A New Clematis Variety
‘Violet Lipstick’

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There are ~300 species of Clematis (Wang and Li 2005; Wu and Raven 2001), known as the “Queen of the Vines” due to their diverse flower types and brilliant colors (Grey 2000). They are excellent for home gardening and urban greening with more than 400 varieties planted worldwide (Beutler 2014). Despite the introduction of Clematis varieties to China since the 1990s, Chinese breeders have made limited progress in independently breeding their own Clematis varieties (Zhang et al. 2010). ‘Violet Lipstick’ demonstrates exceptional ornamental value and adaptability, making it a significant model for the development of new Clematis varieties.

Origin

This cultivar’s vibrant reddish-purple hue (Fig. 1A and B) originated from a distinct seedling of Clematis texensis ‘Cherry Lip’ in 2013. The seeds were collected from ‘Cherry Lip’, which features red flowers (Fig. 1C), and were planted in the Clematis Germplasm Resource Garden (Ningbo Ertao Clematis Agriculture Co., Zhejiang China). The plants produced fruits through open pollination, making the source of pollen from the male parent unknown. This particular plant, which displays a distinctive coloration, was meticulously preserved and cultivated separately. It has been propagated through stem cuttings since Jun 2016. After 5 years of continuous propagation and observation, subsequent generations have consistently maintained stable flower color and morphology. In 2022, it was named ‘Violet Lipstick’ and officially registered with the International Cultivar Registration Authority for the genus Clematis in Sep 2023.

Description

The flowering period of ‘Violet Lipstick’ is from May to September (outdoors), depending on the growth conditions of the current year. ‘Violet Lipstick’ produces hermaphrodite, single, bell-shaped flowers measuring 2 to 2.5 cm across. The flowers are borne individually in leaf axils or at the ends of branches and nod or droop. The four sepals are elliptic, thick, and fleshy. The petals exhibit a strong reddish-purple [N78A; Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) 2019] to strong purple (N80A) color on the outside, gradually lightening toward the tip. The filaments are white, and the anthers are light yellow. The leaves are divided with seven leaflets, initially green and turning dark green as they mature. The leaflets have a rounded or obtuse to acute apex, a coriaceous base, and entire margins.

Cultivation

Between May and September, mature branches are taken from the upper part of the parent plant as cuttings. Each cutting carries a pair of leaf nodes, and the stem is dipped into a rooting hormone solution (1000 mg L⁻¹ NAA) for 3 s before being inserted into vermiculite. A 0.5% fungicide solution is sprayed on the cuttings for sterilization. After ~30 d, the cuttings root and are transplanted into containers. The substrate is composed of a mixture of peat and perlite in a 1:1 volume ratio, with the addition of an appropriate amount of slow-release fertilizer. During the first 3 months after planting, it is important to control watering to promote root development. Watering should only be done when the surface of the substrate is dry during the vigorous growth period. These plants exhibit excellent cold and heat tolerance and can be cultivated in the

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Fig. 1. Photographs of Clematis ‘Violet Lipstick’ (A and B) and Clematis texensis ‘Cherry Lip’ (C).
southeast regions of China, including the Jian-gnan area. They are adaptable to US Depart-ment of Agriculture Hardiness Zones 4–9 (US Department of Agriculture 1990).

**Performance**

Apart from its distinct flower color, ‘Violet Lipstick’ exhibits the same garden performance as *C. texensis* ‘Cherry Lip’ in terms of appearance and flowering habit. ‘Violet Lip-stick’ is suitable for both container and ground planting. This cultivar has been successfully planted in the cities of Hangzhou, Jiaxing, and Ningbo in Zhejiang Province, China.

**Availability**

‘Violet Lipstick’ has been authorized for new variety registration from internal cultivar registration authority for the genus *Clematis* (RHS) on 25 Sep 2023. Seedlings will be available from Ningbo Ertao Clematis Agriculture Co., Zhejiang, China.

**References Cited**


