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(54) **HYDRANGEA PLANT NAMED ‘LC NO4’**

(50) Latin Name: *Hydrangea paniculata*
Varietal Denomination: **LC NO4**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Hydrangea* plant named ‘LC NO4’, characterized by its relatively compact and broadly upright plant habit; freely branching habit with strong lateral branches; freely flowering habit with plants remaining in flower for a long period time; hardy inflorescences with white-colored sterile flowers that age attractively to greyed purple in color with development; and good garden performance.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical designation: *Hydrangea paniculata*.
Cultivar denomination: ‘LC NO4’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Hydrangea* plant, botanically known as *Hydrangea paniculata*, commercially referred to as a Hardy or Panicked *Hydrangea* and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘LC NO4’.

The new *Hydrangea* plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Boskoop, The Netherlands. The objective of the breeding program is to create new *Hydrangea* plants with uniform plant habit and attractive inflorescences.

The new *Hydrangea* plant originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in July, 2013 in Boskoop, The Netherlands, of *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Bombshell’, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 21,008, as the female, or seed, parent with *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Silver Dollar’, not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent.

The new *Hydrangea* plant was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a single flowering plant from within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse environment in Boskoop, The Netherlands during the summer of 2016.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Hydrangea* plant by vegetative tip cuttings in a controlled environment in Boskoop, The Netherlands since the summer of 2016 has shown that the unique features of this new *Hydrangea* plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have not been observed under all possible combinations of environmental conditions

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and cultural practices. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environmental conditions such as temperature 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 ‘LC NO4’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘LC NO4’ as a new and distinct *Hydrangea* plant:

1. Relatively compact and broadly upright plant habit.
2. Freely branching habit with strong lateral branches.
3. Freely flowering habit with plants remaining in flower for a long period time.
4. Hardy inflorescences with white-colored sterile flowers that age attractively to greyed purple in color with development.
5. Good garden performance.

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* can be compared to plants of the female parent, ‘Bombshell’. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* differ primarily from plants of ‘Bombshell’ in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* are more upright than and not as drooping as plants of ‘Bombshell’.
2. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have more open and not as dense as inflorescences than plants of ‘Bombshell’.

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* can be compared to plants of the male parent, ‘Silver Dollar’. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* differ primarily from plants of ‘Silver Dollar’ in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* are more compact than plants of ‘Silver Dollar’.
2. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have smaller leaves than plants of ‘Silver Dollar’.

Plants of the new *Hydrangea* can be compared to plants of the *Hydrangea paniculata* ‘Jane’, disclosed in U.S. Plant

Pat. No. 22,330. In side-by-side comparisons, plants of the new *Hydrangea* differ primarily from plants of 'Jane' in the following characteristics:

1. Leaves of plants of the new *Hydrangea* are darker green in color than leaves of plants of 'Jane'.
2. Sterile flowers of plants of the new *Hydrangea* are white in color whereas sterile flowers of plants of 'Jane' are light green in color.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the unique appearance of the new *Hydrangea* 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 from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new *Hydrangea* plant.

The photograph on the first sheet (FIG. 1 of 2) is a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'LC NO4'.

The photograph on the second sheet (FIG. 2 of 2) is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of 'LC NO4'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

Plants used in the aforementioned photographs and in the following description were grown during the late summer in 15-cm containers in an outdoor nursery in Boskoop, The Netherlands and under cultural practices typical of commercial *Hydrangea* production. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from about 16° C. to 25° C. and night temperatures ranged from about averaged 5° C. to 16° C. Plants of the new *Hydrangea* were pinched one time and were two years old when the photographs and description were taken. As a Hardy or Panicked *Hydrangea*, plants of the new *Hydrangea* are typically not treated with aluminum sulfate to "blue" the inflorescences. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2015 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. Botanical description: *Hydrangea paniculata* 'LC NO4'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—*Hydrangea paniculata* 'Bombshell', disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 21,008.

