

Salvia News

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Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc

www.salvias.org.au

Spring 2021

VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP inc

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www.salvias.org

Find us on  **Salvia Study Group Vic**

THE AIMS OF THE SALVIA STUDY GROUP ARE;

1. To grow and collect Salvias for the purpose of enjoyment and study
2. Promote and encourage the growing of Salvias
3. Correctly name existing and new salvias
4. Maintain our Display Garden at Nobelius Heritage Park for the Group & the general public

The Group is a Not for Profit Organisation. Any monies received are used to run the Group's activities and for the planting and maintenance of our GPCAA (Garden Plants Conservation Association of Australia) registered garden collection. ('Plants Trust' has been a shortened, more comprehensive name for the GPCAAA and has been used for quite a while now).

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The wonders of Spring, gone are the cold grey, miserable cloudy days, now with bright sun shining through, new life is appearing. All those empty pots or bare patches in the garden are finally showing signs of life once more. New flushes of growth and flowers are bursting forth on the small leaf Salvias. While some of the winter flowering Salvias are fading, some like *S. dorisiana*, 'Timboon' and *S. wagneriana* are still in full bloom.

Now is also the time to welcome our new Editor Stephen Carlin and Jenni D'Amato to take on our Facebook Page. Please support these roles by sending in articles about your garden and any other interesting tit bits and keeping up to date with your Facebook page.

Now that I know we are in safe hands, I can formally hand over the hunting, the gathering and collating of the Salvias News to Stephen for the next issue.

Enjoy the sunshine and all the tasks that need doing in the Salvia garden.

Lyndi



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**Copy deadline for the next edition of Salvia News is
23 November 2021**

Please email your articles and photos to: vssged@gmail.com

Cover photo is *Salvia dolomitica* – Photo taken by Lyndi Garnett

SEPT SUN 26TH | Antique Perennial Nursery | 3153 Healesville-Kinglake Rd, Kinglake – 11am

Matt and Michael have produced a huge array of rare and unusual perennials. Tea/ coffee will be provided. Bring a plate to share. Phone Lyndi **9803 4534** if coming. Numbers need to be confirmed. More information on their wonderful nursery on page 30.

OCT SAT 2ND & SUN 3RD | Garden Lovers' Fair | BOLOBEK, 370 Mt Macedon Rd, Macedon
****CANCELLED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS**

OCT SAT 23RD & SUN 24TH | Yarra Valley Spring Fair | 125 Quayle Rd, Wandin East VIC 3139 – 11am-5pm

Huge array of plant and garden stalls for this fair. Salvias for every garden will be for sale. Pre order your Salvias so you don't miss out. Email Lyndi with your orders **lgarnett844@gmail.com** to be picked up on the day. More information about what gorgeous plants you can expect to find page 30.

NOV SUN 14TH | Annual Salvias at Nobelius | Nobelius Heritage Park, Crichton Ave, Emerald – 10am
 (Under the Packing Shed on the Puffing Billy Line)

Our annual sale at Nobelius. Pre order your Salvias NOW so you don't miss out. Email Lyndi with those orders **lgarnett844@gmail.com** to be picked up on the day. More details and information page 30.

NOV SAT 27TH & SUN 28TH | Garden Visit – Tour to the South West, Warnambool and surrounds | Daryl Lyons 1249 Moreys Rd, Nullaware (near Warrnambool) – 11am

Four beautiful gardens to visit over the weekend. Showcasing the beauty of the area and some spectacular hidden gardens. For more details and information for gardens and accommodation, read page 30.

DEC SAT 4TH | Christmas Lunch | Pat and John Anderson's Warrandyte Garden, 98 Bradley's Lane, Warrandyte – 11am

Our AGM first, before our Christmas lunch, always a magnificent feast, in a wonderful setting. A chance to catch up with friends, fellow members and a chance to take home lots of treasures found in the plant swap.

Tea /coffee will be provided. Bring a Christmas plate to share and a chair.

Phone Pat if coming **9844 3442** or mobile **0488 173 490**

Phone Lyndi **9803 4534** to register numbers.



Salvia hierosolymitana

Introducing our new editor, Stephen Carlin

As I will be editing Salvia News, I'd like to introduce myself and share a little of my Salvia Situation.

I grew up in Perth with its culture of Mediterranean gardening. After a degree in Botany and Biochemistry and a research career in science, mainly on the East Coast, I moved up to the Tweed Valley, and have spent the last 7 years on a beautiful property with plenty of space. It was basically grass, forest and lantana, so we have had a lot of fun building it up. One of the existing plantings was a large and semi-feral stand of *Salvia involucrata*, which was the unsubtle hint that our conditions are suited to the Central American salvias with their showy Winter displays.

That was the stimulus for collecting salvias. Now I've got 'a few', and a continuing interest. I joined the Salvia Study Group to see the experiences of other growers and keep up with the news. I think there are as many attitudes to gardening as there are gardeners, so it's great to read stories from members and see their points of view.

Please don't hesitate to send in any content you may have. Favourite salvias, how your garden is growing, tips or experience, garden visits, will all make for interesting newsletters, and of course photos are invaluable for making great content. The open and diverse contribution of members is a great strength of the Group.

Stephen



Me in the *Salvia involucrata*.



My favourite bank of *Salvia* 'Van Houttei' flowers most of the year.

Facebook

I'd like to give a big Thankyou to Liz Tretiakov, affectionally known as Liz T. for taking on the administration of our Facebook Page over the last few years.

I first met Liz at Ferny Creek in 2018, where I asked her if she would be interested in helping us out in looking after our Facebook Page. At the time Patrick Hogan was wanting to leave the Salvia Study Group, so Liz very kindly stepped in to take over as administrator.

As you can see Liz has done a wonderful job, posting photos, enlivening the page with her own

touch and flare, promoting events, forwarding questions from viewers about Salvias and generally keeping people interested in growing Salvias.

It is with some reluctance that we allow Liz to retire from this position and we thank her for all her work on our Facebook Page but it's also a time to welcome our new Facebook administrator Jenni D'amato who will no doubt place her own mark while administrating our Facebook Page. We welcome her to the antics of the Salvia Study group.

Salvias for every garden

With Winter upon us with those cold mornings, the mists and the beautiful sunrises, the tall winter flowering Salvias are in full bloom, with their long arching branches reaching out and the birds hanging off the end of the flowers. This all shows just how wonderful Salvias are when we are all tucked up inside to keep warm.

Salvias are so very versatile, being available in a multitude of colours, shapes and sizes and being able to grow and perform in so many difficult and challenging conditions. Growing easily in most soils and providing colour for most of the year if not all the year.

As you know Salvias belong to the big family Lamiaceae, which contains most of your culinary herbs, including Thyme, Lavender, Rosemary and so many other familiar plants. None of which have petals or sepals, but instead have corollas, where the petals have fused to make a hood and a bottom lobe, the sepals have fused to create a calyx.

Often these plants are distinguished by a square stem and fragrant foliage when crushed.

Salvias are very adaptable plants that are easy to grow, they can blend with so many other plants within the garden to add contrast with other plants or just add a bold splash of colour.

There are so many growth forms available, from groundcovers and small clumping rockery plants, to small shrubs that are ideal for pots on balconies. Most clip well making them perfect for informal hedges along a pathway or those that like to pop up and be seen behind a hedge.

Salvias make wonderful 'fillers' for the middle or the back of the bed, coming in all sorts of heights

and shapes, from those slender upright varieties that can be dotted around to fill up those bare spaces to the more bushy rounded 'fillers'. Then the taller autumn and winter flowering Salvias come into their own, providing screening for ugly shed, screening neighbours and unsightly fences. It is these taller varieties with their tubular flowers that attract the little Eastern Spinebills, that can be seen flitting in and out of the shrubs, whilst the smaller brightly coloured forms attract the bees and other pollinating insects.

With our dry hot summers, many of these tough hardy Salvias are ideal for those 'hotspots' where it is so difficult to get anything to grow, or those shady areas under trees which again are hard to find the right plant. It is in these difficult areas in the garden that Salvias do so well.

Wonderful, easy and adaptable, with such a choice of growth forms, from small to tall, providing that splash of colour all year, there really has to be a Salvia for every garden large or small.

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'Cienna Rose'

Winter cut back

By Janine Molan and Daryl Lyons, Nullawarre

Living on a farm and being heavily involved in the local Nirranda Football Netball Club, not to mention a desire to catch fish every week, can often mean that time is precious and the garden has to play second or third fiddle at times. There is no set time for the winter cut back for example and it sometimes commences as late as early spring.

Not this year! The Covid lock down has shut down footy and fishing, and we are approaching the end of calf raising, not forgetting the Salvia Study Group visit in late November. So on 19 July the power trimmers and the arborist chain saw came out to kick start the annual process. Winter is always our biggest time for garden maintenance, even though some of the later flowering salvias are beautiful at the moment and will get their cut back much later, and we never contemplate putting any mulch down until much later in the year because we are bog wet at the moment.

Our Megan's Magic hedge has gone from about 1500mm to around 200mm. It always appreciates a hard cut back and the growth can just be handled by the power trimmers. Same for Mexicana and Leucantha varieties, our carpet rose hedges and various plectranthus. Our lacromas and bhudleas have met the chain saw as well, the harder the cut back the better for them.

Now cut back has started, it will be an ongoing process, couple of hours here and there as time permits. No rush as the chance of frosts is still there for a while and at the time of writing this article everything is getting wet, swamps in paddocks and we are only a couple of downpours away from the garden flooding.

