

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

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(54) **RHODODENDRON ROOTSTOCK NAMED**
'RHODUNTER 149'

(50) Latin Name: ***Rhododendron* hybrid**
Varietal Denomination: **Rhodunter 149**

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patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 59 days.

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

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./238**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./238**
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

"The International Rhododendron Register and Checklist (2004)-
Third Supplement".*

* cited by examiner

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct *Rhododendron* hybrid plant used as a
rootstock that exhibits a high lime tolerance and vigorous
growth.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical classification: *Rhododendron* hybrid.
Varietal denomination: 'Rhodunter 149'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar
of *Rhododendron* hybrid used as a rootstock known by the
varietal name 'Rhodunter 149'. The new variety was discov-
ered in Ahrensburg, Germany. The new variety is the result of
a planned breeding program between an unpatented *Rhodo-*
dendron fortunei (female parent) and C.V. 'Cunningham's
White' (unpatented male parent). 'Rhodunter 149' exhibits
leaves and flowers that are more similar to its female parent
than to its male parent. Additionally, 'Rhodunter 149' exhibits
more vigorous growth when compared to its male parent.
Further, the new variety differs from both parents in its
improved tolerance to lime. In fact, such improved lime tol-
erance (no Fe-deficiency symptoms on soils up to 6.9 pH)
distinguishes the new variety from other *Rhododendron* vari-
eties known to the breeder. The flower color of the new variety
starts out as a strong lilac at bud stage and opens into a light
lilac color. Its female parent has mostly white and bright pink
flowers, and its male parent has white flowers. The new vari-
ety and its female parent bloom with fragrant flowers one to
two weeks later than its male parent. Finally, 'Rhodunter 149'
is a compact, bushy shrub. 'Rhodunter 149' has been trial and
field tested and has been found to retain its distinctive char-
acteristics and remain true to type through successive propa-
gations.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying photographic drawings illustrate a four
year old plant of the new variety, with the color being as
nearly true as is possible with color illustrations of this type.

FIG. 1 shows a view of a typical flowering plant of the new
variety grown to a flowering plant; and

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FIG. 2 shows a close-up view of the inflorescences of the
new variety.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

5 The following detailed description sets forth the character-
istics of the new cultivar. The data which defines these char-
acteristics were collected by asexual reproductions per-
formed via cuttings or in vitro culture carried out in
Ahrensburg, Germany. The color readings were taken in natu-
10 ral daylight. The new variety was four years old when
described, except where expressly stated otherwise. Color
measurements were taken outside under natural daylight.
Color references are primarily to The R.H.S. Colour Chart of
The Royal Horticultural Society of London.

PLANT

Time to initiate roots: About 90 days at 22–25° C.
Time to produce a finished flowering plant from a rooted
cutting: About 4 years in the field.
20 Rooting habit: Compact root bales.
Form: Spreading.
Height: 50 cm at 3 years.
Diameter: 40 cm at 3 years.
25 Vigor: Strong.
Branching habit: Compact.
Disease, drought and pest resistance: No observations made
to date.
Trunk (at 4 years):
30 *Diameter*.—3 cm.
Height.—5 cm above soil.
Bark color.—Year one: 144A. Year two: From 144A to
175A. Year three: 175A. Year four and older: 177B to
35 between 197B and 197C.
Texture.—Smooth with fissured bark.
Pubescence.—Absent.
Form.—Erect.

Lateral Branches:

Diameter.—5–7 mm.*Internode length*.—1–2 cm.*Texture*.—Smooth with fissured bark.*Pubescence*.—Absent.*Color*.—Year one: 144A. Year two: From 144A to 175A.

Year three: 175A. Year four and older: 177B to between 197 B and 197C.

Leaves:

Arrangement.—Alternate.*Length*.—20 cm maximum.*Width*.—7.5 cm maximum.*Shape*.—Oblanceolate.*Apex*.—Broad.*Base*.—Tapering.*Pubescence*.—Absent.*Color*.—Upper surface: 147B for young leaves and 147A for mature leaves. Lower surface: 147C for both young and mature leaves.*Margins*.—Entire.*Venation pattern*.—Dense venation with a pronounced central vein.*Vein color*.—Upper surface: 144A. Lower surface: 145C.*Stipules*.—None present.*Bracts*.—None present.*Petiole*.—Shape: Round with a flat upside. Length: 2 cm.

Diameter: 3–4 mm. Upper surface color: 144A.

Lower surface color: 144C.

Pedice.—Length: 4 cm. Width: 2 mm. Color: 144C.

Flower:

Natural flowering season.—Beginning of May until the end of May in Northern Germany.*Form*.—Widely funnel-shaped.*Arrangement*.—Truss.*Lastingness of bloom*.—Approximately three weeks; from the beginning of May until the end of May.*Average number of blooms*.—One bloom period per year.*Fragrance*.—Typical of *Rhododendron fortunei*.*Buds (described before bursting)*.—Shape: Oblong.

Width: 20 mm. Length: 40 mm. Color: 67A.

Spike.—Number of flowers per spike: 10–15. Length: 15 cm. Diameter: 15 cm.*Corolla petals*.—Shape: Widely funnel-shaped. Number: 7. Length: 45–55 mm. Width: 80 mm. Apex: Round. Margin: Undulate. Color: When opening: 67B. Fully opened (upper surface): 74C to 74D. (lower surface): The external part is 84B, and the inner part is 84C.*Corolla throat*.—Tube length: 20 mm. Color: 153A. Texture: Velvety smooth.*Sepals*.—None present (totally reduced).*Petaloids*.—None present.

