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Blom

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(54) **HELENium PLANT NAMED ‘SOMBRERO’**

(50) Latin Name: *Helenium hybrida*
Varietal Denomination: **Sombrero**

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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 110 days.

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A01H 5/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **Plt./435**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC Plt./435
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

PUBLICATIONS

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Helenium* plant named ‘Sombrero’, characterized by its compact and broadly upright plant habit; moderately vigorous growth habit; freely flowering habit; inflorescences with yellow-colored ray florets; and strong peduncles that hold the inflorescences above the foliar plane.

3 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical designation: *Helenium hybrida*.
Cultivar denomination: ‘SOMBRERO’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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

The new *Helenium* plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Zuidwolde, The Netherlands. The objective of the program is to create and develop new compact *Helenium* plants with attractive ray and disc colors.

The new *Helenium* plant is a naturally-occurring branch mutation of *Helenium hybrida* ‘Salsa’, disclosed in a U.S. Plant Patent application filed concurrently. The new *Helenium* plant was discovered and selected by the Inventor on a single flowering plant of ‘Salsa’ within a population of plants of ‘Salsa’ in a controlled outdoor nursery environment in Zuidwolde, The Netherlands in 2010.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Helenium* plant by terminal cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in Heerhugowaard, The Netherlands since 2011 has shown that the unique features of this new *Helenium* plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new *Helenium* have not been observed under all possible combinations of environmental conditions and cultural practices. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environmental conditions such as temperature, daylength 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 ‘Sombrero’.

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These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Sombrero’ as a new and distinct *Helenium* plant:

1. Compact and broadly upright plant habit.
2. Moderately vigorous growth habit.
3. Freely flowering habit.
4. Inflorescences with yellow-colored ray florets.
5. Strong peduncles that hold the inflorescences above the foliar plane.

In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Zuidwolde, The Netherlands, plants of the new *Helenium* differed from plants of the female parent, ‘Salsa’, primarily in ray floret color as plants of ‘Salsa’ have dark red-colored ray florets with yellow-colored bases giving a “halo” effect around the disc.

Plants of the new *Helenium* can be compared to plants of *Helenium hybrida* ‘Kanaria’, not patented. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Zuidwolde, The Netherlands, plants of the new *Helenium* differed from plants of ‘Kanaria’ in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Helenium* were more compact than plants of ‘Kanaria’.
2. Plants of the new *Helenium* had smaller inflorescences than plants of ‘Kanaria’.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new *Helenium* plant 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 *Helenium* plant.

The photograph on the first sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of ‘Sombrero’.

The photograph on the second sheet is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of ‘Sombrero’.

The photograph on the third sheet is a close-up view of typical leaves of ‘Sombbrero’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following observations and measurements describe plants grown during the autumn in ground beds in an outdoor nursery in Zuidwolde, The Netherlands and under cultural practices typical of commercial *Helenium* production. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 15° C. to 25° C. and night temperatures ranged from 3° C. to 15° C. Plants were two years old when the photographs and description were taken. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2007 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Helenium hybrida* ‘Sombbrero’.

Parentage: Naturally-occurring branch mutation of *Helenium hybrida* ‘Salsa’, disclosed in a U.S. Plant Patent application filed concurrently.

Propagation:

Type.—Vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About two weeks at temperatures about 20° C.

Time to produce a rooted cutting, summer.—About two months at temperatures about 20° C.

Root description.—Medium in thickness, fibrous; creamy white in color.

Rooting habit.—Moderately freely branching; medium density.

Plant description:

Appearance and growth habit.—Herbaceous perennial; compact and broadly upright plant habit; inverted triangle; freely basal branching with about 23 flowering stems developing per plant; moderately vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 36.2 cm.

Plant width or area of spread.—About 63 cm.

Lateral branch description.—Appearance: Mostly rounded with three axial “wings”; wings about 2 mm in width. Length: About 17.6 cm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Internode length: About 2.5 cm. Strength: Strong. Aspect: About 40° from vertical. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 145A; wings, close to 137A to 137B.