Winter is winter in the South West, and the wetter it gets the better the spring. Both Janine and I are working hard to ensure the garden will be at its best for the members that visit late November. Looking forward to meeting you all.



Daryl and Janine's Garden



SALVIA STUDY GROUP TOUR TO THE SOUTH WEST

SAT NOV 27

11AM "ASHFORD PARK" Janine Molan and Daryl Lyons (members Salvia Study Group)

1249 Moreys Rd, Nullawarre North (approx 250km / 3 hrs from Melb CBD)

Country garden, broad range plants including approx 150 salvia varieties, vegetable plots, English trees, lawn areas and many farm animals.

Lunch at this garden, suggest catered by Tasty Plate, Warrnambool based disability kitchen. Would do sandwiches, cakes/slices and tea and coffee if that suits. Any dietary requirements would need to be advised and can be catered for. Will check cost, but not expensive. (Otherwise people would need to bring lunch as we do not have shops within 15km)

2PM "ROSANDAWAY" Sue and Danny Blake (6km from first garden)

100 Rowans Rd, Nullawarre

Extensive country garden, mature English trees and a large range of perennials, including many salvias. Manicured lawns, pond, and handcrafted outbuildings.

Working dairy farm, cows will be milked from 3.15PM for viewing. Also Danny has a large train room, which he will operate if anyone wishes to see.

Sue will provide afternoon tea of scones and tea/coffee.

Accommodation

For individuals to decide. Nullawarre is 25 minutes to Warrnambool, 15 min Allansford, and 15-20 minutes Terang, Timboon or Peterborough.

Lots of accommodation in Warrnambool, slightly closer options are:

Allansford Hotel – new motel accommodation
Grauers Rd Allansford 55651242

Nirranda (5min) – Butterfly Farm B&B
3155 Great Ocean Rd Nirranda 55665123

Peterborough – Peterborough House
9 Irvine St Peterborough 0407386344

Peterborough – Great Ocean Rd Tourist Park
Cnr Irvine St/Great Ocean Rd, Peterborough
0409 878110

Timboon – Timboon Railway Hotel
2 Timboon/Curdievale Rd Timboon 55983873

SUN NOV 28

10.30AM Jan and Robert (Bob) McCluggage
206 Swans Lane, Naringal (or Allansford in GPS)

Beautiful formal country garden, specialising in roses, which will be at their peak end of November. Also ornamental vegie plots, feature English trees, manicured lawn areas. Take neat to a new level.

Lunch

Suggestion – Timboon Railway Shed Distillery (right in Timboon – cant miss it)

Historic 1800s railway shed, fully restored and nice menu. Would need to book table(s) once numbers known. 55983555 Nearby to afternoon garden. Otherwise in Timboon there is a hotel and take away shop.

2-2.30PM Peter and Kerry Rowe

934 Cobden/Port Campbell Rd, Scotts Creek

Large wandering country garden. Huge amount of plant diversity, lots of roses and mature English trees. True gem in an area where gardens are always lush due to the high rainfall and moderate summer conditions.

GETTING TO NULLAWARRE ON FIRST DAY

If you have GPS, that will find us 1249 Moreys Rd, Nullawarre North. Otherwise, travel down Princes Hwy thru Colac. About 20 km west of Colac on the Hwy is a left turn off to Cobden (Stoneyford Tractor wreckers cnr). Follow this road to Cobden, then as leaving 60 km zone turn left at the milk factory onto the Warrnambool Cobden Rd. In about 25 km turn left onto Ayreford Rd, travel 6km and turn right onto Moreys Rd. 3 km to first garden, there will be a sign at gate.

**Any trouble ring Daryl 0409 354869
or Janine 0409 352935**

HEADING BACK TO MELBOURNE FROM TIMBOON

Quickest way is thru Scotts Creek. Follow signs, rejoins Hwy 10km west of Colac at the Blue Church.

What To Grow With Salvias

By Geoff Crowhurst

With my small garden I don't have room for the larger, winter flowering salvias, so the whole garden is taking a rest, while I trim, cut back, and re-plant. The main spots of colour come from two large pots with the pink flowered *Nerine bowdenii* and a couple of espaliered sasanqua camellias. Although the nerine comes from the summer rainfall area of South Africa, most gardeners treat it like other nerines – summer dormant and autumn flowering. I water mine in summer, and the flowers come in mid-winter as the foliage becomes a bit tatty. The flowers glow in winter sunshine.

As I am mostly restricted to the smaller growing greggii and microphylla type salvias, I try to make the most of what I grow. That means taking into account their character and habit. Although these plants can look quite colourful over a long flowering period, they do have smallish flowers and leaves. So I have

tried to set them amongst other things with contrasting leaf shape, sizes and colour. My central octagonal bed is surrounded by the silver leaved santolina trimmed to make a low hedge. It makes a nice contrast to the salvias and other things there. In the same bed is a modest growing grass, *Calamagrostis* 'Overdam' that came from Lambley Nursery, which boasts variegated, fine leaf foliage, and only needs to be cut back hard once a year. It provides a nice contrast to anything growing nearby.

Some other things happen by chance, as all gardeners know. Against a low brick wall I have 'Baby Sage' and *S. chamaedryoides*, which both sprawl onto the brick paving. But I pushed apart the two salvias for a terracotta pot with what is known as either Ox Tongue or Elephant Ears (*Haemanthus coccineus*). After the curious bright red autumn flowers this produces huge leaves which stand out from the salvias, so the





pot has stayed where it is. Another completely chance combination has been the pale apricot *Ixia paniculata*, which has spread under a hybrid *S. muiirii* (originally from Wendy Smith) and flowers on stalks above the salvia. Elsewhere I am planning another plant combination which I hope works well.

The first garden plant I became aware of as a child was *Poinceana gilliesii* (syn. *Caesalpinia*), which grew right beside the verandah surrounding an old stone farmhouse in the mid north of South Australia. It survived on whatever rainwater trickled down the side of the verandah. This South American plant is sometimes called Bird of Paradise shrub, and produces yellow flowers with very long, curving red stamens. I have grown a plant from seed and will plant it next to *S. greggii* (yellow).

I have also grown some *S. namaensis* from cuttings, and really like its lime green foliage and compact habit. As it is slow growing, I will have plenty of time to place it as a contrast plant somewhere in the garden.

The final contrast plants I have planted recently are small-flowered gladioli in clumps, often near salvias. There are white and pink 'Painted Lady'



(*Gladiolus carneus*), the evening scented, pale yellow *G. tristis* and a cultivar called 'Carine'. If these do well I will probably leave them where they are, to form more dense clumps. I like the spikey leaves showing up what is around them. These little gladioli are quite dainty, compared with the rather vulgar florists' gladdies, and much nicer cut flowers.

Landscaping with Salvias

By Julie Campbell

For the past three years we have been trying to use our experiences with Salvia positions and characteristics, to apply group plantings in appropriate areas. We can now see fully laden perennial borders with succession planting seeming to work, in most cases. This has been a big learning curve.

We placed a rather large gazebo at one end of a straight path and planted white wisteria each side. This is going well. Friends from the Salvia Study group helped me source *S. melissadora* and 'Pink Musk' however the heat murdered a few. Not to worry, there are now several of each established in the 'Avenue' bed complementing the 'Carradonna' drifts and *Eryngium* 'Blue Glitter'. Vertical Structure comes from several Crab Apple *loensis* and *Calamagostis* 'Karl Forster'. Succession colour

comes from the December and April hacking back of the 'Carradonna', numerous hair trims of 'Pink Musk' and Karl Forster flowering in Summer/Autumn. We have Rosemary 'Huntington' spilling over the wall all year.

The eastern side of the Avenue path has a double hedge treatment. Rosemary 'Tuscan Blue' forms the outside wall and a row of *S. africana caerulea* are clipped into balls on the inside edge. They have just a soaker line providing minimum water. Great plan. But. The vegie garden with tomatoes was next door, sending lots of water into the hedge! We have now replanted and have a water barrier and drain in place. Time will tell if the constant rain in July has killed more of our very hardy *S. africana caerulea*.



Kate Glenn in foreground.

We had collections of several *S. nemorosas* to place. 'Amethyst groupings (quite tall) are now starring in the long Northern bed. 'East Friesland' groups are in Salvia Walk (the longest established Salvia border); drifts of 'Kate Glenn', in the Southern bed, sweeps of white 'Snow Hills' in the white bed, 'Carradonna', a mix of pinks bought randomly from Mitre 10 in the garden entrance

bed, and a grouping of 'Blue Hills' are all in different areas. Have been thrilled with them. They are so resilient and help in marking each separate area with an individual colour palette.

Here's hoping this year's Charity Open Garden weekend won't be cancelled again (30 and 31 of October). Stay safe everyone.

Random remarks on some of the salvia groupings in the garden.

- One original plant of *Salvia spathacea* has grown into a sizable clump in the 'Native' bed and looks very comfortable flowering for most of the year. *Leucophylla* 'Bees Bliss' is also creeping amongst these native plants.
- *S. 'Annie B'* (instead of *leucantha*), numerous *S. argentea*, 'Celestial Blues, a *leucophylla* and *leucophylla* 'Figuro', *S. apiana*, ground cover *S. aurita var. aurita* and a grouping of Finngrove's improvement, 'Boundary Creek' are all working well in the bed which competes with the voracious roots of several Casuarinas. *S. amarissima* has also proven to be very hardy here with a generous flowering period. Lovely. The grey leafed bed pretty much planted up.
- 'Amethyst was quite a bit taller than all my other *nemorosas*. Maybe they have more water? I'll cut the water back this Summer.



