US00PP16295P2

(12) **United States Plant Patent**
Westhoff

(10) **Patent No.: US PP16,295 P2**
(45) **Date of Patent: Feb. 28, 2006**

(54) ***LOBELIA* PLANT NAMED 'WESLOWHITE'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Lobelia erinus***
Varietal Denomination: **Weslowhite**

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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 104 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **10/805,583**

(22) Filed: **Mar. 20, 2004**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01H 5/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./263**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./263
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Lobelia* plant named 'Weslowhite', characterized by its cascading plant habit; freely branching habit with short internodes; dense and bushy plant form; continuously and freely flowering habit; densely pubescent leaves; white-colored flowers; and relatively tolerant to high temperatures.

1 Drawing Sheet

Botanical classification/cultivar designation: *Lobelia erinus* cultivar Weslowhite.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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

The new *Lobelia* is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Südlohn, Germany. The objective of the breeding program was to develop new *Lobelia* cultivars with continuous flowering, white flower color and tolerance to high temperatures.

The new *Lobelia* originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in 2002 of a proprietary selection of *Lobelia erinus* identified as code number 01P050, not patented, as the female, or seed, parent with the *Lobelia erinus* cultivar Weslobigblue, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,634, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Lobelia* was discovered and selected by the Inventor from within the resultant progeny from the above-mentioned cross-pollination in a controlled environment in Südlohn, Germany in 2002.

Asexual reproduction since 2002 of the new cultivar by terminal cuttings in a controlled environment in Südlohn, Germany, has shown that the unique features of this new *Lobelia* are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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

1. Cascading plant habit.
2. Freely branching habit with short internodes; dense and bushy plant form.
3. Continuously and freely flowering habit.
4. Densely pubescent leaves.
5. White-colored flowers.
6. Relatively tolerant to high temperatures.

Plants of the new *Lobelia* have larger flowers than plants of the female parent, a proprietary selection identified as code number 01P050. In addition, plants of the new *Lobelia* produce flowers that have colored markings on the petals whereas plants of the female parent selection do not have colored markings on the petals. Plants of the new *Lobelia* have foliage with dense pubescence compared to the smooth foliage of plants of the male parent, the cultivar Weslobigblue. In addition, plants of the new *Lobelia* differ from plants of the cultivar Weslobigblue in leaf shape and flower color.

Plants of the new *Lobelia* differ primarily from plants of the cultivar Weslolav, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,434, primarily in flower color.

Plants of the cultivar Weslowhite can be compared to the cultivar Weslowei, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,708. However in side-by-side comparisons conducted in Südlohn, Germany, plants of the cultivar Weslowhite and the cultivar Weslowei differed in the following characteristics:

1. Leaves and stems of plants of the new *Lobelia* were more pubescent than plants of the cultivar Weslowei.
2. Plants of the new *Lobelia* flowered more continuously than plants of the cultivar Weslowei.
3. Flowers of the new *Lobelia* were shaped differently than flowers of the cultivar Weslowei.
4. Plants of the new *Lobelia* had flowers with different color markings than flowers of plants of the cultivar Weslowei.
5. Plants of the new *Lobelia* were more tolerant to high temperatures than plants of the cultivar Weslowei.

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 *Lobelia*.

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a close-up view of a typical individual flower of 'Weslowhite'.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet comprises side view of a typical plant of 'Weslowhite' grown in a hanging basket container.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

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

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2001 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. Plants used for the description were grown in a glass-covered greenhouse and conditions that closely approximate commercial production conditions during the spring and summer in Südlohn, Germany. Plants used for the above-mentioned photographs and following description were grown as one plant per 12-cm container or three plants per 25-cm hanging basket container. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 20 to 25° C. and night temperatures ranged from 16 to 18° C. Plants were pinched once during the production period by removing about 1 to 2 cm of the uppermost apical growing tip. Plants were about 20 weeks from planting when the photographs and description were taken.

Botanical classification: *Lobelia erinus* cultivar Weslowhite.

Parentage:

Female parent.—Proprietary selection of *Lobelia erinus* identified as code number 01P050, not patented.

Male parent.—*Lobelia erinus* cultivar Weslobigblue, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,634.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—About 18 to 21 days at 20° C.

