



US00PP09710P

**United States Patent** [19]  
**Kramer**

[11] **Patent Number:** **Plant 9,710**  
[45] **Date of Patent:** **Nov. 26, 1996**

[54] **HEATHER 'ALEXANDRA'**  
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[21] Appl. No.: **459,510**  
[22] Filed: **Jun. 2, 1995**  
[51] **Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup>** ..... **A01H 5/00**  
[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **Plt./54.1**  
[58] **Field of Search** ..... **Plt./54.1**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**  
A new and distinct variety of *Calluna vulgaris* Heather has  
purple flowers which remain as unopened buds through their  
entire cycle from fall through early spring.

[56] **References Cited**  
**PUBLICATIONS**  
Huxley, A., et al. (Eds.) "*Calluna*" The New R.H.S. Dictio-  
nary of Gardening I, 1992, Stocton Press, N.Y. p. 469.  
Bud-Flowering Heathers, article by David McClintock,  
published in the Garden, Nov. 1994, p. 543 (Table of  
Contents attached).

**3 Drawing Sheets**

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**BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE  
INVENTION**

The present invention relates to a new and disinct variety  
of bud flowering *Calluna vulgaris*. This new variety was  
developed by Kurt Kramer at Edewecht, Germany from a  
cross between two unpatented *Calluna vulgaris* developed  
by Mr. Kramer; No. 88-49-1 (seed parent) and 88-42-2  
(pollen parent). The numbers were assigned to these vari-  
eties by Mr. Kramer. Both parents are marketed in Germany  
and both are *Calluna vulgaris* or "bud flowering" heathers.  
Cross pollination between bud flowering heathers is difficult  
since the flowers never open, but Mr. Kramer was able to do  
so to create the subject variety and its sister varieties  
'Melanie' and 'Romina'. The resulting seeds were planted in  
1991. From these seedlings 108 plants were selected and  
planted in a field. The subject plant of this disclosure was  
subsequently selected from these 108 seedlings. The subject  
variety has been asexually reproduced at Edewecht, Ger-  
many, from cuttings and subsequent generations have been  
true to form in all respects.

The subject variety produces buds in the fall having a  
unique purple color. The buds do not open into flowers but  
remain in the bud stage through the winter, approximately  
six months, from October to March, in Edewecht, Germany.  
The subject variety has a dense upright globular shape with  
protruding flower shoots which are heavily budded. The  
overall height of the plant at maturity, is approximately 24  
inches with 6-8 inch shoots.

The closest varieties known to the applicant that have  
been publicly disclosed in Europe are 'Romina', a violet-red  
bud flowering Heather also developed by Kurt Kramer. To  
the best of applicant's knowledge, Romina has not been  
brought into the United States.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING**

FIG. 1 shows the subject variety planted in the ground in  
Edewecht, Germany in October showing the color of the bud  
and shaped of the plant.

FIG. 2 shows the subject variety in a pot at about the same  
time period.

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**FIG. 3 shows the shoots and buds of the subject variety.**  
**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW  
VARIETY**

The following is a detailed description of the new variety  
of Heather plant based upon observations of plants grown at  
Edewecht, Germany. Color references are to *The Royal  
Horticultural Society Colour Chart* except where general  
color terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

**PLANT**

Botanical description: *Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull.  
Common description: Broom Heather.  
Form: Woody Shrub, perennial, evergreen.  
Shape: Low, strongly basally branching shrub with very  
dense branching. Habit is generally mounded, with a  
profusion of weakly terminally dominant branches below  
flower spikes which occur at the apices of main branches.  
Height: Approximately 24 inches, including flower spikes,  
at maturity.  
Main stem:  
Length.—Approximately 24 inches, including flower  
spikes, at maturity.  
Color: Dark green 201A in April, tends to get lighter through  
the growing season.  
Branching: Heavily branched until the spike. The spike has  
a plurality of auxiliary verticils of clusters of 2 to 4 buds  
outwardly radiating from the apices of oppositely placed,  
short branches arising out of leaf axils of bilobularly  
attached leaves, with stem pairs on a plane 90° to the  
plane of adjacent pairs.  
Growth: Approximately 8 inches per year, very vigorous;  
ultimate height without spike is approximately 16 inches.  
Foliage: Leaves are oppositely placed, scale-like and bracti-  
olate, sessile, and occur in four rows on stems which are  
essentially square in cross-section.  
Leaf length.—1-2 mm.  
Leaf width.—0.3-1 mm.  
Leaf color.—Color of plant ends in spring — light green  
180A. Color of plant ends in winter — gray green  
200B. Color of main plant in summer — blue green  
188A.

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Flower spikes: Formed at the terminals of main branches, having a plurality of uniformly spaced auxiliary verticils with clusters of 2 to 4, or more, mature buds outwardly radiating from the apex of oppositely placed, short branches which arise out of leaf axils of bilobularly attached bractiolate leaves; stem pairs are on a plane 90° to the plane of adjacent pairs. Length of spikes is normally about 6-8 inches, presenting a profusion of mature buds from base to the progressively bud-forming terminal. The number of buds formed is about average for the species. Pruning: No Pruning is required except to maintain shape. Removal of spikes from the previous season will provide better growth of new spikes.

BUD

Color of bud at full development: Purple 61B-60B. The bud does not open to a flower. It stays a bud during its season. Budding period: 6 months — fall through early spring.

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Bud diameter: Approximately 1/8 inch.  
Bud length: Approximately 1/4 inch.  
Bud shape: Truncated Elliptic.  
Inflorescence: The corolla and reproductive organs of this plant are identical to those of the species. Corolla color — medium to light brown 165C. There are 4 sepals which fade after the first fruit. The plant does not produce seed because the style is covered by the sepals. Reproduction is by cutting.  
What is claimed is:  
1. A new and distinct variety of Heather plant named *Calluna vulgaris* 'Alexandra', substantially as herein shown and described, characterized particularly by its purple flowers which remain as an unopened bud from fall through early spring.

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**FIG.1**





**FIG.2**



**FIG.3**