Pink Musk with crab apples. Karl Forster in background.

Lockdown 4.0 (June 2021)

By Maureen Scoble

Lockdown 4.0 and Winter too. Here we go again. My gravel paths are pristine (this week anyway), my plants pruned, new things in, some things moved to a happier place, Autumn leaves raked – what now? Reading of course. It's cold and wet outside so I don't feel guilty at all. Plus I just love reading. Now who shall I start with? Do you know Christopher Lloyd? He gardened at Great Dixter in Sussex until his death in 2006. The garden is still open to the public under the care of his protegee Fergus Garrett. Now Christopher Lloyd was a master gardener. I know because I visited his garden in 1998. When you read his books you will understand just how much was done to keep the garden looking it's best for 7 months of the year. In fact you will be appalled! If you open to the public for that long it takes a lot of skill to keep it looking fantastic.

He continually experimented with plant combinations and colour juxtapositions until he died. I have 6 of his books and they are great reading. He has a wicked sense of humour and sometimes I just laugh out loud at some comment he makes. The “enfant terrible” of British gardening.

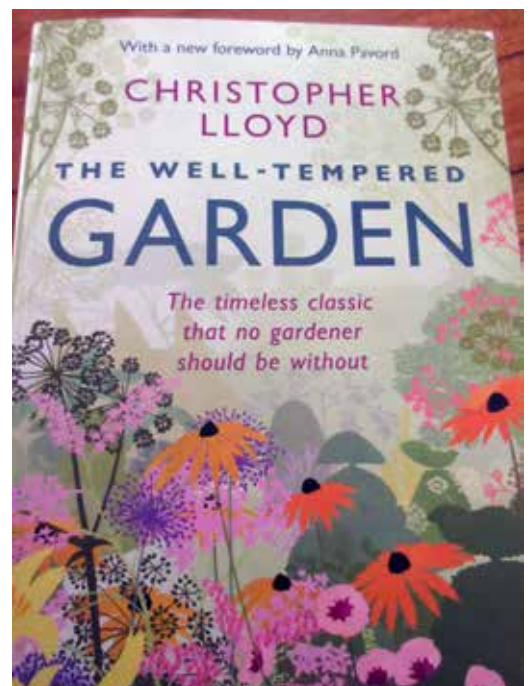
In Australia we know how differently Salvias perform in different areas of the country, and in fact sometimes different areas of our gardens. In England it is a whole new ball game. *Salvia Uliginosa* for example. When it gets tatty in Avondale I just pull it out by the handfull and wait

for it to re grow next month. Not in England. There it doesn't flower until Autumn and they have to dig it up and over winter it behind glass. They do it too! *Salvia canariensis* which can get to 1.5 to 2 m here, only makes 60cm at Great Dixter. He particularly liked *S. leucantha* but in Britain it only just starts to flower before the frost sets in and it gets nipped. Not really worth growing. *Salvia coccinea* is grown from seed sown the previous year and brought on under glass (of course!). In fact every year he sowed masses of seeds and potted them up as necessary. Also took hundreds of cuttings from plants that might not make it through their Winter. Not to mention lifting and storing all the bulbs (thousands of them too). Are you feeling exhausted yet? But really, if you ever read any of his books you will see how enormous his plant knowledge is. I am truly a very humble beginner. If a plant doesn't do well I try something else. Mr. Lloyd works out how to get what he wants and does what it takes.

Take *Salvia* 'Indigo Spires'. It is so tender there they take cuttings every year. Some of the Greggii survive Winter in the open but would you believe *Salvia guaranitica* MAY survive in the open but then probably gets eaten by Capsis. Meg Bentley warns us in her Manual that it can spread alarmingly here as it does for me.

Mr. Lloyd also practiced “Succession Planting” and on a very large scale. Now things get very

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interesting. His garden covers several acres, divided into different areas. His long border is 92 Metres long (300 feet). Plus it is wide... Google it and you will see what I mean. This is seriously labour intensive. In my "Border" at Avondale, when a plant stops flowering I just wait for it to start again. They can't do that. All of the border must look beautiful for 7 months until the garden closes for the year. This is where succession planting comes in. In the Long Border there are some permanent shrubs but many more things like herbaceous perennials, bulbs, annuals and even self sowers. Let's just take 1 square metre of this 92 metre border. They might start with bulbs and say Gladioli in Spring. Herbaceous perennials and tender perennials like Salvias from the greenhouse

might be planted next. Cannas and Dahlias that were stored in the cellar over Winter can be put out after that. The seedling annuals that were sown in trays last year are put in to fill any gaps. He liked to combine *Verbena rigida* with *Salvia splendens* but the seedlings of this "damp off" and flop readily so they need protecting with fungicide every week. When you think of doing 92 metres of border with this kind of intensive planting, you can see why they need a team. This is gardening as High Art.

As for me, I think I'll just continue with my own style... and spend the time I save reading books.
Maureen Sc

Mandy's Garden

My love of gardening has developed since I moved to an acre property 6 years ago. I joined a gardening club to socialize with other gardeners and increase my knowledge about gardening. It was at one of these meetings that Lyndi gave a presentation on Salvias and the display garden at Nobelius. I took up her invitation to assist with maintenance gardening at Nobelius and I continue to join her, Jillian and Christine when I can. I have learnt so much from them about Salvias and Lyndi is a wealth of information about anything to do with horticulture. On the home front my garden is evolving and I have a Salvia section which I planted from cuttings I propagated from Nobelius. This section of my garden is a work in progress as I remove, move or add more Salvias.



Mother's Day in Amanda's

We women are a funny lot (I know you men will thoroughly agree with this statement), but not one female phoned to mention that we had chosen Mother's Day for a garden visit until a week before the event! I really don't think we realised the date, I certainly didn't until someone asked me what I was doing for the day. All I could say was "Something different"!, but Amanda was happy for those of us who ventured out to do "Something different" to come and visit her garden.

We were even graced by Amanda's Mother in Law, who enjoyed having us there for a chat. We had a couple of lovely surprises with Margaret and Neil Kier coming whom we haven't seen for a very long time and Sylvia turning up with a full tray of flowering Salvias for us all to share and take home – a lovely idea.

Amanda has a large garden full of mature trees and lots of lawn which gives it a very spacious feel, almost if you were really at a country home. Many of the trees were conifers mingling with deciduous trees full of autumnal colour, a glorious surrounding.! In another paddock, they have a large dam, but referred to as "The Lake" with a central island where the ducks really enjoyed basking in the afternoon sun. Upon giving an odd duck like call, they all came waddling up to get fed, wagging their tails and squabbling over the bits of food given out. After they realised that all the food was gone, back they waddled with their tails still wagging to the lake to resume basking in the sun.

Walking around Amanda's garden where lots of Salvias were found in all the beds, late Autumn roses were still blooming and a fine specimen of *Cornus capitata* (strawberry tree), was found full of fruit. A closer inspection suggested that it wasn't only were the possums that were enjoying the fruit but also a family of Bower Birds (mainly the green females). They were making a fine mess all over the lawn, scattering little morsels of fruit far and wide. Of course this tree wasn't that far from the neighbouring horses who insisted on sticking their heads over the fence to see what was going on and thoroughly enjoyed the attention, but not to be

outdone, Amanda's own horses in another paddock didn't want to be left out, wanting some of this attention, so of course they also had to be petted and fussed over.

When we were allowed to resume our garden walk, we noticed loads of winter flowering Salvias along the boundary, under very large Cypress trees and others under tall Eucalypts, all ready to come into flower. Many formed backdrops to smaller Salvias in the foreground, all making a lovely show of colour.

Walking down towards The Lake, we spied Amanda's small glasshouse, jammed packed with her special treasures and plants that needed protection from the cold weather. Some glorious Pelargoniums were in flower and so many different succulents were found, some hiding under bigger leaved Begonias.

Of course we had a magnificent feast for lunch, made even better by Amanda's huge batch of Pumpkin Soup from a wonderful crop of pumpkins that were grown around her swimming pool – as you do!

A fire pit made the gathering even cosier, while we admired the garden around the patio and the magnificent Mandevilla vine growing around her garage.

At the end of the day, the men came back very satisfied with themselves, saying that the day was well worth the visit as they had just spent the last hour in the shed with all the vintage cars etc. – say no more!

Amanda did suggest that we should all come again at a different time of the year, but just not on such an auspicious day. These garden visit days are always a success when we all go home with armful of plants loaded into the cars, ready to go home.



A Few Name Changes

Reading the latest seed list from Rolando Uria in Argentina, I noticed quite a few name changes. Some had been suggested in the last few years, but Rolando has now confirmed most of these changes have been accepted.

Name changes are annoying at the best of times, you just get used to the way a name is spelt and pronounced (depends on how you pronounce the syllables and what school you went to) only to find that they've changed again Ahhh!

See if you can get your mouth around some of these names as some of are real doozies.

