Salvia x ’Purple Fountain’ ‘Purple Fountain’ Salvia

Edward F. Gilman

Introduction

’Purple Fountain’ salvia is an herbaceous perennial growing about 2 feet tall with an upright habit (Fig. 1). The rich, dark green, foliage adds a fine texture to the garden and is unusually glossy compared to other salvias. Its bright red flowers grace the top of the plant throughout the spring, summer and fall seasons.

General Information

Scientific name: Salvia x ’Purple Fountain’

Pronunciation: SAL-vee-uh

Common name(s): ’Purple Fountain’ salvia, ’Purple Fountain’ sage

Family: Labiatae

Plant type: perennial; herbaceous

USDA hardiness zones: 7 through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: Jun; Jul

Planting month for zone 8: May; Jun; Jul

Planting month for zone 9: Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: Feb; Mar; Apr; May; Jun; Jul; Aug; Sep; Oct; Nov; Dec

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: cut flowers; border; edging; mass planting; attracts butterflies; attracts hummingbirds

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant

Description

Height: 2 to 4 feet

Spread: 1 to 2 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Figure 1. ’Purple Fountain’ salvia

Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.


2. Edward F. Gilman, professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Foliage
Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite
Leaf type: simple
Leaf margin: undulate
Leaf shape: elliptic (oval)
Leaf venation: arcuate; bowed
Leaf type and persistence: semi-evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: not applicable
Fall characteristic: not applicable

Flower
Flower color: red
Flower characteristic: spring flowering; summer flowering; fall flowering; flower season is longer in zones 9-11

Fruit
Fruit shape: unknown
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: unknown
Fruit color: unknown
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems
Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture
Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 18 to 24 inches

Other
Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management
‘Purple Fountain’ salvia may be used as a specimen in a small garden, but is most attractive in mass plantings in most residential and commercial landscapes. Space plants about 15 inches apart to establish a quick cover.

Place salvias in an area of the landscape where they can receive full sun to partial shade. Salvias favor well-drained soils and they are quite drought tolerant. Some irrigation in an extended drought will help maintain nice plants. One or two fertilizer applications during the growing season will also help maintain good growth and nice foliage.

Pests and Diseases
No pests or diseases are of major concern.