

# Salvia News

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**Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc**

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

Winter 2022

# VICTORIAN SALVIA STUDY GROUP inc

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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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You probably didn't miss the re-naming of rosemary from *Rosmarinus officinalis* to *Salvia rosmarinus*, such was the controversy, even outrage. Some people don't like change and would prefer to learn something once and be done. Fortunately the name of the herb will remain rosemary, and there's no ambiguity there... unless by rosemary you mean *Westringia fruticosa*.

Scientific nomenclature is not only about unambiguous identification though, it has the relationships between plants built in, and that was where the real interest in renaming rosemary lay. Botany began with the tools at hand, namely hand lenses and microscopes, which allowed classification by floral structure and accessory structures like pollen (re Meg Bentley's excellent article from the Autumn newsletter). Recent developments in DNA analysis have powered-up comparisons between plants, and allowed the fascinating discovery that the 'staminal lever', which was used as a diagnostic for *Salvia* species, in fact developed independently

in three lineages. This led to the re-sorting of genera and species that captured *Perovskia* and *Rosmarinus*.

A fascinating corollary (excuse the pun) is that in evolutionary development, once flowers were of a certain sagey form, it was so worthwhile to hide the stamens and only bring them to action when the right pollinator was present, that that lever mechanism developed independently. This is reminiscent of the astonishing pollination strategies of orchids, ensuring both targeted pollen delivery and cross-pollination.

Naming isn't just memorising Latin and Greek, it's a pointer to all the botany and discovery behind the plants. For this edition Pat Anderson has written a concise summary of what can be a tricky topic, which I hope you enjoy. We also have some garden visits, and a cautionary list of plants that might be best left out of your gardening scheme. All in all a colourful selection to entertain you through the darker and quieter days of Winter.

*Stephen*



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**Copy deadline for the next edition of Salvia News is  
 8th August 2022**

Please email your articles and photos to: [vssged@gmail.com](mailto:vssged@gmail.com)

Cover Photo is *Salvia semi atrata*. Photo by Lyndi Garnett

**Read more of what's happening next year on page 22.**

We began the year by visiting the Botanical Gardens in Melbourne. A beautiful restful place to begin the year and we will continue to visit more wonderful gardens throughout the year, so come and join us.

**JUNE SUN 26TH | Propagation Day | Salvia Display Garden at Nobelius – on lawn in front of Museum. Nobelius Heritage Park, Crighton Rd, Emerald.** (Beneath the Packing Shed along the Puffing Billy Train Line) – **2pm-4pm**

This is your opportunity to see how to take cuttings of Salvias. Take part in propagating Salvias for your own garden, potting up cuttings, and be shown how to repot Salvias.

**What to bring:** Plastic bags for cuttings, secateurs, boxes to take home pots of potted cuttings etc... Plants/ flowers to be identified.

Tea/coffee will be provided.

Email or phone Lyndi with inquiries Ph 9803 4534.

**AUG SUN 21ST | New Members Luncheon | Salvia Display Garden at Nobelius on lawn in front of Museum. Nobelius Heritage Park, Crighton Rd, Emerald.** (Beneath the Packing Shed along the Puffing Billy Train Line) – **12.30PM**

All new members are invited to come and enjoy lunch. Which is to welcome and thank them for joining the Group.

The lunch that is provided by the committee.

**What to bring:** Nothing except a chair.

Phone Lyndi Ph 9803 4534 if coming.



# Nobelius in the Autumn of 2022

By Lyndi Garnett

Come and see what's flowering this Autumn in our Salvia Display garden.

The tall pink Salvias are in full bud, 'Limelight' and other mexicana varieties are already in flower. As you can see all the purple and blue Salvias stand out in the autumn light. These contrast so well with the cerise of *S. curviflora* and the rich crimson of 'Ripe Raspberry'.

'Meigan's Magic' looks gorgeous with it's contrasting colours of the dark purple and white and then there's 'Phyllis Fancy' putting on a show with all the hues of purple.

Don't forget that so many of the small leaf varieties are still madly flowering. 'Hot lips' is still in full flight. They will continue until cut down.

Please take the time to go up and walk through the garden, see what's in flower and what is happening in the garden.

If you would like to give a hand and perhaps get a bit dirty, taking home tubs of leaves and cuttings, then call Lyndi 9803 4534. Everyone is welcome. Tea/coffee provided.



Left to right: *miautilensis*, *waverley*, *corrugata* and *littae*.

## Nobelius in the Autumn of 2022 (cont...)



leucantha



aurita var galpinnii



Anthony Parker



Left to right: macrophylla, coconut ice and confertiflora.

# A tiny garden in South Yarra

By Lyndi Garnett

Not everyone has a large block for a garden, many have only balconies or even limited to window boxes. This story is about the tiny garden that our Polish member Marzena Walicka has created out of nothing.

Marzena lives in an apartment block in Sth Yarra, without any front garden. But what she has done is to plant up what ever small parcels of garden there may be in front of the apartment, with loads of colour from Salvia 'Hotlips', 'Anthony Parker' and *S. guaranitica*. These combine well with her Nasturtiums when in flower and the 4 o'clock plant or Jacobs Ladder and a beautiful Hibiscus. On her steps leading up to her apartment are various pots that tolerated shade and sunlight, among them being the beautiful 'Appleblossum' Pelargonium (one of my favourites). So with a small effort, Marzena has made an ordinary apartment building, look cheery in winter and colourful during Autumn and spring.

