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(54) **VERBENA PLANT NAMED 'KIEVERSTAR'**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./308**

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(58) **Field of Search** **Plt./308**

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(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of Verbena plant named 'Kieverstar', characterized by its compact, mounded and outwardly spreading plant habit; freely branching habit; dark green leaves; and white and dark purple bi-colored flowers.

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(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **A01H 5/00**

1 Drawing Sheet

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BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION/CULTIVAR DESIGNATION

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Verbena hybrida cultivar 'Kieverstar'.

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new cultivar, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Colors in the photograph differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new Verbena.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present Invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of Verbena plant, botanically known as *Verbena hybrida*, and hereinafter referred to by the name 'Kieverstar'.

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'Kieverstar' grown in a 15-cm container for about 17 weeks.

The new Verbena was discovered by the Inventor in 1997 as a naturally-occurring branch mutation of an unnamed *Verbena hybrida* seedling selection in a greenhouse in Venhuizen, The Netherlands. The new Verbena was selected by the Inventor on the basis of its unique flower color and compact growth habit.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet comprises a close-up view of typical developing inflorescences, upper and lateral surfaces of typical inflorescences, and upper and lower surfaces of typical leaves of 'Kieverstar'.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal cuttings taken in a controlled environment in Venhuizen, The Netherlands, since the winter of 1998, has shown that the unique features of this new Verbena are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'Kieverstar'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'Kieverstar' as a new and distinct cultivar:

The cultivar 'Kieverstar' has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity, water status, and fertilizer rates without, however, any variance in genotype. The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe plants grown in Lompoc, Calif., under commercial practice during the summer and autumn in a polycarbonate-covered greenhouse with day temperatures about 24 to 29° C., night temperatures about 16 to 18° C. and light levels about 5,000 to 9,000 foot-candles. Unrooted cuttings were directly planted in 15-cm containers and grown for about 17 weeks and pinched twice. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

1. Compact, mounded and outwardly spreading plant habit.

2. Freely branching habit.

3. Dark green leaves; densely foliated.

4. White and dark purple bi-colored flowers.

Plants of the new Verbena differ primarily from plants of the parent in flower color and plant habit.

Botanical classification: *Verbena hybrida* cultivar 'Kieverstar'.

Parentage: Naturally-occurring branch mutation of an unnamed *Verbena hybrida* seedling selection.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—Summer: About 14 days at 22° C. Winter: About 21 days at 22° C.

Plants of the new Verbena can be compared to plants of the cultivar 'Kievertriviok', disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,970. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Lompoc, Calif., plants of the new Verbena were not as upright, had smaller flowers and had fewer flowers than plants of the cultivar 'Kievertriviok'. In addition, plants of the new Verbena and the cultivar 'Kievertriviok' differ slightly in flower color.

Time to produce a rooted cutting or liner.—Summer: About 21 days at 22° C. Winter: About 24 days at 22° C.

Root description.—Fine, fibrous, white in color.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

General appearance.—Compact, mounded and outwardly spreading plant habit. Appropriate for 15-cm and larger containers.

Growth and branching habit.—Vigorous and freely branching with about 8 lateral branches, dense and bushy growth. Pinching, that is, removal of the terminal apices, enhances branching with lateral branches potentially forming at every node.

Crop time.—About 13 to 17 weeks are required to produce a finished flowering plant from planting an unrooted cutting in a 15-cm pot.

Plant height.—About 14 cm.

Plant diameter or spread.—About 58 cm.

Lateral branches.—Length: About 32 cm. Diameter: About 4 mm. Internode length: About 3.5 cm. Texture: Pubescent. Color: 144B.

Foliage description.—Leaves simple, opposite; generally symmetrical. Quantity: Densely foliated, about 24 leaves per lateral branch. Length: About 4.5 cm. Width: About 2.8 cm. Shape: Deltoid. Apex: Broadly acute. Base: Acute. Margin: Irregularly crenate. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Coarse, pubescent. Venation pattern: Pinnate, netted. Color: Young and fully expanded foliage, upper surface: 147A; venation, 147C. Young and fully expanded foliage, lower surface: 147B; venation, 147D. Petiole: Length: About 1 mm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Color: 147D.

Flower description:

Flower type and habit.—Single upright salverform white and dark purple bi-colored flowers with light green to white “eye” arranged on terminal racemes, flowers sessile. Freely flowering with about 24 flowers per raceme. Inflorescences positioned above and beyond the foliage. Flowers last about three to four days under greenhouse conditions. Flowers persistent. Flowers not fragrant.

Flowering season.—In the garden, flowering is continuous from spring until fall.

Flower size.—Diameter: About 2 cm. Height: About 2.4 cm. Tube length: About 2 cm. Throat diameter: About 2 mm.

Flower buds.—Rate of opening, from showing color to fully open flower: About 1 to 2 days. Length, at stage of showing color: About 1.8 cm. Diameter, at stage of showing color: About 4 mm. Shape: Tubular. Color: 83C.

Petals.—Quantity/arrangement: Five per flower fused at base. Lobe length: About 9 mm. Lobe width: About 8 mm. Shape: Rounded. Apex: Emarginate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Velvety, smooth. Color: When opening, upper surface: Ground color, 155C, covered with random flecks, 77A to 83A. When opening, lower surface: Ground color, 155C, covered with random flecks, 79C to 79D. Fully opened, upper surface: Ground color, 155C, covered with random flecks, 83A to 83B. With subsequent development, ground color, 155C, covered with random flecks, 86B to 86C. Fully opened, lower surface: Ground color, 155C, covered with random flecks, 83B to 83C. Throat: 144D. Tube: 155C.

Sepals.—Quantity/arrangement: Five, fused into a tube. Calyx length: About 1.2 cm. Calyx diameter: About 2 mm. Shape: Elongated. Apex: Acute. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Coarse, pubescent. Color, upper surface: 138C. Color, lower surface: 138B.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity: Four. Anther shape: Ovoid. Anther length: About 1 mm. Anther color: 144C. Pollen amount: Scarce. Pollen color: 150C. Pistils: Quantity: One. Pistil length: About 1.8 cm. Stigma shape: Bi-lobed. Stigma color: 144C. Style length: About 1.6 cm. Style color: 144D. Ovary color: 144C.

Seed/fruit.—Seed and fruit production has not been observed.

Disease/pest resistance: Plants of the new Verbena have not been observed to be resistant to pathogens and pests common to Verbena.

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new Verbena have been observed to be tolerant to temperatures ranging from 2 to 40° C.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of Verbena plant named ‘Kieverstar’, as illustrated and described.

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