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

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(54) ***OSTEOSPERMUM* PLANT NAMED 'BALSERLABLI'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Osteospermum ecklonis***
Varietal Denomination: **Balserlabli**

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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 184 days.

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./360**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./360
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Osteospermum* plant named 'Balserlabli' characterized by its single inflorescence form with lavender-colored "spoon" shaped ray florets and violet-blue-colored disc florets, small dark green-colored foliage, freely branching character, and compact, upright, and mounded growth habit.

1 Drawing Sheet

Latin name of the genus and species of plant claimed: *Osteospermum ecklonis*.
Variety denomination: 'Balserlabli'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Osteospermum* plant botanically known as *Osteospermum ecklonis* and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name 'Balserlabli'.

The new *Osteospermum* originated in a controlled breeding program in Arroyo Grande, Calif., during August 2001. The objective of the breeding program was the development of *Osteospermum* cultivars that are freely branching, have a compact and upright growth habit, are freely flowering, and have unique inflorescence coloration.

The new cultivar originated from the open-pollination of the proprietary breeding selection PAS 1899, not patented, characterized by its dark lavender-colored ray florets, dark green-colored variegated, medium to large-sized foliage, elliptic shaped ray florets, and limited branching habit. Seed from the above stated open-pollination was germinated and grown to maturity. A single flowering plant within the progeny was discovered and selected by the inventor during May 2002 in a controlled environment at Arroyo Grande, Calif.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal stem cuttings taken since May 2002 at West Chicago, Ill. has demonstrated that the new cultivar reproduces true to type, with all the characteristics as herein described, firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of such asexual propagation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following characteristics of the new cultivar have been repeatedly observed and can be used to distinguish 'Balserlabli' as a new and distinct cultivar of *Osteospermum* plant:

1. Single inflorescence form with lavender-colored "spoon" shaped ray florets and violet-blue-colored disc florets.
2. Small dark green-colored foliage with no variegation.
3. Freely branching character.
4. Compact, upright, and mounded growth habit.

Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the female parent primarily in inflorescence color, leaf size, and inflorescence form.

Plants of the new cultivar are most similar to the cultivar Askinto, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 12,261. However, in side-by-side comparisons, plants of the new cultivar differed from plants of 'Askinto' in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new cultivar are taller than plants of 'Askinto'.
2. Plants of the new cultivar have larger leaves than plants of 'Askinto'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs show, as nearly true as it is reasonably possible to make the same in color illustrations of this type, typical inflorescence and foliage characteristics of the new cultivar. Colors in the photographs differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed description, which accurately describe the colors of 'Balserlabli'. The plants were grown in 10 cm pots for 14 weeks in a greenhouse at West Chicago, Ill.

FIG. **1** illustrates a side view of the overall growth and flowering habit of 'Balserlabli' with one plant per pot.

FIG. **2** illustrates a close-up view of individual inflorescences of 'Balserlabli' showing the change in color as the disc florets mature.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The new cultivar has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions to date. Accordingly, it is possible that the phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in the environment, such as temperature, light intensity, and day length without, however, any variance in genotype.

The chart used in the identification of colors described herein is The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England, 2001 edition, except where color terms of ordinary significance are used. The color values were determined on Sep. 24, 2004 between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. under natural light conditions.

The following descriptions and measurements describe plants produced from cuttings taken from stock plants and grown at West Chicago, Ill. in a double polycarbonate covered greenhouse under conditions comparable to those used in commercial practice. The plants were grown in 10 cm pots for 14 weeks while utilizing a soilless growth medium. Greenhouse temperatures were maintained at approximately 65°–78° F. (18°–25° C.) during the day and approximately 50°–60° F. (10°–15° C.) during the night. Greenhouse light levels were maintained at 6,000 to 9,000 footcandles during the day.

Botanical classification: *Osteospermum ecklonis* cultivar Balserlabli.

Parentage: Open-pollination of the proprietary *Osteospermum* breeding selection PAS 1899, not patented.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal stem.

Time to initiate roots.—Approximately 9 to 12 days.

