse manure and lucerne hay will be delivered to Mark at Hampton this week. After our working bee last month, it was realised that the garden was in desperate need of nutrients and mulching. Neighbours commented whilst we were working that the garden already looked remarkably better. We left a huge pile of prunings out the back for Mark to deal with.

News & Views

South Australian News

The Salvia Study Group of the Herb Society of South Australia (publishes a newsletter by post or email)
C/o Peter Love, 42 Corunna Ave, Colonel Gardens email: plove@picknowl.com.au

SA Coming Events:

Herb day at Fullarton Community Centre on Sunday 4th November 10-4.

Salvia Show Urrbrae House, Netherby Sunday November 18th 10-4

The National Herb Conference, "Herbs of the Senses"(including Salvias) Pembroke School September 27-29 2002

Lavington News

Meg and Trudi made the pilgrimage to Sue Templeton's garden and nursery in early October. There are so many unusual *Salvias* to see. Lots of other glorious plants too but I admit I was too excited by the *Salvias* to give them any attention. Hopefully Meg has absorbed more than me and can write a more comprehensive account. We bought well grown plants for ourselves and others. On return the rains came again so the new plants settled in well. Of special interest was *S. sagittatus* 'Mosquito'- royal blue flowers on wiry black stems, *S. rubiginosa*, brilliant blue flowers and dark purple calyx, (mine has flowered well in late winter too) but Sue's plant is a mass of flowers, *S. concolor*, just a mass of blue, and *S. hierosolymitana*, a tall spike of pinky maroon and well, yes I am getting carried away, but you need to see for yourself. Meg will report more news on this visit in the next issue.

Geelong News

After propping up the tall *Salvias*; *S. sprucei*, *S. karwinskii*, and *S. Costa Rican Blue* growing along the back fence in mid September, Bill discovered the salvia treasures hidden from view, such as *S. discolor*, *S. mexicana* Lolly, *S. nemorosa* 'Amethyst' and others. This is a remarkable garden full of colour and interesting plants. *S. munzii* in full bloom and growth is an unusual sight and there is so much else to see. He has propagated both by seed and cuttings several boxes of well grown plants for the *Salvia* Group and we enjoyed the hospitality of Bill and Shirley as well as a Herb Society meeting as welcome guests. We should visit Geelong more often. Bill has been collecting *Salvias* longer than most of us and has introduced many of us to *Salvia officinalis* Nana, Rosea & Alba amongst others. He is pleased with his latest lot from Sue Templeton.

The *Salvias* in Geelong Botanical Gardens are a little disappointing, showing signs of unwise pruning and some losses. However a glorious plant of *Salvia concolor* – large plant, glorious intense blue blooms is wonderful. I listed the remaining plants for my computer so I have a record.

Canterbury News

Velda recently explored a *Salvia* sighting in the grounds of MLC at Kew. There are several vigorous plants of a *S. karwinskii* x *involucrata* hybrid just finishing flowering at the end of winter. There seemed to be large trusses of darker flowers than we are used to. She went to a great deal of effort to get some identification but it was the gardener's day off. However cuttings were given and now Neville is propagating them.

Macclesfield News

The continuing saga of Donna's stock/display gardens... Yes, the stock plants have been released from their restricted homes of the past 2 years (pots) and given freedom in the garden. As I (Donna) types this article, it is raining outside and I know that these *salvias* are now very happy. These have been interplanted with roses (especially David Austins). I am selling plants from home and welcome anyone from far and wide to visit – just call first to confirm a time that suits both of us. Liz and Paddy from Eltham Garden Club visited recently and in amongst the heavy rain, managed to fill the back of the car with an assortment of *salvias* and other perennials. I am planning on having one of our gatherings at my place next year. Meg and I will be selling *salvias* at the COCKATOO PLANT MARKET, Sunday October 28, 9am – 2pm. This is a huge market with approximately 100 stalls selling plants and garden related goodies, so all gardeners and would be gardeners should mark this one in their diary as a 'must do'. It is a fundraiser for the local CFA with prizes all day long. Ring me for further details (59 688 567 or 0412 766 763).

Renmark News

Mary Ann has had a great deal of success growing *salvias* in red sandy soil on a vineyard. The prevailing south-westerly winds give them a hard time. She has been a keen *salvia* enthusiast since her sister Jillian gave her plants at Xmas. When Jillian visits again it will be identification time. The only losses have been those put in a poorly drained spot. Mary Ann will be the lucky recipient of another 20 *salvias* for her birthday and Xmas.

NEMOROSAS OR NOT?

