Snavely's GARDEN CORNER

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Purple Rain Salvia

Salvia verticillata 'Purple Rain'



Purple Rain Salvia in bloom
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Plant Height: 18 inches

Flower Height: 24 inches

Spread: 18 inches

Spacing: 15 inches

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 3b

Other Names: Perennial Salvia

Description:

An erect perennial variety featuring arched, whorled spikes of two-lipped violet-purple flowers throughout summer; tolerates drought once established; best in poorer soils; deadhead to extend flowering; perfect for borders, rock gardens, or naturalizing

Ornamental Features

Purple Rain Salvia has masses of beautiful spikes of violet flowers with blue overtones and purple bracts rising above the foliage from early to late summer, which are most effective when planted in groupings. The flowers are excellent for cutting. Its attractive fragrant narrow leaves remain olive green in color throughout the season. The burgundy stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Purple Rain Salvia is an herbaceous perennial with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its medium texture blends into the garden, but can always be balanced by a couple of finer or coarser plants for an effective composition.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and is best cleaned up in early spring before it resumes active growth for the season. It is a good choice for attracting butterflies and hummingbirds to your yard, but is not particularly attractive to deer who tend to leave it alone in favor of tastier treats. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Purple Rain Salvia is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Mass Planting
- Border Edging
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Purple Rain Salvia will grow to be about 18 inches tall at maturity extending to 24 inches tall with the flowers, with a spread of 18 inches. When grown in masses or used as a bedding plant, individual plants should be spaced approximately 15 inches apart. Its foliage tends to remain dense right to the ground, not requiring facer plants in front. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years. As an herbaceous perennial, this plant will usually die back to the crown each winter, and will regrow from the base each spring. Be careful not to disturb the crown in late winter when it may not be readily seen!

This plant should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for a low-water garden or xeriscape application. This plant does not require much in the way of fertilizing once established. It is not particular as to soil pH, but grows best in poor soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This is a selected variety of a species not originally from North America. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Purple Rain Salvia is a fine choice for the garden, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. With its upright habit of growth, it is best suited for use as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. Note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.