

# SALVIA NEWS

Number 47



Official Newsletter of the

**Victorian Salvia Study Group**

Autumn 2012

# **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 for 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.au](http://www.salvias.org.au)**

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**COPY DEADLINE SALVIA NEWS 2012**

**Winter issue 12 May 2012.**

Spring issue 11 August 2012.

Summer issue 10 November 2012

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**DEADLINE for WINTER ISSUE is 12 May 2012**



# SALVIA NEWS

VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP

*Happy New Year !  
May you enjoy good health, and much happiness throughout the year.  
Our thoughts are with those experiencing terrible floods again this year.  
Hoping at the very least, all are safe & well.*

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**W**elcome to your Autumn edition of Salvia News, my first edition of presenting Salvia News.

Kathie and I will now alternate putting together each edition of the Salvia News. Please note new deadlines for the rest of 2012. Each edition should reach you 1<sup>st</sup> of the month of the new season. Your contributions can be forwarded to either of us for each edition. We look forward to hearing from you. Once again, we have heard from many salvia enthusiasts from near and far, and trust you will enjoy reading their news.

Nobelius Display Garden in Emerald is well worth a visit (page 5). Very heavy rain in Melbourne mid November, didn't spoil the weekend for Meryl Waterhouse's open garden (page 6). Jane Lee from Stratford tells about a new sprayer on the market that may be of interest. You may also be able to assist Jane in her search for a salvia that is hard to find (page 6). What a successful event The Salvia Spectacular was late February (pages 8-12). Enthusiasts came from as far as New Zealand to enjoy the show! I enjoyed meeting so many salvia enthusiasts at the Salvia Spectacular, to hear their stories and even get some tips. Of course I added to my salvia collection too.

You will notice that the Calendar of Events is jammed packed with interesting events in the coming months. Don't forget to log into The Victorian Salvia Study Group website for a wealth of information, including identification of salvias, where you can get them, even a list of salvia speakers and so much more.

Also, the Calendar of Events is updated regularly on the website for your information.

[www.salvias.org.au](http://www.salvias.org.au)

Feel free to email any queries or comments. Thank you to those who already have.

Happy gardening, *Beth*

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## A New Adventure for Laurelle

... Meg Bentley

This February we have said farewell to our friend Laurelle Willis as she moves to a new abode up Ballarat way. Laurelle has been a great asset at our Group's plant sales with her natural ability to match salvias with colour schemes for the gardener and her friendliness to all she meets. Laurelle, we hope your new abode will be filled with many choice treasured plants and salvia additions too of course. We certainly wish you well and hope that we will see you from time to time, at some salvia ventures in the future. It was nice to catch up with you at the Salvia Spectacular, this time on the other side of the sales counter, as a customer! Happy new gardening to you Laurelle.

## INSIDE

Page

A New Adventure for Laurelle	3
Calendar of Events	4
Salvia Display Garden at Nobelius	5
From Kathie's Desk	5
Open Garden in Pakenham Nov 2011	6
News from Stratford-East Gippsland	6
News from Hobart	7
S.Navajo Purple	7
Salvia Spectacular Feb 2012	8-12
Salvia News Subscription Form	13
Book Review	
- A Manual for Salvia Growers Meg Bentley	14
Order Form A Manual for Salvia Growers	15

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**March 17/18 Sat/Sun**  
10 am - 4.30 pm

**Pat & John Anderson Open Garden**

98 Bradleys Lane, Warrandyte, Mel: 23, C 12  
Beautiful garden with large Salvia Collection and other interesting plants.  
Refreshments and live music from 11am both days  
Plants will be for sale

**March 17/18 Sat/Sun**  
9am - 4pm

**Tesselaar Gardener's Market**

357 Monbulk Rd, Silvan Mel: 123, B5  
Salvias for sale - bring your list

**April 1 Sun**  
11am-3pm

**Gardening Day at Nobelius Mel 127.G4**

Bring a plate to share, a chair and tools.  
Great opportunity to identify your salvias.  
Lots of cuttings to take home. Come and join in the fun.

