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Stemkens

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[54] VERBENA PLANT NAMED 'MORENA'

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[52] U.S. Cl. Plt./308

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[56] References Cited
U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

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P.P. 9,085 3/1995 Tachibana et al. Plt./87
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[57] ABSTRACT

A new and distinct variety of Verbena plant, named Morena, characterized particularly as to novelty by large, early-appearing, vivid pink flowers, and a growth habit that is initially semi-erect but later spreading and hanging.

2 Drawing Sheets

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BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

The present invention comprises a new distinct cultivar of Verbena, botanically known as *Verbena hybrida*. The new cultivar is propagated from cuttings resulting from the cross of 'R678' and 'R673'. 'R678' is a pink flowering Verbena having a semi-erect habit. 'R678' is not commercially available and is not known by any synonyms. 'R673' is a violet flowering Verbena having a spreading habit. R673 is not commercially available and is not known by any synonyms. Neither 'R678' or 'R673' has been patented. As a result of this cross the present cultivar was created in 1992 in Enkhuizen, Netherlands and has been repeatedly asexually reproduced by cuttings in Enkhuizen, Netherlands and Sarrians, France over a three year period. It has been found to retain its distinctive characteristics through successive propagations, and this novelty appears to be firmly fixed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

This new Verbena plant is illustrated by the accompanying photographic drawings which show blooms and buds of the plant in full color, the color shown being as true as can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic procedures. Flower and bud color may appear different from actual color due to light refraction.

The illustration on the first page shows a close up of large, vivid pink inflorescences of the plant in full bloom.

The illustration on the second page shows the mature plant exhibiting its characteristic spreading and hanging growth habit.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW CULTIVAR

The following detailed descriptions set forth the distinctive characteristics of this new Verbena. The data which defines these characteristics were collected from asexual reproductions carried out in Enkhuizen, Netherlands. The plant history was taken on 14 week old plants, blossomed under natural light in a greenhouse. Color readings were taken in the greenhouse under ambient light. Color references are to the R.H.S Color Chart of the Royal Horticultural Society of London.

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THE PLANT

Classification:
Botanical.—*Verbena hybrida*.
Parentage:
Female parent.—A seedling named 'R678'.
Pollen parent.—A seedling named 'R673'.
Growth habit: Semi-erect, later spreading.
Plant height: 20–45 cm.
Spreading area of plant: 60–90 cm.
Growth rate: Hanging and vigorous.
Strength: Very good.
Branching character: After pinching 7–9 breaks occur.
Blooming period: From April until November.

THE STEM

Diameter: 1.5–2 mm.
Cross section: Tetragonal.
Anthocyan pigmentation: Absent.
Length of internode: 45–75 mm, depending on the light where the plant is grown.
Pubescence: Some pubescence is present.

THE FOLIAGE

Phyllotaxis: Opposite.
Shape of blade: Cleft to parted.
Texture: Mostly smooth, slightly pubescent.
Length: 20–35 mm.
Width: 25–38 mm.
Depth of incision: 15–25 mm.
Color:
Upper side.—Medium green 141B.
Lower side.—Light green 143A.
Pubescence: Some pubescence is present on both sides of the leaf.
Length of leaf stem: 15–20 mm.

THE BUD

Peduncle length: 30–100 mm, depending on season.
Size:
Diameter.—2 mm.
Length.—8–10 mm.
Shape: Elongated.
Color: Medium green 141B.

Sepals:
Color.—Green 137C.
Form.—Upright.

THE FLOWER

Direction: Ascending.
Diameter: 15–17 mm.
Height: 16–18 mm.
Borne: In a cluster.
Form: Flat and symmetrical.
Cluster: Corymb.
Color: Upper Surface: Vivid Pink 73B, later 73D; Lower surface: Pink 73C, later 73D.
Eye: A very small (1 mm) green-white (155 D) eye is present. Typically three out of the five petals exhibit this green-white at their bases.
Number of petals: 5.
Shape of the petals: Gametopetalous, grown together at the base of the petal. Each petal is heart-shaped at the top.
Size of the petals:
Length.—5–7 mm.
Width.—4–6 mm.
Overlapping of petals: Separate.
Corymb:
Length.—30–60 mm.
Diameter.—20–40 mm.
Calyx: Length of 10–12 mm.
Anthocyan pigmentation of calyx limb: Absent.
No. of flowers per corymb: 30–50.
Flowers in bloom at one time: Maximum 14.
Longevity:
Flower.—4–6 days.
Inflorescence.—17–24 days.
Fragrance: No fragrance.

Reproductive organs: 1 pistil, 5 stamens. Seeds are formed in a very low frequency.

THE ROOTS

Type of roots: Fibrous and adventitious. Roots grow on every part of the stem which contacts the soil, not only at the nodes.

Physiological and ecological characteristics

Good tolerance to heat and cold. Strong resistance to pests and diseases, particularly powdery mildew.

The new Verbena plant described herein is distinct from known Verbena varieties in the characteristics described above and is particularly distinguished by its large, early-appearing, vivid pink flower, and an initially semi-erect growth habit that becomes spreading and hanging as the plant develops.

‘Morena’ is an annual in most climatic zones in the U.S., but may be perennial in zones 9 and 10. ‘Morena’ is related to ‘Silvena’ and ‘Mylena’, claimed in co-pending plant applications 08/826,211 and 08/826,210 respectively. However, whereas ‘Morena’ was derived from the cross of ‘R678’ and ‘R673’, the other two were derived from ‘R670’ and ‘R678’, and the flower color of ‘Morena’ is more vivid pink (73B) than the other two varieties, which are more purple (82A and 78B for ‘Silvena’ and ‘Mylena’ respectively).

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct variety of Verbena plant, substantially as herein illustrated and described, characterized particularly as to novelty by large, early-appearing, vivid pink flowers, and a growth habit that is initially semi-erect but later spreading and hanging.

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