S. longystila = *S. longistyla*
S. orthostachys = *S. gachantivana*
S. stachydifolia = *S. rhinosina*
S. ovalifolia var *ovalifolia*, = *S. durifolia* 'Candelaria' white fls 20cmH
S. ovalifolia var *ovalifolia* x *S. ryparia* = *S. durifolia* blue form 50cmH
S. vazquezii subsp *vazquezii* is extremely similar to *S. gravida* with crimson bracts and crimson flowers
S. gravida has green bracts and crimson flowers
S. amethystina subsp *ampelophylla* = *S. ampelophylla*

While there are plenty of new hybrids, varieties and a few dwarf forms, there are a few new names to consider, such as;

S. cocuyana – Columbia, 1.5mH, dense vermilion inflorescence
S. florida 'Molinopampa' – Peru, 2mH, long spikes of magenta flowers
S. orbignaei – Bolivia, 1mH, small stout pink flowers, one parent of x *S. westerae*
S. ozolotepecensis – Mexico, 2mH, long spikes of scarlet flowers
S. retinerva – Bolivia, 1.7mH, large royal blue flowers
S. rubriiflora – Columbia, 2mH, large spikes of scarlet red flowers
S. sessilifolia – Madagascar, 1.7mH, purple/pink flowers
S. libanensis – Columbia, 3mH, spikes of scarlet flowers in winter
S. sphacelioides subsp *pax- fluminensis* – Columbia, 2mH, purple racemes all year
S. styphelus – Peru, 1.5mH, gentian blue, pale blue & mauve flowers
S. trifilis – Peru, 1mH, dainty blue & white flowers in spring
S. vargas – *llosae* – Peru, 40cmH, groundcover, pale purple flowers
S. xeropapillosa – Columbia, 50cmH scandent vermilion flowers

These will be released when we are able to grow them and have tested them for our growing conditions. As you can see there are a few that need careful consideration when trying to pronounce the name. A few more for the entries on V-Z and X-Z, but that might not be for a while, we'll wait to see if there are any Z entries to be found.

Thank you to Brett

A thank you is needed for Brett Horan our IT person for our website who managed to fix and recover our website after we renewed our Web Hosting and SSL Certificate (a form of security). Not sure what went wrong, but our website went down for a few days. No one could access the site which was very inconvenient and frustrating. Brett after contacting the webhosts was able to work behind the scenes, fix and get the site up and running again.

For anyone trying to access the Calendar or other pages of information, all is working well again. THANK YOU BRETT.

A bit of botany Part 3 – Leaves

By Pat Anderson

Leaves are fundamental to plants as it is primarily in leaves that light energy is converted into the sugars necessary for plant growth. Leaves vary enormously in size and shape and give gardeners some indication of the type of growing conditions a plant might need. When it comes to identifying plants, it is the flower parts, and especially the reproductive parts, rather than leaves, that are significant (as described in Part 2 of this series), as well as DNA nowadays.

Leaves are, however, always described as part of the whole plant for recorded descriptions. Also, for salvia collectors, when comparing the plethora of similar hybrids like the *Salvia microphylla* x *greggii* varieties, many of which look almost identical, it is important to also look at the leaves, which may be the only point of difference.

As terms describing leaves crop up regularly in articles in *Salvia News*, I will explain some of the terminology, hopefully in a way that might be useful. This will not be a comprehensive list of terms. This would be immensely boring and there are text books for anyone that way inclined. I will try and keep to the more common terms as they apply to our garden salvias, starting with the general structure of a leaf, then looking at some aspects of leaf arrangements, leaf shape, their margins, tips and bases and hairiness, each time giving some examples.

A basic salvia leaf consists of a **blade** and a **petiole** (stalk) that attaches it to the plant stem. Some leaves have no **petiole** and the leaf blade arises directly from the stem. These are described as **sessile**. Where the petiole or sessile leaf joins the stem is called the **axil** and it is here that **axillary buds** occur, from where new growth will emerge. This region of the stem is also called the **node**. When taking cuttings, it pays to look hard at where the **axillary buds** are, especially if cuttings are taken from stems flopping downwards, to make sure you keep your cuttings the right way up!

Leaf arrangement

Most salvias have simple leaves – single leaves attached to the stem by a petiole, although a few are sessile, like *S. amplexicaulis*. Just a few species have what are called compound leaves, with several small leaves arranged along the petiole. These are mostly Asian salvias, like *S. miltiorrhiza*, *S. nanchuanensis*, *S. plectranthoides*.

In some salvia plants, the leaves form a basal clump, with petioles of varying lengths. Some Asian salvias fit into this category, like *S. dolicantha*, *S. przewalskii* and several of the European ones also have basal leaves, like *S. hierosolymitana*, *S. austriaca*, *S. nemerosa*, *S. pratensi*, *S. eigii*.

In almost all salvias, that is those that do not have a clump of basal leaves, the leaves are arranged in pairs up the stem and are opposite each other – ie. one on either side of nodes



Simple leaf of *Salvia mexicana* 'Limelight'



Compound leaves of *Salvia pinnata*



Sessile leaves of *S. amplexicaulis*



Basal leaves of *S. dolicantha*

going up the stem. This is common to the whole *Lamiaceae* family.

As well as leaf shape, leaves are described by their:

- Apex (tip) – pointed, rounded
- Base (bottom) – ditto
- Margin (edge) – smooth, indented and
- Surface – bumpy, smooth, hairy, glandular etc

Veins can also be useful in describing leaves, although most salvias have a similar branching pattern. *S. lyrata* is a bit of a stand-out because its

dark veins show up against its green leaves, and their resemblance to a lyre shape has given the name to this species.

The following Table hopefully summarises all the technical terms needed to describe salvia leaves. There are many more terms but there's no need to mention anything that isn't relevant to us. In the table, I've given a list of the descriptive terms, what they mean and examples of salvias where these leaf features apply, and even a few photographs to illustrate a point afterwards.

Table: Terms used to describe leaves and some salvia examples

Description	What the term means	Salvia examples
Leaf shape:		
Linear	Long, slender leaf	<i>S. reptans</i> , <i>S. azurea</i>
Elliptic	Shaped like an ellipse	<i>S. sinaloensis</i> , <i>S. mellifera</i> , <i>S. greggii</i>
Ovate	Broad with rounded base, shaped like an egg	<i>S. involucrata</i> , <i>S. discolor</i>
Lanceolate	Shaped like the head of a lance	<i>S. leucantha</i> , <i>S. miniata</i>
Cordate	Heart shaped	<i>S. gesneriiflora</i> , <i>S. madrensis</i> , <i>S. microphylla</i>
Deltoid	Shaped like a delta	<i>S. patens</i> , <i>S. cacalaeifolia</i> ,
Sagittate	Shaped like an arrow head	<i>S. sagittata</i> ,
Hastate	Shaped like a spear head with flared base lobes	<i>S. canariensis</i> , <i>S. spathacea</i>
Leaf apex:		
Obtuse	Blunt or rounded tip	<i>S. muirii</i>
Acute	Tapering to a point	<i>S. bogatensis</i> , <i>S. 'Annie B'</i>
Cuspidate	Tapered but with a sharp point	<i>S. sessei</i> , <i>S. amethystina subsp ampelophylla</i>
Leaf base:		
Cuneate	Wedge shaped	<i>S. arizonica</i>
Rounded	Rounded	<i>S. bullulata</i> , <i>S. tubiflora</i>
Cordate	Like an upside-down heart	<i>S. gravida</i> , <i>S. keerlii</i> , <i>S. myriantha</i>
Leaf margin:		
Entire	Smooth leaf edge	<i>S. greggii</i> ,
Crenate	Shallow blunt teeth along the edge	<i>S. chinensis</i> , <i>S. microphylla</i>
Serrate	Sharp teeth along the edge pointing forward	<i>S. chamelaeagnea</i>
Dentate	Sharp wide teeth along the edge	<i>S. dentata</i> ,
Lobed	Edge divided into rounded segments	<i>S. scabra</i> , <i>S. columbariae</i> , <i>S. taraxacifolia</i> , <i>S. 'Boundary Creek'</i>
Pinnatifid	Divisions almost to the middle vein	<i>S. jurisicii</i> , <i>S. pinnata</i> , <i>S. schlechteri</i>
Ciliate	Fine hairs round the margin (but you will need a hand lens to see)	<i>S. blepharophylla</i>
Leaf surface:		
Glabrous	Smooth and hairless	<i>S. regla</i>
Rugose	Rough and bumpy	<i>S. corrugata</i> , <i>S. disermas</i>
Tomentose	Short, dense, matted hairs	<i>S. tomentosa</i> , <i>S. officinalis</i> (both on under side)
Pilose	Covered with long, soft hairs	<i>S. argentea</i>
Floccose	Woolly tufts	
Glandular	Glands or parts of hairs that exude oils	<i>S. officinalis</i> , <i>S. spathacea</i>

The leaf surfaces are particularly interesting in salvias. These can often give an indication of growing conditions. Just about all salvias are hairy, and some have leaves that are densely covered in fine hairs, giving them a whitish appearance. These very hairy salvias generally come from naturally dryish habitats and the hairs function to help reduce water loss from the non-woody tissues above the ground. Good examples of these are *S. argentea* and *S. aethiopis*. Another example is *S. canariensis*, especially the variety *candidissima* where not only are the leaves hairy, but also the stems. So as a general rule, if you have a salvia with whitish leaves (caused by hairs), you can place it in a dryish, well-drained position, but remembering to get it well established before you forget to water it altogether.

By contrast, anything with large, non-hairy leaves, will have the opposite requirements. Many of these are from warm, humid places and they need plenty of water as well as some protection from the full heat of the sun.

