

# SALVIA NEWS

Number 43



Official Newsletter of the

**Victorian Salvia Study Group**

# **THE VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP**

**A BRANCH OF THE HERB SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.**

## **THE AIMS OF THE SALVIA STUDY GROUP ARE:**

1. To grow and collect salvias to study their growth habits.
2. To identify and name plants correctly.
3. To propagate new and existing Salvias
4. To promote the qualities of Salvias to the general public
5. To exchange information, seeds and cuttings with other Salvia enthusiasts.

The group is a not profit organization. Any monies received are used to run the Group's activities and for the planting and maintenance of our GPCAA registered garden collection.

LOOK FOR MORE INFORMATION ON OUR WEB ADDRESS [WWW.SALVIAS.ORG](http://WWW.SALVIAS.ORG) .

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**Deadline for the next issue is 25<sup>th</sup> April 2011. Please send copy to Trudi.**

# SALVIA NEWS

## VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP



**W**elcome to your latest edition. I'm sure you'll see some changes from previous issues.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Kathie and I am Trudi's neighbour. I enjoy gardening very much but didn't know about Salvias till I met Trudi so now I'm on a learning curve. I look forward to meeting many of you and learning much more.

When I'm not out in the garden gardening, I can often be found with a camera, so hope to include some of my shots here in this newsletter periodically. And when I'm not doing photography I'm actually working in my home office running a secretarial/admin business which is these days known as a 'Virtual Assistant'. I rarely meet my clients and deal with them almost entirely by email, phone and fax, oh and sometimes the snail mail.

So please know that I'm happy to be contacted direct if you have a need, otherwise continue to contact Trudi as you have in the past.

I look forward to getting to know many of you over time.

**Kathie Thomas:** e: [kathie@vadirectory.net](mailto:kathie@vadirectory.net) ph: 9754 8310

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### Message from Trudi:

I had such a bad year in 2010 that I was sure 2011 would be better. Well, my body is greatly improved but floods, fires and now poor New Zealand, as well as the unrest in the Middle East. What can I write? As always I go to my garden for comfort. The rain and mild weather in my spot of world has given me a garden in confusion. Enough plums and nectarines to share with friends and with birds for the first time since 1993 and apples still to ripen. Rhubarb replanted in the garden above the house as a border to a *Salvia splendens* bed has long thick, juicy, ruby red stems needing just a sprinkle of sugar and a little water to stew into a delicious puree. There are salvia seedlings popping up everywhere.

Kathie Thomas is producing this Salvia News and I am rejoicing. We are in email communication as well as phone and a four minute run (for her). The four minute run was so she could photograph the baby wallaby before the "Help for Wild life" people could take it into care.

Bill and Shirley Whitehead have left their lovely garden and house after forty years. Bill told me that one of the things he was sad about was losing our friendship because he would be no longer a salvia grower. He said that I don't publish anything that isn't about salvias. Well I'll change that. Companion planting is natural and the robust growth of a mixture of plants proves it and adding humans to the mix even if it only to have a comforting chat to an interesting plant contributes to the health of all. We welcome all news on plants and for someone like Bill the knowledge stored up in his 94 years will make an interesting series of articles. So look forward to hearing from Bill. Anyone else who has had to give up active gardening but is willing to share knowledge is welcome too. As you have realised I am not able to garden these days either but the garden gives me interest and delight.

About the joey swamp wallaby. They wander through the garden and bush and we treat each other courteously. His mum came to die in a bank of plants against a floor to ceiling window. A beautiful place. It would suit me. She wasn't obviously injured but the road is above so perhaps she was hit. The Wildlife people were very good.



