



Desert Sage (*Salvia dorrii*)

“The smell of wetted dust and wetted sagebrush in a desert thundershower, is a fragrance more packed with associations than the most romantic of flowers.”

- Wallace Stegner

Description: Desert sage leaves are oval shaped, gray-green and clustered. Flowers share a color combination of blue, red-violet and purple. Bark is rough and peels when mature. Plants grow between one and three feet in height and width. Scent is intense but refreshing. Aromas are generally released after handling or crushing leaves.



Location: Native to the Great Basin Range and Mojave Desert, desert sage has also been found in the Aquarius Plateau area of Utah. This includes Bryce Canyon National Park and parts of Dixie National Forest. Being low maintenance, dry, rocky, desert areas are most suitable for desert sage. Desert elevations below 2,000 feet are ideal for successful growth.



Uses: Historically, tribes used desert sage as multi-purpose medicine for a variety of illness. Preparing infusions, baths, and bandages with pieces and leaves of desert sage aided in the alleviation of headaches, stomachaches, the flu, pneumonia, and more.

Also known as purple sage, desert sage is used in desert landscape as it is resistant to wildlife foraging. However, insects such as bees, butterflies, and moths extract pollen and nectar from the purple flowers. Popular for revegetating rugged and rocky terrain.

Sources:

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