**April 12 Thurs**  
8pm

**Emerald Garden Club**

Emerald Arts Society Hall  
cr Anne & Church St, Mel: 127, D4  
Lyndi will be speaking on Salvias  
Salvias for sale. Bring plants to be identified

**April 14 Sat**  
10am - 4pm

**Rare & Unusual Plant Fair**

Jindivick Public Hall, Jacksons Track, Jindivick  
Lots of plant stalls. Jindivick has much to offer the visitor, 3 eateries, a Rare Plant Nursery, Art Gallery and Antique Shop, Sculpture Park, a Book shop and much more. **The Garden at Broughton Hall, Jindivick is Open to the public on April 14 & 15 Sat/Sun. AOGS.** Why not make a day of it?

**April 14/15 Sat/Sun**  
10 a.m.- 4.30 p.m

**Terry Ashton's Open Garden**

The Cottage Garden  
2 Lily Street, Glen Waverley. Mel: 70 K1  
opens as part of Australia's Open Gardens Scheme.  
Lots of roses, salvias, perennials and much more  
AOGS is charging \$6 admission. Plants for sale.  
No dogs please and the garden is not suitable for prams or pushers.

**April 21 Sat**  
11am

**Garden Visit in Emerald at Sue Warren's beautiful garden,**

24 Majestic Dve, Emerald, Mel: 311, A5, B5  
Take the Belgrave - Gembrook Rd, , Wright Rd, Dalziell Rd  
These are beautiful gardens with magnificent vistas  
Bring a plate to share

**April 29/30 Sat/Sun**

**The Cherokee Rose and Wine Festival Races**

Kilmore Racing Club, East St, Kilmore Vic  
Endorsed by The Rose Society of Victoria

## Salvia Display Garden At Nobelius

Nobelius Heritage Park, Emerald. Mel: 127 G 4... **Beth Clisby**

With more than half the Melbourne monthly average rain in the previous 24 hours, I wasn't sure how I would go visiting the Salvia garden at Nobelius 27 November 2011 in an electric wheelchair. I hadn't been before and was pleasantly surprised. It's easy to find, ample parking even to unload my electric wheelchair. Although much of the terrain is steep, paths were accessible for me. Anyone with mobility impairment who would like more information, please contact me.

For those who haven't seen the Salvia Garden at Nobelius Heritage Park in Emerald, it is a 40 metre long double border on a hill facing north, with centre and cross paths. Paths have a thick coating of crushed granite that has set firm with rain to prevent wash away and slippage, making it easy to walk on (and worked for me in my wheelchair).

Alongside the Salvia Gardens there were stalls set up with salvia plants, information, books and calendars.

Patrons had the opportunity to walk around the garden, ask questions, purchase their favourites and enjoy a pleasant hour or two. We didn't arrive until 2pm and both Lyndi and Jillian were busy with customers. There was a steady flow of traffic even at that time and had been all day despite the weather.

The garden was most welcoming, a wonderful display of plants showing colour, textures, different sizes and form. It was wonderful to be able to see the plants in flower that I had only read about or seen pictures of and in a garden setting. In total there are 76 salvias on display, certainly worth a visit. I collected the plant I had on order and found a couple more to add to my collection.

Lyndi and Jillian in particular who visit and work the garden on a monthly basis, often on their own, and those who have worked with them to plan, work and maintain this treasure for the pleasure of anyone who makes the time to visit, are to be highly commended. I look forward to the next open day and will endeavour also to be part of the next working bee.

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## FROM KATHIE'S DESK

I am very grateful to Beth for managing the whole newsletter this issue. I can't believe how busy I've been these past few weeks. Although most of you probably don't know my story - I had an accident in December, resulting in two broken bones in my left leg. After being hospitalised I returned home to learn how to use crutches - I can tell you that might be easier for the younger folk but for someone in her mid 50s it was a very tiring and exhausting exercise. My first time on the things and I hope the last time. I got told I could start walking again a few weeks ago but still have one crutch for confidence building, and also to help distribute my body weight when my leg is hurting. I'm told it could be 12 months before I'm walking properly but I sincerely hope I'll be walking without an aid in the very near future.



