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

(10) **Patent No.:** **US PP17,193 P2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Nov. 7, 2006**

- (54) **AZALEA PLANT NAMED MNISIR**
- (50) Latin Name: *Rhododendron* sp.
Varietal Denomination: **MNISIR**
- (76) Inventor: **James O. Harris**, 538 Swanson Dr.,
Lawrenceville, GA (US) 30043
- (*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 31 days.
- (21) Appl. No.: **11/180,476**
- (22) Filed: **Jul. 13, 2005**
- (51) **Int. Cl.**
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- (52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./239**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./239,
Plt./240
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new variety of *Azalea* plant found as a seedling in a planned cross between the female *Azalea* ‘Cherie’ (syn. V12-4) and the male *Azalea* ‘Indian Summer’ is disclosed. The new variety has a unique blooming period and is extremely cold hardy. It is a compact, dense, and upright growing plant with attractive, semi-double, hose-in-hose, coral pink flowers.

3 Drawing Sheets

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Genus/species: *Rhododendron* sp.
Botanical designation: ‘MNISIR’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is a new and distinct variety of evergreen *Azalea* of the genus *Rhododendron*. This new *Azalea*, hereinafter referred to as ‘MNISIR’, was discovered in August 1981 in Lawrenceville, Ga. ‘MNISIR’ originated from a planned hybridization between hybrid *Azalea* ‘Cherie’ (syn. V12-4) (unpatented) and hybrid *Azalea* ‘Indian Summer’ (unpatented) in Lawrenceville, Ga. The value of this new cultivar lies in its unique blooming period, growth habit, and cold hardiness.

Asexual propagation of the new plant by cuttings was performed in Dearing, Ga. The new plant retains its distinctive characteristics and reproduces true to type in successive generations by vegetative propagation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following are the most outstanding and distinguishing characteristics of this new cultivar when grown under normal horticultural practices in Dearing, Ga.

1. Unique spring and fall blooming;
2. Large, semi-double, hose-in-hose flowers;
3. Easily propagated by semi-hardwood cuttings in late spring through summer;
4. Fast growth rate under normal fertilization and moisture conditions;
5. Upright, dense, and compact nature;
6. Attractive, showy flower;
7. Grows well in containers;
8. Thrives in shade or sun; and
9. Hardy in USDA Zone 5b.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

This new *Azalea* hybrid variety is illustrated by the accompanying photographs which show blooms and foliage of the plant in full bloom. The colors shown are as true as

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can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic means.

FIG. 1. shows a close-up view of stems, mature foliage, and immature foliage.

FIG. 2. shows mature foliage and growth habit of a seven gallon plant.

FIG. 3. shows a close-up view of a mature inflorescence.

FIG. 4. shows the plant in full bloom.

FIG. 5. shows the re-blooming characteristic of the plant.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW PLANT

The following is a detailed description of the new variety of *Azalea* based on observations made of a 3-year-old plant grown in a seven-gallon container according to wholesale commercial production conditions in Dearing, Ga. The colors of the various plant parts are detailed with reference to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart.

Classification:

- Family*.—Ericaceae.
- Species*.—*Rhododendron* sp.
- Common name*.—*Azalea*.
- Commercial name*.—‘MNISIR’.

Parentage:

- Female parent*.—Gartrell hybrid *Azalea* ‘Cherie’ (unpatented).
- Male parent*.—Gable hybrid *Azalea* ‘Indian Summer’ (unpatented).

Growth:

- Form*.—Compact, dense and upright.
- Height*.—1–1½ feet.
- Width*.—3–3½ feet.
- Growth habit*.—Upright, dense and compact.
- Growth rate*.—Fast growth rate under normal fertilization and moisture conditions. In a period of six years from a rooted cutting, the plant reaches a height of 2–3 feet and a spread of 3–3½ feet. The growth rate is normally about 4 to 6 inches per year; the plant

reaches a height of 4 to 6 feet at maturity while maintaining a dense habit.

Spring growth.—In 2004, the date of initial spring growth was March 15, in Dearing, Ga. After the initial spring flush, there was continuous growth through the fall. The average length of terminal growth of the initial spring flush is about 3¼ inches for a plant in full sun and about 2¾ inches when grown in shade. This growth, if not pruned, will begin to produce flowers starting in April. As the plant continues to grow through summer and fall, more flower buds are produced which mature and bloom until frost. ‘MNISIR’ bloomed heavily until frost in December, 2003. The remaining growth produces about 2 to 4 inches of height.