Many of the *Salvia nemorosa* offered in the nurseries are in fact either *Salvia x superba* or *Salvia x sylvestris*. It is very hard to find a true *S. nemorosa* at all.

S. superba is a hybrid of *S. nemorosa*, *S. pratensis* and *S. villicaulis*

S. x sylvestris is a hybrid of *S. nemorosa* and *S. pratensis*

<i>Salvia x superba</i>	Lower stem leaves mostly sessile, leaf blades 2.5-7.5cms/1-3 inches long
<i>Salvia pratensis</i>	Lower stem leaves mostly petioled, leaf blades 4.5-15cm/2-6inches long
<i>Salvia x sylvestris</i>	Lower stem leaves mostly petioled, but much shorter than <i>S. pratensis</i> Leaf blades 5-10cm/2-4 inches long
<i>Salvia nemorosa</i>	Lower stem leaves petioled, but stem leaves are cauline, these are sessile Leaf blades 5-10cm/2-4inch but more rounded at apex and more rugose

Cultivars of *S. superba*

'Blue Queen', 'Rose Queen', 'Blue Hills' and 'Snow Hills' show *superba* parent.

'East Friesland' and 'Lubeca' show long leaves of *pratensis* parent.

Cultivars of *S.x sylvestris*

'Lyre End', 'Blauhugel' and 'Mainacht' mostly show the long leaves of *pratensis*.

Given cool nights and good moisture these plants can be spectacular. Numerous dense flower spikes rise from terminal spikes in spring. Moderately drought tolerant if given a cool root run and mulching in the hottest months.

Lyndi Garnett

Salvias Flowering in Member's Gardens Now

agnes	gesneraeflora	microphylla Baby sage
africana caerulea	gesneraeflora var. Tequila	microphylla Huntingdon
austriaca	greggii Alba	microphylla Cyclaman
africana lutea Namibia	greggii Ever Red x micro	microphylla Bi-color
africana lutea	greggii Fulhams Red	microphylla Neurepia
arizonica (lucky Lyndi)	greggii Raspberry Royal	microphylla Iced Lemon
algeriensis	Harmony	microphylla Sierra Pink
blancoana	hirtella	moricana
Black Knight	Indigo Spires	munzii
calialiaefolia	interrupta	muirri
chamaedryoides	involucrata Bethelli	nilotica
chiapensis	involucrata tall	officinalis
chiapas species	involucrata x karvinskii	officinalis Nana
coahuilensis	iodantha (last flowers)	patens
coccinea	karvinskii dark calyx	polystachys
coccinea coral	karvinskii green calyx	pulchella
coccinea pale	karvinskii x 'Grey Form'	purpurea
coccinea red	karvinskii x involucrata	rubinigosa
concolor	karvinskii x involucrata Winter Red	rugosa
confertiflora	karvinskii x involucrata Winter Red slender form	runcinata
corrugata	karvinskii x involucrata Romantic Rose	scabra
Costa Rican Blue	lanceolata	scutellarioides
discolor	lavandulifolia	semi-atrata
disermis	lavanduloides	spathacea
dolomitica	leucantha few flowers	splendens van Houttii
dorisiana	leucophylla	splendens varieties
eigii	longispicata	sprucei
elegans	lyrata	tingitana
elegans Honey melon	madrensis	urica
elegans purple	Marine Blue	villosa
fallax	mellifera	wagneriana pale pink
fruticosa	mellisadora	wagneriana deep pink
fruticosa Greek Skies		Waverley

Pruning Salvias

Pruning, as we all know helps to maintain a good shape in most plants, promotes new growth and removes old or dead wood.

This also applies to many of the salvias and since they grow in various shapes and forms, the degree of pruning can vary from one species to another.

The tall shrubby species require only a tip prune after the first lot of flowers have finished, this can often produce a second flush of flowers, then follow up with a harder prune at a later date.

