South American Sage

Salvia lavanduloides



South American Sage flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 4 feet

Spread: 24 inches

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Blue Purple Calyx Sage

Description:

Striking bright blue flowers emerge from dark purple calyx in congested whorls at the top of the flowering stalk from mid-winter to early spring; very fast growing and vigorous; prefers well drained garden soils

Ornamental Features

South American Sage features showy spikes of blue flowers with purple calyces rising above the foliage from late winter to early spring. It has dark green deciduous foliage. The fragrant pointy leaves do not develop any appreciable fall color.

Landscape Attributes

South American Sage is a multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with an upright spreading habit of growth. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This shrub will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Self-Seeding

South American Sage is recommended for the following landscape applications;

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

Planting & Growing

South American Sage will grow to be about 3 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 24 inches. It has a low canopy. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 5 years.

This shrub does best in full sun to partial shade. 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. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. Consider applying a thick mulch around the root zone in winter to protect it in exposed locations or colder microclimates. This species is not originally from North America.

South American Sage makes a fine choice for the outdoor landscape, but it is also well-suited for use 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. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.