Reproductive organs:

Stamens.—Number: 14. Length: 30 mm.*Anthers*.—Shape: Normal *Rhododendron* type. Color: 161D. Length: 25 mm.*Pollen*.—Amount of pollen: Typical for a *Rhododendron* plant. Color of pollen: 150D.*Pistil*.—Number: 1. Style: Color: 160D. Length: 45 mm; filiform. Stigma: Shape: Undivided. Color: 145A.

Seeds:

Production.—Seed capsules mature in November when pollinated in May.*Length*.—2 mm.*Color*.—164B.*Number*.—Approximately 200 per capsule.COMPARISON WITH OTHER *RHODODENDRON* CULTIVARS

‘Rhodunter 149’ differs from ‘Nova Zembla’ (not patented) in that ‘Rhodunter 149’ is lime tolerant while ‘Nova Zembla’ is not. ‘Rhodunter 149’ has an upright growth habit while ‘Nova Zembla’ has a broad sweeping growth habit. ‘Rhodunter 149’ is very stable and has strong shoots while ‘Nova Zembla’ has thinner and less strong shoots. ‘Rhodunter 149’ has elongated and oval leaves while ‘Nova Zembla’ has vaulted and concave leaves with a slightly twisted leaf apex.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of *Rhododendron* hybrid plant, as is herein illustrated and described.

* * * * *



Fig. 1

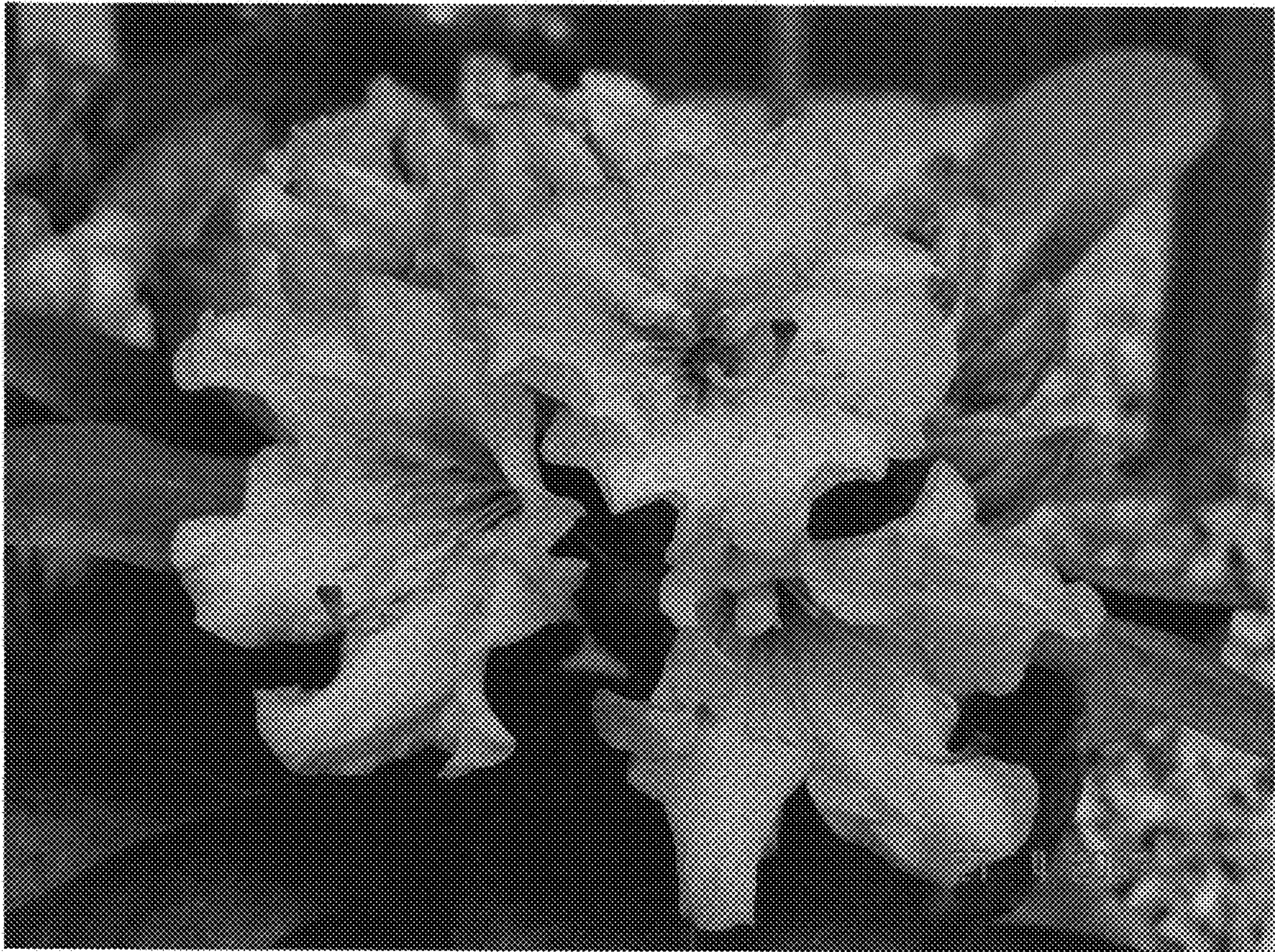


Fig. 2