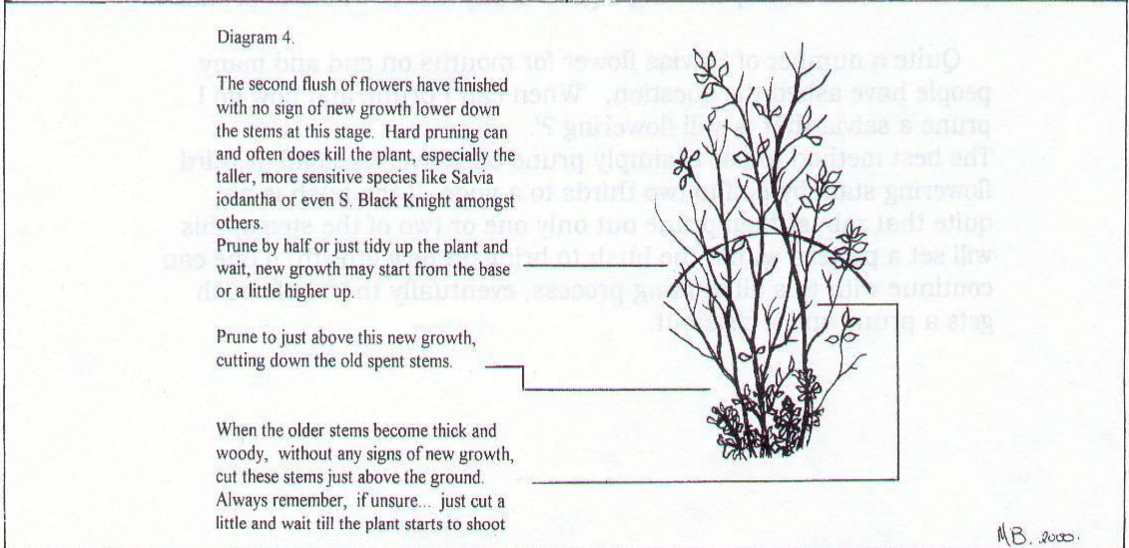
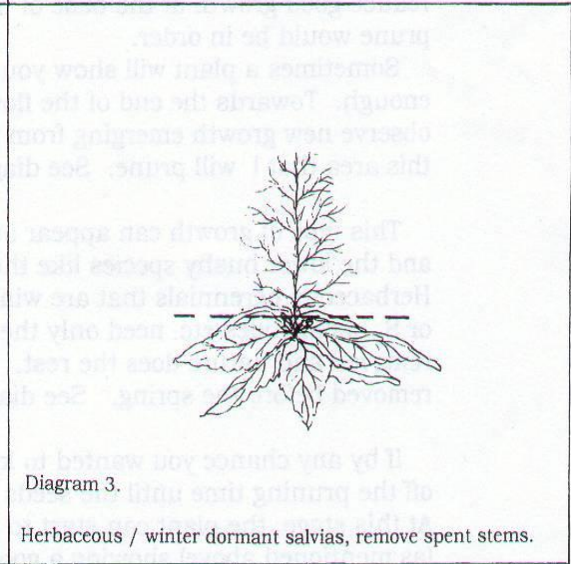
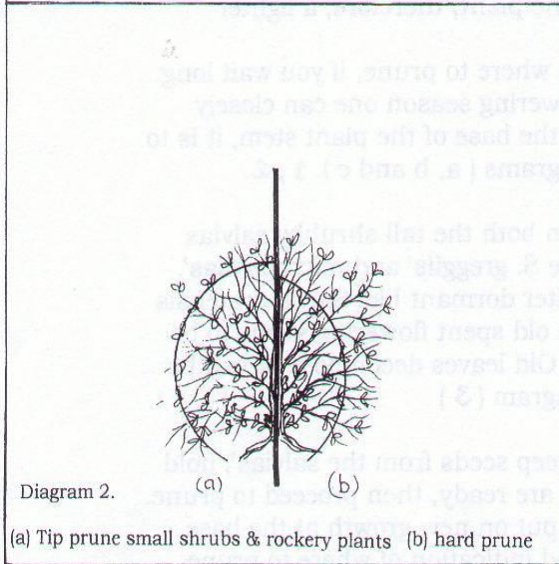
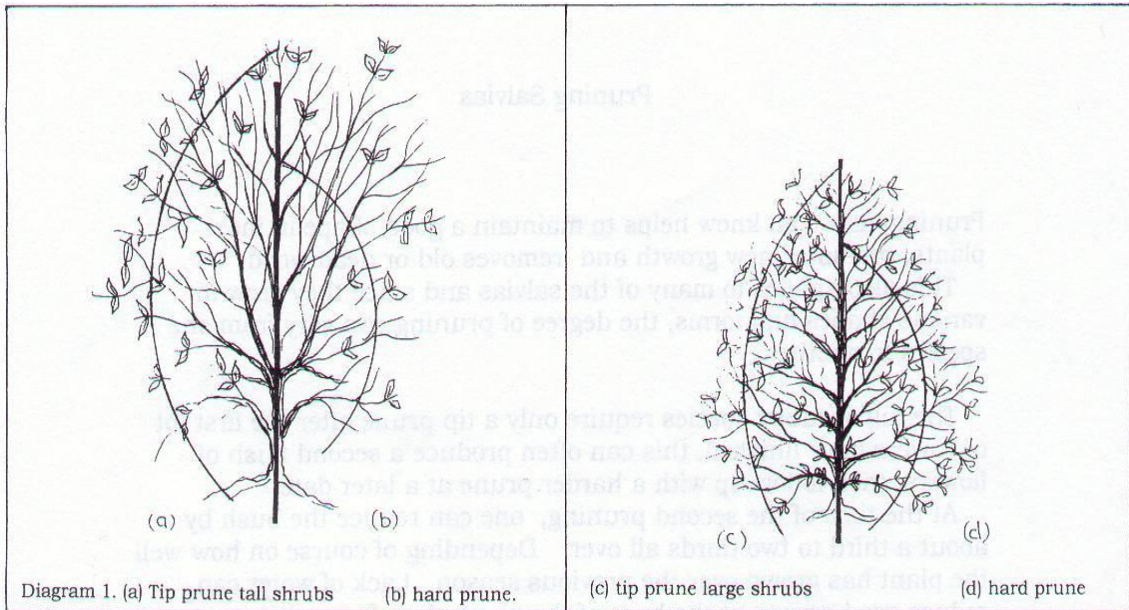
At the time of the second pruning, one can reduce the bush by about a third to two thirds all over. Depending of course on how well the plant has grown over the previous season. Lack of water can reduce good growth at the base of the plant, therefore, a lighter prune would be in order.

