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

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(54) **ASTILBE PLANT NAMED ‘VERSIPINK’**

(50) Latin Name: *Astilbe arendsii* × *Astilbe japonica*
Varietal Denomination: **Verspink**

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2015 CS Haarlem (NL)

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patent is extended or adjusted under 35
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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./407**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./407**
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Astilbe* plant named
‘Verspink’, characterized by its compact, upright and strong
plant habit; strong and healthy foliage; freely and uniformly
flowering habit; intense pink-colored flowers; and good gar-
den performance.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical designation: *Astilbe arendsii* × *Astilbe japonica*.
Cultivar denomination: ‘Verspink’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar
of *Astilbe*, botanically known as *Astilbe arendsii* × *Astilbe*
japonica and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘Verspink’.

The new *Astilbe* is a product of a planned breeding pro-
gram conducted by the Inventor in Haarlem, The Nether-
lands. The objective of the breeding program was to create
new strong *Astilbe* cultivars with attractive foliage and
flower coloration.

The new *Astilbe* originated from a cross-pollination made
by the Inventor in 2001 in Haarlem, The Netherlands, of an
unnamed *Astilbe arendsii* seedling selection, not patented, as
the female, or seed, parent with an unnamed *Astilbe*
japonica seedling selection, not patented, as the male, or
pollen, parent. The new *Astilbe* was discovered and selected
by the Inventor as a single flowering plant within the prog-
eny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse
environment in Haarlem, The Netherlands in 2003.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Astilbe* by divisions in a
controlled environment in a greenhouse in Honselersdijk,
The Netherlands since 2003, has shown that the unique fea-
tures of this new *Astilbe* are stable and reproduced true to
type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The cultivar Verspink has not been observed under all
possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary
somewhat with variations in environment and cultural prac-
tices 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 ‘Ver-
spink’. These characteristics in combination distinguish
‘Verspink’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Astilbe*:

1. Compact, upright and strong plant habit.
2. Strong and healthy foliage.
3. Freely and uniformly flowering habit.

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4. Intense pink-colored flowers.

5. Good garden performance.

Plants of the new *Astilbe* differ primarily from plants of
the parent selections in plant height and flowering habit as
plants of the new *Astilbe* are more compact and more freely
flowering than plants of the parent selections.

Plants of the new *Astilbe* can be compared to plants of the
Astilbe arendsii cultivar Europa, not patented. In side-by-
side comparisons conducted in Haarlem, The Netherlands,
plants of the new *Astilbe* and the cultivar Europa differed in
the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Astilbe* were more compact than
plants of the cultivar Europa.
2. Plants of the new *Astilbe* were more freely flowering
than plants of the cultivar Europa.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the
overall appearance of the new *Astilbe*, showing the colors as
true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored repro-
ductions 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
Astilbe.

The photograph on the first sheet comprises a side per-
spective view of a typical flowering plant of ‘Verspink’
grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the second sheet is a close-up
view of typical inflorescences of ‘Verspink’.

The photograph at the bottom of the second sheet is a
close-up view of the upper surface of a typical leaf of ‘Ver-
spink’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following
observations, measurements and values describe plants
grown in containers in Afferden, The Netherlands, under
commercial practice in during the early summer in an out-
door nursery with day temperatures ranging from 12° C. to

30° C. and night temperatures ranging from 5° C. to 15° C. Plants had been growing for about one year when the photographs and description were taken. 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.

Botanical classification:

Astilbe arendsii × *Astilbe japonica* cultivar 'Verspink'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Unnamed *Astilbe arendsii* seedling selection, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Unnamed *Astilbe japonica* seedling selection, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By divisions.

Time to initiate roots.—About three weeks at 20° C.

Root description.—Thick, fleshy; brown in color.

Rooting habits.—Freely branching; moderately dense.

Plant description:

Plant form/habit.—Herbaceous perennial. Compact, upright and strong plant habit; roughly triangular. Flowering stems and leaves basal; dense and bushy growth habit; moderate to low vigor. Freely and uniformly flowering with numerous flowers on branched panicles.

Growth rate.—Moderate to slow; from divisions, about 28 weeks are required to produce fully-grown flowering plants.