Marzena has also been able to play with the very narrow space behind her rooms, only 2m wide! Apart from a path of approx 900mm wide, she has created an extraordinary garden 500mm either side, using every inch of walls and fence for climbing plants such as Jasmine, Mandervillas', Parthenocissus 'Henryii', cane Begonias, Hoyas as well as a *S. chiapensis* and a 'Meigan's magic'.

In the small sunny areas by the propagating table are Pelargoniums, Rhipsalis and Begonias of every description. Cutting pots are hung from Rio along the fence while they wait to root. Small pots of shade loving ferns, Aspidistra, are tucked under other plants growing on the walls. Where there is space there is a pot clambering for the light. What has been achieved in this small space is extraordinary, which shows that a garden can be created anywhere.



# Autumn at Ashford Park

By Janine Molan and Daryl Lyons



*Salvia oxyphora* & *S.* 'Anthony Parker'.

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At the time of writing this article in mid April, it has been a very dry autumn at Ashford Park, Nullawarre (25 minutes from Warrnambool). Thank god for the good quality bore water we have 12 foot under the ground, which has ensured that our garden has hit its peak. Unlike summer when we pour the water on, being in a normally wet area we have to apply just enough water this time of year to avoid a waterlogged garden later. So the strategy is pretty much to look for plants that are sagging, then water a bit.

With a large array of salvias in flower most of the year, Janine and I have always debated when our true peak in the garden is. January? February? March? April? I think it definitely is late March/early April when most Salvias have reached the full extent of their growth and 90% are in flower. The garden appears very full and a bit of a jungle, but wow, the colour! Being free of Covid restrictions we have had a number of local garden clubs thru in recent months, something we always look forward to.

Earlier in the year we had the pleasure of visiting the beautiful gardens of Pat, Fiona and Lyndi, and brought home around 25 new salvias for our collection. That has resulted in a bit of a reshuffle in the garden to create areas for them,



*Salvia nipponica* 'Crug Cream'.



Multiple varieties.

the end result being that a bit more of the horse paddock has been resumed. Raspberries, loganberries and several apple trees are soon to find new homes there, in turn freeing-up ground for several new salvia dominated cottage areas. It is always exciting to make changes in a garden, and we can't wait to see the outcome of this, including some of our new salvias in flower.

While a number of club members visited our garden back in November last year, we always welcome anyone who is down this way to drop in for a look at the garden. With the dairy cows soon to start calving we are generally not far away, so don't hesitate to contact us on 0409 354 869.



Above: *Salvia mexicana* 'Bill Whitehead'. Above, inset: *Salvia* 'Allegra's Child'.

# Bad, wicked or just illegal?

By Maureen Scoble

I was gardening in my front yard a few weeks ago. Mostly it has very few flowers. I have a big Gleditsia tree and underneath I am hoping for a garden a la 'Nicole de Vesian'. Not sure what that is? Google it and see. Mine is nowhere near that garden (yet?). Anyway, one spot over near the fence abutting the footpath, has about 10 cm of soil over a concrete slab that I can't move. Needless to say what grows there is super tough. A lady walking along the footpath stopped and said in a horrified voice 'oh you poor thing, you have oxalis'. When I looked at where she was pointing, I could see that indeed I did have oxalis. In fact I had planted it many years ago. Sweet little clover type leaves, bright pink flowers and absolutely no trouble. No care, no extra water, no feeding, no pruning. I just look and like. Does it spread? Yes, a little, but I liked it so much I planted another in the back garden, white this time. Some oxalis are ferocious spreaders, I know, but this is *Oxalis purpurea* and it is just a gem.

It did get me thinking though about what else I grow that would horrify some gardeners. I can remember my sister in law being shocked that I had planted so much Sacred Bamboo. She told me that I would never get rid of it. Why would I want to? I have it all along the back fence (never watered) and in 6 other places around the garden. Sacred Bamboo suckers, as you know. Once a year I walk around my clumps and pull out any bits I don't want. Sometimes I need to saw off a branch down at ground level. If I need to kill that branch I get out my trusty paintbrush and put a dab of blackberry killer on it. Oops! Maybe I shouldn't have told you that.

Some Salvias spread too, as I'm sure you know. *S. 'Black and Blue'*, *S. uliginosa* and *S. 'Cyclamen'* do. I have them all of course but they are confined so we still have a working relationship. *S. 'Christine Yeo'* spreads by suckering as does *S. 'Hotlips'*. The latter I no longer grow, because I have limited space, not because it suckers. *S. macrophylla* just goes where it wants. I plant it at the back of the border but even there it can be a problem because it can hoist itself up on anything. *S. oxyphora* moves around too; if you are watering a new plant in nearby, it will head in that direction within the week. I couldn't find any salvias on the Australian noxious weed list. I guess we can imagine though some of our beloved plants becoming a problem. Given the right conditions anyway.