## Calendar of Events

- March 19th Sat / 20th Sun**      **Tesselaar's Gardening & Rare Plants Expo**  
9am - 4pm 357 Monbulk Rd, Sivan, Mel: 123 B5  
Salvias for sale. Bring your lists and be early.
- March 28th Mon**      **Ringwood Garden Club 8.00 pm**  
Ringwood East Community Hall, Knaith Rd, Ringwood East Mel: 50 B8  
Lyndi will be speaking on Salvias.  
Plants for sale. Bring plants to be identified
- April 2nd Sat**      **Ferny Creek Buy- Swap or Sell Plant Sale**  
2 - 5pm, 100 Hilton Rd, Ferny Creek Mel : 66 E12  
Rare and unusual plants for fanatics  
Salvias for sale, bring your list and be early of those bargains.
- April 11th Mon**      **Upper Valley Garden Club to visit Nobelius 10am.**  
Nobelius Heritage Park, Emerald. Mel: 127. G4  
Salvia plants for sale. More details later
- April 17th Sun**      **Visit to Terry Ashton's garden 11.00 am**  
2 Lily St, Glen Waverley Mel: 70 K1 Ph 98028550  
Beautiful garden. Bring a chair and lunch to share (no ham or bacon products)  
Bring Salvias to be identified.
- April 29th Fri**      **Bunnings South Oakleigh 10.am**  
1126 Centre Rd, South Oakleigh. Mel : 78 C2  
Lyndi will be speaking on Salvias  
Bring Salvias to be identified.
- May 15th Sun**      **Propagation Day with Meg Bentley**  
3 Fords Rd, Gruyere. Mel: 285 E3  
A "hands on" how to learn to propagate Salvias and other perennials  
Bring a plate, a chair and plants to be identified
- May 18th Wed**      **Mt Macedon Horticultural Society 1.30 pm**  
583 Mt Macedon Rd, Mt Macedon Mel: 658 A1-6,Pg 909 F10  
Lyndi will be speaking on Salvias, after lunch 1.30pm  
Peter Leigh will be speaking on Hellebores in the morning 9.30am  
\$35.00 to Register for lecture & lunch  
Plants for sale. Bring plants to be identified.  
Ring Anne Tomlinson Ph.03 54223621 for these and other lectures being held by the Society
- June 19th Sun**      **Garden Visit Heather Lucas 11.00 am**  
3 Bligh Crt, Heathmont Mel : 63 J1, Ph98795365  
Interesting Salvia garden. Bring a chair and lunch to share  
Bring Salvias to be identified.
- July 21st Thurs**      **Warrigal Ranges Probus Group 10.am**  
40 Shirley Rd, Neerim South, at the home of Caryl & Denis Ferdinands Lyndi will be speaking. Bring plants to be identified Mel: Reg Maps, Pg 912, V6 Plants for sale.



**Aug 17th Wed**

**South Melbourne Garden Club 7.45pm**

Mary Kehoe Centre, 224 Danks St , Albert Park. Mel:2K, A 10

St Kilda Beach Tram 112, Stop 136, Cnr Mills & Danks St.

Lyndi will be speaking .Bring plants to be identified

Salvias for sale.

**Sept 29th Thurs**

**Mansfield Garden Club 7pm**

Autistic Centre, Highett St, Mansfield,

Goulburn Valley Hwy, Mel: Reg Map, Pg 922, B11

Meg Bentley will be speaking. Bring plants to identified

Salvias for sale.

## Notes from Gruyere, Summer 2011

I would have to say it has been the 'bestest' summer we have had here in many, many years, best for growth, best for cool weather, best for propagating and best for rain! Mind you, I do feel for all the folk who have had to deal with the floods and the damage they have caused.

It is amazing how the climate changes and makes such a difference to our gardens, the extra rains and warmth have made everything grow better than expected in my garden and in some areas it is like looking at plants anew! It wasn't until these past rains and I saw the growth that I realized just how my gardens have struggled all through these years without the rain.

Some salvias have actually doubled in size to what they were used to under dryer conditions especially *Salvia forskaohlei* which once had leaves the size of saucers which have now grown to the size of dinner plates. Flowering stems are now at 80-90cm instead of 40-60cm and *S. sclarea alba* has just about doubled in size to 1.2m with a beautiful head of white flowers.

Years ago I planted a few borders of *Plectranthus argentatus*?? and other species which grew well in dry shade and covered the ground admirably which was the intention. Unfortunately these have now doubled and in some cases tripled in size smothering many small salvias and other plants. Even the pathways have been lost to the advancing growth of many plants and I'm not sure whether to laugh or cry, still, there are some wonderful joys to be found in the gardens here. *Salvia 'Garron'* with orange-red corolla and glossy green leaves has been flowering very well over

the summer and blends well with another salvia of similar colouring *Salvia microphylla* 'Desert Sunset' that opens to almost an orange-red colour and fades to a soft apricot-coral. Planted in the same area and to help offset the hot colours is the white flowering *S. microphylla* 'Peg' a touch of blue with *S. 'Marine Blue'* and *S. forskaohlei*. Further along the border we have a few new salvia cultivars flowering and it is always a joy to see what colourings they will have and how they will fit in with other salvias and plants. These two specials are a treat; *S. 'Strawberry Crush'* which it does look like, with a touch of white at the throat and the other one *S. 'Sweet Laura'* (from QLD) is a real beauty with the palest cream to white on the lower lip and light wine on the upper hood, not yet available but will become quite an asset in the garden. Behind these salvias are a few newly planted bush roses and some taller salvias like '*Indigo Spires*' and '*Meigans Magic*'. All of the buddlejas have put on a good show especially *Buddleja 'Lochinch'* with its purple-blue flowers right next to the tall golden trumpet blooms of my liliums, which also have done remarkably well this season. The tall blue and white spikes of *Salvia forskaohlei* and the deep violet-blue, chocolate scented flowers of '*Cherry Pie*' *Heliotropium arborescens* in front of the buddleja and liliums just completes this picture.