**Jillian Barkell with Salvia Study Group member Meryl Waterhouse of Pakenham**

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... **Kathie Thomas**

However, it did mean I missed the Spectacular, I was hoping to be there to take photos, but it has pretty much been a day-to-day basis for me as to whether I feel I'm up to travelling and being in unfamiliar places or stay in the familiarity and comfort of my home. It is a good thing that I work fulltime at home and in front of a computer and work has been very busy lately, which helps to pass the time during my recovery. In the meantime I've been enjoying my own garden and, in particular, watching the Eastern Spinebills enjoy the Salvia near the back porch. I can sit and watch them virtually undetected but would dearly like to get closer for a really good shot... with my camera I mean.

Until next issue - enjoy the new season that is upon us!

## Open Garden in Pakenham 19 & 20 November 2011

...Meryl Waterhouse

After months of preparation for opening our garden for Open Gardens Australia the day arrived, it had been raining all night and whilst speaking to Jane Edmanson on 3AW at 8.15am on the Saturday it still rained. Jane said "Oh Meryl" and I replied "the hardy gardeners will still come" (aren't we all?) and they did! 75 on Saturday, still raining most of the day and on Sunday, no rain and 210 came. Garden lovers came from near and far including Japan, New Zealand and New South Wales. More than 40 entries were made in the Visitor's Book.

I was most grateful to Lyndi who came during the week prior and labelled all my Salvias. I didn't realise I had so many and had purchased 50 labels and ran out!! Thanks Lyndi!!

Our garden covers 1 ½ acres, at the front we have natives and out the back there are perennials, Roses, Salvias, Iris, Day lilies, Succulents, Deciduous trees, Fruit trees and Vegetables.

The Salvias all looked great on the days and we sold many plants. Very popular were *S. Aurea*, *S. Aurea* 'Silver Lady' and *S. Lanceolata*, all growing in gravel. Also popular were *S. Namaensis*, *S. Discolor*, *S. 'Desert Blaze'*, *S. 'Black Night'* and *S. Semiatrata*.

I have over 250 roses and they also were at their peak along with the perennials.

We served Devonshire teas and lunches, most visitors indulging in these delights. Despite all the hard work my family and friends (helpers) enjoyed the days selling plants, serving food, freeing bogged cars (some people can't drive!) and answering a myriad of questions.

Open Gardens Australia received \$1680 for distribution to charities and others to receive donations were Red Cross and Juvenile Diabetes Australia.

A note for your diary, the Victorian Salvia Study Group will visit our garden on 28 October 2012 and I look forward to seeing you here.

The week following our opening, four of the girls from Sale Garden Club came for the day and we enjoyed visiting two other gardens in Pakenham, one being Beth Clisby's

We have been asked by Open Gardens Australia to open our garden again – maybe in two years.

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## News from Stratford, East Gippsland

... Jane Lee

Since I last wrote for Salvia News, how the weather pattern has changed.

First, I want to share that we now have our second grandchild. Patrick was born 24 November 2011 weighing 7lbs 4 oz. I was blown away with the name as my grandfather, father and mother were all Patrick and as I have four daughters, I now have a Patrick.

Since July last year I can't garden on my knees anymore and the garden is calling out for help. If I do go down on my knees I will end up with a knee operation. So I now bend over and weed for short periods which becomes a slow way to weed. I now use Roundup more and prune more.

I want to share with you that there is a new sprayer on the market that comes on wheels. Its put out by Earthcore and holds 12 litres, not the usual 7 litres and has a very long extension. Its hard to find in hardware stores, our local stores is the only place I have seen it selling at

only \$50. Being on wheels it just the best thing out. It makes it so much easier on one's back. No more lifting that dead weight or having the sprayer on your back. It should have been on the market years ago. Innovations mail order is the only other place I have seen it advertised but it is \$30 dearer. If anyone wants more information on how to get hold of them, I can easily ask my local hardware for a supplier, just let me know.