I don't actually have Ipomoea (Morning Glory Vine) but I would love to! I know it is illegal so I restrain myself, but every time I catch sight of that deep, rich blue growing over some derelict fence it just breaks my heart. I do have *Convolvulus mauritanicus* which is a

relative and a ground cover. It does spread, but in my usual fashion, if it goes too far I just rip it out. Within a month it has grown back in a much-reduced form.

*Tradescantia alliiflora* I don't grow. It can spread far and wide and is difficult to remove. I do grow *Tradescantia pallida* in several places. It is a wonderful purple scrambler and I particularly like it with *Asparagus meyeri* (Foxtail Fern). This one isn't a noxious weed although *Asparagus sprengeri* is. In fact they have *A. meyeri* in the Royal Botanical Gardens (childrens section).

Many years ago I planted clumps of the beautiful Japanese Wind Flowers (Anemone) in white. They are gorgeous but they spread alarmingly everywhere and they were 1.5 metres in height! I was swamped, they liked me too much and were difficult to remove. Some of the newer varieties are not quite so rampant so I am trying again.

I have *Viola hederacea* everywhere. I don't care. It is the Australian native violet and it is a sweet little ground cover, easy to pull out and I wouldn't be without it. Another good spreader is *Artemisia variegated* form, a nice green and gold plant that loves the sun. Easy to pull out so I have it in several places. Grows to about 50cm.

The next 2 plants I beg you not to touch. When I came to this garden it already had *Alstromeria pulchella 'Aurea'*. The flowers are quite nice being deep red and green but this plant I have been unable get rid of in 25 years of trying. The other terror is *Eomecon chionantha* – the Snow Poppy. Sounds delightful but don't be fooled. It is supposed to like moisture and dappled shade but I can tell you it will put up with just about anything. My patch has moved itself into the sun, and in Spring the flowers are pretty there. The plant will take over the whole bed if don't pull it regularly. Thank goodness it doesn't like hot Summer sun and takes itself off till next year. If you need a good plant for shade try *Ruscus* (Butchers Broom). It grows to about 40-50 cms tall and does spread slowly but not alarmingly. No flowers to speak of but it will grow in dry shade.

One final thought – don't ever buy this property! The house is fine but the garden would cause you to despair..

PS. I did once visit Nicole de Vesians garden. It was 43 kms from where I was staying in France. I hired a taxi. The driver couldn't speak English and I couldn't speak French but we got there. On the way he said – 'You like? You no like?'. Pressed the CD button and on came "You Ain't Nothin but a Hound Dog" by Elvis Presley. 43 km of 60s and 70s rock was a bit much but the garden was lovely.

# Notes from Gruyere – Winter 2022

By Meg Bentley

A visit to the Sensory Garden in the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Initially, it was the aim of the Botanic Gardens to have a garden space designed with accessibility for people with specific needs like dementia, but also to include traditional plants with connections to the past. Designed by Andrew Laidlaw, Landscape Architect for Melbourne Gardens and through generous donations, including the Friends of the RBG and Dementia Australia it came to fruition and opened in 2020.

Many times I've heard people reminiscing about the plants they see, like the Sweet Peas, roses, lavender, pinks, scented pelargoniums and marigolds, bringing back memories of their childhood and their grandmothers' garden. Then I see a new generation of young children coming through and encourage them to rub a leaf or two and smell its fragrance and you hear the 'WOW' as they turn to their friends beside them saying 'smell this'.

Not long ago the Salvia Study Group made a visit to see the Sensory Garden and yes, there are salvias growing there as well, both colourful and fragrant and also textured plants. Some of the salvias to be seen are *Salvia sagittata*, S. 'Phyllis Fancy', S. 'Meigans Magic', *S. glutinosa*, *S. thyrsoflora*, *S. canariensis* var *candidissima*, S. 'Rosalie', *S. elegans* 'Golden Delicious', *S. apiana* and S. 'Bees Bliss'.

Tripods of Sweet Peas have now replaced the tall *Echium wildpretii* and in the Winter/Spring will bring a mass of fragrant blooms from Daphne, Gardenias and roses and by then, the Thyme Walk will be fully covered with various fragrant creeping thymes. The Persimmon 'Nightingale' trees will be showing new growth and the 'Golden Corner' will look elegant with gentle drapes of *Acacia cognata* 'Lime Magik' wattles overhanging the white flowering golden *Heliotrope arborescens aurea*. There are fragrant pelargoniums like Lemon Crispin, Mabel Gray, Guava-scented and chocolate-peppermint, all intermingled with *Tagetes lemmonii* the Mexican Tree Marigold which emits a fragrance of passionfruit. There are many plants of the Lamiaceae family like

*Nepeta*, *Mentha*, *Teucrium*, *Oregano*, rosemary, lavender, *Prostanthera* and *Plectranthus*, including the salvias as mentioned earlier. I do remember someone questioning 'why would they have a *Prunus* here in this garden?'... fact is, this special *Prunus* is the Japanese Flowering Apricot, *Prunus mume*, and its heavenly fragrance is superb and not to be missed. What better plant could one wish for in a Sensory Garden?

