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## **Wendy's Wish - a pretty new salvia from Down Under**

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By Sharon Cohoon, [Sunset](#) senior garden writer

The salvia shown below, 'Wendy's Wish', caught my eye at several different nurseries on a recent scouting excursion through Orange and San Diego counties. And that's saying a lot because there are already so many salvias on the market, it takes a really special cultivar to grab your attention.



The color of the flowers--lipstick pink--and their size and abundance are what I noticed first. But up close I also liked the contrast of the bronzy-red calyxes. And purple stems are always a plus in my opinion.



Never having heard of this salvia before my trip, I came home and did some research. Here's what I found:

`Wendy's Wish' was discovered in the garden of Wendy Smith, a *Salvia* hobbyist, in Victoria, Australia in 2005. Its exact parentage is unknown but [\*Salvia buchananii\*](#), [\*Salvia chiapensis\*](#), and [\*Salvia 'Purple Majesty'\*](#) were all in the neighborhood so are likely suspects. [Plant Haven](#) distributed the plant for trial in the U.S. in 2007 and released it to the market in 2009. Quantities were limited that year, but this year the plant is widely available, especially in the West.

You can expect this salvia to grow 3 or 4 ft. tall and slightly less wide. `Wendy's Wish' has a long bloom period. Spring to fall in mild climates; maybe a bit of time off in summer in hotter ones. Best in full sun in most locations but might prefer partial shade where it sizzles. Moderate water needs. Cold hardy to 25°F.

The cultivar's name, incidentally, came from Smith's desire that a portion of the royalties goes toward the Make A Wish Foundation in Australia.