*Salvia bowleyana* is still flowering a treat in part shade and producing a second lot of dark cream and wine blooms further down the stems, this salvia has enjoyed the cooler moist summer months in a part shaded position.

I have been taking notice of salvias with open 'campanulate' type calyces: examples are

*Salvia aurea* (Syn. *S. africana lutea*) *S. africana* (Syn. *S. Africana caerulea*) *S. lanceolata*, *S. dolomitica* and to a smaller extent *S. muirii* and *S. dentata* which all usually grow in areas of Southern Africa with flowers rather sparse on the plants and usually on the tips, therefore my question is this:

Do salvias with these sparse, rather large open funnel or campanulate type calyx need less water than those with smaller, abundant corollas and calyces? Also the above mentioned salvias with the campanulate type calyx all have grey-green leaves and are extremely hardy whereas the ones which are smaller and abundant have greener leaves with more indentations along the leaf margins which can be rough and some can be softer in texture, these examples are:

*S. disermis*, *S. aurita* var *galpinii*, *S. chamelaeagnea*, *S. repens*, *S. scabra*, *S.*

*namaensis*, *S. somalensis*, *S. stenophylla*.

While all of these are relatively hardy enough only the following few have remained unchanged with the extra rains, *S. chamelaeagnea*, *S. scabra* and *S. somalensis*.

This observation has been one of interest since we have had so much rain, the best ever since I have been growing salvias and the response by the smaller, green leaved species which have now doubled in size compared to the grey-leaved species. I know there is a general rule that grey leaved plants don't need as much moisture but does the type of calyx give an indication as to the plants requirements in normally dry areas such as Southern Africa?

**Meg Bentley**

## **A special note:**

### **Our Salvia Friends from Geelong:**

Anyone who has been part of the Salvia Study Group for any length of time will know our trusted friends Bill and Shirley Whitehead and no doubt visited their garden and shared their hospitality with Shirley's cooking and her wonderful Curry Puffs and Bill's enthusiasm with his salvias and herbs. We all know Bill gave his salvias to the Geelong Botanic Gardens and has had to down size his garden, well now he and Shirley have moved to a smaller residence, not too far from their old home and are on the verge of 'new beginnings'. It is a great step for anyone to leave what they have known and start anew and while the new garden area is small, there is scope for a few special salvias and herbs out near their patio and no doubt there will be a wonderful 'potted' garden in which they both can enjoy without the back breaking work. On a recent visit to see them both, Garry and I took a container of salvias to welcome them into their new home and no doubt in due course they will settle and enjoy their new surrounds and the well tended rose garden in the central area. We all wish them well! **MB**

## **The Nobelius Salvia Display Garden News**

There has been a lot of rain. Since 1993 our soil has not been so wet. At first the heavy rain just ran away but because of the mulching and soil improvement the plants now have their roots in rich moist soil well drained and full of worms. The plant growth has been fantastic. The 'look' of the double borders is lush and lovely, very English Country Garden Style. Birds and butterflies are rejoicing. Some plants have not enjoyed the humidity. For example the *Salvia officinalis* lot get very stressed as do other plants from dry arid areas. We need to plant them in an open breezy spot. We have had some dramatic deluges damaging the path and forming a gully. Repair with more gravel is needed and there will be a lot of pruning to be done. So, therefore, lots of great cutting material for the workers.

Contact Lyndi ph: 9803 4534 or Jillian ph 9756 6361 to join working groups.



## The Jindivick Country Gardener

Over the rolling hills and valleys and round the winding roads, you pass lush green pasture and magnificent gums. This is the Jacksons Track to Jindivick and atop the hill in the small township is a wonderful nursery called the Jindivick Country Gardener. The place to go if you are looking for something really different for your garden, in the home or a gift for a very special person!

David, the owner, has an eye for the rare and unusual, not just items for hard landscape but plants as well, which is what we were after for the garden. Something that will give your garden an edge and stunning is what we got. *Liquidambar styraciflua* 'Golden Treasure' with leaves of green and brilliant golden markings which will light up a partly shaded area, not too tall and robust like the species. Another tree was the Damio Oak, *Quercus dentata* which has very large bright green leaves and a *Liquidambar formosana* 'Evergreen' with deep red new growth and tri-lobed leaves which I had been after for some time.