A walk around and through the tall swaying bamboo *Phyllostachys aurea*, 'Fish Pole Bamboo' leads around to the small Central Lake where the lotus with delicate pink blooms standing erect above the green leaves and ducks and black swans swim gracefully through the foliage.

Every season will emerge with something new in bloom, be it Pinks, daisies, marigolds, violas, geraniums especially the bright blue 'wide-eyed' Geranium 'Rozanne' and of course the Iris, splendid in colour and stature and many more treasures including swaying grasses, shrubs and small trees.

Since our visit to the Sensory Garden, the gardens here in Gruyere have been extremely dry and plants had to hold on until some sort of moisture fell from the sky. Thank goodness salvias are a hardy bunch, well most of them. My garden tank water ran very low and since there is no back-up dam to top up, all the plants in the gardens had to sit and quietly bow their heads until it rained.

Then Easter came and so did the rain, soft and gentle but constant for two days, so I'm as pleased as the plants who have now lifted their leaves to face the sky and have all that dust wash off. Now to settle down and think of planting and propagating new additions and I'm sure many of you have already started on that score. And, if you happen to visit the botanic Gardens in Melbourne, do go and see the lovely Sensory Garden, sit quietly on one of the seats and enjoy!

# Photos of the Sensory Garden



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# Geelong garden visit

By Christa

Well the day finally came when we could get together at Geelong on March 20th. Our destination was the beautiful garden of Judy and Earl Medlyn. This garden is located at Ceres on the outskirts of Geelong. Judy and Earl have been gardening here for more than 20 years. It is one acre of garden flowing up and down the hill, there are many paths winding in and out creating many pockets for planting, this really shows off many succulents and other specimen plants. The back fence has shrubs and trees and some magnificent stands of bamboo. Coming back around towards the house there is a good stand of Wigandia trees with their lovely blue flowers.

There are so many paths and treasures to be found, not only plants but some beautiful sculptures and pots. We were able to indulge walking through this garden multiple times and still finding something to look at. There were some huge bromeliads thriving in the shady areas. Along the front of the house leading to the garage we saw some beautiful begonias in flower. Judy and Earl were such lovely and gracious hosts and made us feel so welcome in their garage, where we shared lunch and cups of tea/ coffee.

I heard someone say as we were walking around the garden Where are the salvias? They were found here and there, mainly the South African species around the rear and some of the newer bright pink varieties leading down the path. There were also some lovely small bright blue *Salvias sinaloensis* to be found, tucked in around one or two beds. Although I didn't know that *Salvia*, the flowers certainly lit up this particular part of the garden.

Thank you Judi and Earl for your hospitality and to all the *Salvia* Enthusiasts who attended, was lovely to be together again and feast our eyes on such a lovely garden.



## Geelong garden visit (cont...)



Ladies at Geelong Garden March 22



Hill House Geelong





Large bromiliads



Earl's garden



# Salvias: what's in a name?

By Pat Anderson

Quite a lot actually, and it helps to know a little bit of Latin, and it also helps to know who is doing what in the field of naming. In the following article, I will try to cover some topics such as the need for botanical names, how to write them and pronounce them, what some of the word elements mean, changing names and nursery names.

First of all, the **basic binomial system of genus and species**. This was introduced some 250 years ago to rationalise a multiplicity of plant descriptions. The **genus** (plural **genera**) denotes a group of plants (or animals) with a distinctive set of characteristics. A salvia, for example, is a plant with square stems, opposite leaves, a 2-lipped flower and 1 pair of stamens. The **specific epithet**, such as *argentea* is like an adjective, describing the specific differences within the **genus**. Together, they denote a **species**, so, for example, *Salvia argentea* is a species within the **genus Salvia**.

**There are some recognised rules for writing these terms** that we, as a study group, should try to follow:

Both the genus and specific epithet should be written in italics

The genus only should begin with a capital letter eg *Salvia argentea*.

When mentioning salvias in general, there are no italics and no capital letters, although in the paragraph above where I specifically mentioned **the genus Salvia**, then italics and a capital letter apply.

If writing a list of salvias, it is appropriate to abbreviate the subsequent ones: *Salvia argentea*, *S. indica*, *S. canariensis* etc

Varieties and subspecies are denoted by abbreviated forms of these words, and not in italics. For example: *Salvia microphylla* var. *neurepia* and *S. rubescens* subsp. *dolichotrix*.

Cultivars, whether natural or deliberate crosses are written differently. The genus is written in italics, but the cultivar name is not, all words are enclosed in single primes and each word has a capital letter. For example *Salvia* 'Van Houttei', *Salvia microphylla* 'Candle Glow' or *Salvia*

*microphylla* 'Heatwave Glow'.

Crosses are indicated by the x symbol, not in italics.

**Pronouncing botanical names** is not really an issue as there is no agreement on how to pronounce Latin in English-speaking countries. There are a few guidelines about emphasis and the number of syllables, but even these are not adhered to in general. The only important thing is that we can get others to understand us. Many botanical names, for example, are based on people's names such as *Choysia*. This is named after a Frenchman, Choisy, and theoretically it could be pronounced in 1 of 3 ways: the English way, CHOI-sy-a; the French way, choi-SY-a; or the Latin way, KO-I-S-YA. So, don't get hung up on pronunciation. Similarly a name like *Salvia coccinea* could be pronounced the Italian way, where 'cc' sounds like 'ch' (I think), whereas others pronounce this like coxsinea (I'm one of these, for no special reason other than that's how I first heard it said).