Male, or pollen, parent.—*Hydrangea paniculata* 'Silver Dollar', not patented.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—By vegetative tip cuttings.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About 20 days at temperatures about 16° C. to 30° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About 50 days at temperatures about 16° C. to 30° C.

Root description.—Medium in thickness, fibrous; typically light brown in color, actual color of the roots is dependent on substrate composition, water quality, fertilizer type and formulation, substrate temperature and physiological age of roots.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching; dense.

Plant description:

Plant and growth habit.—Relatively compact, broadly upright and rounded plant habit; overall plant shape, obovate to broadly oblong; strong and sturdy stems; moderately vigorous to vigorous growth habit and moderate to rapid growth rate.

Plant height.—About 75 cm.

Plant diameter or area of spread.—About 55.3 cm.

Lateral branch description:

Branching habit.—Freely branching habit; when pinched, about ten lateral branches develop per plant.

Length.—About 57.9 cm.

Diameter.—About 4 mm.

Internode length.—About 3.7 cm.

Texture.—When developing, densely pubescent; fully developed, woody.

Aspect.—Upright to about 35° from vertical.

Strength.—Strong, sturdy.

Color.—When developing: Close to 183D. Developed: Close to between N199B and 200D; when woody, close to 199B, 199C and 200D.

Lenticels.—Density: Sparse. Size: About 1.5 mm by 0.75 mm. Color: Close to 173D.

Leaf description:

Arrangement.—Opposite, simple.

Length.—About 6.5 cm.

Width.—About 4.2 cm.

Shape.—Ovate.

Apex.—Acuminate to apiculate.

Base.—Obtuse.

Margin.—Serrate.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Moderately pubescent, scabrous; slightly rugose.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate.

Color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to 137A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Close to 138B. Fully developed leaves, upper surface: Slightly darker than between 138A and 143A; venation, close to 152A, towards the base, close to 178B. Fully developed leaves, lower surface: Close to between 138B and 147C; venation, close to 195C, towards the base, strongly tinged with close to 185B.

Petioles.—Length: About 1 cm. Diameter: About 1.75 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous; margins, moderately pubescent. Color, upper surface: Close to 183A. Color, lower surface: Close to 184A.

Flower description:

Flower type and habit.—Showy sterile flowers and small inconspicuous fertile flowers arranged on terminal panicles; panicles broadly ovate to nearly orbicular in shape; sterile flowers face upright to outwardly and slightly drooping depending on their position in the inflorescence; fertile flowers face mostly upright.

Fragrance.—Faintly fragrant; sweet and pleasant.

Natural flowering season.—Flowering begins in the midsummer and is continuous until late summer in Northern Europe.

Flower longevity.—Sterile flowers last about six weeks on the plant, sterile flowers persistent; fertile flowers last about five days on the plant, fertile flowers not persistent.

Quantity of flowers.—Freely flowering habit; about 70 sterile flowers and about 120 fertile flowers per panicle.

Panicle height.—About 12.9 cm.

Panicle diameter.—About 13.8 cm.

Sterile flower buds.—Length: About 5 mm. Diameter: About 7 mm. Shape: Cup-shaped. Color: Close to 145C to 145D.

Fertile flower buds.—Length: About 4 mm. Diameter: About 3 mm. Shape: Obovate. Color: Close to 157D;

distally, strongly tinged with close to 63A; immature calyx, close to 145D to lighter than 145D.

Sterile flower diameter.—About 3.9 cm.

Sterile flower depth (height).—About 1 cm.

Fertile flower diameter.—About 9 mm.

Fertile flower depth (height).—About 5 mm.

Petals, sterile flowers.—Quantity and arrangement:

Four in a single whorl. Length: About 3.5 mm.

Width: About 2 mm. Shape: Ovate, concave. Apex:

Acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture and

luster, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous;

matte. Color: When opening and fully opened, upper

surface: Close to NN155D; color does not change

with development. When opening and fully opened,

lower surface: Close to NN155D; color does not

change with development.