Plant height (soil level to top of foliar plane).—About 13.7 cm.

Plant height (soil level to top of inflorescences).—About 27.2 cm.

Plant width (spread).—About 28.7 cm.

Stem description.—Length: About 8.8 cm. Diameter: About 2.5 mm. Internode length: About 1.9 cm. Strength: Strong. Texture: Sparsely pubescent. Color: 144A.

Foliage Description:

Arrangement.—Alternate; biternately compound.

Leaf length (excluding petiole).—About 12.3 cm.

Leaf width.—About 10.9 cm.

Lateral leaflet length.—About 3.8 cm.

Lateral leaflet width.—About 1.6 cm.

Terminal leaflet length.—About 4.5 cm.

Terminal leaflet width.—About 2.1 cm.

Lateral and terminal leaflet shape.—Elliptic to narrowly ovate.

Lateral and terminal leaflet apex.—Acute.

Lateral and terminal leaflet base.—Rounded to attenuate.

Lateral and terminal leaflet margin.—Biserrate.

Lateral and terminal leaflet texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Sparsely pubescent; slightly rough.

Lateral and terminal leaflet venation pattern.—Pinnate.

Lateral and terminal leaflet color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: 143A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Between 143C and 144A. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Between 139A and 147A; venation, 148A to 148B. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: 146A; venation, 148B.

Leaf petiole length.—About 4.8 cm.

Leaf petiole diameter.—About 1 mm.

Leaflet petiole length.—About 9 mm.

Leaflet petiole width.—About 1 mm.

Leaf and leaflet petiole texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Smooth, glabrous.

Leaf and leaflet petiole color, upper and lower surfaces.—144A.

Flower description:

Flower type/habit.—Numerous single rotate flowers arrange on branched panicles; flowers fact upright, outward or downward depending on position on the panicle. Panicles conical in shape. Freely and uniformly flowering habit with about 2,000 flowers developing per inflorescence.

Fragrance.—Faintly fragrant; sweet.

Natural flowering season.—Continuously flowering during the early summer for about six weeks in The Netherlands.

Postproduction longevity.—Flowers last about ten days on the plant. Flowers persistent.

Flower buds.—Height: About 2 mm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Shape: Broadly elliptic. Color: 148A; apex tinged with 58A.

Inflorescence height.—About 16.6 cm.

Inflorescence diameter.—About 11.4 cm.

Flower diameter.—About 1 cm.

Flower depth.—About 4 mm.

Petals.—Quantity per flower: Typically five in a single whorl. Length: About 5 mm. Lobe width: About 0.8 mm. Shape: Narrowly oblanceolate. Apex: Acute. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Developing petals, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 63A. Fully expanded petals, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 63B; color becoming closer to 70B with development.

Sepals.—Quantity per flower: Typically five in a single whorl, fused towards the base; campanulate calyx. Length: About 2 mm. Width: About 1 mm. Shape: Broadly ovate. Apex: Acute. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Developing sepals, upper and lower surfaces: 148A. Fully expanded sepals, upper and lower surfaces: 150D; towards the margins, 63A.

Peduncles.—Length: About 16.1 cm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Angle: Erect. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 144A.

Pedicels.—Length: About 1.5 mm. Diameter: About 0.5 mm. Angle: About 45° from vertical. Strength: Moderately strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 145B to 145C flushed with 63D.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity per flower: Typically ten; anthers basifixed. Filament length: About 2.5 mm. Filament color: 61D. Anther shape: Ovate. Anther length: About 0.4 mm. Anther color: 61D. Pollen amount: Scarce. Pollen color: 155D. Pistils: Quantity per flower: Two. Pistil length: About 2 mm. Stigma shape: Club-shaped. Stigma color: 61B. Style length: About 1.6 mm. Style color: 61D. Ovary color: 61D.

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

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

Garden performance: Plants of the new *Astilbe* have been observed to have good garden performance and tolerate rain, wind and high temperatures of about 35° C. Plants of the new *Astilbe* have been observed to be hardy to USDA Zone 5.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Astilbe* plant named 'Verspink' as illustrated and described.

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