Sometimes a plant will show you where to prune, if you wait long enough. Towards the end of the flowering season one can closely observe new growth emerging from the base of the plant stem, it is to this area that I will prune. See diagrams (a, b and c) 1, 2.

This type of growth can appear on both the tall shrubby salvias and the lower bushy species like the *S. greggiis*' and *microphyllas*'. Herbaceous perennials that are winter dormant like *Salvia pratensis* or *S. haemetodes* etc. need only the old spent flowering stems to be removed and nature does the rest. Old leaves decompose or can be removed before the spring. See diagram (3)

If by any chance you wanted to keep seeds from the salvias', hold off the pruning time until the seeds are ready, then proceed to prune. At this stage, the plant can start to put on new growth at the base (as mentioned above) showing a good indication of where to prune.

Quite a number of Salvias flower for months on end and many people have asked the question, 'When can I prune and how do I prune a salvia that is still flowering?'. The best method to use is simply prune back every second or third flowering stalk by half to two thirds to a node. If the bush is not quite that robust then prune out only one or two of the stems, this will set a pattern within the bush to bring on new growth. If one can continue with this alternating process, eventually the whole bush gets a prune and a cleanout.



Meg Bentley continues her Journey of NZ

My lovely hosts were Adair and Geoff Genge at 'Marshwood' who grow a wonderful selection of salvias, in fact they maintain the Salvia Collection for the South Island. It's incredible to think that such a vast array of salvias do so well in this cold climate and interesting to see their performance...if one uses comparisons between the North and the South Islands and salvia collections in Australia.

Geoff tells me that some salvia species come into flower just as winter begins and the onset of cold weather can set back the flowering and pollination and can result in lack of seed production.

On the whole, I was greatly impressed by Geoff and Adairs' collection of salvias and another topic of interest was the fact that although the flowering season is much shorter in Invercargill, there are quite a few species that do better here than in the North where it is very humid over summer.

It did seem to be very good for some of the Chinese, Mexican and the European species including salvias from the Mediterranean. Some examples being varieties of *S. patens*, *S. nemerosa* and *S. officinalis*.

Following is a list of most of the salvias seen at Invercargill.

