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Oliver

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(54) **HEUCHERA PLANT NAMED ‘ROYAL VELVET’**

(50) Latin Name: *Heuchera*×*hybrida*
Varietal Denomination: **Royal Velvet**

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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 63 days.

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(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 *Heuchera* plant named ‘Royal Velvet’, characterized by its full, densely foliated and uniformly mounded plant habit; purple and bronze-colored foliage; numerous white-colored flowers arranged on erect panicles; and excellent garden performance.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical classification/cultivar designation: *Heuchera*×*hybrida* cultivar Royal Velvet.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Heuchera* plant, botanically known as *Heuchera*×*hybrida* and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘Royal Velvet’.

The new *Heuchera* is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Scottdale, Pa. The objective of the breeding program is to create new *Heuchera* cultivars having good plant vigor, dense and uniform plant habit, and showy and attractive flower and leaf coloration.

The new *Heuchera* was discovered by the Inventor in a controlled environment in Scottdale, Pa., from seedling progeny from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in May, 2000, of the *Heuchera*×*hybrida* Shenandoah Mountain, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,357, as the female, or seed, parent with a proprietary selection of *Heuchera*×*hybrida* identified as code number H99-9B, not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Heuchera* was selected by the Inventor in May, 2001. The selection of this plant was based on its desirable flower and foliage coloration.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Heuchera* by cuttings in a controlled environment in Scottdale, Pa., since May, 2002, has shown that the unique features of this new *Heuchera* are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The cultivar Royal Velvet has 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.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of ‘Royal Velvet’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Royal Velvet’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Heuchera*:

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1. Full, densely foliated and uniformly mounded plant habit.
2. Purple and bronze-colored foliage.
3. Numerous white-colored flowers arranged on erect panicles.
4. Excellent garden performance.

Plants of the new *Heuchera* can be compared to plants of the female parent, the cultivar Shenandoah Mountain. In side-by-side comparisons conducted by the Inventor in Scottdale, Pa., plants of the new *Heuchera* differed from plants of the cultivar Shenandoah Mountain in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Heuchera* and the cultivar Shenandoah Mountain differed in leaf shape and coloration.
2. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had larger flowers than plants of the cultivar Shenandoah Mountain.
3. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had shorter inflorescences than plants of the cultivar Shenandoah Mountain.

Plants of the new *Heuchera* can be compared to plants of the male parent, the *Heuchera*×*hybrida* selection identified as code number H99-9B. In side-by-side comparisons conducted by the Inventor in Scottdale, Pa., plants of the new *Heuchera* differed from plants of the male parent selection in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Heuchera* and the male parent selection differed in leaf shape and coloration.
2. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had larger petals than plants of the male parent selection.
3. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had pubescent leaf petioles and peduncles whereas plants of the male parent selection had smooth leaf petioles and peduncles.

Plants of the new *Heuchera* can also be compared to plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,066. In side-by-side comparisons conducted by the Inventor in Scottdale, Pa., plants of the new *Heuchera* differed from plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Heuchera* and the cultivar Silver Scrolls differed in leaf shape and coloration.
2. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had larger leaves than plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls.

3. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had larger flowers than plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls.
4. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had shorter inflorescences than plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls.
5. Plants of the new *Heuchera* had pubescent leaf petioles and peduncles whereas plants of the cultivar Silver Scrolls had mostly smooth leaf petioles and peduncles.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new *Heuchera*, 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 colors of the new *Heuchera*.

The photograph on the first sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical one-year old flowering plant of 'Royal Velvet'.

The photograph on the second sheet is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of 'Royal Velvet'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 1995 Edition, except where generally terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. The aforementioned photographs and following detailed botanical description describe plants grown in Scottsdale, Pa. in a glass-covered greenhouse and under cultural conditions which approximate commercial practice. Plants were grown as single plants in one-gallon containers and were about one year old. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 15 to 26° C. and night temperatures ranged from 5 to 15° C.