Life cycle.—Perennial and evergreen.

Leaves:

Leaf arrangement.—Alternate, simple, evergreen.

Leaf shape.—Elliptic.

Leaf length.—1½ inches.

Leaf width.—½ inch.

Leaf margin.—Entire.

Leaf base.—Acuminate.

Leaf apex.—Mucronate.

Petiole length.—¼ inch.

Petiole color.—RHS 146D (yellow-green).

Mature leaf.—Upper leaf surface. Surface texture: Semi-glossy. Surface color: RHS 139A (green). Surface pubescence: Strigose. Surface pubescence color: RHS 155C (white). Midveins and laterals: Impressed on surface. Lower leaf surface: Surface texture: Matte. Surface color: RHS 146B (yellow-green). Surface pubescence: Strigose. Surface pubescence color: RHS 164B (greyed-orange). Midveins and laterals: Prominent on surface.

Immature leaf.—Upper leaf surface: Surface texture: Dull. Surface color: RHS 144A (yellow-green). Surface pubescence: Strigose. Surface pubescence color: RHS 155C (white). Lower leaf surface: Surface texture: Matte. Surface color: RHS 146C (yellow-green). Surface pubescence: Strigose. Surface pubescence color: RHS 155C (white). Immature petioles and midveins: Petiole color: RHS 144A (yellow-green). Midvein color: RHS 144A (yellow-green). Petiole pubescence: Strigose. Petiole pubescence color: RHS 155C (white). New growth pubescence: Strigose. Length of pubescence: ½ to ⅓ inch; numerous on mid-vein and petiole, more so as the leaf matures.

Stems:

Form.—Densely branched.

Young stems.—Stem color: RHS N144B (yellow-green). Stem pubescence: Strigose. Stem pubescence color: at point of attachment individual hairs emerge RHS 155C (white) and mature to RHS 167A (greyed-orange); hairs distal from stem are RHS 164C (greyed-orange). Stem length: 3 to 6 inches. Stem diameter: ⅜ to ½ inch.

Second-year stems.—Stem color: RHS N200B (brown) and RHS 197A (greyed-green). Stem pubescence: Glabrous. Stem length: 3 to 6 inches. Stem diameter: ⅜ inch.

Pith.—Solid and uniform.

Internode length.—⅓ inch to ⅞ inch when grown in both full sun and light shade.

Flower buds:

Buds.—Tight; borne in groups of three sheathed by a pair of modified leaf bracts.

Bud shape.—Ovate.

Bud size.—⅝×⅓ inch.

Bud scales.—Distal portion pubescent (tomentose), individual hairs emerge RHS 155C (white) and mature to RHS 167A (greyed-orange).

Bud color.—RHS N144C (yellow-green) and RHS N144D (yellow-green).

Bud sheath.—Bud sheath length: ⅝ to ⅓ inch, persistent. Immature sheath color: RHS 139A (green) and RHS 144D (yellow-green). Mature: As the buds swell, the bud sheath matures to RHS 145C (yellow-green), and RHS 46D (red), falls off and reveals the flower color of RHS 42B (red).

Bud pedicel.—Pedicel length: ⅜ inch long. Pedicel color: RHS N144C (yellow-green). Pedicel pubescence: Villous. Pedicel pubescence color: RHS 167A (greyed-orange).

Calyx.—Calyx shape: Cup-shaped, 5 sepals, persistent. Size: ⅜ inch long. Color: RHS N144C (yellow-green). Pubescence: Villous. Color of pubescence: RHS 167A (greyed-orange).

Flowers:

Flower type.—Perfect, semi-double, hose-in-hose.

Flowering habit.—Borne on the current season’s growth.

Lastingness of flowers on the plant.—4–6 days in the sun; 8–11 days in the shade.

Length of flowering period.—3 to 4 weeks in April in Dearing, Ga.; flowering resumes in September and continues until frost which can be as late as November or December.

Peduncle length.—¼ to ½ inch.

Peduncle diameter.—⅓ inch.