Salvias certainly brighten the garden and they can override the weeds and come out winners as they won't let the weeds smother them.

They are true fighters.

Microphyllas are becoming a favourite of mine as they never stop flowering and the bush is just covered in flowers all the time, the colours vary in all shades. Take purple for instance – if I picked one of every purple microphylla or greggi in all shades of purple or mauve I have

(continued page 7)

## Salvia News from Hobart

.... John Daniels

[johndaniels@bigpond.com](mailto:johndaniels@bigpond.com)



I would like to hear of member's experience in growing *Salvia* 'African Sky'. I bought this plant in 2009 with a label that says it is a *S.chamelaearnea x scabra* hybrid. The rough texture and green colour of the leaves are similar to the parent plants but, disappointingly, the leaves do not have the strong scent of *S. chamelaearnea*, which I love, although the calyces do have a similar pungent aroma to those of that parent plant.. This *Salvia* 'African Sky' plant came through last winter without any frost damage after little growth during its first summer. Vigorous shoots arose during the recent spring and flowered for over two months with branching inflorescences, dense with many small purple-blue corollas on an attractive compact bush at over a metre high and almost as wide. While flowering is coming to an end, the woody stems should be reduced by pruning off all those flowered shoots to stimulate further growth from the base. It does not appear to be setting much, if any seed.

I have not grown this plant for long enough to determine as to whether it develops stolons like *S.chamelaearnea*. These shoot horizontally just below soil surface, for up to 50cm in a season, and then send up vertical stems. This can result

in vigorous sprawling growth that requires regular reduction of these shoots, a technique of both root pruning and shrub reduction that I used in control of this species at the RTBG. There, in raised beds, *Salvia chamelaearnea* is a rampant stolon spreader and grows to 1.5m plus in height and flowers for the summer months and into autumn. Disappointingly, this species struggles at home in the couple of positions I have trialed it over the last few years and it is also reluctant to flower possibly due to poorer drainage. Or is it a species requiring more time to establish? *Salvia scabra*, the other parent plant of the 'African Sky' hybrid, is much more compact in growth, but has a tendency for profuse seed production capable of volunteering many young seedlings nearby. Feedback by members about their experiences in the performance of these salvias would be welcomed.

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### ***News from Stratford East Gippsland***

*(continued from page 6)*

in the garden, you'd find I have so many different ones enough to fill a vase, yet seeing them in the garden away from each other, you don't notice the difference that much in colour variation.

I'm now on the lookout for a black or blue microphylla salvia! Hard to find!

Well I think I've written enough, not much on salvias this time. Do hope all our salvia readers are fit and enjoying their gardens, especially those salvias.

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## **S. Navajo Purple**

.. Margaret Scott/Maffra

One of my favourite *Salvia*'s in my garden is *S. NAVAJO PURPLE* grows nice and neat to 60 cm a beautiful shade of bluish purple, very eye catching.

I purchased it at a Dahlsion's store but haven't seen it since, everyone that sees it wants a cutting which I am happy to give.

We have had lovely rain and it makes everything look good, and the weeds are flourishing.

Happy gardening to you all.

### **Editors Note:**

*Margaret emailed a lovely coloured photo of her Navajo Purple. Unfortunately, we were unable to include this time.*

## Salvia Spectacular

The Salvia Spectacular weekend held at the Ferny Creek Horticultural Hall in Ferny Creek the last weekend in February was a great success. Temperatures in the high 30's didn't deter the many Salvia enthusiasts who came from near and far including Leongatha, Ballarat, Bendigo, Werribee, Mooroopna near Shepparton, Gippsland and New Zealand. Late afternoon on the Sunday,



Jane Edmanson made a visit too.