## Some plant names, word endings and meanings

As Latin is the traditional language of botanical descriptions, certain rules apply. The specific epithet, for example, is an adjective or describing word, and, being Latin, must agree in gender with the noun (a problem we don't have in English). *Salvia* is a feminine/first declension word and any adjective should agree. So we have *Salvia argentea*, *S. aurea*, *S. cacaliifolia*, *S. coccinea*, *S. corrugata* etc., all ending in 'a'. Someone clearly made a mistake when he (more than likely a he at the time) named *Salvia candelabrum*, giving the adjective the neuter ending of 'um' instead of 'a'! But we have to live with that.

You will no doubt have noticed that not all species names end with an 'a'. Some common endings are iensis, ana, ica, iaca, This is because the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature* recommends that epithets **taken from geographical names** should end this way. Hence we have the following:

<i>S. algeriensis</i>	from Algeria
<i>S. arizonica</i>	from Arizona

<i>S. austriaca</i>	from Austria
<i>S. canariensis</i>	from the Canary Islands
<i>S. coahuilensis</i>	from the Coahuila province in Mexico
<i>S. indica</i>	from India
<i>S. jamensis</i>	from the Mexican village, Jame
<i>S. hierosolymitana</i>	from Jerusalem, where the city name is pronounced somewhat differently from the English pronunciation

And so on. Two oddities to note here. Firstly *S. aethiopsis* (spelled with ae because it is latinised greek for Ethiopia) has the inconsistent name ending of 'is'. This literally means 'of Ethiopia' in Latin, and doesn't conform to the rules. Neither does *S. somalensis*. Theoretically it should be *S. somaliensis*.

The other point is the species name *australis*. I don't know of a *S. australis*, but I recently fell into the trap of thinking that a plant called *Baptisia australis* is an Australian native plant. In fact it is from the USA, and *australis* in Latin means 'southern'!

The international naming Code also has instructions for endings where a plant is **named to commemorate a particular person**. There are 2 ways of doing this. When named after the discoverer, it is written to mean, for example, Mr Muir's salvia, in which case the genitive (possession) form of the name is used giving *Salvia muirii* (would be *muiriae* for Mrs Muir). If the name is merely given as a compliment, it should be given the adjectival form, agreeing in gender with the generic name – for example, *Salvia wagneriana*. Again, some naming pre-dates the International Code.

You may have noticed that there are sometimes 2 'i's after a name.

When a name ends in a vowel, including the letter 'y', 'i' is added eg. *S. dombeyi* (named after M. Dombey) or *S. sessei* (named after Don Martin de Sesse)

When the name ends in a consonant, 'ii' is added, except when the name ends in 'er'. Hence *S. buchananii*, *S. munzii*, *S. muelleri*, *S. meyeri*.

If the person discovering the plant is a woman, the genitive ending is 'ae'. Hence *S. x westerae*

Many specific epithets are purely descriptive.

Examples include:

<i>caerulea</i>	deep blue
<i>argentea</i>	silvery (leaves)
<i>campanulata</i>	bell shaped
<i>candidissima</i>	pure glossy white
<i>corrugata</i>	corrugated, crumpled
<i>rubescens</i>	becoming red
<i>glutinosa</i>	sticky
<i>hirtella</i>	hairy
<i>microphylla</i>	small leaves
<i>nutans</i>	nodding

Two other forms are worth mentioning. When the epithet is a compound of words, the Code prescribes adding the letter 'i' in between. So, a salvia with leaves resembling those of the genus *Cacalia*, will take the stem – calcali -then add an 'i' before the word folia, meaning leaf, giving *S. cacaliifolia*. The other is the word part, oides, meaning 'resembling'. Hence *S. thymoides*, resembling thyme, *S. scutellarioides*, resembling a scutellaria.

**Changing names.** Sometimes, plants have been discovered at different times and in different places by different people and given different names. The naming code specifies that the first description of a plant should be the true name. So once this is understood, the first, correct name is adopted but other names can still be recognised as synonymous. An example is *S. darcyi* (syn.) *oresbia*. Corrections like this are happening all the time. But just when we think we are getting a handle on this naming business, along comes the nursery industry, whose aim is to sell plants. So their glossy labels may have the botanical name in small print somewhere, but an attractive, descriptive name is given to the plant to make it more appealing. So we have Electric Blue for *S. sinaloensis* and many, many more examples to confuse us. Worse still, certain large chains like to market whole groups of plants under headings like Garden Jewels. It is easy to be taken in to buying something that we already have under a different name.

If you are interested in more details, the following sources are helpful. The first book listed is easy to read.

