



SARATOGA HORTICULTURAL FOUNDATION, INC.

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Salvia clevelandii 'Aromas'

Cleveland Sage is a relatively small, low growing, rounded sub-shrub which eventually develops to a height of four feet or so with the flower stems rising above. The plant has, overall, a pewter grey appearance in summer due to the cast of the foliage colour combinations. It is well clothed with obovate leaves, about 2 - 2 1/2 inches long, these are wrinkled and grey-green above and pale with felting underneath - the leaf colour being more green in the winter and greyer in the summer. However despite it possibly being the most elegant of the shrubby sages in both shape and foliage and is easily recognized by these features, it is also readily categorized by the characteristic and distinctly recognizable fragrance of the aromatic leaves, which has been variously described as 'pleasant', 'delightful' and 'unusual'.

In common with the other californian sages this plant is of sub-shrub habit; i.e. it has a woody base and an annual flush of semi herbaceous branches which produce the flowers on erect stems. The flowers are carried in successive and closely spaced whorls in which the flower colour on individual plants may vary in the range from a rich bluish purple to a violet blue.

Cleveland Sage is a native of the southern parts of California in the coastal sage scrub and chaparral, and is a typical plant of this arid type of summer environment. Although it will be best suited to a non-irrigated landscape it will not succeed in establishing from a nursery container, in its first season after planting, without supplementary watering. However it is a plant which will tolerate summer watering and will usually be more vigorous in growth and look fresher as a result of such a regime, but almost inevitably it will also have a shorter life span.

The cultivar 'Aromas' is a lower growing more compact form with a very long flowering season which will last right through into October. The flower colour is also distinct, being - so called - dauphin violet in hue.

In order to maintain the characteristically compact habit it is prudent to prune the bush rigorously after flowering, this will allow renewal of growth from low down.

This plant is not only valuable as a resource for bees it is also very attractive to Humming Birds.

The origins of this particular clone are obscure. It was first brought to the Foundation in 1978 by Barrie Coate who obtained it from the nursery of Ken Taylor at Aromas, who in turn had obtained it from Ray Williams 'many years ago'. It was named by SHF at the request of Ken Taylor in 1981 when it was decided to put the plant into commercial production.

Low water use; sub-shrub; evergreen; aromatic foliage; flowering; bee plant.