

[54] AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT NAMED PRIMADONNA

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[21] Appl. No.: 92,149

[22] Filed: Aug. 13, 1987

[51] Int. Cl.⁴ A01H 5/00

[52] U.S. Cl. Plt./69

[58] Field of Search Plt./69

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[57] ABSTRACT

A cultivar of African violet named Primadonna, characterized by its large purple flowers with ruffled white margins; compact growth habit, large dark green leaves, and floriferous habit.

1 Drawing Sheet

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The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of African violet plant, botanically known as *Saintpaulia ionantha*, and known by the cultivar name Primadonna.

The new cultivar is a product of a planned breeding program carried out by applicant in Hannover, Federal Republic of Germany. The basic objective of the breeding program was to create a new African violet cultivar having large single purple flowers with a white margin, dark green foliage, compact growth habit, and a highly floriferous habit.

The new cultivar was originated from a cross made by applicant in the controlled breeding program. Both the female (or seed) and the male (or pollen) parents were unnamed seedlings not specifically identifiable.

Primadonna was discovered and selected by Arnold Fischer as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross in a controlled environment in Hannover, Federal Republic of Germany. Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by leaf cuttings, as performed by applicant at Hannover, Federal Republic of Germany, has demonstrated that the combination of characteristics as herein disclosed for the new cultivar are firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Primadonna has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary significantly with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity and day length. The following observations, measurements and values describe the new cultivar as grown in Parrish, Fla. under greenhouse conditions which closely approximate those generally used in commercial practice.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be basic characteristics of Primadonna, which in combination distinguish this African violet as a new and distinct cultivar:

- (1) Large purple single zygomorphic rotate flowers with a slightly ruffled, white margin.
- (2) Flowers 30–35 mm in diameter.
- (3) Compact rosette habit with flowers held erect on strong upright peduncles.
- (4) Very floriferous, with flowers continuing to open for many weeks after the onset of flowering.
- (5) Large dark green, pubescent oval leaves with repand margins and broadly acute apex.
- (6) Suitable for production in 10 cm pots, finishing in 9–13 weeks when started from a 2¼" plantlet.

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The new cultivar is similar in certain characteristics to Sugar Plum, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 5,534. Primadonna is principally distinguished from Sugar Plum by its larger flower and foliage size, and redder flower color.

The accompanying photographic drawing shows a typical specimen plant of the new cultivar. The photograph is in black and white, with several flowers being shown in colors which accurately depict the color values stated below.

In the following description, color references are made to the Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart (RHS), except where general colors of ordinary significance are referred to. Color values were taken under fluorescent light conditions at approximately 4:00 p.m. in Parrish, Fla.

Botanical classification: *Saintpaulia ionantha*, Ramat., cv. Primadonna.

Parentage: Unknown.

Propagation: The new cultivar holds its distinguishing characteristics through successive propagations by leaf cuttings.

Plant: From 8 cm to 12 cm tall when grown in pots, and approximately 20 cm in diameter when fully grown. The growth rate is vigorous, and the general shape of the fully grown plant is round.

Leaves.—Quantity: Abundant. Shape: Oval with repand margin. Diameter: 5.5–8.5 cm for mature foliage. Texture: Pubescent, glossy. Ribs and veins: Pinnate. Color (upper side): 147A. Color (under side): Light green with blotches of purple around the midrib. Petioles: Light green-purple.

Flowers.—Buds: Size: About 1 cm × 1 cm. Shape: Round. Rate of opening: Normal. Sepals: Shape: Lanceolate. Color: 184A. Phyllaries: 2, lanceolate. Color: 184A. Calyx: Shape: Funnel. Size: About 12 mm in diameter. Aspect: pubescent. Peduncle: Length: Up to 12 cm. Character: Erect, rigid. Color: Light green-purple. Individual flowers: Number of petals: 5. Size: Approximately 33 mm across and 8 mm deep. Shape: Cup shaped when bloom first opens, becoming flat as bloom matures. Color (upper side): 80 A edged with clear white. Color (under side): 80 B–80 D. Flowers fade slightly as they age. The flower color may vary somewhat depending upon the amount of light, fertilizer, temperature and other

Plant 6,646

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growing conditions. Borne: Cymose clusters on upright peduncles, up to 12 cm long. Flowering habit: Flowers profusely and intermittently year round, with blooms lasting 2-3 weeks after which petals dry up but do not drop. Finishes in 9-12 weeks when a 2 1/4" plantlet is placed in a 10 cm pot.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Stamens borne singly on one side of ovary; 2 anthers, basifixed. Anthers: 2 mm x 2 mm, yellow. Filaments: 3 mm, yellow with purple streaks. Pollen color: Yellow. Pistels: Number: 1. Styles: 1, 5 mm long.

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Stigma: Sticky, white. Ovaries: Superior. Roots: Fibrous and fine.

Disease resistance: No African violet diseases observed to date.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of African violet named Primadonna, as illustrated and described, and particularly characterized by its large purple flowers with ruffled white margins; compact growth habit, large dark green leaves, and floriferous habit.

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U.S. Patent

Mar. 7, 1989

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