Botanical classification: *Heuchera*×*hybrida* cultivar Royal Velvet.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—*Heuchera*×*hybrida* Shenandoah Mountain, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,357.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Heuchera*×*hybrida* identified as code number H99-9B, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—Summer: About 15 days at 23° C. Winter: About 21 days at 17° C.

Time to produce a rooted cutting.—Summer: About 45 days at 23° C. Winter: About 60 days at 17° C.

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

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Appearance.—Perennial; basal rosette plant habit with leaves developing from the base; densely foliated; full, mounded and uniform plant habit with upright panicles with white-colored flowers. Vigorous growth habit.

Plant size.—Height, soil level to top of foliar plane: About 20 cm. Height, soil level to top of panicles: About 45 cm. Diameter or spread: About 40 cm.

Foliage description.—Arrangement: Basal rosette, simple. Length: About 8 cm. Width: About 7.5 cm. Shape: Rounded cordate; seven-lobed. Apex: Broadly obtuse, lobed. Base: Auriculate. Margin:

Crenate with fine ciliation. Texture, upper surface: Slightly rough; glabrous. Texture, lower surface: Slightly rough; pubescent. Venation pattern: Palmate, reticulate. Color: Developing and fully expanded leaves, upper surface: 184B underlain with 187B; areas of 196B. Developing and fully expanded leaves, lower surface: 183B. Venation, upper surface: 184B. Venation, lower surface: 183B. Petiole: Length: About 13 cm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 187C underlain with 138D.

Flower description:

Appearance/arrangement.—Single campanulate flowers arranged on numerous erect panicles; about 100 to 150 flowers and flower buds per flowering stem. Flowers face mostly outward to slightly downward. Flowering continuous. Flowers persistent. Flowers not fragrant.

Time of flowering.—Plants flower from May through June in Scottsdale, Pa.; flowering continuous during this period.

Inflorescence longevity.—Individual inflorescences last about one week on the plant.

Inflorescence size.—Length: About 45 cm. Diameter: About 6.5 cm.

Flower size.—Diameter: About 6 mm. Depth (height): About 9 mm.

Flower buds.—Height: About 5.5 mm. Diameter: About 3.5 mm. Shape: Globular. Color, at stage of showing color: 57C.

Sepals.—Quantity/arrangement: Five sepals; radially symmetrical and fused at base. Calyx length: About 7 mm. Calyx diameter: About 6 mm. Shape: Elongate. Apex: Obtuse. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Color, upper surface: Close to 155D. Color, lower surface: Close to 155D shaded with 57D; pubescence, 57D.

Petals.—Quantity/arrangement: Five minute petals; radially symmetrical. Length: About 5 mm. Width: About 1.6 mm. Shape: Spatulate; twisted. Apex: Acute. Margin: Dentate. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth. Color, upper surface: Close to 155D. Color, lower surface: Close to 155D.

Flower bracts.—Length: About 3.5 mm. Width: About 0.8 mm. Shape: Lanceolate. Apex: Acute. Margin: Serrate. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 187B.

Peduncle.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Mostly upright. Length: About 28 cm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Texture: Pubescent. Color: 187B.

Pedicels.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: About 60° from vertical. Length: About 3 mm. Diameter: About 0.2 mm. Texture: Pubescent. Color: 198C underlain with 187B.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Stamen number: Five per flower. Anther shape: Oval. Anther length: About 0.4 mm. Anther width: About 0.3 mm. Anther color: 8A. Amount of pollen: Moderate. Pollen color: 8A. Gynoecium: Pistil number: Two per flower. Pistil length: About 6 mm. Stigma shape: Round. Stigma color: 157D. Style length: About 4 mm. Style color: 157D. Ovary color: 157B.

Seed.—Size: About 0.3 mm by 0.6 mm. Color: Close to 202A.

Disease/pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to *Heuchera* has not been observed on plants grown under commercial conditions.

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Weather/temperature tolerance: Plants of the new *Heuchera* have been observed to have excellent garden performance. Plants of the new *Heuchera* have demonstrated good tolerance to rain, wind, night temperatures as low as -35° C., and day temperatures as high as 45° C.

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It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Heuchera* plant named ‘Royal Velvet’, as illustrated and described.

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