Time to produce a rooted cutting.—Approximately 21–28 days.

Root description.—Fine, fibrous.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Crop time.—Approximately 10–13 weeks from rooted cutting.

Habit of growth.—Compact. Freely branching. One or two pinches improves basal branching.

Form.—Upright, mounded.

Size.—Height — Approximately 38.6 cm from soil level to top of plant plane and 31.6 cm from soil level to top of foliage. Width to outer inflorescences (area of spread): Approximately 23.3 cm.

Branch.—Quantity per plant: Approximately 4 main branches. Strength: Strong. Length from soil level to base of peduncle: Approximately 21.4 cm. Diameter at base: Approximately 4.1 mm. Texture: Glabrous. Color: N144D with overlay of 187C. Internode length at middle of branch: Approximately 1.2 cm.

Foliage.—Quantity per branch: Approximately 26. Type: Simple. Fragrance: Faint. Arrangement: Alternate. Aspect: At an acute angle to the stem. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Widely serrate. Length: Approximately 5.9 cm. Width: Approximately 3 cm. Texture: Upper and lower surface: Papillate. Color of mature foliage: Upper surface: Darker than 146A with venation of 145C. Lower surface: 146A with venation of 145C.

Flowering description:

Time to first flower.—Approximately 10–13 weeks from planting of rooted cutting.

Flowering habit: Freely flowering under outdoor growing conditions with substantially continuous blooming from spring through autumn and year round in greenhouse environment.

Inflorescence arrangement.—Solitary, terminal.

Lastingness of inflorescence.—Approximately 4–6 days.

Inflorescence description:

Appearance.—Type: Composite, persistent. Shape: Round. Aspect: Slightly cupped, facing upward or outward. Disc and ray florets develop acropetally on a capitulum. Fragrance: None.

Quantity of inflorescences and buds per lateral branch.—Approximately 2 inflorescences and 2 buds.

Size.—Diameter: Approximately 5.4 cm. Depth: Approximately 2.3 cm.

Bud.—Rate of opening: Generally takes from 3–6 days for buds to progress from first color to fully open inflorescences. Shape: Oblong. Length: Approximately 1.9 cm. Diameter: Approximately 8 mm. Color: 144B.

Ray florets.—Quantity per inflorescence: Approximately 20, arranged in a single whorl. Arrangement: Not overlapping. Aspect: Flat to slightly concave. Shape: "Spoon", proximal ½ elliptic shaped, next ⅝ constricted, distil ⅜ ovate, cupped. Apex: Emarginate with three tips. Base: Attenuate and fused to form tube. Margin: Entire. Length: Approximately 2.8 cm. Width at widest point: Approximately 4 mm. Texture: Glabrous and ribbed. Color of upper surface of ray florets when first open: N78A. Color of lower surface of ray florets when first open: N187B. Color of upper surface of fully open floret: N80B with N80A at base. Color of lower surface of fully open floret: 197B with 94B at base.

Disc.—Diameter: Approximately 1.2 cm. Depth: Approximately 1.2 cm.

Receptacle.—Diameter: 3 mm. Depth: 2 mm. Color: 154D.

Disc florets.—Quantity per inflorescence: Approximately 89. Shape: Tubular with five lobes each having an acute apex. Margin: Entire. Length: Approximately 8 mm. Diameter at apex: Approximately 3 mm. Diameter at base: Approximately 1 mm. Texture: Glabrous. Color of immature florets: N92B. Color of mature florets: 96B.

Phyllaries.—Quantity per inflorescence: Approximately 18. Arrangement: Imbricate, arranged in several rows. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Truncate. Margin: Entire. Length: Approximately 1.2 cm. Width: Approximately 2 mm. Texture of center of outer/lower surface: Rough. Texture of center of inner/upper surface: Glabrous. Color of center of outer/lower surface: Closest to 144B. Color of center of inner/upper surface: Closest to 144C. Texture of margins: Papery. Color of margins: 157B, transparent.