In many salvia species, some of the hairs are glandular – that is some of their cells secrete the oils that give the plants their characteristic aroma. These oils vary in composition from species to species. Some people have very acute ‘noses’ – rather like wine tasters - and can more or less determine a species of salvia by rubbing a leaf and smelling it. Certainly *S. apiana*, *S. myriantha*, *S. gravaida*, *S. urica*, *S. sclarea* all have extremely strong aromas. I find these fairly unpleasant. In theory, this unpleasant smell (and taste) is said to deter rabbits from eating them. On the other hand, I really like the sweeter perfume of the crushed leaves of *S. ‘Romantic Rose’*, *S. dorisiana* (Fruit Salad Sage), *S. spathacea*, *S. melissodora* (Grape scented Sage), *S. elegans* ‘Honey Melon’.

One more interesting point about leaves is that they occasionally come as variegated. Odd variegated salvias appear and disappear from time to time, but ones that seem to remain are *S. greggii* ‘Desert Blaze’ and forms of *S. officinalis*. If normal leaves appear, and you want to retain the variegation, it is always best to remove the non-variegated ones.

So, time to go outside and look at your salvias. Look especially at the difference between the **ovate/elliptic** leaves with **entire margins** and **rounded base** of a *S. greggii* (such as ‘Playa Rosa’ or ‘Beetroot’) and contrast these with the **cordate/ovate** or even **dentate** leaves with **crenate margins** of a *S. microphylla* (such as ‘Hot Lips’) and then at every shape in between as seen in all the various hybrids (such as ‘Los Lirios’, ‘Coconut Ice’, ‘Angel Wings’, ‘Easter Bonnet’). Then look closely at the hairiness or otherwise of both surfaces of the leaves. Finally, try rubbing and sniffing a range of different salvia leaves and try to describe the aromas.

Happy leaf describing and leaf sniffing.



S. argentea



Variegated leaves of *S. greggii* ‘Desert Blaze’



Elliptic & Entire (smooth edged) leaf of a *S. greggii*



Cordate & Crenate leaf of a *S. microphylla*

Spot the Difference

By Lyndi Garnett

There have been a number of bicoloured Salvias appearing in the last few years, most coming down from Queensland.

The first to appear a number of years ago was 'Sweet Laura', a beautiful bicoloured flower with a pink hood and tube with creamy lower lobes and dark calyces. The leaves set this plant apart from the others, being larger, pointed and often wavy.



'Sweet Laura'

A number of other pink bicoloured Salvias began to appear a few years later, these being 'Pearlescence' and 'Partytime'. These are similar to 'Sweet Laura' but different. These two Salvias are very similar to each other, showing subtle differences in the colour of the lower lobes and the shape of the leaves. Looking at the leaves 'Partytime' with its large very pointed leaves is probably a seedling of 'Sweet Laura',



'Pearlescence'



'Pearlescence'

Often identification is difficult, but is possible with close scrutiny by observing the colour of the



'Party Time'

different components of the flower, including the colour of the calyx, the throat area, a coloured beeline or not, the colour of the 2 side lobes, if they are a different colour or shade from the middle large lobe, the shape of the leaf and the tip, as some are rounded, some are very pointed.

In the last season, another couple of pink bicoloured Salvias have been released. These have been commercially bred by Ball Australia and PGA nursery.

The first to appear was a Salvia produced under the Regal Passion label, but without a name, so we call it 'Pink Regal Passion'. The flowers have a pink hood and tube and pale lower lobes, but the leaves are a definite greggii shape. The other release was part of the So Cool range by PGA Nursery, the 'Pink So Cool'. Again, a pink hood, tube and pale lower lobes. Looking at the flower, they are both extremely similar to each other. They are also extremely similar to the previous three plants found years ago.



'Pink Regal Passion'



'Pink So Cool'

The major difference between these newly released Salvias are their leaves. One has greggii shaped leaves, the other has typical microphylla shaped leaves with rounded tips. There may be a few very fine differences in the colour of the hoods and lower lobes.

A more recent find in Qld, gave us 'Di's Delight', looking extremely similar to the 'Pink So Cool' and 'Pearlescence', but you can see a slight colouring on the base of the lobes, but again very similar. One plant commercially bred and the other a garden find.



'Di's Delight'

To add more confusion to the mix, I noticed that Rolando Uria (Argentina) has listed 'Crazy Dolls' and 'Dancing Dolls' on his recent seed list. These look just like each other and extremely similar to flowers we have here, similar to 'Pearlescence' and the 'So Cool Pink', but these both have a bleeding of colour around the throat area along the beeline.



'Crazy Dolls'

'Dancing Dolls'

An earlier release from Ball Aust. was the beautiful small 'Mirage Soft Pink', a more compact plant with greggii type leaves. The flowers have similar colouring to 'Pink Regal Passion' and 'Pink So Cool', but softer tonings.



'Mirage Soft Pink'

Other bicoloured Salvias that are similar but not so confusing can be seen in 'Candleglow' which has

been around for some years with a much more delicate creamy look. 'Lara' a very old variety has a muted form of bicoloring with the hood being cream and the 2 side lobes being a distinct shade of pink to the cream coloured middle lobe.



'Candleglow'

'Lara'

A few others that have more creamy yellow tonings are garden finds, one from Qld, with 'Cupie Doll', a lovely creamy bicoloured flower looking just like a doll with a perfect complexion and a local find with 'Tuttifrutti', resembling those icypoles from our childhood of passionfruit and peach and all things nice.



'Cupie Doll'

'Tuttifrutti'

Don't forget the good old greggii 'Bicolor' and microphylla 'Keegan', that have been around for ages, both are very similar in their colour tonings, but with different leaves.



greggii 'Bicolor'

microphylla 'Keegan'

As you can see confusion is and will be a big problem with these plants.

Again correct identification will be attention to detail, but the good thing is that most people are not bothered about names, whether it's correct or not, they just want that pretty bicoloured flowering plant that keeps flowering all through the summer months.

Vale Wendy Smith

By Pat Anderson

Wendy was well known to the salvia world, both to the Victorian Salvia Study Group and the Salvia Association of Australia, as well as to other salvia enthusiasts worldwide. So it is with great sorrow that we report that Wendy recently died quite suddenly. She will be sorely missed by so many of us.

Wendy was a very enthusiastic plant collector and also had a gift for creating beautiful gardens. She also had a nursery at some stage during her career while she and Brian were living in Gippsland. I believe this is where Sue Templeton first met Wendy through a visit to this nursery. When Sue started advertising her salvia nursery in Albury in the 1990s, Wendy travelled to Albury to visit this for herself and make purchases. And so began a long relationship of sharing ideas, information and enthusiasm for growing salvias.

Brian and Wendy retired to Rosebud where Wendy, with Brian's help, created a beautiful garden. It soon became a venue for visits by various garden groups, including the Victorian Salvia Group, the Salvia Association of Australia on a number of occasions, as well as groups from interstate like the Perennial Poppies Group from Queensland.

Apart from wanting to visit this beautiful garden that people had heard about, with its riot of colour and clever plantings of roses, daisies, clematis, salvias and a huge range of unusual cottage garden plants, people were also curious, for this was the garden where the hybrid Salvia 'Wendy's Wish' had been discovered. Both Wendy and Sue recognised that this hybrid was special and, after observing how well it performed, Sue helped direct Wendy to the appropriate wholesalers, where it could be patented. It is typical of Wendy that the royalties of this patent were directed to a special charity – the 'Make a Wish Foundation', - rather than for personal gain. And I believe that subsequent plants in the 'Wish' series have followed this pattern.

Wendy met Glenda Sellenger some 20 years ago while living in Rosebud and a warm friendship was enjoyed for many years, and, through Wendy's influence, Glenda's huge garden was quickly filled with salvias and Glenda caught the salvia collecting bug. This meant that a garden visit to Rosebud was rewarded with 2 large salvia gardens. Together they went on many nursery crawls and they were both very supportive of all the Salvia Association visiting weekends throughout Victoria and beyond in NSW and SA that Sue organised.

Both Wendy and Brian and Glenda and Eric decided to downsize about 7 years ago – Glenda to Euroa nearer some family members and Wendy to a retirement village near Cranbourne. Wendy's new garden area was quite small, which suited Wendy because she was battling some health issues. However, it is unbelievable how many plants, including salvias, that she managed to fit into this space with some clever terracing. She was still collecting seed from overseas and had a dedicated propagating corner. She once told me that if there was enough space to put a foot down in a garden bed, that there was room for another plant!

Ironically, both Glenda and Wendy decided to move again around the same time, but this time to Queensland to be nearer more family members and also to be warmer. Glenda had had too many frosts in Euroa for her liking, and was pleased to have managed the move just as the Covid restrictions were taking hold. The Smiths put their sale on hold, but were finally heading north in May, to their new 'village' on the Sunshine Coast. It was during the long drive north that Wendy suddenly became very ill and was rushed to hospital on arrival. Sadly, and both tragically and unexpectedly, she died only a week later, without having the chance to move into their new home and start to create another new garden. She had taken a lot of tubes and bulbs with her. Glenda will no doubt help Brian to plant these in her memory.

We will all miss Wendy greatly. Even those of us who did not see her often will remember her as a lovely person – warm, caring and always generous with cuttings and plants. A true nurturer. I will certainly treasure the plants she has given me, including a greggii/microphylla cross called 'Sweet Caitlyn', named after a grand daughter. I will think of her as I walk past these plants.

Our thoughts are with Brian and other family members and close friends like Glenda in this loss.