Surrounding the Lambley Nursery display were magnificent framed salvia drawings/paintings by Meg Bentley that drew many a visitor to stop and admire. In the main hall, garden displays potted and hanging plants, a combined effort by Meg and Jillian, central floor display with mermaid by Lyndi, gave many ideas to borrow and or adapt for home use. A special feature was Robyn Powell of Tupelo Grove Nursery from South Australia with an extensive range of plants for sale, and knowledge to share with those who visited her corner.

Gardeners brought along plant cuttings from home for identification. Jillian, Meg and Lyndi were available to answer questions and together with a small team, assisted everyone with their purchases. Plants, seeds, books, calendars and t-shirts were available for sale. Early birds had the widest choice of plants of course, but there were plants a plenty although it was looking light on nearing closing time Sunday afternoon. Both days a raffle was held with numerous happy winners, most of who were present at the draw to take home their prize, others contacted by telephone of their win.

Meryl Waterhouse was baking scones in the kitchen working together with her great team, Rhonda, Lila and Bev from the Pakenham Garden Club, and her husband Keith to serve an assortment of delicious refreshments throughout both days.

As people were leaving with their purchases, many commented that planting would wait a couple of days. Much needed rain was expected and cooler temperatures too, just in time for settling in any new acquisitions of Salvias.

*Photos pages 8 and 9 were taken by  
Patrick Hogan*

## Leongatha Loves Salvia Spectacular!

### Lillian Brittain Leongatha Horticultural Society

A big busload of happy and hungry gardeners arrived quite early on Saturday and scorched into the Hall.

The Salvia mavens headed for the sales section in hope of scooping up a treasure or two, while the hungries, who had breakfasted quite early, rushed to revitalise with a great morning tea.

The group of fifty-six included Leongatha Horticulture, Poowong Horticulture, and the Tarwin Garden Club.

Leongatha Horticulture has had a 'Salvia Program' of sorts over the past couple of years, so many of us have some knowledge of this great genus. Salvia Study group experts have shared knowledge with us and we have visited many of your sales and displays. We grow, among us, a wide selection of the many types. A lot of us live in low, or no, frost zones, which helps.

But whether keen, or not too interested, we all appreciated the A-Z sales counter. We found a lot of great plants that we were not looking for like the Californians *apiana* and *leucophylla*, to try out on our well-drained hillsides, a couple of different *involucratas*, the luscious, big winter-flowering types like the *gesnerifloras* and *iodantha*, and just a couple of hundred more. Something for everyone. Including our friend and driver, Wayne, who, after taking us on several 'Salvia trips', finally succumbed, and with guidance, bought four reliable, smallish varieties, like Hotlips.

And as for the display as a whole - what an inspiration the Salvia Garden was! And the side displays like the many *nemorosas*! And of course the wonderful cool garden setting for those of us who wanted to wander.

We all really enjoyed our Salvia overview and scones and spree. Many thanks and congratulations to everyone who worked so hard to produce a wonderful show.

Spectacular indeed!



## Salvia Spectacular Delightful Dalliance in the Dandenongs

... Joan Giuliani / Mooroopna Garden Club

A bus load of 35 members of the Mooroopna Garden club visited the Salvia Spectacular on Saturday, 25 February.

All keen gardeners themselves, they were amazed at the multitude of varieties available and quite a few potted plants found their way back to the Goulburn Valley. In their distinctive blue shirts the members of the Salvia Study Group were very welcoming and gave helpful advice on the propagation and maintenance of this very interesting plant.

It is always a thrill to visit the beautiful Dandenongs and the Ferny Creek area was looking magnificent. Congratulations on an excellent display.

Best wishes and happy gardening from the Mooroopna Gardening Club.



Mooroopna Garden Club visited the Salvia Spectacular

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## From Ballarat

Today the much awaited Salvia Spectacular at Ferny Creek and it seemed to me very well attended indeed boosted too for a few hours by around 50 people from Ballarat, me amongst them as I now reside here.

As promised Lyndi had gathered together my desired acquisitions and both plants and people managed the heat to arrive safely home within minutes of the expected arrival time. A minor hiccup with the original bus necessitated a small detour at Bacchus Marsh to transfer to a replacement bus for the remainder of the trip back.