Flower shape.—Open funnel-shaped.

Flower diameter.—2½ inches.

Flower depth.—1½ to 2 inches.

Petal number.—10, fused at the base and remain fused up to ¼ inch from the base.

Petal pubescence.—Glabrous.

Petal shape.—Obovate with obtuse to rounded apices and entire margins.

Petal size.—1¼ inches long.

Petal color.—Upper surface: RHS 39B (red). Lower surface: RHS 180C (greyed-red). Spots on upper surfaces of 3 of the five petals: RHS 53A (red).

Sepals.—Ovate and joined at base to form a cup.

Sepal number.—5.

Sepal color.—RHS N144C (yellow-green).

Sepal size.—¼ inch long×⅓ inch wide.

Reproductive organs:

Ovary.—Tomentose.

Placenta arrangement.—5 locules.

Pistil.—Single, non-petaloid, sometimes petaloid.

Pistil length.—1¼ to 1⅜ inches long.

Stigma color.—RHS 185A (greyed-purple).

Style color.—RHS 47C (red-purple).

Stamen number.—5–6, petaloid.

Stamen length.—1⅓ to 1⅝ inches.

Stamen color.—Filaments: RHS 185A (greyed-purple).

 Anthers: RHS 187A (greyed-purple).

Pollen color.—RHS 155D (white).

Fragrance.—None.

CULTURE

‘MNISIR’ grows well in a wide range of conditions and tolerates sun to shade. It prefers moist, well-drained soil that is rich in organic matter and responds well to mulching and medium applications of fertilizer. It does best in soil with a pH of 5.0 to 5.5. It is propagated with semi-hardwood cuttings in late spring through the summer.

DISEASES/INSECTS

Lace bugs and spider mites can be a problem.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTAL CULTIVARS

The female, or seed parent, of ‘MNISIR’ is the Gartrell hybrid *Azalea* ‘Cherie’ (syn. V12-4) (unpatented) which has orange-red, double flowers and is a late blooming *azalea*. ‘Cherie’ is the result of a cross between ‘Jimmy Coover’ (unpatented)×‘Glamour’ (unpatented) and the pink blooming Robin Hill hybrid ‘Lade Louise’ (unpatented).

The male, or pollen, parent is the Gable hybrid ‘Indian Summer’ (unpatented) which has yellowish pink flowers and is a fall blooming *azalea*. ‘Indian Summer’ is a fall blooming clone of *R. kaempferi*.

In Table 1 below, the instant plant is shown in comparison with the parental cultivars.

Example 9 (Enteric coated calcium polycarbophil formulation)

Component	mg/tablet	Function
<u>Core</u>		
Paroxetine Hydrochloride	22.89*	Active
Calcium polycarbophil	20.00	Matrix
Lactose anhydrous	146.11	Hydrophilic agent/diluent
Polyvinylpyrrolidone	10.0	Binder
Magnesium stearate	1.0	Hydrophobic agent/lubricant
Water**	0.024	Granulating liquid
<u>Enteric coat</u>		
Eudragit	22.19	Polymer
Talc	1.53	Lubricant
Triethyl citrate	1.00	Plasticizer
Water**	24.6	Diluent
<u>Film coat</u>		
Opadry pink	10.5	Film coat
Water**	94.5	Diluent
<u>Polish coat</u>		
Opadry clear	0.750	
Water**	29.3	Diluent

*Equivalent to 20 mg paroxetine as free base.
 **Removed during processing.

What is claimed is:

1. A new variety of *Azalea* plant named ‘MNISIR’ as herein shown and described.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : PP 17,193 P2
APPLICATION NO. : 11/180476
DATED : November 7, 2006
INVENTOR(S) : James O. Harris

Page 1 of 2

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 6, Table 1 reading

“Example 9 (Enteric coated calcium polycarbophil formulation)

Component	mg/tablet	Function
Core		
Paroxetine Hydrochloride	22.89*	Active
Calcium polycarbophil	20.00	Matrix
Lactose anhydrous	146.11	Hydrophilic agent/diluent
Polyvinylpyrrolidone	10.0	Binder
Magnesium stearate	1.0	Hydrophobic agent/ lubricant
Water**	0.024	Granulating liquid
Enteric coat		
Eudragit	22.19	Polymer
Talc	1.53	Lubricant
Triethyl citrate	1.00	Plasticizer
Water**	24.6	Diluent
Film coat		
Opadry pink	10.5	Film Coat
Water**	94.5	Diluent
Polish coat		
Opadry clear	0.750	
Water**	29.3	Diluent

*Equivalent to 20 mg paroxetine as free base.

