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 (71) Applicant : **Soar, Margaret Shirley**
Grooms Cottage, 16 Heathfield Road
Sidcup, Kent BR2 6BQ (GB)

(72) Inventor : **Soar, Barry John**
Grooms Cottage, 16 Heathfield Road
Keston, Kent BR2 6BQ (GB)

 (74) Representative : **Connor, Terence Kevin**
T.K. Connor & Co. 19 Station Road
Sidcup, Kent DA15 7EB (GB)

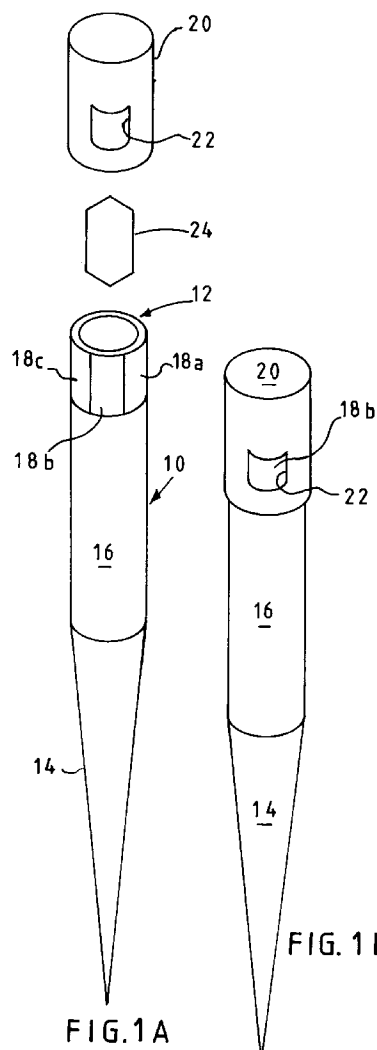
(54) Marking device.

(57) Marking devices for use with plants are described which are provided with elongate bodies in which detailed information concerning a particular plant may be provided on a plant label (24). The upper end of the body may carry a number of differently coloured and/or patterned sections which are normally covered by a skirt of a cap (20) for the device. The skirt is apertured to enable a user to provide that one or more of the sections is visible to give a quick indication of the particular treatment a plant may need.

An alternative arrangement provides that a number of different caps are provided - of different colours.

The marker may be supported adjacent a plant by being provided with a spike (14) at one end of the body. In the alternative the body, or a cap - if provided - may be apertured and receive a wire or cord by means of which the marker may be hung on a plant or a support adjacent a plant.

The body may be provided with a window (22) through which the information on a plant label may be read.



The present invention relates to marking devices, particularly for use in gardens, to enable gardeners to mark the positions at which plants or seedlings are located and which additionally will give an indication of how those plants should be treated and/or maintained.

It is traditional in gardening to provide a marker adjacent a line of sown seeds or seedlings or a plant or a row of plants to indicate the nature what the seeds, seedlings, plant or plants.

The marker may be provided as a flat stick on which the names of the plants or seedlings are written by the gardener as he has planted them. Alternatively, the marker may take any form and have fixed to it (for example by means of an elastic band) the packet or bag in which seeds planted adjacent the marker were provided.

Neither of these methods are truly satisfactory in providing an indication of the plants which have been planted - particularly in the climate of this country the information written on a flat stick, or provided on the paper packet or bag, can become illegible (in the latter case the material of the packet or bag may disintegrate in time).

An object of the present invention is to provide an arrangement which alleviates and/or overcomes this difficulty.

Many people today enjoy gardening but not all are expert gardeners and it is therefore desirable for them to be provided, as far as possible, with information concerning the plants that they keep in their garden - for example whether the plant should be lifted at the end of the season, what level of watering is required, when it is in bloom and what pests may be particularly attracted to the plant in question.

In view of the inexpert abilities of many gardeners many plants are lost because the individual gardener does not know - without reference to a book - what action should be taken in connection with each of the plants in his garden.

A second object of the present invention is to provide an arrangement which alleviates and or overcomes this difficulty.

In one aspect the invention provides a marking device for use with plants, the device being adapted to support so as to readily display information concerning a plant with which the marker is to be associated, the device further being provided with means enabling its mounting on or adjacent a plant with which it is to be used.

Advantageously, part of the device carries a plurality of differently coloured or patterned elements to each of which the user may assign a different aspect of plant care, the device further being provided with means wherein one or more of said elements may by a user be selectively displayed.

Preferably the device is provided with an elongate hollow body portion closable by a cap, a part of

the wall of the body portion being formed of transparent material to form a window, wherein the hollow body portion is operable in use to support means displaying through said window a selected one or more of said plurality of different elements.

The body portion may support an inner member sections of the surface of which inner member form said plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned elements and wherein said inner member is rotatable to bring one or more of said plurality of elements to a position in which they may be viewed through said window.

Alternatively the hollow body portion may be arranged to receive one or more insert elements selected by a user from a plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned insert elements.

An outer surface of the body portion may be provided with a plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned sections to each of which a user may assign a different aspect of plant care, and the device may be further provided with a cap mountable on the body portion and having a skirt which in use extends over the body portion and covers said sections, said skirt being apertured such that by appropriately positioning said cap a user may display one or more of said sections.

In this arrangement both the body portion and cap are preferably circular in section and the cap is rotatable by a user to enable display of a selected one or more of said sections.

