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Smith

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(54) ***PAEONIA* PLANT NAMED 'Smithopus3'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Paeonia* hybrid**
Varietal Denomination: **Smithopus3**

(71) Applicant: **Donald R. Smith**, Fairfield, CT (US)

(72) Inventor: **Donald R. Smith**, Fairfield, CT (US)

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USPC **Plt./316**

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USPC Plt./316
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See application file for complete search history.

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Primary Examiner — June Hwu
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Cassandra Bright

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of intersectional hybrid (Itoh) *Paeonia* plant named 'Smithopus3' is disclosed, large flowers colored pink with a distinctive red basal flare of double form carried on strong stems, which present the flowers above and beyond the foliage. Plants have very attractive, dissected foliage, which lasts through the fall and is also highly disease resistant. Plants have a symmetrical, compact plant habit/shape which is excellent in the landscape. The new variety is a intersectional hybrid (Itoh) *Paeonia* normally produced as an outdoor ornamental garden plant.

3 Drawing Sheets

Latin name of the genus and species: *Paeonia* hybrid.
Variety denomination: 'Smithopus3'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The new cultivar is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the inventor to produce new *Paeonia* hybrid cultivars with strong stems, large panicles and compact habits. The crossing resulting in the new cultivar was made in summer of 2011 in a backyard in Windham, NH.

The seed parent is the cultivar *Paeonia* 'Martha W', unpatented. The pollen parent is the cultivar *Paeonia* 'Weipa', unpatented. The new cultivar was found and selected by the inventor in 2017 in the same backyard in Windham, NH. Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar 'Smithopus3' was first performed at a research laboratory during 2018 in Heerhugowaard, the Netherlands by tissue culture. Through subsequent confidential propagation, multiple additional generations have been reproduced, having shown that the unique features of this cultivar are stable and reproduced true to type.

Plants of the new cultivar were first sold Jul. 1, 2024 in the United States. This was from plant material originating from the inventor. Plants were advertised on a website from the Entity "Plants Nouveau", which has received a license, information and plant material directly from the inventor.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The cultivar 'Smithopus3' has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary

somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature, day length, 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 'Smithopus3'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'Smithopus3' as a new and distinct *Paeonia* cultivar:

1. New cultivar is an intersectional hybrid (Itoh) peony from a cross of an herbaceous peony (lactiflora) with a hybrid tree peony.
2. It is a sterile first-generation hybrid with triploid (3n) ploidy level.
3. New cultivar has large medium pink colored flowers of double form carried on strong stems, which present the flowers above and beyond the foliage.
4. New cultivar has very attractive, dissected foliage, which lasts through the fall and is also observed disease resistant.
5. New cultivar has a symmetrical, compact plant habit/shape and makes an ideal landscape plant.

PARENT COMPARISONS

Plants of 'Smithopus3' are similar to plants of the seed parent in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of 'Smithopus3' differ in the following:

1. Seed parent has fully herbaceous stems and growth habit, whereas the new cultivar has stronger semi-

woody stems and many above-ground buds, yet grows primarily as an herbaceous plant.

2. Seed parent has pink flowers of single form with 11-13 petals, whereas the new cultivar has double flowers pink colored flowers with many more petals (about 30 to 40).
3. Seed parent blooms 1-2 weeks later than the new cultivar.
4. Seed parent has many lateral flowers per stem, whereas the new cultivar has only 1 or 2.
5. Seed parent is highly fertile both ways, whereas the new cultivar is a sterile triploid.

Plants of 'Smithopus3' are similar to plants of the pollen parent in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of 'Smithopus3' differ in the following:

1. The new variety has pink colored flowers whereas 'Weipa' has red flowers.
2. The pollen parent has flowers with a single row of petals, whereas the new variety has 3 to 4 loose whorls of petals.
3. Pollen parent is a woody tree peony hybrid that has winter hardy, woody stems, whereas the new variety has semi-woody stems and are much less winter hardy.
4. Pollen parent has more upright, shrub-like plant and growth habit, whereas the new variety has mostly herbaceous habit with some semi-woody stems.
5. Pollen parent blooms **1-2** weeks before the new variety.

