



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Salvia coccinea*¹

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Introduction

The Native Salvia is an herbaceous perennial that is native to the southeastern United States including the state of Florida (Fig. 1). It may attain a height of 3 to 4 feet with a vase shaped or upright habit. It bears striking, rich red flowers (occasionally white or pink) in the late spring, summer, and fall seasons.

General Information

Scientific name: *Salvia coccinea*

Pronunciation: SAL-vee-uh kock-SIN-nee-uh

Common name(s): Scarlet Salvia, Scarlet 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: native to Florida

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

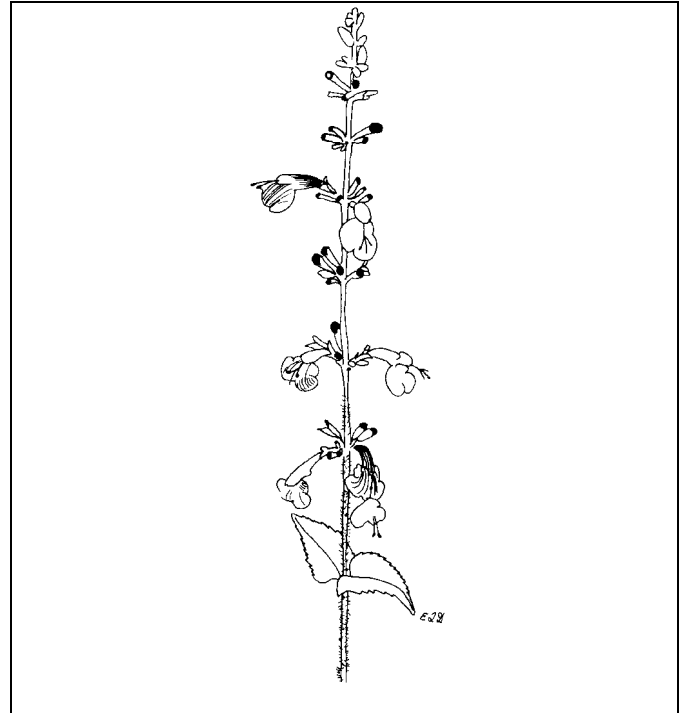


Figure 1. Scarlet Salvia.

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: moderate

Texture: medium

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf margin: serrate
Leaf shape: ovate
Leaf venation: reticulate
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; white; pink
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: reddish
Current year stem/twig thickness: thin

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun
Soil tolerances: acidic; alkaline; sand; loam; clay; occasionally wet
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 24 to 36 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: native plant that often reproduces into nearby landscapes

Pest resistance: no serious pests are normally seen on the plant

Use and Management

This charming plant may be massed together as a tall ground cover. It also makes a nice red display in the perennial border in the full sun. Plant it among other herbaceous perennials for a nice display of soft, red flowers borne terminally on erect stems.

Salvia will perform well in full sun, partial shade, or full shade; however, flowering is reduced in the partial shade. It prefers a moist, well-drained soil and, unlike many flowering bedding plants, is very drought tolerant. Native Salvia is at its best during the hottest summer months when other flowering plants may suffer from the heat. To maintain a neat-looking landscape, cut it back at the end of the year after it finishes flowering and foliage begins to die. Although this is not necessary for good growth or survival of the plant, it keeps the garden looking neater.

'Lady in Red' is a popular cultivar with deep red flowers. Rain often helps snap off the flower spikes, but new ones are usually not far behind.

One may propagate the Native Salvia by seed or cuttings.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.



Figure 3. Flower of Scarlet Salvia