Next time we go I would like to get the slender form of *Ginkgo biloba* (the Male tree) to compliment my robust female form of Ginkgo and probably a few unusual *Berberis* species since they are all quite hardy in this area. A visit to this nursery is a bit like a kid in a lolly shop...such wonderful goodies everywhere you look. David also has a number of different salvias: *S.aethiopsis*, *S. Mexicana* 'Lolly' and some good looking *S. discolor* just to mention a few and he will eventually be stocking new varieties and to add to his display garden. The Jindivick Country Gardener: 1070 Jacksons Track. Jindivick and is open Wed. to Sun. from 10am to 4-30 or 5pm.

**Meg Bentley**

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### In Response to Questions from Hobart:

John Daniels writes about Clary Sage, concerned that the packet of seed may have been wrongly labelled as 'Clary Sage' 'Summer Bouquet Mixed' thinking that they were the *Salvia sclarea* Clary Sage. It becomes very confusing when people use only the common name for plants and seeds but if they used the correct botanical name this confusion would not arise. The above mentioned seed 'Summer Bouquet Mixed' does refer to a Clary Sage *Salvia horminum* and can also be referred to as 'Garden Clary' while 'Wild Clary can refer to *S.sylvestre*. To add to the confusion of 'Clary', the 'Vervain Sage' *S. verbenaca* is also named clary 'Wild English Clary', see how confusing it can be! So when folk speak about Clary Sage it pays to follow up quickly with its botanical name right at the beginning!

A few other little mentions, re Johns' articles of late, *Salvia sprucei* does grow better with base protection or at the back of a border. It does have magenta flowers with white bee lines and there is another form with paler pink

flowers and white bee lines, both very similar in height but the leaves are different in as much as the species has darker green leaves and margins slightly crenate whereas the paler form leaves have definite uniform crenulate margins with neat indentations and the leaf is somewhat paler green. Both can droop at the drop of a hat if allowed to dry out in summer but a good dunking can sometimes correct this if it is due to lack of water otherwise it needs a cool change in the weather to buck it up.

*Salvia roscida* was previously called *S.fallax* and yes it does enjoy cooler conditions and should be very happy in Hobart, mine struggles in the summers making the leaves go purple on the reverse due to stressing but I must say I am impressed with the length of the flowering stems at 30cm, well done!

With reference to *Salvia hispanica* 'Chia': it can shoot into flower all too quickly if growing in pots. Having bought a few pots of *S. hispanica* which were almost at the end of

flowering I planted them deep into the soil (over the base shoots and stems) and cut down all flowering stems by about 1/3 to 1/2 mulched them and watered with a diluted seaweed solution. New leaves and buds started to form and a second flowering was

achieved, this can also be done with other annuals like the *Salvia splendens* in borders although many prefer to pull them out and start anew!

**Meg Bentley**

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## News from Hobart – Summer

This summer has been perfect for plant growth in the south-east of Tasmania. Thankfully, we have been spared the floods that have been a feature of this season in Queensland, Victoria and parts of the north of Tasmania. Fortunately, damaging winds have been minimal and temperatures have been equable with many cloudy nights and only ten days with maxima of twenty-five degrees and above recorded for Hobart. So far, this summer has favoured us with regular gentle rain almost to order, fortnightly, an extension of the pattern in November!

In January, at the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens, *Salvia karwinskii*, *S. gesneraeflora* (and its pink form) and *S. involucrata x karwinskii* were reduced to an upright framework of mostly one to two year old stems, sacrificing further flowering to contain spread. This allows light to the flourishing new shoots within these three metre high plants as well as promotes the development of buds at the base and on the retained framework of the shrub. Their rapid development is almost visible and engenders an appreciation of the aesthetics of the vegetative growth of such tropical salvias, the vigour and symmetry of their stems, and the texture and subtlety of colour of their leaves. The softness and pink shoots of *S. karwinskii* as well as its aromatic leaves make it a particular favourite of mine.

Another favourite is *Salvia corrugata* which has a roughly textured upper leaf surface and a silky lower surface covered in beige, dense woolly hairs that impart the same colour to the stems, producing a contrast that enhances the dark green of the upper leaf. The stems terminate in dense, branched inflorescences

with initially prominent pale green bracts. Specimens of this species planted in early summer 2009 are commencing to flush with flowers. One, in full sun, exceeds two metres across but, while only a metre high, has developed many terminal buds on stems that have been tip-pruned two to three times during last year. This pruning technique contains the length of stems and, thereby, promotes bushiness of this quick growing salvia with a vigorously spreading habit resulting from its tendency to spread horizontally due to weak stems with long internodes. Other plants of this salvia though, planted at the same time in an aspect with more shade but less attention to tip pruning, are over a metre and a half in height and, as yet, are not exhibiting the swelling terminal buds on the majority of their shoots.

*Salvia confertiflora* plants also have beautifully textured leaves that are softer, but much broader, with lighter green leaves than *S. corrugata*. Planted in December 2009, they have developed spikes of red tips uniformly over the shrub, and promise a second flush of very small red flowers.