- Spencer, R., Cross, R. and Lumley, P. 2007 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed): *Plant Names: A guide to Botanical Nomenclature*
- Stearn, W. T., 2004: *Botanical Latin* (paperback edition)

# Salvias in Autumn

By Geoff Crowhurst

I imagine everyone who grows salvias looks forward to autumn, not only because of the pleasantly cool temperatures but also because many salvias are at their very best. In my small garden I haven't room for the larger South American types that often flower not only in autumn but into winter and spring. My *S. greggii* and *S. microphylla* plants have done surprisingly well throughout a warm, dry summer, with the addition of little *S. chamaedryoides* and *S. nemorosa* ssp. *tesquicola*. I have somewhat belatedly trimmed a number of plants with sheep shears but there will soon be flowers again, and probably for some months.

*Salvia microphylla* (Baby Sage) is a great little plant, so I have three. One flops onto the brick paving, with a pot of Ox-tonque /Paintbrush lily (*Haemanthus coccineus*) poking into it. An earlier photo in the Newsletter showed the salvia with the large leaves of the same plant. Nearby *S. chamaedryoides* also flops onto the paving. I love the contrast of the little grey leaves and the bright blue flowers. I have a couple of plants of *S. nemorosa* ssp. *tesquicola* which flower very well in spring, and then, if cut back hard about new year, flower again in autumn. It is a no-nonsense plant, needing just a little feeding and not much water, and benefits from being divided and replanted every couple of years. I picked up a couple of *nemorosa* type plants in Bunnings not long ago, labelled just pink and blue, and at discount price as they had been in their container too long. They have come good with a little TLC, so it will be interesting to see what I have when they flower.

Down the back, in a semi-shaded position, I have *S. forskaohlei*, still with a few flowers. It seeded itself around last season, so I had plants to take to the local garden club. *S. miltiorrhiza* seems to be a somewhat similar plant, from China. Reading Roy Lancaster's *Travels in China* I realized that I had been to the very place where it grows in the wild, near the Great Wall, NW of Beijing. So I hope to obtain a plant in the near future.



*S. tesquicola*



*S. chamaedryoides*

# Visit to Royal Botanic Gardens

By Geoff Crowhurst

Only a few members turned up on the day, which was a pity as we had a good time. The visit was not about seeing a range of salvias: members are also gardeners keen to grow a variety of plants, as can be seen by what Pat Anderson and Meg Bentley have in their gardens. We started at D Gate and went first to Guilfoyle's Volcano, with its floating garden at the top. The plantings of cacti and succulents down the sides are now filling out and becoming more attractive. It is interesting to note how the patterns in the paving at the base connect with the volcano area.

From there we wandered over to the newly revamped arid garden with its wide variety of desert plants. These are quite impressive, though to my mind both the plantings and the hard landscaping will take time to weather and look more natural. In particular, groundcovers have plenty of room to spread. It was then quite easy to go down hill to the lake area at the bottom of the fern gully, which we didn't get to explore. Right near a massive cypress is the entrance to a sensory garden, which has unobtrusive stepping-stones through it. Past a clump of bamboo one could see the lake and clumps of beautiful lotus in flower.



Volcano, water garden

It being lunch time, we then made our way beside the lake, with more lotus, to the café, where at seats nearby we had either our own lunch or bought something to eat. That was more or less the end of our explorations, though I remember someone later saying they had gone back towards the Observatory Gate and past the herbaceous border. There is so much to see that more than one visit is needed. Using the open mini-bus Gardens Explorer would be a fun way of getting around, not to mention commentary from a trained guide.



Lotus



Arid garden

# Three Salvia gardens visited

By Lyndi Garnett

If you'll remember back to our Warrnambool visit last year, it was suggested that to reciprocate our visiting those lovely gardens way down in the land of lush grass, that February might be a good time for Daryl and co to come up to Melbourne and visit some Salvia gardens.

So in mid-February, Pat Anderson, Fiona and I opened our gardens to Daryl and Janine, Danny and Sue from Warrnambool and anyone else who was able to come. This event was a midweek affair as it was the only time Daryl and Danny could leave their farms and all those beautiful doll eyed cows ready to be milked.

I must say it was an honour for us to be able to open our gardens at that time. Of course after New Year and holidays there was a mad scramble to cut back, prune, replant and clean up our gardens in readiness.

It was agreed that we would visit Pat first and then go onto Fiona's for lunch. Unfortunately my day started out badly as I was almost within Warrandyte, I suddenly realised that I had left my food platters at home, and in the rush to get out the door, I had forgotten to lock the front door!!! So, I had to go back home, collect my platters and lock the door – checked and rechecked, and head off once again for Warrandyte.

I was late and a bit flustered by the time I arrived. Of course Heather, Tina and Pat had everything in hand and with a cup of coffee in hand I was able to then say hello to everyone, including our guests.

Everyone loves going to Pat's garden with so many unusual and interesting plants, a good variety of Salvias; a lovely garden to just wander around. After everyone had identified this and that flowering Salvia and had been given generous amounts of cuttings or plants, it seemed we all wanted to go and

inspect the vegetable garden on the river flat.

Of course it was wonderful, with loads of tomatoes, green vegetables just finishing after being picked and others just coming up in their rows.

