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

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(54) **SALVIA PLANT NAMED ‘EGGBEN002’**

(50) Latin Name: *Salvia microphylla* × *greggii*
Varietal Denomination: **EGGBEN002**

(76) Inventor: **Steven Eggleton**, Wonga Park (AU)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 81 days.

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **Plt./475**

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

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct *Salvia* cultivar named ‘EGGBEN002’ is disclosed, characterized by a dense, bushy plant habit, salmon colored flowers and a rigid, short inflorescence. The new variety is a *Salvia*, normally produced as an outdoor garden or container plant.

2 Drawing Sheets

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2

Latin name of the genus and species: *Salvia microphylla* × *greggii*.
Variety denomination: ‘EGGBEN002’.

3. Short inflorescence.
4. Strong, rigid inflorescence.
5. Dense plant habit.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The new *Salvia* cultivar is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the inventor, Steve Eggleton, in Wonga Park, Victoria, Australia. The objective of the breeding program was to produce new *Salvia* varieties with denser plant habits, strong garden performance, in a range of flower colors. The cross resulting in this new variety was made during April 2006.

The seed parent is the unpatented, *Salvia microphylla* ‘Ribbongelle’. The pollen parent is the unpatented, proprietary variety *Salvia greggii* ‘005’. The new variety was identified as a potentially interesting selection in October 2006, at a research greenhouse in Wonga Park, Australia. Further observations and evaluations were made during 2007.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ by vegetative cuttings was first performed during 2007, at a research greenhouse in Wonga Park. Subsequent propagation has shown that the unique features of this cultivar are stable and reproduced true to type on successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ 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 ‘EGGBEN002’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘EGGBEN002’ as a new and distinct *Salvia* cultivar:

1. Bushy plant habit.
2. Salmon colored flowers.

PARENT COMPARISON

Plants of the new cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ are similar to plants of the seed parent, *Salvia microphylla* ‘Ribbongelle’ in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of the new cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ are denser, with a less upright plant habit. Additionally, foliage of the parent variety is not as glossy as that of the new cultivar.

Plants of the new cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ are similar to plants of the pollen parent, *Salvia greggii* ‘005’ in most horticultural characteristics, however, plants of the new cultivar ‘EGGBEN002’ produce salmon colored flowers whereas the pollen parent produces red flowers.

COMMERCIAL COMPARISON

Plants of the new cultivar are best compared to the commercial variety *Salvia greggii* ‘Navajo Salmon Red’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 14,976. Plants of the new variety produce lighter colored salmon flowers, and tolerate humid conditions better than the comparator. Additionally, the varieties differ in leaf shape.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photograph in FIG. 1 illustrates in full color a typical flower of ‘EGGBEN002’.

FIG. 2 illustrates in full color a typical plant of ‘EGGBEN002’ grown in a greenhouse, in Watsonville, Calif., in a commercial 8 inch container. Age of the plant photographed is approximately 20 weeks from an unrooted cutting. 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 except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

The following observations and measurements describe 'EGGBEN002' plants grown in a greenhouse in Watsonville, Calif. The growing temperature ranged from 10° C. to 28° C. The greenhouse is un-shaded, giving bright, normal sunlight conditions. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plant types.

Botanical classification: *Salvia microphylla* × *greggii* cultivar 'EGGBEN002'.

PROPAGATION

Time to initiate roots: About 5-8 days at approximately 25° C.

Root description: Fine, densely fibrous.

Time to produce a rooted cutting: About 21 days at 25° C.

PLANT

Growth habit: Upright annual.

Pot size of plant described: 6 inch pot.

Height: Approximately 32 cm to top of foliage. Approximately 42 cm to top of flowering plane. Measured from soil level of pot.

Plant Spread: Approximately 24 cm.

Growth rate: Rapid.

Branching characteristics: Free-branching, Approximately 6 primary branches.

Length of primary lateral branches: Approximately 35 cm.

Diameter of lateral branches: Approximately 0.35 cm.

Quantity of lateral branches: About 12 to 18.

Stem:

Color.—Near RHS Green 138A.

Pubescence.—Minute pubescence.

Internode length: Approximately 2.0 to 3.0 cm.

Age of plant described: Approximately 20 weeks from an unrooted cutting.

FOLIAGE

Leaf:

Arrangement.—Opposite.

Quantity.—Approximately 14 fully expanded per main branch.

Average length.—Approximately 4.8 cm., including petiole.

Average width.—Approximately 2.1 cm.

Shape of blade.—Obovate.

Apex.—Obtuse.

Base.—Obtuse to nearly truncate.

Attachment.—Stalked.

Margin.—Crenate.

Texture of top surface.—Matte, minute, coarse pubescence.

Texture of bottom surface.—Matte, minute, coarse pubescence.