<i>S. nemerosa</i> 'Amethyst'	<i>S. nemerosa</i> 'Pink Peaks'	<i>S. nemerosa rosea</i>
<i>S. nemerosa</i> 'Ostfriesland'	<i>S. nemerosa</i> 'Blue Hills'	<i>S. nemerosa</i> 'Snow Hills'
<i>S. sylvestris</i> 'Blue Queen'	<i>S. pratensis rosea</i>	<i>S. pratensis</i>
<i>S. pratensis</i> Bertoloni group	<i>S. interrupta</i>	<i>S. forskaohlei</i>
<i>S. dumetorum</i>	<i>S. coahuilensis</i>	<i>S. sinaloensis</i>
<i>S. apiana</i>	<i>S. recognita</i>	<i>S. Marine Blue</i>
<i>S. elegans</i> 'Honeymelon'	<i>S. elegans</i> 'Pineapple'	<i>S. chamaedryoides</i>
<i>S. africana-lutea</i>	<i>S. nilotica</i>	<i>S. dominica</i>
<i>S. somalensis</i>	<i>S. disermis</i>	<i>S. Indigo Spires</i>
<i>S. farinacea</i>	<i>S. fruticosa</i>	<i>S. concolor</i>
<i>S. iodantha</i>	<i>S. 'Red Dragon'</i>	<i>S. greggii</i>
<i>S. Blue Bird</i>	<i>S. uliginosa</i>	<i>S. castanea</i>
<i>S. przewalskii</i>	<i>S. hians</i> (?)	<i>S. bulleyana</i> (hybrids)
<i>S. microphylla</i> var. <i>wislizenii</i>	<i>S. microphylla</i> <i>neurepai</i> (small leaf)	<i>S. microphylla</i> var. <i>neurepia-Grahamii</i> (ref to as 'Kew Red')
<i>S. guaranitica</i>	<i>S. guaranitica</i> 'Argentine Skies'	<i>S. virgata</i>
<i>S. viscosa</i>	<i>S. merjamie</i>	<i>S. patens</i>
<i>S. patens</i> 'Guanajuato'	<i>S. greggii</i> Blush Pink	<i>S. greggii</i> 'Two-tone Pink'
<i>S. greggii</i> 'Marshwood Pink'	<i>S. greggii</i> 'Marshwood Peach'	<i>S. greggii</i> 'Marshwood Lemon'
<i>S. microphylla</i> <i>cyclamen</i>	<i>S. microphylla</i> 'Cerro Potosi'	<i>S. scabra</i>
<i>S. involucrata</i> 'Bethellii'	<i>S. involucrata</i> 'El Butano'	<i>S. rugosa</i> (syn <i>S. karoo</i>)
<i>S. officinalis</i> and varieties	<i>S. officinalis</i> Murihiki Night	<i>S. officinalis</i> Murihiki Pink
<i>S. officinalis</i> Takitimu Snow	<i>S. officinalis</i> ssp 'Minor'	<i>S. officinalis</i> <i>grandiflora</i>
<i>S. officinalis</i> 'Icterina'	<i>S. officinalis</i> 'Jade Ice'	<i>S. officinalis</i> <i>Purpurescens</i> Group
<i>S. officianlis</i> x <i>recognita</i> 'Southern Belle'		

These were just some of the salvias growing in Geoff's garden, not all were flowering, of course, but I did see a few 'specials' growing in the garden like *Salvia heirosolymitana*, *S. cyanescens*, *S. microstegia*, *S. candidissima*, *S. regla* and one other salvia which I found quite interesting, ...*S. amplexicaulis*. This was quite different to the one at home which has leaf petioles, apparently with the 'true' species there is no leaf petiole, which is what amplexicaul means: 'clasping the stem', as with Geoff's specimen plant.

The weather was quite cold, cloudy, drizzly and wet for most of the time but for one as keen as I, this didn't bother me...gardens are always wonderful to see anywhere and the plants, trees and shrubs are the backbone and asset to all gardens, and 'Marshwood' certainly displayed some really fantastic trees and shrubs as well as salvias.

Geoff has just obtained *Salvia fulgens* from Sue Templeton which was interesting to see (a new one I obtained before leaving for my trip to NZ). Having been asked what the differences are between *S. fulgens* and *S. Red Dragon*, I can now state that there are a few slight differences. Size of leaf, size of flower, leaf surface texture and the covering of indumentum on the calyx and corollas, also the colour of the petiole. See the next *SalviaNews* for further information and sketched differences.

Glossary

This is a new section to *SalviaNews*, which, due to the late nature of this news getting to you, will start in the next edition. We are sure there are salvia buffs out there that do not understand a lot of the jargon mentioned in our articles, so we will attempt to educate you.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 20 October, 2001	Nobelius, Emerald Macclesfield	Working Bee – 11am – 2pm Committee meeting - 2.30pm
Sunday 18 November, 2001	Meg Bentley 3 Fords Rd, Gruyere (Melways Ref 285E2)	Garden Visit & ID
Sunday 9 December, 2001	Nobelius, Emerald	Salvia Xmas Picnic

2002 program will be in the next edition.

We are planning a Salvia Show and Sale for Autumn next year. This will be held at the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society's hall. Allow enough time to walk around the magnificent garden. A date is yet to be finalised, we will include it in the next edition.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE YOUR SALVIANEWS BY EMAIL?

If so, please email Trudi (trudifry@iprimus.com.au) with your email address before our next edition.