COMMERCIAL COMPARISON

Plants of 'Smithopus3' can be compared to plants of the commercial cultivar *Paeonia* intersectional hybrid 'First Arrival', unpatented. Plants of 'Smithopus3' are similar to plants of 'First Arrival' in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of 'Smithopus3' differ in the following:

1. 'Smithopus3' has approximately 50% wider petals than 'First Arrival'.
2. Flowers of 'Smithopus3' have approximately 30% more petals than flowers of 'First Arrival'.

Plants of 'Smithopus3' can be compared to plants of the commercial cultivar *Paeonia* 'RTPIV789-06', U.S. Plant Pat. No. 26,908. Plants of 'Smithopus3' are similar to plants of 'RTPIV789-06' in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of 'Smithopus3' differ in the following:

1. 'Smithopus3' has flowers that are much lighter and softer pink in color than 'RTPIV789-06'.
2. Petals of 'Smithopus3' have prominent dark red basal flares, 'RTPIV789-' has no central flares.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photograph in FIG. **1** illustrates in full color a typical flower of 'Smithopus3' photographed from a slight angle to show some of the basal flares on the petals. The plant producing this flower was grown in a field in Fairfield, CT. This plant is approximately 3 years old.

FIG. **2** is a photograph of the same flower as FIG. **1**, photographed from a straight angle.

FIG. **3** illustrates in full color a close-up of a very mature flower of 'Smithopus3', which illustrates color change from aging. In FIG. **3** the basal flares are more visible as the flower is more open and the base of the petals more visible.

The photographs were taken using conventional techniques and although colors may appear different from actual colors due to light reflectance it is as accurate as possible by conventional photographic techniques.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart 2015, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. The following observations and measurements describe 'Smithopus3' plants grown outdoors in Camarillo, CA. The plants were 2 to 3 years old from large tubers, grown in 5-gallon pots. Temperatures ranged from 5° C. to 10° C. at night to 12° C. to 30° C. during the day. No artificial light, photoperiodic treatments were given to the plants. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plant types.

Botanical classification: *Paeonia* hybrid 'Smithopus3'.

PROPAGATION

Typically by shoot tissue culture.

Root description: Freely branching storage root with numerous feeder roots. Roots various shades of tan and brown, not accurately measured with a color chart.

Tubers: Elongated, typically 4 to 10 cm long and 2 to 4 cm in diameter. Colored near Greyed-Orange 166C.

PLANT

Growth habit: Vigorous perennial mostly herbaceous shrub with some semi-woody stems. Semi-upright growth habit.

Height: Approximately 65 to 75 cm at opening of first flower.

Plant spread: Approximately 70 cm.

Stems:

Length: Approximately 45 to 55 cm.

Diameter: Average range 8 to 10 mm.

Strength: Strong.

Internode length: 5 to 7 cm, highly variable.

Color: Near RHS Green 137D flushed Greyed-Purple 187C.

Texture: Glabrous.

Age of plant described: Approximately 2 to 3 years.

FOLIAGE

Leaf: Alternate, pinnate compound, with an overall circular to ovate shape, which is slightly wider than long. Average fully expanded leaf 17 cm long and 23 cm wide, excluding the petiole. Horizontal to semi-erect attitude.

Primary leaflets:

Shape.—Obovate.

Quantity and arrangement.—3 primary leaflets further divided into 3 to 5 deeply divided secondary leaflets. All leaflets sessile.

Length.—Average range 7 to 10 cm.

Width.—Average range 9 to 15 cm.

Individual primary leaflet blades:

Shape of blade.—Broad ovate, variably incised.

Apex.—Acute.

Base.—Attenuate.

Margin.—Deeply incised.

Texture of top surface.—Glabrous.

Texture of bottom surface.—Glabrous.

Appearance of top surface.—Matte.

Appearance of bottom surface.—Matte.

Aspect.—Flat to very slightly reflexed downward.

Individual secondary leaflet blades:
Shape of blade.—Oblanceolate, variably incised.
Apex.—Acute.
Base.—Attenuate.
Margin.—Deeply incised.
Texture of top surface.—Glabrous.
Texture of bottom surface.—Glabrous.
Appearance of top surface.—Matte.
Appearance of bottom surface.—Matte.
Aspect.—Flat to very minutely reflexed downward.
Color.—Young — Upper side: Near RHS Green 139C. Under side: Near RHS Green 137C. Mature — Upper side: Near RHS Green 139A. Under side: Near RHS Green 137A.
Venation.—Type: Pinnate. Venation color upper side: Near RHS Green 139D. Venation color under side: Near RHS Yellow-Green 145B.
Petiole.—Length: Average 9 cm. Diameter: 5 to 6 mm. Color: Near RHS Yellow-Green 145A lightly flushed Greyed-Purple 187C. Texture: Glabrous.

