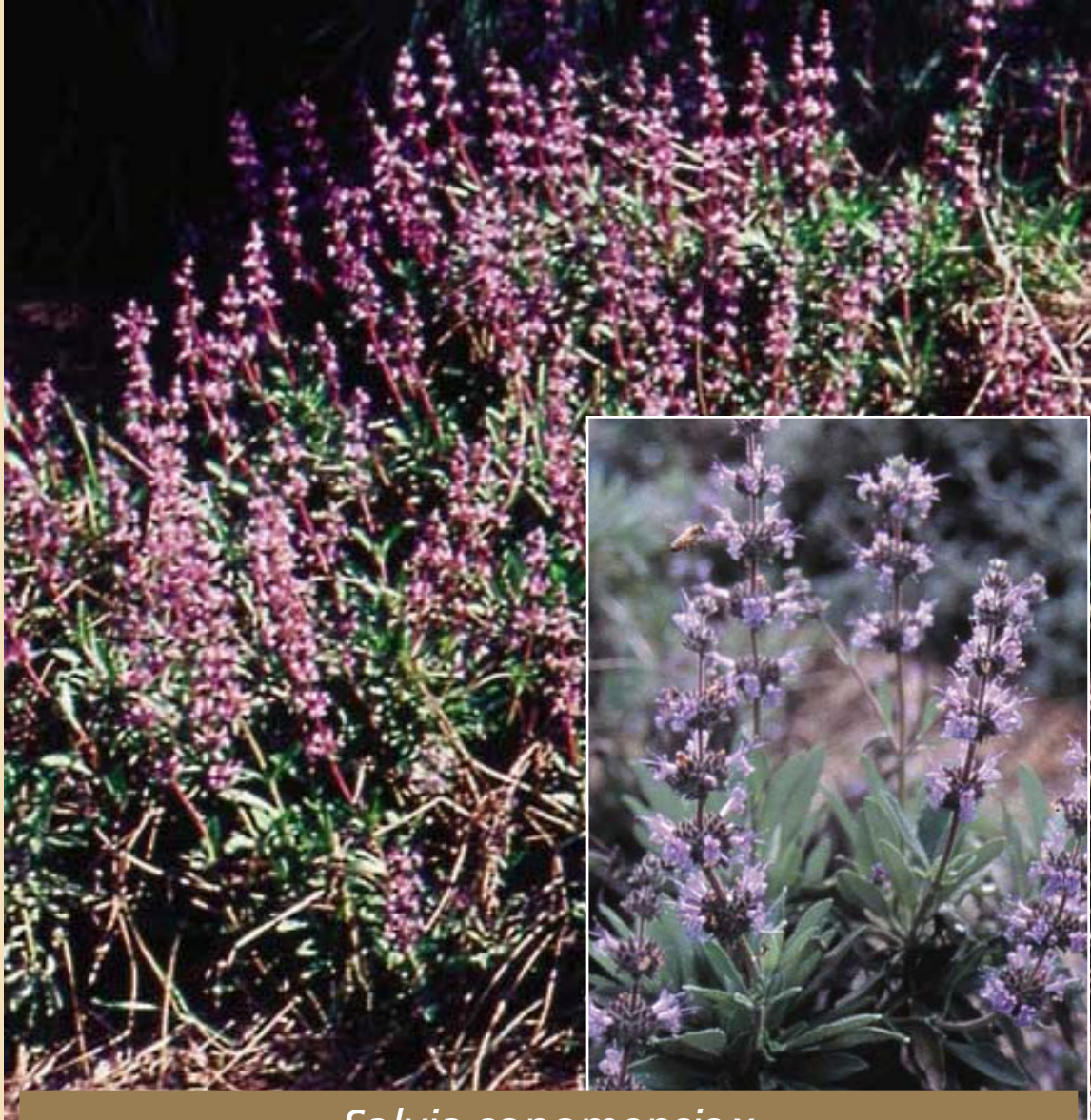


BRANCHING OUT

A California Native Plant Introduction Program



Salvia sonomensis x
Salvia mellifera 'Dara's Choice'
Dara's Choice Sage



The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden's Plant Introduction Program "Branching Out" is dedicated to increasing awareness, appreciation, and availability of outstanding California native plants for landscapes and gardens.

BOTANICAL NAME _____ *Salvia sonomensis* x *Salvia mellifera*

CULTIVAR NAME _____ 'Dara's Choice'

COMMON NAME _____ Dara's Choice Sage

FAMILY NAME _____ Lamiaceae

ORIGIN _____ An open-pollinated selection made by Horticulturist Dara Emery from seed collected off a plant labeled *Salvia sonomensis* in the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. The original seed collection, obtained from UC Davis, came from Pine Hill in El Dorado County. It is most likely a hybrid with *Salvia mellifera* due to its upright habit and intermediate foliage characteristics.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION _____ Very compact, evergreen subshrub 1.5 ft tall by 4-6 ft wide whose stems may root. The leaves are medium green above, whitish green beneath, 3.25-4.25 inches long, oblanceolate and aromatic. The blue-purple flowers are held in short spikes in spring.

WATER REQUIREMENTS _____ Judicious summer watering recommended.

SOIL REQUIREMENTS _____ Wide soil tolerance.

EXPOSURE REQUIREMENTS _____ Full sun in coastal areas.

PESTS AND DISEASES _____ We have had dieback problems at Santa Barbara Botanic Garden. Well-drained soil and judicious watering seem to be key factors in avoiding root rot. As with many sages, occasional aphids on new growth and powdery mildew.

HARDINESS _____ Zones 3, 18-24.

LANDSCAPE VALUE _____ The low spreading habit makes 'Dara's Choice' a desirable groundcover in mixed borders. Grows well for several years and can be maintained in good form with light pruning. Other features include aromatic foliage and hummingbird-attracting flowers.

PROPAGATION _____ Easy from cuttings.

SALES POTENTIAL _____ 'Dara's Choice' continues to be a popular native cultivar. Its size, fragrance, and flower color are still a unique combination.

NURSERY AVAILABILITY _____ El Nativo Growers (<http://www.elnativogrowers.com/>)
 Elkhorn Native Plant Nursery (<http://www.elkhornnursery.com/>)
 Suncrest Nurseries (<http://www.suncrestnurseries.com/>)
 Tree of Life Nursery (<http://www.treeoflifenuresery.com/>)

Note: Most nurseries have been propagating and selling the wrong clone! These plants have paler flowers and greener leaves that lack the whitish undersides.

For more information about this program, contact the Garden at 805-682-4726, ext. 114 or 148. Or, write to the Plant Introduction Program at 1212 Mission Canyon Road, Santa Barbara, California 93105.



1212 Mission Canyon Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93105-2126, www.sbbg.org