We all had a lovely time discussing the varieties of tomatoes or spinach, carrots and the various herbs, but the real beauties were the self-sown Zinnias that help to attract the pollinating insects. The Zinnia's were so bright and beautiful, adding a certain lightness to the whole area.

Time to go on to Fiona's which was only a short way up the hill. I stayed by the junction to show the way for our visitors and those who were not familiar with the road.

Fiona has now constructed a deer proof

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Daryl & Janine at Fiona's garden, February 2022

fence around her house and garden. This has allowed Fiona to create a wonderful garden full of tough hardy Salvias and perennials. A lovely garden to wander through.

Apart from growing a good selection of Salvias, Fiona is also collecting Begonias and Hoyas. Begonias of every description were everywhere – beautiful colourful leaves and markings, tall cane varieties as well as hanging baskets swinging between branches.

What did amaze us all was the variety of Begonias, Salvias and other plants that are now being established in a gully under gum trees. This is where water now collects and allows soil to be a conditioned microclimate for these types of plants to survive.

At the end of the day, everyone went home very happy with armfuls of cuttings, plants and pots.

The next day being Wednesday began well, bright and sunny with a slight cool breeze. Everyone that was to come, soon arrived including our visitors and some that couldn't come the day before.

With a cup in hand, everyone began to wander around the front garden, checking out all the different or similar greggii and microphylla plants. I was so pleased that the front was again in full bloom as it had all been dead headed and cut back in January. Beds had been mulched and copious amounts of water



Pat's garden, February 2022

applied and now it was its normal array of colour.

People selected flowers to see if they could find a potted plant to take home. Others sort the shade of the rear garden, with all its trees, searching among the stock of pots for that flower they saw at the front. After exploring all the nooks of my garden, it was time to rest on the patio and take in the majesty of a tall Sydney Blue Gum.

Time to go home, as I had a committee meeting to go to, but all who came went away with smiles and bags of pots. Two days well spent by our visitors from Warrnambool, who definitely went home with smiles on their faces.



Jeoff sitting down in Fiona's garden, February 2022

## Three Salvia gardens visited (cont...)



Members at Fiona's garden, left and below



## Fiona's garden



Fiona's Begonias



Fiona explaining her garden

# Pat's garden



Pat's garden of microphyllas



Ladies discussing Pat's vegetable garden

# WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS YEAR

# 2022

## JUNE – SUN 26TH

**Propagation Day – Salvia Display Garden at Nobelius – on lawn in front of Museum (2pm-4pm)  
Nobelius Heritage Park, Emerald. Crighton Rd.**  
(Beneath the Packing Shed along the Puffing Billy Train Line)

This is your opportunity to see how to take cuttings of Salvias.

Take part in propagating Salvias for your own garden, potting up cuttings, and be shown how to repot Salvias.

What to bring:

- Plastic bags for cuttings, secateurs, boxes to take home pots of potted cuttings etc...
- Plants/flowers to be identified

Tea/ coffee will be provided

Email or phone Lyndi with inquiries.



## AUGUST – SUN 21ST

**New Members Luncheon – on lawn in front of  
Museum (12.30pm)  
Nobelius Heritage Park, Emerald. Crighton Rd.**  
(Beneath the Packing Shed along the Puffing Billy  
Train Line)

All new members are invited to come and enjoy a lunch to welcome and thank them for joining the Group.

This is a lunch that is provided by the committee to welcome new members.

Lunch, tea/coffee will be provided. BYO chair.

Phone Lyndi Ph 9803 4534 if coming.

## CONTACT LYNDI

Email: [lgarnett844@gmail.com](mailto:lgarnett844@gmail.com) | Ph (03) 9803 4534

# Salvia Cards & Salvia Placemats Order Form

Created by Meg Bentley

**NEW!**



PLACEMATS	QTY	SUBTOTAL \$
Set of 4 laminated = \$35 posted		
Prints only set of 4 = \$30 posted		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

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State: ..... Postcode: .....

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**PAYMENT DETAILS** Fill in the form and send to:

**Norm Winn** (Victorian Salvia Study Group) P O Box 197, Vermont 3133 Phone: 0438 733 060 Email: norm.winn@bigpond.com

Cheque / Money Order: payable to Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc.

Direct Deposit: BSB: 633-000 Acc. No: 116846122 Acc. Name: Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc.

PayPal: online – vssginc1@tpg.com.au Website: www.salvias.org.au **Surname & Initial please (admin purposes only)**



CARDS	QTY	SUBTOTAL \$
Individual cards only \$2.50 each		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia gesneriiflora		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia micro. var neurepia		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia roemeriana		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia leucantha		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia patens		
5 assorted flowers \$10.00/pack		
5 same flower \$10.00/pack		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia gesneriiflora		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia micro. var neurepia		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia roemeriana		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia leucantha		
<input type="checkbox"/> Salvia patens		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

**PAYMENT DETAILS** Fill in the form and send to:

**Lyndi Garnett** (Victorian Salvia Study Group)

844 Highbury Rd Glen Waverley VIC 3150

Phone: 03 9803 4534 Email: lgarnett844@gmail.com

Cheque / Money Order: payable to Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc.

