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Heuger

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(54) ***HELLEBORUS* PLANT NAMED 'HGC GREEN CORSICAN'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Helleborus niger*×*H. argutifolius***
Varietal Denomination: **HGC Green Corsican**

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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.

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(22) Filed: **Jun. 28, 2004**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./263**
(58) **Field of Search** Plt./263

(56) **References Cited**

PUBLICATIONS

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Seyring, M. In vitro cloning of *Helleborus niger.* Plant Cell Reports 20 (10): p 895–900 Mar. 2002 (Abstract).*

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Helleborus* plant named 'HGC Green Corsican', characterized by its compact and mounded plant habit; dark green-colored leaves; and white-colored flowers.

1 Drawing Sheet

Botanical classification/cultivar designation: *Helleborus niger*×*H. argutifolius* cultivar HGC Green Corsican.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present Invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Helleborus* plant, botanically known as *Helleborus niger*×*H. argutifolius,* and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name HGC Green Corsican.

The new *Helleborus* is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Glandorf, Germany. The objective of the breeding program was to create new *Helleborus* cultivars with a good plant habit, that flower for a long period of time, and have attractive flower coloration.

The new *Helleborus* originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in January, 1999 in Glandorf, Germany of an unnamed seedling of *Helleborus niger,* not patented, as the female, or seed, parent with an unnamed seedling of *Helleborus argutifolius,* not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Helleborus* was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled environment in Glandorf, Germany.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by divisions at Glandorf, Germany since March, 2001, has shown that the unique features of this new *Helleborus* are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the cultivar HGC Green Corsican have not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature and light level without, however, any variance in genotype.

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

1. Compact and mounded plant habit.
2. Dark green-colored leaves.
3. White-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Helleborus* have less leaf serration and flower about two months later than plants of the female parent. Compared to plants of the male parent, plants of the new *Helleborus* have less leaf serration, flower about one month earlier and differ in flower coloration.

Plants of the new *Helleborus* can be compared to the *Helleborus niger* cultivar HGC Jericho, disclosed in U.S. Plant patent application Ser. No. 10/878,420. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Glandorf, Germany, plants of the new *Helleborus* differed from plants of the cultivar HGC Jericho in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Helleborus* were taller than plants of the cultivar HGC Jericho.
2. Plants of the new *Helleborus* had larger leaves and longer leaf petioles than plants of the cultivar HGC Jericho.
3. Plants of the new *Helleborus* were more freely flowering than plants of the cultivar HGC Jericho.
4. Plants of the new *Helleborus* had longer peduncles than plants of the cultivar HGC Jericho.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

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 photographs may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the actual colors of the new *Helleborus.*

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'HGC Green Corsican'.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet is a close-up view of a typical flower of 'HGC Green Corsican'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs, following observations and measurements describe plants grown in Glandorf, Germany, in a glass-covered greenhouse and under commercial production practices during the winter. Plants were grown in 15-cm containers and were about six months old when the photographs and description were taken. During the production of the plants, day temperatures were about 18° C. and night temperatures were about 14° C. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 1995 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Helleborus niger*×*H. argutifolius* cultivar HGC Green Corsican.

Parentage:

Female parent.—Unnamed seedling of *Helleborus niger,* not patented.

Male parent.—Unnamed seedling of *Helleborus argutifolius,* not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By divisions.

Time to initiate roots, winter.—About 40 days at 12° C.

Time to produce a rooted plant, winter.—About six months at 12 to 15° C.

Root description.—About 3 to 15 thick fleshy roots; not branching; white to brown in color.

Plant description:

Plant form/habit.—Compact and mounded plant habit; moderately vigorous growth habit. Leaves basal. Single flower form.

Plant height.—About 25 cm.

Plant width (*spread*).—About 56 cm.

Foliage description.—Arrangement: Basal; palmately compound with three to five leaflets per leaf. Leaflet length: About 6 to 14 cm. Leaflet width: About 3 to 7 cm. Leaflet shape: Lanceolate; pedate. Leaflet apex: Acuminate. Leaflet base: Acute. Leaflet margin: Serrate. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Venation pattern: Reticulate. Color: Developing leaflets, upper surface: Closest to 137D. Developing leaflets, lower surface: Closest to 146D. Fully expanded leaflets, upper surface: Between 137A and 147A. Fully expanded leaflets, lower surface: Closest to 146B. Venation, upper surface: 146C. Venation, lower surface: 146C overlain with 183A. Petiole: Length: About 15 cm. Diameter: About 5 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 144B to 144C slightly overlain with 183A.

Flower description:

Flower type/habit.—Single rounded flowers arranged singly on mostly upright cymes; flowers face upright to outwardly; petals inconspicuous. Freely flowering habit with about 25 flowers developing per plant over the flowering period.

Fragrance.—Slightly fragrant.

Natural flowering season.—Intermittent flowering from December to February in Glandorf, Germany. Flowers persistent.

Postproduction longevity.—Flowers last about 15 days on the plant.

Flower buds.—Height: About 2 cm. Diameter: About 1 cm. Shape: Ovoid. Color: 145D.

Flowers.—Diameter: About 8 cm. Depth: About 2 cm.

Petals.—Size: Minute, obscured by reproductive organs; forming inconspicuous nectaries.

Sepals.—Quantity/arrangement per flower: Typically five in a single whorl. Length: About 3.9 cm. Width: About 3.5 cm. Shape: Broadly ovate. Apex: Broadly acute. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous; satiny. Color: Developing sepals, upper and lower surfaces: 155A; towards the base, 145D. Fully expanded sepals, upper and lower surfaces: 155A; towards the base, 145D. Color becoming closer to 145D with development.

Peduncles.—Length: About 12 to 20 cm. Diameter: About 6 to 8 mm. Orientation: Upright. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 145C overlain with 184C.

Pedicels.—Length: About 2 to 5 cm. Diameter: About 2 to 3 mm. Orientation: Angled outwardly. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 144D.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity per flower: About 75. Anther shape: Oblong. Anther length: About 1 to 2 mm. Anther color: 153D. Pollen amount: None observed. Pistils: Quantity per flower: About four. Pistil length: About 2 cm. Stigma shape: Tuberculate. Stigma color: 155D to 145C. Style length: About 1.2 cm. Style color: 145D. Ovary color: 145C.

Seed/fruit.—Seed and fruit development have not been observed.

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

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new *Helleborus* have been observed to tolerate temperatures from −10 to 36° C.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Helleborus* plant named 'HGC Green Corsican', as illustrated and described.

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