Vale dear Wendy



Vale Wendy Smith

By Barb Wickes

It is with great sadness, I advise of the death of salvia enthusiast and knowledgeable plantsperson, Wendy Smith. Wendy was involved with the Salvia Association of Australia and the Victorian Salvia Study Group and had many friends throughout Australia, as a result of her horticultural pursuits. Wendy will be remembered because of the introduction of Salvia 'Wendy's Wish', a chance seedling discovered in their Rosebud garden in Victoria. This salvia is a now owned and loved by thousands of gardeners across Australia and worldwide.

As a result of the sale of 'Wishes' salvias sales over \$100,000 has been donated to the Make-A-Wish charity. Wendy wanted to donate part of the proceeds from the sales of her plant and so began a wonderful horticultural tale. Inspired by Wendy's generosity, John Fisher in Orange NSW, a renowned plant breeder with a passion for salvias, produced a deep purple stemmed cousin for 'Wendy's Wish' and called it 'Love and Wishes'

and donated more royalties to the foundation. With the two 'Wishes' salvias experiencing such success, the breeding team at the Victorian plant nursery Plant Growers Australia, took up the baton and introduced a third 'Wish' salvia called 'Ember's Wish'.

Wendy and Brian had recently sold their home in Melbourne and were coming north to a retirement village in Chancellor Park. Unfortunately, Wendy became very ill and was rushed hospital where she passed away a week later. Many of our members had met Wendy when we were on our garden tour to Victoria in 2010 and were very much looking forward to having her as part of our Perennial Poppies Group. Wendy travelled annually to the Sunshine Coast to visit family and always included a visit to the Queensland Garden Expo. I enjoyed a visit from Wendy on these occasions. When we visited Wendy's garden on our Poppy garden tour, November 2010, I recall being in awe of her amazing plant collection and knowledge.

From Sue Templeton – Unlimited Perennials – Salvia specialist

Wendy and Brian were school teachers and once taught at Corryong, quite close to Albury but in the mountains. Wendy grew up in an agricultural area near Wangaratta, Victoria. When they were living in Gippsland last century Wendy had a small nursery which I visited not knowing we would have a long relationship many years later. When I started advertising salvias last century, Wendy and friend from Gippsland, Heather, came on a visit to my nursery. Perhaps because of having had a nursery herself she constantly visited nurseries and invariably found something interesting in those old days when nurseries were not so standardised and owners more knowledgeable.

Brian and Wendy retired to Rosebud where Wendy created a beautiful garden with Brian's help. There 'Wendy's Wish' happened. I was able to introduce her to the wholesalers who ended up patenting it. Glenda Sellenger lived nearby on the same very big block which Wendy was able to assist to cover in plants,

mostly salvias. By then I had set up the Salvia Association and Wendy and Glenda were very generous in opening their gardens a number of times to me and the members. As I lived about 5 hours' drive north Wendy would invite me to stay overnight. Wendy and Glenda always came on the visiting days I organised and I appreciated their loyal support, knowledge and hospitality.

The Smiths downsized to a retirement village in Cranbourne, eastern Melbourne, where Wendy was able to experiment packing a smaller garden with a large amount of mostly salvias. She loved propagating so much she often had extra plants which she gave to me. Glenda moved to Euroa in Victoria and then decided to go even further north to be closer to family in Maleny. The Smiths also were heading north and bought into a retirement village in Sippy Downs. They looked forward to continuing their friendship with Glenda and Eric and being part of the Poppies group. We lost a treasure from the gardening world and a kind and beautiful lady.

Vale Kate Boyce

It was unfortunate to hear that another long-time member has passed away.

Kate was a good friend of Ray Boatman (whom so many knew). It was this friendship with Ray that inspired Kate to join the Group in the 1990's

She loved growing Salvias, many of the smaller varieties, loved their colours, their hardiness and their variety of plant shapes and positions as to where they could be grown.

Although not an active member, Kate has always been there in the background. I remember have a good chat with her in the kitchen of Pat Anderson on the occasion of a Plant ID session, that had to be held inside due to the weather. No idea what the conversation was about but it was invigorating and amusing.

So it's with sadness that we say goodbye to another member who enjoyed her garden full of Salvias.



Wayne's Plant Props

By Tine Grimston

In our gardening partnership, Wayne has always been the one who does the structural work such as garden edging, making structures to grow things on, and attaching my "found" items to the fence securely. He likes a neat garden and his mowing and whipper snipping give crisp edges to my rather full and tangled plantings.

Wayne has recently set himself up to do welding in his semi-retirement, and I asked him to make me some plant props to stop some of my plants flopping over the driveway and paths. I have looked around in shops and online and not found anything suitable at a sensible price. I sent him links to all the ideas I found and suggested he make one option which looked the easiest to me.

He disregarded my suggestion and chose a much nicer (but more difficult) option to experiment with.

I now have lots of very sturdy plant props keeping my paths clear, and every gardening friend that has seen them, wants some too!

He can make them in various heights and widths and I have used them to hold up *Verbena bonariensis*, *Salvias*, windflowers, grasses and more.


He has also experimented with other designs such as steel stakes, plant rings and flanged plant supports.

Wayne is happy to make them for others if they can pick them up from Rowville. He can do a variety of sizes.

To find out more, you can view his brochure which is on the website of the Dibble and Hoe Garden Club. The direct link to the brochure is at <https://dibbleandhoe.files.wordpress.com/2021/06/plant-props-bw-1.pdf> or contact Wayne by email at waynesplantprops@gmail.com



Waynes Plant Props



Plant Props


Choose your height
(allow 150-200 mm to anchor into the garden - depending on your soil type)

Choose your height		Choose your width			
		Small	Med	Large	X-Large
Height		230mm	400mm	580mm	650mm
Short	500mm	\$20.00		\$22.00	
Medium	750mm				
Tall	1000mm	\$28.00		\$30.00	
X-Tall	1250mm				

Add \$10.00 to each size, if a Double Prop is required

Natural finish (will rust)

Special widths/heights available on request



Plant Rings

Size	
Small (270mm dia, 700 high)	\$ 16.50
Medium (320mm dia, 800 high)	\$ 22.50

Natural finish (will rust)

Special sizes available on request

Decorative Steel Plant Stakes

Choose your height (allow 150-200 mm to anchor into the garden - depending on your soil type)	
1.0 mt high (standard)	\$ 15.50
1.5 mt high (tall)	\$ 18.50

Natural finish (will rust)

Special heights available on request

Pickup is from Rowville, delivery charges will apply if required

For more information contact Wayne :-

waynesplantprops@gmail.com

Notes from Gruyere Spring 2021

By Meg Bentley

One would think with all the lockdowns that working from home and short distance travelling with this Covid19 virus, we could get so much done around the home. Pruning, planting, clipping, weeding and repotting but after that terrible storm and long-term blackouts, the small list of things to do has grown into a mountain. Even many planned events have had a knock-back.

We are all thankful that at least we did have a garden in which to get lost in, no matter what size, the fact that we could put our hands into the soil or pull a weed gave us some hope for the future when things 'might' get back to some form of normality... bring on Spring.

There are many salvias in flower or coming into flower here in Gruyere and it's always the taller species that are the 'winter-bloomers', ones with large flowers and usually they are the ones with big leaves but there are a few that have smaller corollas like *Salvia* 'Blue Bird', *Salvia polystachya* and *Salvia myriantha*. Many are spaced around the gardens and amongst the shrubs dotted here and there and whilst there doesn't appear to be many, it's not until you pick a bunch of flowers do you realise just how many there are. I am going to dig up a huge wayward clump of *Salvia* 'Amistad' and move it as well as potting up a small clump to go with *Salvia rubiginosa* which is just coming

into flower. They will look good close together and as *S. rubiginosa* starts to dwindle with blooms the calyces always look attractive and will add a good contrast to the purple flowers of *S. 'Amistad'* which will be bushy and starting to flower.

Salvia miniata with its shiny leaves and bright red flowers has grown profusely in the shade perhaps not too many flowers but quite colourful never the less, however I did want to prune it back a bit and checked out the length of the stems to where I could prune. It was growing over an old stump of a tree fern and surprisingly had taken root along the stem into the top of the tree fern. I was surprised because so called arial layering is usually more prevalent with plants with hairy stems, not so much with smooth, glabrous foliage.



Salvia miniata growing in the tree fern and the plant.

Colin Baird

Hi, my name is Colin Baird and I joined the *Salvia* Study Group in the late 1980s or early 1990s when I lived in Nunawading. At the time I had a perennial garden in which salvias were a prominent part. Then I rediscovered camellias, having grown them in Abbotsford, and I then joined the Victorian Camellia Society and, as they say, the rest is history. Camellias dominated my life, they became an obsession and have taken me around Australia and around the world (biannual conferences in various countries). Recently I downsized to a unit in Mitcham, camellias are still the prominent plant but I have rejoined the *Salvia* Study Group and have amassed quite a collection, some old favourites and lots of new interesting ones with quite fascinating foliage. Most of these salvias are planted in the ground but there is a growing collection of potted salvias!

I tend to be attracted to the unusual in plants, especially foliage, growth habit and colour. The colour purple, mauve, the clear reds and blues are particularly of interest, as are any salvias which attract birds and bees to the garden. *Salvia* preferences are too many to list so let's just say, whatever is flowering at the time, and with salvias that is most of the year.

Salvias of PGA Nursery

If you've recently been to your local Independent nursery, to wander and fossick about, you might have been able to grab a PGA Salvia Season booklet.