Direct Deposit: BSB: 633-000 Acc. No: 116846122 Acc. Name: Victorian Salvia Study Group Inc.

PayPal: online – vssginc1@tpg.com.au Website: www.salvias.org.au

**Surname & Initial please (admin purposes only)**

Name: .....

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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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Rowville Vic. 3178

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A form must be completed with all types of payment and sent to the Membership Officer

# A MANUAL FOR SALVIA GROWERS

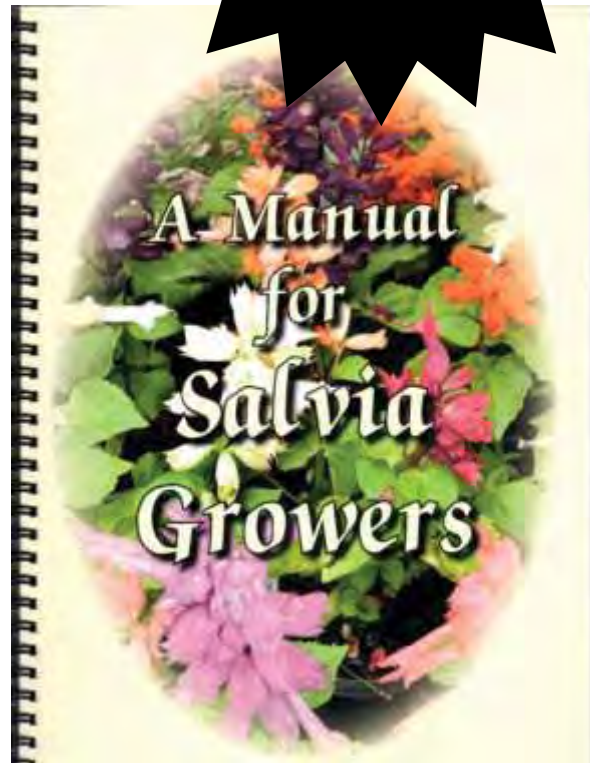
by Meg Bentley



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

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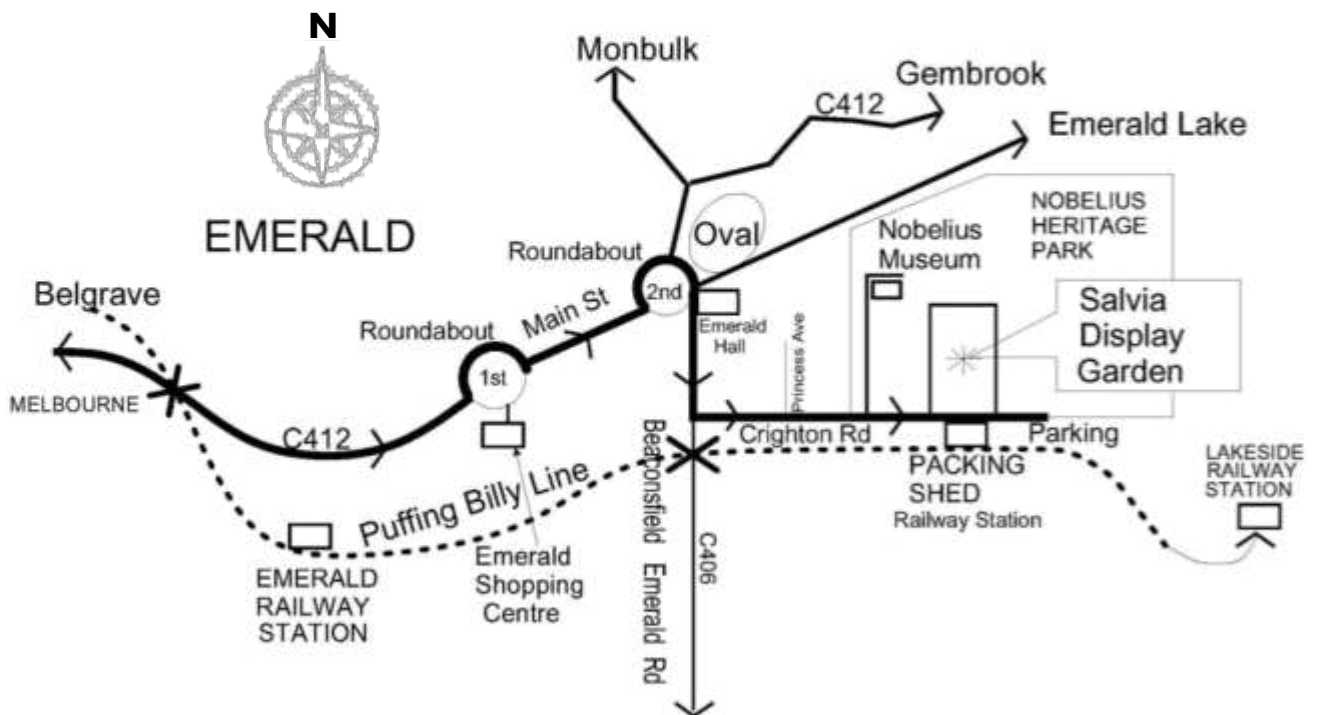
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