Very nice to catch up with familiar faces so soon after the wonderful farewell gathering kindly organised for me just days before I left Boronia

... Laurelle Willis

As usual the displays were stunning, and Meg Bentley's paintings as the backdrop to David Glenn's (Lambley's) display were simply beautiful, she's a talented lady is our Meg. Lyndi's beautifully arranged 'garden' was a delight, the centrepiece to the hall and of course attracted much attention.

How nice too to see Robyn Powell from S.A. with a lovely selection of various plants not just Salvias.

And Meg Bentley obliged with signed copies of her wonderful manual to anyone who asked.

A day to remember. Planting will be delayed until tomorrow and hopefully all the many prayers being offered for rain will be successful!

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## Email

The Salvia Show at Ferny Creek last Saturday was most enjoyable. Placing Salvias together, that one could easily see their tolerance and position for garden was most helpful. I realise that this is often trial and error. The small displays arranged with different types made it like a mini garden helping one decide how they could make this at home. The hanging baskets and ones in pots gave a different perspective. It was again most informative and the work behind same thoroughly appreciated.

Another very amateur garden person,  
**Wendy Chamberlain** /East Ringwood

## Salvia Spectacular - A Kiwi Perspective

...Pauline Bassett and Kate Jury



When the poster for the Salvia Spectacular was emailed to members of the New Zealand SPRIGS the idea quickly grew on us – instead of envying the Australians, why not attend ourselves. After careful negotiations with husbands and children Kate and I were delighted to be on a plane to Melbourne on the Friday prior to the ‘Spectacular’ weekend.

We flew in to Melbourne mid-morning, picked up our lovely car (upgraded to a Holden Calais) and set off in the direction of Gruyere. Lunch at Watsons Creek Café and Antiques – by then an awareness of heat such as we had not experienced ever in NZ. Meg Bentley had invited us to visit her garden even though she was not expecting to be there, so it was a lovely surprise to find her there with Garry and her niece, packing yet another load of plants to take to Ferny Creek. Our walk around the garden made us realise what treasures there are in the Salvia stable that we can only dream about – our MAF list of allowable species is still rather limited.

From Meg’s garden we continued on to our B&B in Olinda, sought respite from the heat, ate fish & chips on a seat in the garden whilst listening to the birds and planning for the next day’s activities.

Saturday was our day to be at the Salvia Spectacular. We were mightily impressed. The venue we could only envy – it seemed such a well-appointed hall for the purpose, with delightful gardens outside. We greatly admired the Michaelmas daisies and were very taken with the Phlox, which we later found out was *Phlox hesperis*. And there were BUSES and lots of gardening folk. Our first glimpse inside the

hall (see photo) was of people at a plant bonanza supermarket, red shopping baskets in hand, choosing Salvias to purchase and take home. Unfortunately something we could not do.

The display by Lambley Nursery in the dining hall of fourteen different *S nemerosa* varieties was eye-catching. Some we are familiar with, but I noted ‘Lambley Dumble’, ‘Giovanni’, ‘Kate Glenn’, and ‘Tanzarin’ to add to my wish list. The main hall with plants in groups for different growing conditions such as full sun, part shade, plants suitable for hanging baskets, different foliage types – I could go on about the overall effect which was spectacular. It was great having the country of origin on the labels. There were a number of Salvias in what we call the ‘Waverley’ stable that caught our eye, notably ‘Meigans Magic’ and ‘Phyllis Fancy’ – more to add to the wish list! However by the time we left there were huge gaps on the sales benches and we imagine the Sunday attendees would not have nearly as much to see or to choose from.

We appreciated our wonderful reception at the Salvia Spectacular, and particularly the opportunity to purchase the new edition of Meg Bentley’s Manual, plus the gifts of some of the quarterly newsletters – we later went back and bought some more. They are a mine of information and make wonderful reading. The quality and variety of plants both for sale and on display was amazing – a real credit to all involved.