**Removed during processing” should read

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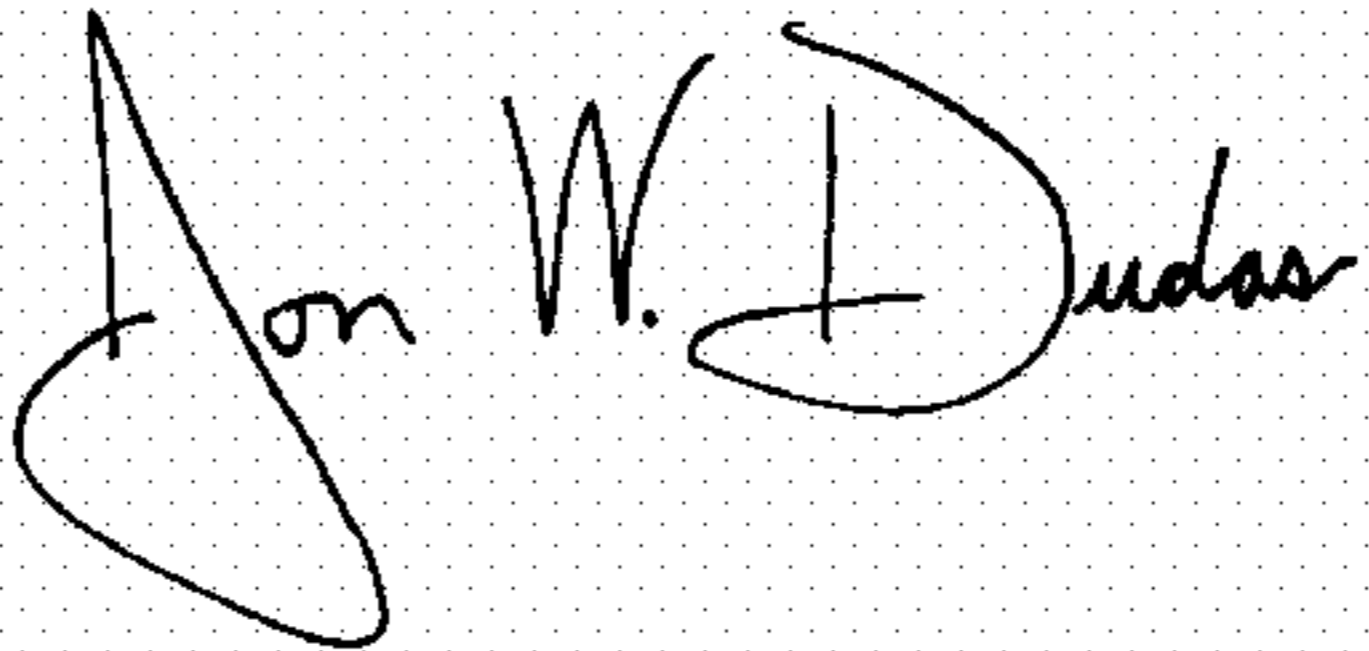
Column 6, Table 1, should read --

Characteristic	'MNISIR'	'Cherie'	'Indian Summer'
Height (Mature)	2½ -3 ft.	3-5 ft.	8-10 ft.
Width (Mature)	3-3½ ft.	Not available	Not available
Flower Diameter	2-2½ in.	2 in.	Not available
Flower Form	Single to semi-double/hose-in-hose	Double	Single/hose-in-hose/semi-double
Flower Color	Coral pink	Deep reddish orange	Yellowish pink
Flowers per Terminal	3	Not available	Not available
Bloom Period	April; September to frost	Not available	Fall
Petal Number	10-11	Not available	Not available
Hardy Zone	5	6	5
Stamen Number	5-6	Not available	5
Stamen Type	Petaloid	Petaloid	Non-petaloid

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Signed and Sealed this

Thirtieth Day of January, 2007



JON W. DUDAS

Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office