Two other plants of particular note in the collection are *Salvia patens* 'Large Form' and *S. atrocynea*. The former, transplanted to a different bed from its original planting, has developed into a most impressive upright plant with many spikes full of large blue flowers that have a noticeable white spot at the back of the lower lip. I also particularly like the dark toned hastate leaves that this tuberous salvia produces in spring. *Salvia atrocynea*, also moved, but to a shadier position than it was exposed to before, has commenced to flower at over a metre high

with sparse inflorescences 50cm in length with large green bracts and lovely blue corollas, of a paler hue, that contain a style and stigma with combined length of 40mm. In this climate it is deciduous dying back to its crown. Thanks to Sue Templeton for the seed of both of these plants.

I welcome comments by members on the observations above and would like to hear of their particular experiences of growing these species and the use made of techniques in their cultivation of salvias.

**John Daniels**

john-daniels@bigpond.com

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## Glenda & Eric Sellenger's garden at Rosebud

Monday morning saw us heading off down the Mornington Peninsula, to Glenda & Eric Sellenger's garden at Rosebud. 'Kurrajong' was carved out of one acre of pine forest approximately 7 years ago and Rosebud, being almost at the end of the peninsula, the soil is quite sandy which suits the numerous natives growing in the garden. The small garden along the front of the house is home to among other plants standard roses, a yellow one, a David Austin 'Golden Celebration' blooming beautifully, aquilegias in their various bicolours, a must it seems in Victorian gardens as they self-seed so readily, numerous salvias, and the ubiquitous species gladioli. The back garden is long and narrow and is protected from what could be strong coastal winds, by native bushland. All the gardens are built up to 30cm with concrete blocks which add to the good drainage already created by the sandy base, and are heavily mulched with pea straw.

A third dimension is given to the garden by numerous archways, mainly planted with climbing roses, among them Crepuscule, and the lovely red Dublin Bay. Another rose much admired was the shorter growing Rhapsody in Blue. Also planted on one archway is a smaller growing wisteria, Amethyst Falls, which promises to only grow to 2m. It appears that this garden along with many other Victorian gardens has been planted with species which will be able to cope with a future where water will be a precious commodity. Thus we have geraniums and pelargoniums, several different species of euphorbias, aloes, native hibiscus, kniphofia and abutilons, gaillardias and of course the many salvias which are Glenda's pride and joy. Amongst her favourites are quite a number which are listed in 'Salvias in Southeast Queensland', namely 'Magenta Magic', 'Phyllis Fancy', 'Black Knight', *curviflora*, *dolomitica*, 'Waverley', 'Wendy's Wish', *urica* and *somalensis*. Glenda is also proud of her New Zealand rock lilies growing along the back of the house but only just starting to flower when we were there. I was happy also to see a nasturtium which I have always loved and only seen growing in Toowoomba, it has dark blue green leaves and ruby red flowers, known at one time as 'Indian Chief'. Height is given to the gardens with the planting of numerous callistemons.

A plant which was of particular interest was our namesake the oriental poppy, coming from Central Asia it needs a few frosts to make it bloom well, definitely not for Brisbane. This one was orange although they do come in shades of pink, red and salmon. The bottom end of the garden is shaded sufficiently for numerous tree ferns to live happily, also cymbidium orchids grow and flower well in these conditions. Another plant seeming to enjoy this shadier part of the garden is the native Acacia 'River Cascade'. Here is the utilitarian part of the garden where vegetables thrive in corrugated iron raised beds as well as citrus. Here too is a collection of plants being propagated in readiness for transfer into the main garden. Wildlife is not forgotten with a plate of chopped apple to hopefully attract the possums away from the roses. Two silky bantams Molly and Polly, sadly Dolly is no longer with them, live happily and securely in their cage. And so to another Rosebud garden for morning tea and a feast of more salvias.



Elisabeth & David Stanton  
The Perennial Poppies Group Inc  
Reprinted from "The Poppies" with permission.

## Wendy & Brian Smith's garden at Rosebud

The salvia enthusiasts among us had been looking forward in anticipation to the garden of Wendy and Brian Smith. It was here that a chance seedling was discovered, trialled and then marketed as one of our newer true performers here in Qld - 'Wendy's Wish'. Wendy's interest in gardening began in childhood and followed her into adult life as she pursued a career in the nursery industry. She and Brian moved to their present home on 2/3 acre eight years ago and set about creating a garden. The removal of 10 large gum trees was first on the agenda.