Leaf description:

Arrangement.—Alternate; simple; sessile.

Length.—About 6.3 cm.

Width.—About 2 cm.

Shape.—Elliptic to narrowly elliptic or oblanceolate.

Apex.—Acute.

Base.—Cuneate; decurrent.

Margin.—Serrate.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Smooth, glabrous.

Color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to 143A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Between 143A and 144A. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Close to N137A to N137B; venation, close to 144A. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 137B to 137C; venation, close to 144A.

Inflorescence description:

Appearance and arrangement.—Single terminal inflorescences held above the foliar plane on strong erect

peduncles; composite inflorescence form, radially symmetrical; obcordate to flabellate-shaped ray florets; disc florets massed at the center; ray and disc florets develop acropetally on a capitulum; inflorescences face mostly upright.

Natural flowering season.—Plants flower continuous and freely from early August to early October in The Netherlands.

Postproduction longevity.—Inflorescences maintain good color and substance for about six weeks on the plant; inflorescences persistent.

Quantity of inflorescences.—Freely flowering habit; about 650 inflorescences developing per plant during the flowering season.

Fragrance.—None detected.

Inflorescence buds.—Length: About 1 cm. Diameter: About 1.9 cm. Shape: Flattened globular. Color: Close to 143A to 143B.

Inflorescence size.—Diameter: About 4 cm. Depth (height): About 1.6 cm. Disc diameter: About 1.5 cm. Receptacle height: About 5 mm. Receptacle diameter: About 5 mm.

Ray florets.—Quantity and arrangement: About 15 ray florets arranged in a single whorl. Length: About 1.8 cm. Width: About 1.1 cm. Shape: Obcordate to flabellate. Apex: Four-lobed; lobes, obtuse to broadly acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous; velvety; longitudinally ribbed. Orientation: Initially upright then perpendicular to the peduncle. Color: When opening and fully opened, upper surface: Between 7A and 12A; color does not change with development. When opening and fully opened, lower surface: Close to 12A; color does not change with development.

Disc florets.—Quantity and arrangement: Numerous, about 400 disc florets arranged spirally at the center of the receptacle. Length: About 5 mm. Width: About 1.5 mm. Shape: Tubular, elongated. Apex: Five-pointed; acute. Texture, inner and outer surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, inner and outer surfaces, immature: Towards the apex, close to 13A to 13B; mid-section, close to N144A; towards the base, close to 145B to 145C. Color, inner and outer surfaces, mature: Towards the apex, close to 13A to 13B; mid-section, close to N144A; towards the base, close to 145B to 145C.

Phyllaries.—Quantity and arrangement: About 22 phyllaries arranged in a single whorl. Length: About 1.1 cm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Shape: Lanceolate. Apex: Narrowly acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper surface: Close to 143A. Color, lower surface: Close to 143A to 143B.

Peduncles.—Length, terminal peduncle: About 7.5 cm. Length, fourth peduncle: About 6.2 cm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Angle: Erect to about 25° from vertical. Strength: Strong. Texture: Densely pubescent. Color: Close to 143C.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Present on disc florets only. Stamen number: Five per floret. Filament length: About 2 mm. Filament color: Close to 8A. Anther shape: Lanceolate. Anther length: About 0.5 mm. Anther color: Close to 12A. Pollen amount: Scarce. Pollen color: Close to 9A. Gynoecium: Present on both ray and disc florets. Pistil number:

One per floret. Pistil length: About 3 mm. Stigma shape: Decurrent. Stigma color: Close to 13A. Style length: About 2 mm. Style color: Close to 12B. Ovary color: Close to 145D.

Fruits and seeds.—Fruit and seed development have not been observed on plant of the new *Helenium*.

Disease & pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to *Helenium* plants has not been observed on plants grown under outdoor conditions.

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

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Helenium* plant named ‘Sombrero’ as illustrated and described.

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