

Salvia leucophylla Greene, PURPLE SAGE. Shrub, drought-deciduous, with ascending to erect branches, 80–170 cm tall; shoots gray-green to ashy gray, densely pubescent with short, white, many-branched (dendritic) hairs and sparsely glandular having milky, spheric hairs mostly concealed by the dendritic hairs, strongly aromatic. **Stems:** conspicuously 4-sided with rounded edges aging cylindric, internodes 25–80 mm long. **Leaves:** opposite decussate, simple, petiolate to sessile with pairs connected by low ledges across node, without stipules; petiole 0.5–7 mm long; blade lanceolate to oblong-lanceolate (elliptic), 20–80 × 14–30 mm, ± cordate to truncate at base, short-crenate on margins, acute to obtuse at tip, pinnately veined with veins sunken on upper surface and principal veins raised on lower surface, upper surface cobblestonelike, lower surface whitish from dense pubescence. **Inflorescence:** condensed cymes, axillary in congested, headlike clusters of 2 per node (verticils), produced as a flowering axis terminating each spring shoot, ascending to erect, 55–280 mm long (including peduncle) with 3–7 spaced to crowded verticils, verticil hemispheric, 22–44 mm across, many-flowered, flowers ± sessile, bracteate, white-pubescent and densely glandular-hairy like shoot; peduncle stemlike, 15–100 mm long; bract subtending each cyme leafy, spreading aging recurved to reflexed, narrowly ovate to ovate, 4–35 × 5.5–11 mm, larger and more leaflike on lower cymes decreasing upward, at the lowest node > verticil; axes within cyme short; bract subtending each branch and bractlet subtending flower oblanceolate or obovate to lanceolate or linear, 4.5–11.5 × 0.8–7 mm decreasing upward. **Flower:** bisexual, strongly bilateral, 5–7 mm across; **calyx** 1-lipped (lower lip absent), ± compressed side-to-side, 6–9 mm long increasing slightly in fruit, faintly 10-veined, densely dendritic-hairy and with glandular hairs, internally with forked or several-branched hairs and minute glandular hairs; tube inversely conic to midpoint; upper lip obtuse, 3–4 mm long, folded, truncate, minutely 3-toothed, or 2-toothed to slightly notched at tip; **corolla** 2-lipped, light purple to light or dark rose-lavender on lips and fading into tube, lacking spots or lines; tube + throat gradually enlarging, (6–)9–11.5(–13) mm long, curved downward (± straight); tube white at base, internally with dense ring of ascending white hairs separating tube from throat; upper lip arching upward, 2-lobed, 6–7.5(–8) mm long, lobes overlapping, equal, rounded, 1.8–2.5 × 2.5–3 mm; lower lip descending, 3-lobed, 7–8.5 × 5–6.5 mm, central lobe 5.5–6.7 × 1.7–2 mm, truncate or slightly notched to obtuse or jagged at tip, lateral lobes 1/2 to 2/3 length of central lobe, 1.7–2.5 mm wide; **stamens** 4, fused to corolla throat, dimorphic, the upper 2 sterile and attached below the sinus between lips, rudimentary and inconspicuous, ca. 0.5 mm long, the lower 2 fertile and fused to top of throat at the orifice attached below sinus of lower lip, exerted; filaments of fertile stamens 4.5–7 mm long, rose-lavender, glabrous; anther with 1 sac on arching connective (2.5–)3–4 mm long resembling filament color, sac oblong-elliptic, 3–4 mm long, olive green purplish red along back and opening, with colorless glandular hairs along connective to midpoint, longitudinally dehiscent, becoming arched after dehiscing; pollen orange-yellow, sticky; **nectary disc** base beneath ovary, 1.5–2 mm across, white; **pistil** 1; ovary superior, strongly 4-lobed, lobes sausage-shaped, ca. 1.5 mm long, 2-chambered, each lobe with 1 ovule; style exerted, attached to ovary base at center of ovary lobes (gynobasic), arching downward, 9–15 mm long, white at base grading to light purple or rose-lavender above, glabrous, unequally 2-branched, the lower branch spreading to recurved, 1–2 mm long, the upper branch ± 0.5 mm long. **Fruits:** nutlets, 4, oblong to oblanceoloid, 2.4–3.3 × 1–1.3

mm, tannish to grayish tan with brown to dark brown “veins” and brownish dots, 3-angled, convex on outer face, angled between flat faces, rounded at both ends but narrower at base. Late February–mid-August.

Native. Drought-deciduous shrub occurring as a co-dominant in chaparral and coastal sage scrub throughout the range. *Salvia leucophylla* occupies the same habitat niche as *Salvia mellifera*, and usually either one or the other occurs in a local site, although occasionally they are sympatric. Typically purple sage mostly flowers after black sage, but flowering times can overlap, so that hybridization is possible because they utilize similar pollinators. Several times interspecific hybrids have been reported from the region where healthy populations of the two species abut, so that intermediates should be expected.

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