Having to deal with hungry grey soil proved to be a bit of a challenge but one that Wendy vowed to overcome in true 'Gardener's Spirit'. On arrival we were met with a riot of colour on the footpath with two large curved beds and a border that followed the length of the patio simply brimming with mass plantings. Neat rounded buns of salvia, both *greggii* and *microphylla* exploded in all shades of pink, red and purple. Above these, reaching toward the sky, healthy bud-laden roses. Enormous clumps of alstreomeria in varying shades vied for your attention among daisies, sedums and nicotiana. Lavatera in their many shades and flower sizes hung their ballerina skirts as back-drop.

The rear garden was more elevated giving the patio area the feel of a sunken oasis, cool, green and protected. A main central garden was bisected by a gravel path entered through a timber arbor dripping with clematis. Here again an amazing mix of cottage garden plants awash with colour. Long beds hugged the fence line on all sides with varying heights of plants used to add dimension. And open sweeps of lawn between the gardens gave a feeling of space. The sunny beds offered ideal conditions for Wendy to succumb to her fascination with salvias. She is a true collector, growing around 250 different species and cultivars, many of which she grows from seed. Some of the forms of *Salvia nemerosa* could only be dreamed of. And as we 'Salvia Nuts' were dragged grudgingly back onto the bus, still scribbling away on our 'Wish List' we felt lucky to have had the opportunity to visit this wonderful 'Gardener's Garden'.

Carol Kerkin  
The Perennial Poppies Group Inc  
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## News from Melbourne

Well haven't we had a different summer this year in Melbourne and indeed probably for the rest of Australia? So I thought I'd research the weather and was a bit surprised by the results. We've only had 2 days over 40 this summer – 31<sup>st</sup> December, 41.1 C and 1<sup>st</sup> February, 40.2 C, none in January. Last year's summer Dec 2009 to Feb 2010 didn't have that many days over 40 C either, however I think the difference is that this year it has been so humid and tropical (and the garden has loved it), whereas last year it was more of a dry heat. This difference in weather is greatly due to the amount of rain we have been getting this spring/summer. We received 89.6 mm of rain in January this year compared to 22.6 mm in January, 2010 and to date in February we have received 119.6 mm, so the garden loves all the rain.

I must admit that I have been surprised by the growth that my salvias have put on this spring/summer. Plants that are performing beautifully at the moment in my garden are S. 'African Skies', S. 'Black Knight', *S. chiapensis*, *S. darcii* 'Josh' and *S. flocculosa*. I went around my garden and counted how many types of salvia were actually in bloom and was amazed that there are 63. The other thing that amuses me is that *S. uliginosa* is supposedly meant to like moist soil

conditions (I guess that is why it is also known as bog sage), however I have several plants of it that are in a full sun condition and also one under a tree that hardly any plant survives there due to lack of moisture and they are all thriving. A very pretty salvia which combines beautifully with a yellow *Buddleja globosa* that is growing behind it.

For years I've been meaning to finish my driveway garden bed, its one of those areas that you weed from the bottom of the driveway to the top and by the time you get to the top, the bottom is full of weeds again. This time as I weeded, I added many bags of all purpose premium conditioner-improver to the bed and then put plantation wood chips on. I purchase 15 kg bags of the soil conditioner-improver and all purpose composted organic mulch from a company called Betta Growers and find that their products are fantastic (probably not the most economical way of purchasing soil, etc., but it works for me). I get 8 x 15 kg bags and get 1 more bag of my choice for free for \$129.90. I also had to completely re-do the top half of the driveway, so I put in at least 30 salvias and 3 native plants and a couple of geraniums, geums and a winter flowering buddleja. I planted these plants end December, beginning January, so they have only been in the garden bed for just on 2 months. The amount of growth and filling out they've done is wonderful. Most of the salvias were bought from the Salvia Study Group at the calendar day events and were in the small 5" pots. The ones flowering profusely at the moment and adding beautiful colour to the driveway are S. 'Waverly', S. 'Mystic Spires' and a *S. greggii* I bought from Branch Out Nursery that said it was 'apricot', but looks more like sierra pink. I have not watered the driveway garden at all and the strange thing is that the salvias are thriving and the 3 native plants that I bought have all died. Who would have thought that!!!

The joy of finding a treasure in the garden cannot be measured, I get so excited when I see a new salvia that I've bought flower for the first time, eg. *S. arenaria*, with beautiful little scarlet flowers. I have been known to do a little dance at the time and am very glad that no-one can see me in the back garden.