If you have been able to get your hands on one of those, you'll be amazed at just how many Salvias PGA actually grow. In fact PGA are our biggest Salvia fans as they promote, grow and produce over 32 Salvia varieties.

I say varieties, as the majority are hybrids, but some are species with fancy marketing names. For some reason PGA only promote hybrids, no species unless they have marketing name attached as in *S. bullulata* 'Turquoise Kisses' and *S. sinaloensis* 'Aztec Blue'

I don't know if you are aware, but for the last 10 years at least, PGA have been releasing a new Salvia or two each season. They began with the initial Heatwave series, mainly pinks (all new to us then), then another release two years later, this time with different colours, some *S. leucantha* varieties including 'Santa Barbara' and the Velour series and of course the 'Wishes' series, gradually adding more colours and even last year they added the pale pink 'Kisses and Wishes'. Don't forget the 'Glow' and 'Glare' for an orange and white theme and then a few more pinks with 'Radiance and 'Brilliance', both very vibrant eye catching colours. Who could forget the onslaught of the 'So Cool' range with those gorgeous purples and a pale lilac for impact and now the new 'So Cool Pink' which is one of many bicoloured Salvias. Their latest additions are Salvia 'Blue Sky' a very pale blue colour with a hint of mauve and their 'Honeyeater Raspberry' which is a crimson form of 'Wendy's Wish' but a more compact, mounding shrub, also known as 'Raspberry Pollinator'.

If you have noticed PGA have covered all the major colour forms except a good yellow, although 'Heatwave Flash' is a cream colour.

PGA have also dabbled with a few herbaceous varieties, namely 'Caradonna', their own 'Impact Purple' and the small 'Marcus'. Other varieties promoted are the beautiful 'Waverly', the tall 'Limelight', 'Hotlips', 'Royal Bumble', 'African Sky' and our own 'Finngrove'.

I don't think many realise that it was PGA who brought in the first greggii range, way back in the 80's. Natalie Peat (recently deceased) brought a range of Salvias in from the USA, they included

S. greggii 'Alba', 'Furnam's Red', 'Raspberry Royale', 'Sierra Pink' and 'Sierra Red' all of which I still have from the original plants given to me way back then. Most of these were known as the Mexican Bandits for a short while, but only the 'Purple Mexican Bandit' remains, this was lost then found again in someone's garden. Included in the original Bandit range was *S. chamaedryoides*, now known as 'Mexican Blue'. Don't forget that those Salvia greggii's were then taken and renamed under the Navajo Range by Ball Australia, who now recognise them all as *S. greggii* varieties.

All of the various new Salvias released over the years have been bred exclusively by PGA. Most if not all of these hybrids have Plant Breeders Rights (PBR) attached, so we cannot sell them without a licence.

PGA has done extremely well over the years and continue to work with the Group with any new releases.



'Sky Blue'

Possums & Pests in the Garden

Most of us have or have had possums at one time or another. I think everyone would agree that they are among one of the most destructive pests around the metropolitan area. But as you move into the outer suburbs or live beside a park, then you might also have rabbits or the very elusive deer, that only come out at night.

Those that suffer from possums come up with all sorts of remedies to keep them at bay.

A couple of ideas is the use of pantyhose filled with either:

- Blood & Bone
- Pelletised Chicken Manure
- Mothballs
- Dog & Cat Hair.

These can be hung up where possums feed, but they must be rotated each week as their scent will wear off or the possums will get used to the smell and continue eating.

Another idea is the use of solar lights, especially those that change colour or are very bright and begin to blink on and off. This idea is effective around vegetable gardens or pots on or near the ground.

I have had my fair share of possum problems, with the little blighters running along the fence and eating my *Salvias* and climbing roses.

What I have found is that possums don't like certain scents or tastes; they will eat my *S. iodantha* but leave my *S. purpurea* alone – possibly because of the scent and taste of the leaves. They still eat the tips of my *S. 'Pink Gruyere'* and the top of my Photinia hedge, but leave all my flowering Camellias alone.

I have to thank my neighbour as she has planted a host of trees and shrubs next to my fence, that the possums don't particularly like. With the neighbouring jacaranda, olive tree and potato vine, giving protection, I have managed to keep my *S. 'Romantic Rose'*, *S. iodantha*, *S. karwinskii* and 'Pink Icicles' from being eaten and can actually have them flowering for most of the season. Yea!!



I don't find possums come down to the ground to rummage through my pots as I have enough trees to keep them happy.

Another method that many use to keep possums from destroying their garden, is to create a feeding station. By giving them a plate of fruit or tasty scraps, you are filling their tummies for the night rather than have them finding tasty new buds in the garden to eat. If you are lucky, a whole family may arrive for a feast. They may look cute and cuddly, but... Many swear by this method of keeping their garden safe.

Rabbits and deer are another major problem for many gardens.

Although we occasionally see signs of rabbits at Nobelius, they are only a small shallow hole dug, usually in an open space between plants. rabbits don't generally like *Salvias* as they don't like their many scented leaves.

The more pungent the leaves or flowers of a plant, the less likely they are going to be bothered by pests or wildlife. This also goes for deer who are extremely destructive. Another deterrent is prickly foliage, they like us don't like their legs being scratched, but a deer fence is often the only option from them eating your garden.

My Garden

By Sophie

Hello fellow salvia enthusiasts!

Well, I am very enthusiastic about salvias, and a keen gardener, but very much a novice when it comes to botany of the salvia. So, this is what led me to join your wonderful group, and I am hoping to learn all the nitty gritty details in the world of the versatile, bright and cheerful salvia.

My little garden is situated in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges. I call it little as it is nowhere near big enough for all my grandiose landscaping plans. We are blessed with high rainfall, rich clay, hot dry summers, and cold wet winters.

Great conditions for many plants and the weather fluctuations really allow one to fully immerse themselves in each season, like it or not! It is now the start of winter and we have just experienced 2 full days of constant heavy rain and wild winds. As I write, roads are closed, and power is out due to many falling trees. The upside is that the garden has had a good drenching and mother nature keeps us grounded, in more ways than one!

The garden is looking quite colourful for this time of year even though the last of the autumn leaves have now fallen. Cheery jonquils, snow drops, various daisies, lavender, geranium, grevillea, banksia, plectranthus, azaleas, and many



different salvias are all in bloom, and the ripening citrus fruit adds to the bright colours which contrast with the lovely shades of winter green.

My salvias get a regular pruning from the resident red wattle bird, who is just slightly too heavy for their slender branches. It is a sight to watch him slowly see-sawing on the end of a branch as he drinks the nectar from their blooms. Unfortunately, he is quite possessive of the salvias and chases away a pair of Eastern Spinebills. Fortunately, there is enough cover in the garden for them to hide. Much to my delight, the spinebills make regular visits to the garden during the day, competing with the wattle bird for the salvias.



News from southeast Queensland

By Barb Wickes, The Perennial Poppies Group Inc

Moving from 1.5 acres to a 500 sq m block in a gated community early in the year certainly has been a massive change of lifestyle for us. We knew it must occur one day and I am very pleased we made the move when we were able to do it easily, as I am aware many people leave it until it is too late and ill health can then make a move extremely difficult. I potted up a lot of plants and many friends



in our group took plants and cuttings from our Roms Court garden, so I am be able to access anything I wasn't able to take with me. Within a few weeks of moving I had all the pots emptied, including a variety of larger shrubs recently purchased. There are limitations to the size shrubs in the community, so plants that can be maintained at around 3m have been planted. Camellias, several evergreen magnolias and *Tabernaemontana divaricata* 'Sweet Love' are some that will form a backdrop. Some favourite fragrant shrubs are *Osmanthus fragrans* and *Plumeria pudica* (evergreen frangipani). I have always tried to get the look of a cool climate garden by adding burgundy foliage so *Euphorbia continifolia* and *Loropetalum chinense* 'China Pink' have been included. Friends who are always on the lookout for something different spotted a weeping tropical birch (*Betula nigra*) in a local nursery and encouraged me to purchase it as we had a grove of tropical birch in the last garden. It is a focal point in our small garden and I look forward to it providing a shady corner. It is a plant that is rarely seen in southeast Queensland.

I have chosen smaller salvias and those that flower longer as with a limited space I hope to have colour for much of the year. The smaller growing microphylla varieties taking precedence are *Salvia* 'San Carlos Festival', 'Angel Wings', 'Di's Delight', 'Mrs Bucket', 'Heatwave Blaze' and a compact little pale pink salvia from Adrienne Starkey, *S.* 'Arabella', named after her granddaughter. Choosing medium sized salvias has been more difficult as there are so many favourites. The 'Wish' series, *S.* 'Wendy's Wish', 'Love & Wishes' and the new 'Kisses & Wishes' are thriving. Medium sized *S.* 'Finn Grove'

looks good with its fine foliage. *Salvia mexicana* 'Lime Calyx', *S. leucantha* 'Pink Velour' and even though it flowers only in the winter, the fragrant leaved *S. dorisiana* have found a home. Although *Salvia* 'Amistad' is large and a bit of a rogue, I must plant it in the ground as it is so loved by the bees and flowers constantly. With a small garden I hope I can keep those suckers under control!

Salvia 'Rosh Eden', a seedling from member Sheryl Jenyns garden is thriving. It came up under *Salvia* 'Phyllis Fancy' in Sheryl's garden about 6 years ago and it has been agreed it is more like *Salvia leucantha* as the flowers resembled *S. leucantha* 'Midnight'. After growing this plant for several years it has proved to be a strong plant that flowers for a much longer period than leucanthas.