Color.—Young foliage upper side: Near RHS Green 137A. Young foliage under side: Near RHS Green 137B. Mature foliage upper side: Near RHS Green 137A. Mature foliage under side: Near RHS Green 138A.

Venation.—Type: Pinnate. Venation color upper side: Near RHS Yellow-Green 144A. Venation color under side: Near RHS Green 143C.

Petiole.—Average Length: Approximately 1.2 cm. Diameter: Approximately 0.1 cm. Color: Near Green 143C.

FLOWER

Natural flowering season: Flowering from early Spring through late Summer.

Inflorescence type and habit: Flowers arranged in verticillasters on spikes.

Flower longevity on plant: Individual flowers last approximately 1 week on the plant. Each spike lasts approximately 7 weeks with flowers.

Quantity of flowers: About 8 buds and 6 fully opened flowers per spike, at one time. Mature plants have approximately 8 to 14 spikes.

Spike size:

Diameter.—Approximately 6.0 cm.

Height.—Approximately 8.0 cm.

Individual flowers:

Size.—Diameter: Approximately 2.1 cm. Length: Approximately 2.6 cm.

Persistence.—Non-persistent.

Fragrance.—Moderate, typical *Salvia* scent.

Corolla:

Petal arrangement.—The corolla is sympetalous and typically bilabiate with 2 small, highly fused lobes forming an upper lip and 3 larger highly fused lobes forming a lower lip.

Margin.—Nearly entire, slightly scalloped.

Tip shape.—Upper lip tip retuse, lower lip tip rounded with scallops.

Length.—Upper lip Approximately 1.1 cm, lower lip Approximately 1.5 cm. Tube length Approximately 2.0 cm.

Width.—Upper lip Approximately 0.4 cm, lower lip Approximately 1.9 cm. Tube width Approximately 0.7 cm.

Texture.—Upper lip: Highly pubescent on exterior surface. Interior surface glabrous. Lower lip: Glabrous all surfaces.

Color:

Upper lip.—When opening: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 36D, slight flush near Red 39A. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 39A. Fully opened: Inner surface: Near RHS White 155A. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 47C. Fading: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 36C. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 51C, base near Red 51B.

Color:

Lower lip.—When opening: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 52A. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 52A with flush near Red 40D. Fully opened: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 43C. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 48C. Fading: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 54B. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 55C.

Color:

Tube.—When opening: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 38D. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 47D. Fully opened: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 49C. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 48C. Fading: Inner surface: Near RHS Red 55D. Outer surface: Near RHS Red 48D.

Bud:

Shape.—Ovoid.

Length.—Approximately 1.3 cm.

Diameter.—Approximately 0.5 cm.

Color.—Near RHS Red 52A.

Calyx:

Length.—Approximately 1.3 cm.

Diameter.—Approximately 0.7 cm.

Shape.—Tubular.

Sepals:

Shape.—Quantity per flower: 3, fused to form a tube.

Unfused Apex: Length: Approximately 0.5 cm.

Width: Approximately 0.6 cm.

Margin.—Entire.

Apex.—Acute.

Texture.—Pubescent.

Color.—Immature: Near RHS Green 138A. Mature:

Near RHS Green 138A with very faint flush near

Greyed-Purple N186A.

Peduncle:

Length.—Average 1.5 cm.

Diameter.—0.3 cm. Color: Near RHS Green 137C,

occasional thin stripe near Greyed-Purple N186DB.

Orientation.—Upright, straight.

Strength.—Strong.

Texture.—Pubescent.

Pedicels:

Length.—Average 0.2 cm.

Diameter.—0.1 cm. Color: Near RHS Greyed-Purple N187A.

Orientation.—Straight, approximately 45 degree angle from attachment.

Strength.—Flexible.

Texture.—Pubescent.

REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS

5 Stamens:

Number.—2.

Filament length.—Approximately 1.3, approximately 0.6 cm of length fused to petal.

Filament color.—Near RHS White N155B.

10 Anthers:

Shape.—Very narrowly elliptic.

Length.—Approximately 3 mm.

Color.—Near RHS Greyed-Yellow 161A.

Pollen.—Moderate colored near Yellow-Orange 23B.

15 Pistil:

Number.—1.

Length.—Approximately 2.8 cm.

Style.—Length: Approximately 2.7 cm. Color: Near RHS White N155B.

20 *Stigma*.—Shape: Linear, curled. Color: Near RHS Red-Purple 61A. Ovary color: Near RHS Green-Yellow 1B.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

25 Seeds and fruits: Not observed to date.

Disease/pest resistance: Neither resistance nor susceptibility to pathogens and pests common to *Salvia* have been observed.

Temperature tolerance: The new variety tolerates temperatures between 5 to 35° C.

30 What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Salvia* plant named 'EGGBEN002' as herein illustrated and described.

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2