Last year I spent a day pruning lots of different salvias and I thought I'll just pop a couple of these cuttings into my wheelbarrow. Has anyone ever put some cuttings into a spot in the garden and said that they'd remember what salvia it was and then months later, you see it really putting on growth and you think what salvia was that?? I'm not very good at propagating, but every so often I think I'll just put this cutting in a garden bed and see what happens. You really must label them there and then. I'm very surprised by the fact that I plonked in some *S. glutinosa* cuttings and I have now got 2 new plants in the wheelbarrow that are flowering!! I have found that the greggii family of salvias does take very easily from cuttings; I have been able to propagate *S. greggii* 'Bi-colour' and 'Lara'. I'll just end off by noting that a salvia that is well worth getting is *S. verticillata* var *amarissima*, a cultivar, which has beautiful lilac/mauve flower spikes from early summer to autumn and can take full sun as well as light shade. I have two in full sun and one in part shade and all are equally flourishing.

Happy gardening.  
Heather Lucas.

## Pat & John Anderson's garden at Warrandyte

The detail in this article is for the benefit of the Salvia Study Group.

Pat Andersen's garden at Warrandyte is a delightful mix of perennial garden and bush backdrop. It flows from the entrance through

the 'Salvia Garden' under the 'Rose Arch' down the 'Pelargonium Path' to the back lawn and then through the covered walk and vegetable garden to the Yarra. Pat's garden was the morning tea stop and there was much to see between the entrance and the lovely

back lawn, the setting for morning tea. At the entrance was a lovely weeping acacia, templetonia, westringia and the beautiful *Eremophila glabra* 'Kalbarri Carpet' with its lovely felty yellow flowers contrasted against the grey/silver foliage and *E. glabra* 'Red Form' with orange/red flowers and slightly greener foliage.

Wandering down the drive, you could see lots of new plantings from the gate down to the main central salvia garden area. Most of Pat's plantings were carefully labelled making the garden enthusiast's experience all the more interesting. Thanks Pat! The new plantings included *Eremophila decipiens*, a lovely red flowered eremophila and *E. lehmanniana* a more upright plant with dusty pink flowers, *Prostanthera sp.*, *Derwentia demorosa* and many more drought tolerant specimens on the way to the 'Salvia Garden'.

Pat has several salvia gardens, in the front section of the property, which feature her extensive collection of over 350 different salvias. Time was of the essence so the focus here was on the central garden which is very much what I would call a 'cottage collection' with the featured salvias beautifully set against a range of other plant varieties, avoiding the regimented specimen nature of some plant collections.

As a result of the prolonged cold weather, there were many salvias just beginning to put up their flower spikes, with the promise of colour to come. What a treat it was to see many lovely salvias that we struggle with in southeast Queensland. *Salvia judaica* and *Salvia algeriana* not yet in flower but providing lovely contrast with their grey and bright green foliage. *Salvia desoleana* was very close to flowering with luscious fat buds held high above the large bright green felty leaves. *Salvia nemerosa* 'E. Friedland' was flowering beautifully with metre tall, densely packed flower spikes, green bracts turning dark red with pale mauve short-tubed corolla. There followed splashes of colour from *Salvia nemerosa* 'Lubeca' with its short stems of vibrant blue flowers, *Salvia nemerosa* 'Blue Hills' with long stems of 8-9 whorls of

flowers having a showy pale mauve upper lip and stunning purple and orange contrast on the lower lip, *Salvia nemerosa* 'Tanzerin' - another vibrant blue, *Artemisia ludoviciana* 'Silver King' providing wonderful contrasting foliage and *Salvia hierosolymitana* with maroon/purple flowers above a lovely grey-green, wavy leaved, rosette. Perhaps the most interesting salvia for me was *S. spathacea* which caught my attention as the pollen is a very bright yellow contrasting against the dense, dark pink flower heads and very dark coarse bracts. Closer inspection reveals a very long anther sitting over a pronounced, very long lower lip, long tube (> 2cm) and heavy coarse dark bract. Set against its large felty spear shaped leaves, I thought it quite a picture.

Around the corner in the central garden was a large selection of *Salvia greggii* and *microphylla*. Many of these were yet to flower but there was some colour from the early flowers on *S. greggii* 'Pumpkin' a pale orange-pink, *S. greggii* 'Wensley Apricot', *S. greggii* 'Pat's Pink', *S. greggii* 'Grace', *S. microphylla* 'Peg', *S. greggii* 'Sierra Pink', *S. microphylla* 'Maraschino' and *S. microphylla* var. *wislizenii* which was just beginning to open its bright pink flowers. After musing on the seemingly endless range of *microphylla* and *greggii* it was time to move on towards morning tea!

