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Hanes

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(54) **VERBENA PLANT NAMED 'ESCA RED'**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A verbena cultivar particularly distinguished by red colored flowers, vigorous growth and trailing habit.

1 Drawing Sheet

GENUS AND SPECIES

Verbena hybrida.

VARIETY DENOMINATION

'Esca Red'.

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of verbena, botanically known as *Verbena hybrida,* and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name 'Lan Esca Red'. The new cultivar is asexually reproduced from vegetative cuttings and tissue culture resulting from the cross of the seed/pod parent 98-520-1, an unnamed and unpatented deep pink proprietary line and the pollen parent 'Temari Red' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,311), a commercial line.

'Esca Red' is a product of a planned breeding program intended to create new verbena cultivars with red colored flowers, dark green foliage, vigorous growth and trailing habit.

The new cultivar was created in 1999 in Gilroy, Calif. and has been asexually reproduced repeatedly by vegetative cuttings and tissue culture in Gilroy, Calif. over a two year period. It has also been trialed at Gilroy, Calif.; Alberta, Canada, Litchfield, Mich. and Andijk, The Netherlands. The present invention has been found to retain its distinctive characteristics through successive propagations; and this novelty is firmly fixed.

DESCRIPTION OF PHOTOGRAPH

This new verbena plant is illustrated by the accompanying photograph which shows blooms, buds, and foliage of the plant in full color, the colors shown being as true as can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic procedures.

The drawing shows overall plant habit and the mature inflorescence.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW CULTIVAR

The following detailed descriptions set forth the distinctive characteristics of 'Esca Red'. The data which defines these characteristics were collected from asexual reproductions carried out in Alberta Canada. The plant history was

taken on 11 week old plants grown in 4 inch pots, blossomed under natural light in a greenhouse and color readings were taken in the greenhouse in Alberta Canada. Color references are primarily to The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society of London (R.H.S.).

THE PLANT

Classification:
Botanical.—Verbena hybrida.
Commercial.—Verbena.
Form: Low trailing annual, decumbent.
Growth and branching habit: Vigorous growing, moderate basal branching; low trailing habit.
Height: From soil level to top of blooms: Approximately 8 cm.
Width: Approximately 80 cm.
Time to produce a finished flowering plant: 10 weeks.
Outdoor plant performance: Typical bedding plant culture, full sun in the garden, hanging baskets or container plants.
Time to initiate roots: Approximately 4 days in the greenhouse.
Time to develop roots: Approximately 7 days in the greenhouse.
Root description: Fibrous, fleshy, white.

THE LEAVES

Length: 3.1–4.6 cm.
Width: 2.4–3.9 cm.
Leaf blade shape: Ovate-lanceolate, irregular lobing near base.
Leaf margin: Irregular, serrately and crenately incised.
Apex aspect: Obtuse or sharp.
Base aspect: Truncate.
Foliage color: Upper surface — Yellow-green RHS 147A; Lower surface is yellow-green RHS 147B.
Texture: Moderately hairy.
Venation: Pinnatifid, pubescent.
Venation color: Upper surface is yellow-green RHS 147B; lower surface is yellow-green RHS 147C.
Petiole length: 7 mm.
Petiole diameter: 2 mm.
Petiole color: Upper surface is yellow-green RHS 147C; lower surface is yellow-green RHS 145C.

THE STEM

Length: 17–36 cm.
Diameter: 2.0–3.0 mm.
Internode length: 3.4–5.7 cm.
Color: Upper surface is yellow-green RHS 144A; lower surface is yellow-green RHS 144A–B.
Texture: Pubescent.
Stem anthocyanin: Weak to medium anthocyanin on stem distributed in irregular blotches.

THE BUD

Shape: Linear.
Diameter: 1–3 mm.
Length: 12–13 mm.
Color at tight bud: Red RHS 53A.

THE FLOWER

Blooming habit: Continuous throughout the growing season.
Inflorescence type: Spike.
Spikes per plant: 15–22.
Spike diameter: Approximately 5.5 cm.
Spike depth: Approximately 4.0 cm.
Peduncle length: 4.0–7.6 cm.
Peduncle diameter: 2 mm.
Peduncle color: Yellow-green RHS 146B.
Peduncle texture: Moderately pubescent.
Flower color: Upper petal surface is red RHS 45B; Lower petal surface is red RHS 46C; throat hairs red-purple RHS N66A.
Floret form: Salverform; sessile on spikes.
Floret (limb) diameter: Approximately 19 mm.
Corolla tube length: Approximately 18 mm.
Number florets per spike: 25–40 (closed to fully open florets).
Number of petals: Gamopetalous, five lobed.
Petal size:
Length of one lobe.—8 mm.
Width of one lobe.—8 mm.
Petal lobe shape: Obcordate.
Petal apex shape: Emarginate.
Petal base shape: Fused.
Petal margin: Entire.
Petal texture: Smooth with fine pubescence.
Sepals: Five sepals whose margins are fused to each other along their length with a transparent membrane of less than 1 mm in width with one smaller sepal (7 mm) attached to the base of the calyx.
Calyx length: Approximately 12 mm.
Calyx width: Approximately 5 mm.
Calyx shape: Linear.
Calyx apex: Acute.
Calyx color: Yellow-green RHS 146B.
Lastingness of individual blooms: One week.
Fragrance: None.

THE REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Stamens: Anthers and filaments fused to upper half of corolla tube; four anthers with two pollen sacs per anther.
Pollen amount and color: Moderate, yellow RHS 4C.
Pistil: One style approximately 15 mm; transparent to yellow RHS 1D. throughout length with yellow-green RHS 144C near tip, slightly curved at the tip with one stigma yellow-green RHS 144A.
Fruit seed set: Does not freely set seed but can produce 4 narrow nutlets, approximately 4 mm long; colored grey-brown RHS 199D and enclosed in the dried calyx.

DISEASE AND INSECT RESISTANCE

Tolerant to mildew.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTAL CULTIVARS

When the instant plant is compared to male parent 'Temari Bright Red' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,311) the 'Esca Red' leaves are shorter and narrower than that of 'Temari Bright Red'. The flower diameter of 'Esca Red' smaller than 'Temari Bright Red'. The flower color on the upper side of 'Temari Bright Red' is a little brighter than 'Esca Red'. Additionally, 'Esca Red' has no petal markings like 'Temari Bright Red' does.

When 'Esca Red' is compared to female parent 98-520-1, 'Esca Red' has a red flower and 98-520-1 has a deep pink flower. 'Esca Red' is a larger more vigorous plant than 98-520-1 and 'Esca Red' is earlier to flower than 98-520-1.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of verbena as shown and described herein.

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