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Stemkens

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(54) **VERBENA PLANT NAMED 'DARKEYENA'**

(50) Latin Name: *Verbena*×*hybrida*
Varietal Denomination: **Darkeyena**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./308
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct variety of *Verbena* plant particularly distinguished by its deep blue flower with a white eye, early flowering and a habit that is semi-erect and later spreading.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Latin name of the genus and species of the plant claimed:
Verbenaxhybrida.

Varietal denomination: 'Darkeyena'.

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

The present invention comprises a new distinct cultivar of *Verbena*, botanically known as *Verbenaxhybrida*.

The new cultivar is propagated from cuttings resulting from the cross of 'X585' and 'A714'. 'X585' is a purple flowering *Verbena* having a semi-erect habit. 'X585' is not commercially available and is not known by any synonyms. 'A714' is a blue flowering *Verbena* having a spreading habit. 'A714' is not commercially available and is not known by any synonyms. Neither 'X585' or 'A714' has been patented.

As a result of this cross the present cultivar was created in 2000 in Enkhuizen, Netherlands and has been repeatedly asexually reproduced by cuttings in Enkhuizen, Netherlands and Sarrians, France over a three year period. It has been found to retain its distinctive characteristics through successive propagations, and this novelty appears to be firmly fixed.

This new *Verbena* plant is an annual in most climatical zones in the US, only in zones 9 and 10 it is a perennial plant.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

This new *Verbena* plant is illustrated by the accompanying photographic drawing which shows blooms, buds and foliage of the plant in full color, the color shown being as true as can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic procedures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW CULTIVAR

The following detailed descriptions set forth the distinctive characteristics of this new *Verbena*. The data that define these characteristics were collected from asexual reproductions carried out in Enkhuizen, Netherlands. The plant history was taken on 14 weeks old plants, blossomed under natural light in a greenhouse and grown in a 10.5 cm container. Colour readings were taken in the greenhouse under ambient light. Colour references are primarily to The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society of London.

TABLE 1

Differences between the new cultivar 'Darkeyena', its parents and a similar cultivar

	'Darkeyena'	'X585'	'A714'	'Wyena'
Flower color	Deep blue	Purple	Blue	Burgundy
Earliness	Mid early	Late	Early	Early
Seed set	No	No	Much	No

The commercial name of the most resembling variety is 'Babylon Purple'. The patented name of this variety is 'Wyena' and its U.S. Plant Pat. No. is 12,292.

The plant:

Classification.—Botanical: *Verbenaxhybrida*.

Parentage.—Female parent: A seedling named 'X585' is one of our seedlings from our X-generation of plants bred in 1995. Pollen parent: A seedling named 'A714' is one of our seedlings from our A-generation of plants bred in 1997.

Growth habit.—Semi-erect, later spreading, decumbent.

Plant height.—14–18 cm.

Spreading area of plant.—32–58 cm.

Growth rate.—Vigorous.

Strength.—Resistant to hot (30° C.–40° C.) and cold (0° C.–10° C.) weather.

Branching character.—Freely branching and lateral branching at every node.

Blooming period.—From April until November.

35 The stem:

Diameter.—2–2.5 mm.

Length.—10–15 cm.

Shape.—Tetragonal.

Anthocyanin pigmentation.—Absent.

Color of the stem.—141B.

Length of internode.—18–34 mm, depending on the light where the plant is propagated.

Pubescence.—Slightly pubescent.

Length lateral branches.—15–19 cm.

The foliage:

Phyllotaxis.—Opposite.
Shape of blade.—Ovate.
Texture.—Upper side: Smooth. Lower side: Smooth.
Venation.—Pinnate.
Leaf margin.—Incised.
Leaf base.—Obtuse.
Leaf apex.—Acute.
Length.—14–24 mm.
Width.—14–20 mm.
Depth of incision.—2–4 mm.
Number of incisions.—3–6 per leaf.
Color.—Upper side: 141B. Lower side: 141C.
Pubescence.—Some pubescence is present.
Length of leaf stem.—2–5 mm.
Petiole surface structure.—Slightly pubescent.
Petiole diameter.—2–3 mm.
Petiole coloration.—141B.

The bud:

Peduncle length.—35–60 mm, depending on season.
Peduncle diameter.—2–3 mm.
Peduncle color.—141C.
Bud size.—Diameter: 3 mm. Length: 8–12 mm.
Bud shape.—Elongated and ovate.
Bud color.—137B.
Sepals.—Color (upper side): 137C. Color (lower side): 137C. Form: Upright. Number: 5, fused. Length: 7–9 mm. Width: 2 mm. Shape: Elongated. Apex: Emarginate. Base: Fused. Margin: Entire.

The flower:

Flower diameter.—14–22 mm.
Flower height.—12–16 mm.
Flower tube length.—12–14 mm.
Flower throat diameter.—2–3 mm.
Inflorescence.—Corymb.
Flower-form.—Single, salverform; sessile on terminal corymbs.
Petal color.—Upper side: 71C, bleaching to 75B. Lower side: N89A.
Eye.—A small (3 mm) whitish Eye (N155A) is present on all petals at their base.
Overlapping of petals.—Separate.
No. of petals.—Gamopetalous, 5 lobed.

Petal apex.—Obcordate.
Petal base.—Fused.
Petal margin.—Entire.
Petal surface texture.—Smooth.
Size of the petal.—Length: 6–8 mm. Width: 4–6 mm.
Inflorescence.—Length: 25–35 mm. Diameter: 25–40 mm.
Calyx length.—12–14 mm.
Calyx diameter.—3–4 mm.
Anthocyanin pigmentation of calyx limb.—Absent.
Color of the calyx.—137C.
No. of flowers per inflorescence.—35–50.
Fragrance.—A very light pansylike fragrance is present.
Bloom time of one inflorescence.—New florets continue to open in one corymb over a period of 14 days.
Lastingness of one flower.—2 to 4 days.

Reproductive organs:

Androecium.—Stamens quantity: 4. Anther shape: Ovoid. Anther length: 1 mm. Anther color: 144A. Pollen amount: No pollen.
Gynoecium.—Pistils quantity: 1. Pistil length: 2.0–2.4 cm. Stigma shape: Bi-lobed. Stigma color: 144B. Style length: 1.9 cm. Style color: 144C. Ovary color: 144C.

No seedset is observed.

Roots:

Type of roots.—Fibrous, color 155C. Roots start to grow on every part of the stem that contacts the soil, so not only at the nodes.

Physiological and ecological characteristics: Good tolerance to heat and cold.

Disease/pest resistance: Plants of the new *Verbena* have been observed to have strong resistance to diseases and pests, particularly to Powdery Mildew.

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct variety of *Verbena* plant named 'Darkeyena', substantially as illustrated and described herein.

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