Time to develop roots.—About 20 to 28 days at 20° C.

Root description.—Fine, fibrous and well-branched.

Plant description:

Plant form/habit.—Cascading flowering plants with white-colored flowers. Lateral shoots outwardly spreading; plants uniform with dense foliage. Foliage and stems are very pubescent. Freely branching with lateral branches forming at every node; dense and bushy plant habit. Pinching plants will enhance branching. Moderately vigorous growth habit.

Usage.—Appropriate for hanging baskets, window boxes and patio containers.

Plant height (*soil level to top of plant plane*).—About 18.5 cm.

Plant length (*soil level to lateral branches apices*).—About 70 cm.

Plant diameter.—About 35 to 40 cm.

Lateral branch description.—Length: About 17 cm. Diameter: About 1.7 mm. Internode length: About 1.5 cm. Texture: Densely pubescent. Color: 146A and 146B.

Foliage description.—Arrangement: Alternate; simple. Basal leaves: Length: About 4.6 cm. Width: About 3.2 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Rounded. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Crenate. Petiole length: About 1.6 mm. Mid-plant leaves: Length: About 3.6 cm. Width: About 2.3 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Rounded. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Nearly entire. Petiole length: About 9.5 mm. Apical leaves: Length: About 2.6 cm. Width: About 5 mm. Shape: Oblanceolate to linear. Apex: Acute. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Entire. Petiole length: Petioles not observed. Texture, all leaves, upper and lower surfaces: Densely pubescent. Color, all leaves: Developing foliage, upper surface: 147A. Developing foliage, lower surface: 147B. Fully developed foliage, upper surface: 147A; venation, 147B. Fully developed foliage, lower surface: 147B to 147C; venation, 147B.

Flower description:

Flower type and habit.—Flowers arranged singly at lateral apices. Flowers held mostly outwardly. Flowers persistent. Older flowers are overgrown by new flowers and foliage. Freely and continuously flowering. Flowers not fragrant.

Flower shape.—Tubular with three larger lower petals and two upright petals.

Natural flowering season.—Spring until frost in the autumn.

Flower longevity on the plant.—Longevity of individual flowers is highly dependent on weather conditions; typically three to ten days.

Flower size.—Diameter: About 1.8 cm. Depth (height): About 2.2 cm. Tube length: About 1 cm. Throat diameter, distal end: About 4.7 mm. Tube diameter, proximal end: About 2.1 mm.

Flower buds.—Length: About 1.45 cm. Diameter: About 2.6 mm. Shape: Oblong. Color: Base and mid-section, 145D; towards the apex, 145C.

Petals.—Arrangement: Single whorl of five petals, fused; three larger lower petals and two smaller upper petals. Three lower petals: Shape: Obovate. Length, above throat: About 1.3 cm. Width: About 5.5 mm. Two upper petals: Shape: Spatulate. Length, above throat: About 7 mm. Width: About 2 mm. Upper and lower petals: Apex: Cuspidate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, satiny. Color: When opening, upper and lower surfaces: 155B. Fully opened, upper and lower surfaces: 155C. Throat: 69C to 69D; stripes, 144B, and spots, 76A. Tube: 69C to 69D; stripes, 144A.

Sepals.—Arrangement: Single whorl of five sepals, star-shaped calyx. Length: About 8 mm. Width: About 1 mm. Shape: Elliptic. Apex: Acute. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Densely pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 147A.

Peduncles.—Appearance: Wiry, flexible. Length: About 2.8 cm. Diameter: About 6 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent. Color: 137A.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity per flower: About five, fused. Anther length: About 2.6 mm. Anther diameter: About 1.8 mm. Anther texture: Pubescent. Anther color: 79A to 84D. Pollen amount: Moderate. Pollen color: 8A. Pistils: Quantity per flower: One. Pistil length: About 1.1 cm. Stigma shape: Two-parted, ovate. Stigma texture: Pubescent. Stigma color, immature: 77B. Stigma color, mature: 77B. Style length: About 6 mm. Style color: 144A. Ovary color: 137B and 137C.

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

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

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new *Lobelia* have been observed to tolerate temperatures ranging from 2 to 30° C.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Lobelia* plant named 'Weslowhite', as illustrated and described.

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