FLOWER

Natural flowering season: Flowering begins mid May in Southern California. Flowering extends throughout the Summer, depending on environmental conditions.
Inflorescence type and habit: Double form with conspicuous stamens. 3 to 4 loose whorls. Shape regularly round. Erect flower attitude.
Flower longevity on plant: Approximately 10 days on the plant. Varies considerably with environmental conditions.
Quantity of flowers: 1 to 2 per stem. 5 to 9 flowering stems per plant.
Flower size:
Diameter.—Approximately 11 cm.
Depth.—Approximately 6.5 cm. (Flower height).
Peduncle:
Length.—Approximately 20 cm.
Diameter.—Approximately 5 mm.
Color.—Near RHS Yellow-Green 145A, flushed Red 53D.
Strength.—Strong.
Texture.—Glabrous.
Petals:
Petal arrangement.—3 to 4 loose whorls of about 30 to 40 petals. 8 to 12 petals per whorl.
Size.—Length: Average 5.5 cm. Width: Average 4 cm.
Shape.—Obovate.
Margin.—Entire.
Apex.—Emarginate.
Base.—Broad attenuate.
Texture.—Smooth, glabrous all surfaces.
Aspect.—Moderately reflexed downward.
Color: Petals: When opening:
Color:
Petals.—When opening: Opening: Upper surface: Near RHS Red 56A flushed Red 55C and Red 48D. Strong basal flare near Red 53A. Blotch about 2.2 cm in length and 3 cm in width. Lower surface: Near RHS Red 56A flushed Red 55C and Red 48D. Strong basal flare near Red 53A. Blotch about 2.2 cm in length and 3 cm in width. Fully opened: Upper surface: Near RHS Red 55C flushed 55B. Strong basal flare near Red 53A. Blotch about 2.5 cm in length and 3 cm in width. Lower surface: Near RHS Red 55C flushed 55B. Strong basal flare near Red 53A. Blotch about 2.5 cm in length and 3 cm in width. Aging: Upper surface: Near RHS Red 56D flushed 56B. Strong basal flare near Red 53C. Blotch about 2.5 cm in length and 3 cm in width. Lower surface: Near RHS Red 56D flushed 56B. Strong basal flare near Red 53C. Blotch about 2.5 cm in length and 3 cm in width.
Petaloids: Not present.
Bud:
Shape.—Oblate.
Length.—Approximately 1.8 cm.
Diameter.—Approximately 2.5 cm.
Color.—Near RHS Yellow-Green 145A flushed Red 53C.
Sepals:
Quantity.—2 to 4.
Length.—2 to 3 cm.
Width.—2 cm.
Shape.—Deltate.
Aspect.—Flat.
Attitude.—Horizontal.
Apex.—Acute.
Base.—Truncate.
Margin.—Entire.
Color.—Interior Surface: RHS Green 137C. Exterior Surface: RHS Green 137C.
Texture.—Glabrous.
Fragrance: Light, honeylike.

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

Androecium:
Stamens:
Quantity.—80 to 100.
Length.—15 to 20 mm.
Color.—Yellow 9C, center section Red 54D.
Anthers:
Shape.—Linear or curled.
Length.—3 to 4 mm.
Color.—Yellow 7A.
Gynoecium:
Pistil:
Type.—Compound. Partly Petaloid.
Number.—3.
Carpel length.—1.6 cm.
Carpel width.—1.2 cm.
Carpel pubescence.—Medium.
Openness of disc.—Partly open.
Color of disc.—Light green.
Stigma.—5 mm long and 4 mm in diameter. Shape: Irregular circular. Color: Near RHS Red 53C.
Ovary color.—Near RHS Yellow-Green 145C.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

Disease and pest resistance: Observed resistance to foliar diseases of *Paeonia*. Typical foliar diseases of *Paeonia* include *Botrytis paeoniae, Graphiopsis chlorocephala* and *Phytophthora*. sp. No additional resistance nor susceptibility to the normal diseases and pests of *Paeonia* has been observed.
Temperature tolerance: Typically USDA Zones 3 to 8.
Fruit/seed production: Not observed.

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Paeonia* plant named 'Smithopus3' as herein illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3