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Yamamoto

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(54) *HYDRANGEA MACROPHYLLA* NAMED
‘YELLOWLEAF’

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patent is extended or adjusted under 35
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new plant variety of *Hydrangea macrophylla* character-
ized by its foliage color, which is bright golden yellow to
chartreuse.

3 Drawing Sheets

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety
of *Hydrangea macrophylla* (Thunb.) Ser., which was dis-
covered as a branch sport in a controlled planting of *Hydran-*
gea macrophylla (unnamed, unpatented) in Shizuoka Pre-
fecture, Japan. The varietal denomination of the new variety
is ‘YELLOWLEAF’.

The genus *Hydrangea* is included in the family Saxi-
fragaceae which comprises about 80 genera and 1,200
species of herbs, shrubs, small trees, woody climbers mostly
temperate in origin. *Hydrangea* comprises approximately 23
species of deciduous or evergreen shrubs and vines origi-
nating in North America, South America and East Asia,
many of which possess desirable ornamental characteristics.
Recent taxonomical treatments sometimes isolate *Hydran-*
gea in a new family, *Hydrangeaceae*.

Hydrangea macrophylla is widespread and common
throughout much of Japan. It generally has opposite, simple
leaves, obovate to elliptic in shape, 10 to 20 cm long and 5
to 15 cm wide. Leaf color ranges from light to dark green,
depending on light intensity and cultural conditions. Leaves
are generally softly pubescent. Flower color is depended
upon the pH level of the soil and the amount of available
aluminum in the soil media. Flowers of *Hydrangea macro-*
phylla are borne in mostly sterile florets, formed in what is
often called a “hortensia” flower.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new variety exhibits golden yellow to chartreuse
foliage throughout the growing season. Asexual reproduc-
tion of the new variety by stem cuttings performed in Tokyo,
Japan; Lewisberry, Pa.; Vacaville, Calif.; and Fulshear, Tex.;
has confirmed that the distinctive characteristics of the new
variety are stable and transmitted to succeeding generations,
and the new variety reproduces true to type.

COMPARISON WITH PLANT

‘YELLOWLEAF’ is distinguished from its parent and all
other varieties of *Hydrangea macrophylla* of which I am
aware by its foliage color, which is bright golden yellow to
chartreuse.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIONS

The accompanying illustrations show specimens of the
new cultivar in photo illustrations as true to color as is
reasonably possible to make in illustrations of this character.
‘YELLOWLEAF’ is shown with pink inflorescence grown
under 75% shade, soil pH 6.4 and water pH of 6.4. Blue
pigmentation of the inflorescence is also possible by
manipulation of the nutrient amendments and pH of the
growing medium.

FIG. 1 shows the distinct yellow foliage coloration;

FIG. 2 illustrates the typical flower form with soil pH of
6.4 and water pH of 6.4; and

FIG. 3 illustrates the plants overall growth habit, the
flower position on the plant, and the golden foliage coloration.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW VARIETY

‘YELLOWLEAF’ has not been observed under all possi-
ble environmental, cultural, and light conditions. The
following observations, descriptions and color readings are
of 3-year-old plants grown in 5-gallon nursery containers
under 75% shade at Vacaville, Calif. In the description, color
references are to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour
Chart (1995) and terminology used in the color descriptions
herein refers to plate numbers in this color chart. Phenotypic
expression may vary with light intensity, cultural, and envi-
ronmental conditions.

Classification:

Botanical.—*Hydrangea macrophylla* (Thunb.) Ser.
‘YELLOWLEAF’.

Parentage.—Branch sport of *Hydrangea macrophylla*
(unnamed, unpatented).

Propagation.—By vegetative cuttings.

Plant:

Size.—Mature plant can grow to a height of about 1
meter.

Habit.—Upright, mound-forming deciduous shrub.

Branching.—Freely on 1-year-old wood.

Leaf:

Shape.—Ovoid.

Base.—Cuneate to obtuse.

Apex.—Acute to broadly acuminate.

Size.—As large as 16 cm long and 10.5 cm wide.

Arrangement.—Opposite.

Margin.—Serrate.

Texture/substance.—Thick; glabrous top and under-side; veins prominent on the under side of the leaf and are furrowed on the leaf surface.

Petioles.—About 3.5 cm long. Color: Near Green Group 142C.

Mature leaf color.—Leaf color varies with intensity of sunlight and cultural conditions, color is generally yellow early in the growing season tending toward chartreuse. Upper side: Ranging from near Yellow Group 7B to 13C. Upper side: From near Green Group 143A to 143C (Shaded by flowers and other leaves). Under side: From near Green Group 143B to 143D (Covered by flowers and other leaves).

Stems:

Thickness.—7 to 10 cm.

Texture.—Smooth with raised lenticels.

Internodes.—About 7.5 cm.

Hardiness.—USDA Zone 6 (−10° F. to 0° F.).

Vigor.—Vigorous growth.

Inflorescence:

Bloom period.—Spring to Summer.

Flower arrangement.—Corymb, from about 100 to 200 florets per inflorescence, both sterile sepalous florets

and fertile asepalous florets borne on the same panicle.

Shape of inflorescence.—Depressed globose.

Flower form.—3 to 5 irregularly, broadly obovate, petaloid sepals, toothed at the apex; sepals occasionally conjoined or overlapped.

Flower size.—About 20 cm.

Sepals.—Within each floret sepals differ in size, but with no clear pattern of size difference noted among florets.

Color.—Sepal color is near 62B at a soil pH of 6.4, however the sepals can be variable in color depending on soil pH and nutritional amendments supplied.

Fragrance.—None noted.

Lastingness of individual blooms.—Inflorescence is ornamental for 3 months; individual flowers of inflorescence last up to 15 days.

Reproductive system:

Gynoecium.—Stamens: None to 5. Pollen: White. Stigma: 1 to 4 per fertile flower.

Fruit.—Capsules, 0 to 4, ovoid to irregularly rounded when fully developed; less than 1 to 2 mm in diameter; near Brown Group 200B.

I claim:

1. A new plant variety of *Hydrangea macrophylla* of the variety substantially as shown and described.

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