We had afternoon tea and a wander about at Cloudhill (some excellent Salvias in their sales area) and then finished the day by going to Emerald and wandering through the Salvia display garden at Nobelius Heritage Park. It was good to see our NZ flax (*Phormium tenax*) being used at the entrance to the display garden but the Salvias were definitely the stars even at the tail end of summer. We were very impressed with the number and variety of *S microphylla* & *S. greggii* cultivars that we saw both in the gardens and at the show. Standouts were ‘Hot Lips’, ‘Peg’, ‘Blaze’, and ‘Sweet Laura’. We are not sure if the Salvias at Nobelius will fire up in the autumn, but certainly

(continued on page 12)

## Salvia Spectacular –

There was a fantastic turnout for the Salvia Spectacular; an event which covered so many aspects of growing salvias. The display stands showed ‘Shade Lovers’/ ‘Part Shade to Sun’ and those ‘Hardy in the Full Sun’. There was a display of Rare, Unusual, Medicinal and Culinary Salvias, an array of Salvias in Containers, Pots and Hanging Baskets including the giant hanging basket. A ‘Cottage Garden’ and a Landscape Garden showing various foliage contrasts and textures of salvias and amongst the foliage one got a glimpse of the Mermaid in the water feature on loan from Trudi Fry. At the end of the hall a photographic display and a section covering ‘Sage or Salvia’ where common names of ‘Sage’ don’t always represent a Salvia eg; ‘Russian Sage’, ‘Jerusalem Sage’ and ‘Wood Sage’ which are *Perovskia*, *Phlomis* and *Teucrium* respectively. Also a display showed the differences between some species and cultivars of salvia. The smaller room, where refreshments were served one could see many framed line illustrations of salvias which were offset with the beautiful brass vases of salvia flowers that Jillian had

...Meg Bentley

used to compliment some of the displays here and around the hall. Of course the main reason that many folk came was the huge plant sales area where our helpers were kept very busy advising and selling plants. The kitchen volunteers, ladies from the Pakenham Garden Club, did a sterling job in spite of the tremendous heat creating Devonshire teas and refreshments (thank-you ladies) and the assistants at the front tables were kept busy welcoming the public as they entered the Spectacular. Many folk came from far and wide in buses, cars and even by plane with visitors all the way from New Zealand. Many thanks to Robyn Powell too who travelled from South Australia as our special guest. The Salvia Study Group of Victoria certainly hope the public went away happy with their bounty of plants and books. I would like to thank all our volunteers for your welcome assistance in their many capacities, you were wonderful and as always, these events would not take place without you. We were lucky too with the venue at the Ferny Creek Horticultural Society Hall and Gardens and a big thank-you to them.

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### *Salvia Spectacular – A Kiwi Perspective*

*(Continued from page 11)*

in the Auckland Botanic Garden they are at their best during autumn.

Sunday was our shopping day in Olinda, but we began the day with a visit to Gentiana Nursery just down the road. We apologised for being there to look but not buy, and then discovered that the owner is himself a Kiwi! He has such interesting plants including some excellent Salvias. His *S microphylla var microphylla* in the garden was a huge mound of flowers and attendant bees. Likewise *Calamintha cretica* in the sales area was very pretty in flower and extremely attractive to various insects. In fact there were all sorts of treasures for gardeners to enjoy and we made lots of notes.

It was home time on Monday and that in itself was memorable for the torrential rain, the determined driving (Kate) to get us to the airport (late, but not too late) and the poor navigating (Pauline). We do not drive in rain like that in NZ – we stop and wait for it to pass.

We purchased 3 packets of seeds at the Salvia Spectacular which we declared at Auckland Airport. It was an entertaining but successful exercise. The man (only one person on duty) in Biosecurity asked “what is Salvia – does it have a common name?”. “Yes it is Sage”. “Ah yes I know Sage. So how come there’s more than one packet?”. “There are about 900 species of Salvia”. We showed him the MAF list with our seed names on it. “I will have to inspect the seeds”. After the second packet (thankyou whoever packed them in plastic bags inside the paper envelopes) he was more than satisfied and didn’t bother to look at the third.