Pedunde.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: At an acute angle to the stem. Length: Approximately 7.9 cm. Diameter. Approximately 1.4 mm. Texture: Rough. Color: 144A.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Present on disc florets only. Stamen quantity: 5. Anther shape: Linear. Anther length: 2 mm. Anther color: 93A. Amount of pollen: Abundant Pollen color. 14A. Gynoecium: Present on ray and disc florets. There is one pistil per floret. Pistil length: 7 mm. Stigma shape: Two parted. Stigma length: 1.3 mm. Stigma color: N92B. Style length: 4 mm. Style color: Lighter than 84D. Ovary size: 2 mm. Ovary color: 145C.

Seed and fruit production: Neither seed nor fruit production has been observed.

Disease and pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to *Osteospermum* has not been observed.

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Osteospermum* plant named 'Balserlabli', substantially as herein shown and described.

* * * * *

FIG. 1

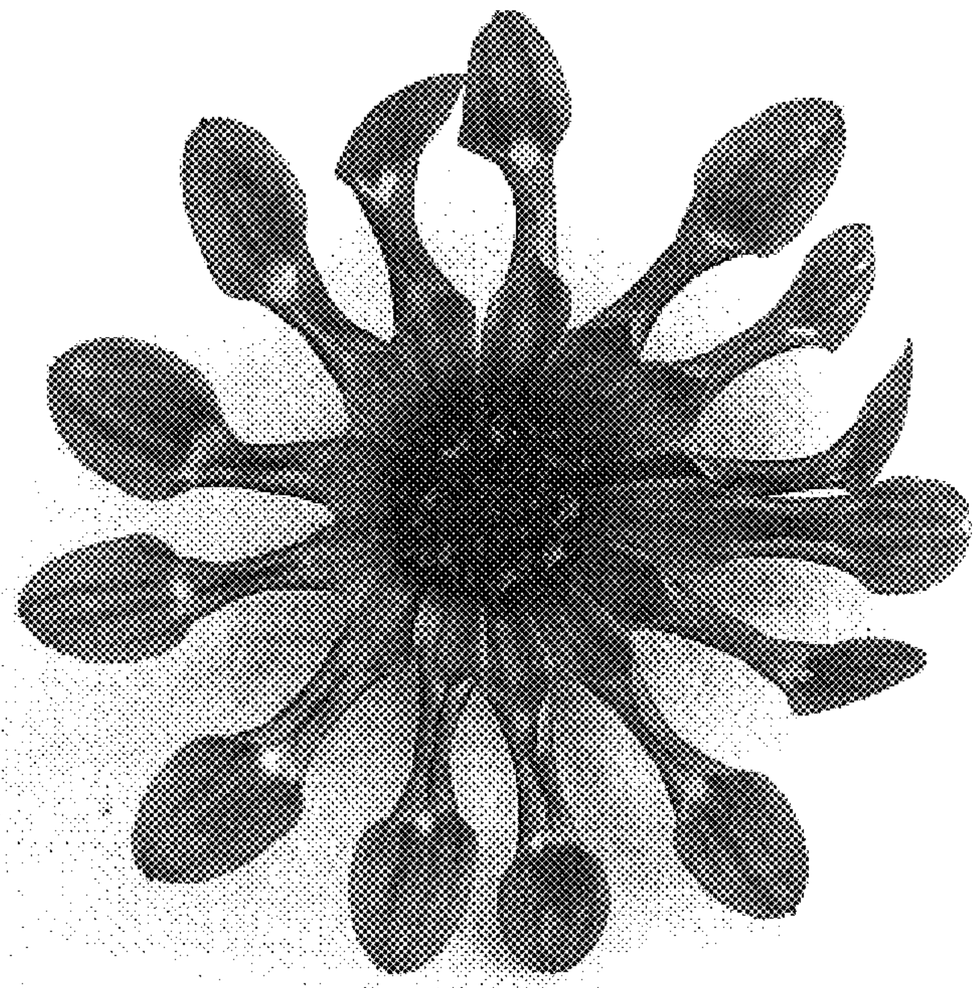

FIG. 2