Through the red rose covered archway and down the cottage walk to the back garden and morning tea. The paved path curved down past the front of the house and around to the back garden providing interesting colour and aroma along the way. I wandered down the path to be delighted by pelargonium, lavatera, *Buddleia crispa*, hebe and the *Sphaleria sp.* - an unusual groundcover and related to the hollyhock. The gum vine, *Aphanopetalum resinsum*, on the front pillar of the house sparked much interest being a quite fine-leaved climber with dainty bunches of bell-like flowers, actually having no petals but very pronounced creamy white sepals. The aromas from pennyroyal, an unusual dark purple form of *Anthriscus sylvestris* and the lovely splashes of the *Aquilegia* 'McKenna'

hybrids brought me around to the morning tea area and a chance to sit and ponder. Everyone enjoyed morning tea on the back lawn which looks down a sloped area of nearly half an acre across the extensive vegetable garden area and through many large eucalypts down to the Yarra River. The lawn was an oasis bordered by the palette of colour from the salvia, eupatorium (blue mist flower), valerian, nasturtiums and pinks. In particular, Salvia 'Romantic Rose' at 3m tall was an impressive tall salvia framed by a lattice work of climbing roses and *S. greggii* 'Cecilia' with its very atypical (for greggii) leaf shape was an interesting find. There was a lovely specimen of *Nicotiana mutabilis* which I had seen in several gardens in Melbourne and which can also be grown

successfully back in 'Poppy Territory'. *Agastache rupestris* does well in this garden and also in mine! The clever use of rhubarb and rainbow chard



reminded me that vegetables can be used to provide a great contrast of form and colour in the flower garden. The half wine barrels of water lilies, complete with tadpoles, mosquito larvae and dragon flies completed, what for me, is a wonderfully interesting cottage collection in an idyllic setting.

**Lynn McAllister**

The Perennial Poppies Group Inc  
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## PLANTS & LABELS

There are a number of Salvia plant series available these days, being produced by big named nurseries that are adding to the confusion of you being able to identify correctly what you may already have growing in your garden.

Under the label **NAVAJO GARDEN JEWELS, MEDITERRANEAN SERIES (Balls Aust)**

Navajo Series:

*S.* 'Navajo Red' ( label – Navajo Bright Red)  
*S.* 'Cream' - green calyxes and flower stem( not to be confused with *S.* 'Iced Lemon' - dark calyxes and flower stem)  
*S.* 'Navajo Purple' - violet purple ( not to be confused with *coahuensis* – dark purple/blue  
*S.* 'Navajo Dusky Mauve' - new release

These plants have been released for a number of years and are well known. BEWARE!!

Also included under this banner of NAVAJO GARDEN JEWELS are:

*S. greggii* 'Alba'  
*S. greggii* 'Raspberry Royal'  
*S. greggii* 'Furnam's Red'  
*S. greggii* 'Sierra Pink'

The Salvia *greggii* group of plants have been released and recognized in their own right for the past 18 yrs. I do not understand why Balls Aust. do not recognise these plants and place them on their labels correctly.

Also under the Navajo label you might find labels with:

'Navajo Rose' = *S. greggii* 'Raspberry Royal'

'Navajo Pink' = *S. greggii* 'Sierra Pink'  
'Navajo Red' = *S. greggii* 'Furnam's Red'  
'Navajo White' = *S. greggii* 'Alba'

Make sure you know what you have in your garden before going out and snapping up these plants thinking they are something new of different.

HEATWAVE SERIES – PGA ( most have Plant Protection Rights)

This series were produced in 2 releases:

*S.* 'Sizzle' – a bright cerise pink with coloured calyxes –  
*S.* 'Scorcher' – a baby pink with a blue hue to the flowers and leaves – (no PBR)  
*S.* 'Flare' – a bright baby pink – (noPBR)  
*S.* 'Blaze' – a deep crimson colour

Second Series:

*S.* 'Glimmer' – a pale cream with dark calyxes and dark flower stems  
*S.* 'Blast' - a coral pink with white markings – can seed easily  
*S.* 'Sparkle' – an interesting pink /purple with white markings  
*S.* 'Glitter' - mauve coloured

All these Salvia releases are well recognised.



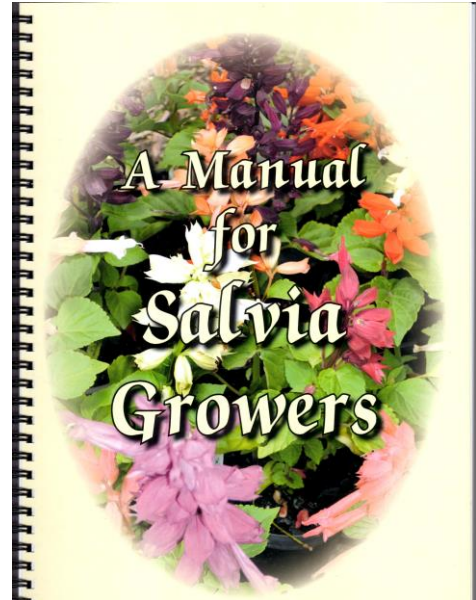
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