Old-fashioned roses are a feature and Polyantha Roses are a favourite. Named varieties are: 'Irene Watts', 'Perle d'Or', 'Clotilde Soupert', 'Melville de Rouges', 'Fairy Changeling', 'Ravensworth', 'Victoria's Pride' and 'The Fairy'. Polyanthas without registered names, that I have planted are 'Garden of St Erth', 'Pink Dreams', 'Hazel Anne', 'Our Little Lucy', 'The Straw Rose' and 'Stan's Laidley Rose'. The garden would not be complete without a Duchesse de Brabant rose. Once everything begins to grow I may find a space for one or two more Tea Roses!

An assortment of asters, tulbaghia, dwarf agapanthus, daylilies, hydrangea, dwarf grasses, many self-sowing annuals and a large collection of herbs and edible subtropical plants have been interplanted throughout. An advantage of the Halycon gated community here in Buderim is that they plan on having a community garden and a rose garden. I suspect the rose garden, with some help from me, will be under planted eventually with roses and perennials. I look forward to the challenge.

Many of our members have faced a similar situation as we have and I have found inspiration from visiting their gardens to plan our small space garden.

UPCOMING GARDEN VISITS FOR SPRING & SUMMER

See Calendar for details

SEPTEMBER – SUN 26TH

Antique Perennial Nursery – This will be a fantastic outing for anyone interested in this garden, anyone who loves Spring and all the new growth that appears at this time of year. Matt and Michael produce a huge range of perennials and grasses, many rare and unusual. If you're looking for a particular plant that you just can't find, then this Nursery is the best place to look.

We'll be meeting at 11am, so get up nice and early for the journey to see plants you haven't seen before. Bring a plate to share and enjoy a cuppa as you wander around.



30

OCTOBER – SAT 2ND & SUN 3RD

Garden Lovers' Fair – **CANCELLED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS**

OCTOBER – SAT 23RD & SUN 24TH

Yarra Valley Spring Fair – If you've been to the Autumn Fair, you'll know how exciting it was, with all sorts of nurseries, garden furniture, big and small, garden implements and all those quirky things you need for a garden. Then there is the stage with Jane Edmondson and others talking to you throughout the day about what to buy and plant in your garden.

Again, don't forget the Salvia Stall, providing our huge selection of Salvias, the new varieties for summer and the older true and trusted varieties. Look at the wonderful array of colours, so many to choose from, there is a colour and plant for every position in the garden.

Pre order your Salvias NOW, so you don't miss out, to be picked up on the day. Email Lyndi with your orders: lgarnett844@gmail.com

Spring Yarra Valley Plant Fair
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NOVEMBER – SUN 14TH

Annual Salvias at Nobelius – It's on again!! Our annual end of year sale at Nobelius. Hopefully it won't be roped off and people will be free to chat and wander.

If you have missed out on particular Salvias during the year or you want to have plants at bargain prices, then come along, fill baskets full of those bargains. Don't forget to wander through the garden to find those Salvias that really take your fancy, their names and then come and find them on the tables. Big and small bargains to be had in all sorts of colours.

Come early so you have the best choice from the tables to find those treasures you've been hunting. Pre order NOW, so you don't miss out on the day, pick up on the day.

Email Lyndi with those orders: lgarnett844@gmail.com



NOVEMBER – SAT 27TH & SUN 28TH

Daryl Lyons of Warrnambool is organising a few special gardens for us to visit during this weekend.

There are some magnificent gardens in the Western District not seen by us City dwellers. With rich deep soil, a good water supply and wonderful views, we can expect some beautiful gardens to enjoy and wander through.

Four beautiful gardens have been selected to visit over this weekend, show casing the beauty of the area.

Don't forget that our Salvia 'Timboon' was found down here and there is the creamy delicious Timboon Ice Cream to be tasted.

Phone Daryl if coming down Ph 0409 354 869. Bookings essential.

Phone Lyndi Ph 9803 4534 to check numbers.

Queries, please phone Lyndi 98034534 or email lgarnett844@gmail.com

DECEMBER – SAT 4TH

Christmas Lunch – Pat Anderson has kindly put up her hand to have us all for a wonderful Christmas feast.

An opportunity to catch up with friends, meet other members, meet the committee. Everyone is encouraged to donate plants (any plants) for the table of freebies.

We will be conducting our AGM before we begin to enjoy ourselves. Bring a Christmas plate to share. Tea/ coffee provided.



The Victorian Salvia Study Group. Inc

NEW MEMBERSHIP

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(NOT FOR RENEWALS)

Any queries, phone Tine Grimston – see details below

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Victorian Salvia Study Group

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Surname & Initial (admin purposes only) please

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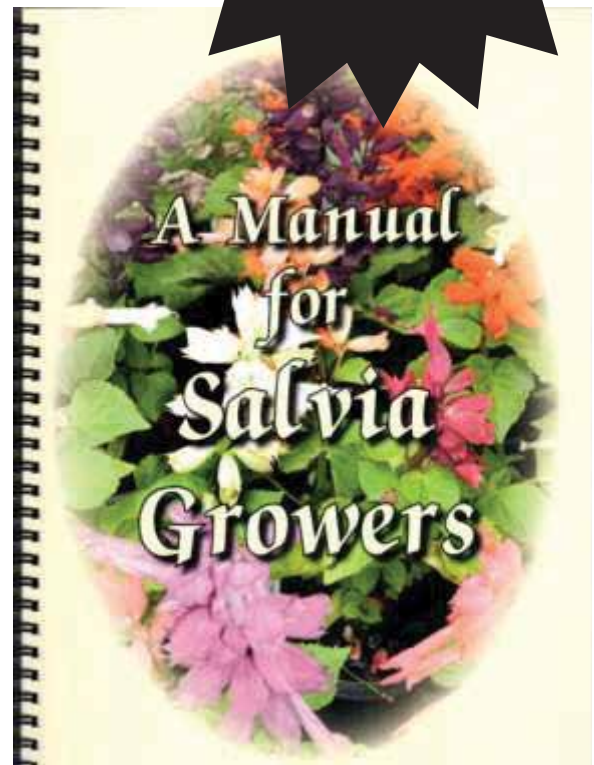
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by Meg Bentley

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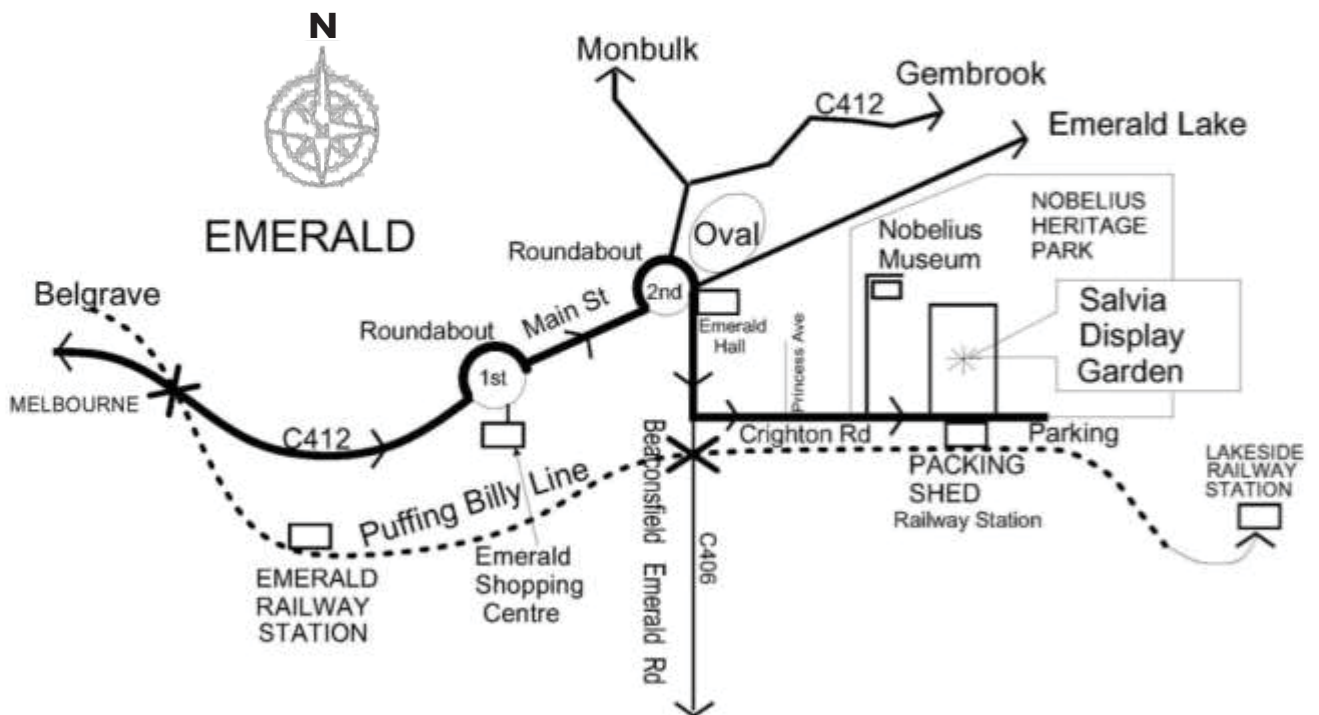
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DIRECTIONS TO THE SALVIA DISPLAY GARDEN



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