Petals, fertile flowers.—Quantity and arrangement:

Five in a single whorl. Length: About 3.5 mm.

Width: About 2 mm. Shape: Ovate, concave. Apex:

Acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture and

luster, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous;

matte. Color: When opening and fully opened, upper

surface: Close to NN155D; color does not change

with development. When opening and fully opened,

lower surface: Close to NN155D; distally, slightly

tinged with close to 63D to lighter than 63D; color

does not change with development.

Sepals, sterile flowers.—Quantity and arrangement:

Typically four, or occasionally five or six, in a single

whorl. Length: About 2.2 cm. Width: About 1.5 cm.

Shape: Ovate to elliptic and broadly elliptic. Apex:

Acute to broadly acute. Base: Cuneate. Margin:

Serrate. Texture and luster, upper and lower surfaces:

Smooth, glabrous; matte. Color: When opening,

upper surface: Close to 155C. When opening, lower

surface: Close to 155D. Fully opened, upper surface:

Close to 155C; towards the apex and margins, tinged

with close to 62D; color becoming closer to 185D

with subsequent development. Fully opened, lower

surface: Close to 155A; color becoming closer to

186A to 186B with subsequent development.

Sepals, fertile flowers.—Quantity and arrangement:

Five in a single whorl. Length: About 1 mm. Width:

About 1.5 mm. Shape: Close to deltoid. Apex:

Broadly acuminate. Base: Broadly cuneate. Margin:

Entire. Texture and luster, upper and lower surfaces:

Smooth, glabrous; matte. Color: When opening and

fully opened, upper surface: Close to 157D; color does not change with development. When opening and fully opened, lower surface: Close to 157D; color does not change with development.

Pedicels, sterile flowers.—Length: About 2.6 cm.

Diameter: About 1 mm. Strength: Moderately strong.

Aspect: About 70° from branch axis. Texture and

luster: Moderately pubescent; matte. Color: Close to

155C.

Pedicels, fertile flowers.—Length: About 2 mm. Diam-

eter: About 0.5 mm. Strength: Moderately strong.

Aspect: About 20° from vertical. Texture and luster:

Densely pubescent; matte. Color: Close to 157D.

Reproductive organs, sterile flowers.—Stamens: Quan-

tity per flower: About ten. Filament length: About 3.5

mm. Filament color: Close to NN155C. Anther

length: About 0.5 mm. Anther shape: Broadly

oblong. Anther color: Close to 155A. Pollen amount:

Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 156A. Pistils: Pistil

quantity per flower: One. Pistil length: About 1 mm.

Stigma shape: Club-shaped. Stigma color: Close to

NN155D. Style length: About 0.5 mm. Style color:

Close to NN155D. Ovary color: Close to 157D.

Reproductive organs, fertile flowers.—Stamens: Quan-

tity per flower: About ten. Filament length: About 3.5

mm. Filament color: Close to NN155C. Anther

length: About 0.5 mm. Anther shape: Broadly

oblong. Anther color: Close to 155A. Pollen amount:

Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 156A. Pistils: Pistil

quantity per flower: Typically three, occasionally

two. Pistil length: About 1 mm. Stigma shape: Club-

shaped. Stigma color: Close to NN155D. Style

length: About 0.5 mm. Style color: Close to

NN155D. Ovary color: Close to 157A.

Seeds.—To date, seed production has not been observed

on plants of the new *Hydrangea*.

Pathogen & pest resistance: To date, under commercial

production conditions, plants of the new *Hydrangea* have

not been observed to be resistant to pathogens and pests

common to *Hydrangea* plants.

Garden performance: Plants of the new *Hydrangea* have

been observed have good garden performance and to be

suitable for USDA Hardiness Zones 5 through 9.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Hydrangea* plant named 'LC NO4'

as illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2