Now it is back to reality, to dealing with all the fruit that has ripened, to gardening, to housework and dealing with the stormy weather that has just crossed the Tasman after us. We hope our Australian friends are not inundated by too much rain. Thankyou for your wonderful show of Salvias.

# Salvia News

## THE VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP

A branch of the Herb Society of Victoria Inc

[www.salvias.org.au](http://www.salvias.org.au)

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## BOOK REVIEW

### A Manual for Salvia Growers by Meg Bentley

This manual is for Salvia enthusiasts both new and experienced and is not only a great read but a good reference book. It is currently the only Salvia book *written* in Australia. Meg Bentley has more than 20 years experience growing Salvias and her extensive National Salvia Collection in Gruyere, Victoria is registered with the Garden Plant Conservation Association of Australia (GPCAA Inc) c/- Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne.

A Manual for Salvia Growers covers many areas including Botany of Salvias, maintenance, propagating, pruning, pest and diseases, how to use salvias for example as an accent, containers, hanging baskets and hedges. There are salvias for sun and shade and Meg explains it all. It also includes cultivation notes and name changes too. She even tells you where you may see salvias. There are 370 plants represented with 202 (colour) photographs and illustrations, all photographs and illustrations are her own work, many of the photos are taken in her own garden.

Meg says that “with good management and careful planning salvias are very accommodating and amongst the hundreds grown here at least five or six will be in flower throughout the months of the year. They bring honey-eaters and other birds into the garden to feed on nectar and the seed, some even nest amongst the salvias”, some of the reasons why she loves salvias.

A must read for anyone interested in salvias – available from Victorian Salvia Study Group including via mail order. (Soft cover, spiral bound A4, 125 pages)



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for

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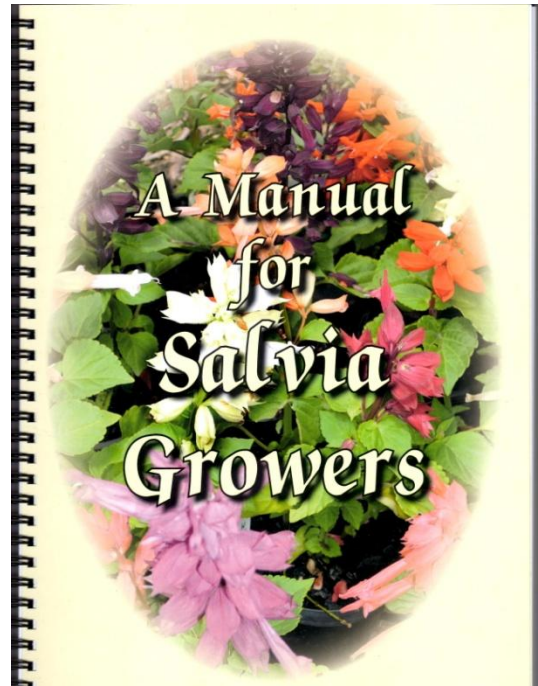
# A MANUAL FOR SALVIA GROWERS

By Meg Bentley

**There are now approximately 370 Species and Cultivars represented  
202 Photographs, Illustrations and Index**

Contents include:

- Botany of Salvia
- Characteristics of Leaves
- Salvia microphylla & greggii differences
- Salvia karwinskii and cultivars
- Purple Majesty and Black Knight
- Salvia Maintenance
- Hardy Salvias and Shade Lovers
- Containers/Hanging Baskets/Hedges
- As an Accent in the Garden
- Propagating and Pruning
- Colourful Tints of Stressed Leaves
- Pest and Disease
- Where to see Salvia
- Cultivation Notes and Name Changes



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**The Salvia Manual by Meg Bentley can be ordered from:**

HSOV Salvia Study Group  
6 Halcyon Avenue,  
The Patch Vic 3792  
Ph: 9756 6361

Cost: \$45.00 + \$5.00 P/P per copy.  
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**Salvia News**

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A Branch of the Herb Society of Victoria

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