A plurality of caps may be provided mountable on the body portion, the caps being differently coloured and/or patterned to enable a user to assign to each a different aspect of plant care, to enable a user to select from amongst the plurality a cap to mount on the body portion.

With advantage the marker may have an elongate hollow body portion for receiving a sheet carrying information concerning a plant with which the marker is to be associated.

In such an arrangement the hollow body portion is preferably provided with a window of transparent material through which information on said sheet may be viewed.

The sheet may be of a plastics material. The means for mounting the marker may comprise an elongate tapered section extending from one end of said body portion by means of which the marker may be mounted in the ground adjacent a plant with which it is to be associated.

The marker may be provided with means enabling its attachment to a plant or a support therefore.

Such means may be provided by forming an aperture in the body portion or a cap for the device if provided which aperture receives a wire, cord or string by which the marker may be attached to a plant or a support therefore.

Alternatively the body portion or a cap for the de-

vice if provided may carry means by which the marker may be clipped, clamped or otherwise attached to a plant or a support therefore.

In a second aspect the invention provides a receptacle for receiving seeds or other material usable by a gardener and which is to be sold, which receptacle comprises a device as defined above.

The above aspects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following description of various embodiments of the invention now made with reference to the accompanying drawing, in which:-

Figure 1 illustrates a first marker embodying the invention showing it at A and B respectively in an open and partially closed condition,

Figure 2 shows a second marker embodying the present invention showing it at A and B respectively in an open and closed condition,

Figure 3 illustrates a third marker embodying the present invention showing it in an open closed condition,

Figure 4 illustrates a fourth marker embodying the invention showing it in an open condition.

Figure 1 shows a marker embodying the invention to comprise an elongate hollow and generally cylindrical body 10 open at one end 12.

The other end of the body 10 terminates in a tapering portion of reducing diameter in moving from body 10 and forming a generally conical spike 14 which may be driven into the ground adjacent a plant or row of plants, seeds etc., with which the marker is to be associated.

The main part 16 of the body 10 in the arrangement of Figure 1 is of any desired colour, e.g. green, whilst the uppermost part is provided with a plurality of differently coloured sections three of which, 18A, 18B and 18C can be seen.

The marker is completed by a cap 20 adapted to be a friction fit on the end 12 of body 16. When fitted on body 16 the skirt of cap 20 extends from end 12 along the length of the body 16 by an amount which covers each of the differently coloured sections 18 formed on the body portion.

Cap 20 is provided with an aperture 22 such that when the cap is on the body 16 one of the coloured sections 18 can readily be seen by a user.

The main body portion 16 of the marker is operable to receive a plant label 24 on which may be provided detailed information concerning a plant with which the marker is to be used, and it will be appreciated that cap 20 on end 12 of body 16 will keep the label 24 within the body safe from the weather.

The positioning of cap 20 on the end 12 of body 16 may be selected by a user to allow one of the coloured areas 18 formed on the outer surface of the body 16 to be seen by the user and, can be used to give him - at a glance - information about the plant. For example, does it require regular watering, does it

need lifting in the autumn, does it need particular protection from aphids or other garden pests.

The marker shown in Figure 1 may be made of any suitable moulded plastics material.

A modified form of the marker shown in Figure 1 is shown Figure 2 and similar parts of that marker are given the same reference numerals.

The arrangement of Figure 2 is provided with an elongate hollow body 16 which is generally square in section. The four walls 18 of the body 16 at its open end 12 are provided as four differently coloured sections. The spike formation at the other, lower, end of body 16 is pyramidal in form.

A cap 20 is provided with an aperture 22 in its skirt, which by appropriate positioning of cap 20 on the end 12 of body 16 can be arranged to allow a viewer readily to see any one of the upper sections 18 of the wall 16.

Once again a plant label 24 may be located within the body 16 of the marker.

In the arrangement of Figure 2 one wall of the body 16 may be provided with a transparent window 26 allowing label 24 to be read therethrough if desired.

The window 26 of Figure 2 is preferably of a material which will screen out actinic radiation falling on the marker thereby preventing the information on label 24 fading. Desirably the plant label is of a plastics material.

Figure 3 shows a marker which is similar to that shown in Figure 1 and again similar parts are given the same reference numerals.

The marker of Figure 3 is similar to that shown in Figure 1 save that the upper, coloured, sections 18 provided on the outer wall of body 16 of the marker are omitted and in that a plurality of differently coloured caps 20' are provided.

It will be seen with this arrangement a user may select a cap of a particular colour which he wishes to give him an indication at a later date of any particular treatment a plant may require.

It is possible for a range of caps of different colours - or combinations of colours - to be provided and in this way to give an indication to the gardener that a plant needs particularly careful watering, feeding and is, for example, is susceptible to attack by aphids.

As in the earlier described arrangements the body 16 of the marker shown in Figure 3 is hollow and is capable of receiving a label giving more detailed information concerning the plant.

In distinction to the arrangements shown in Figures 1 and 2 in which the cap is a friction fit pushed onto the end of body 16 - the cap shown in Figure 3 may be fitted on end 12 of body 16 in any suitable way - for example it may be screwed into position on it.

Figure 4 shows a marker having features in common with the marker shown in Figure 1 and again similar parts are given the same reference numerals.

The marker of Figure 4 is similar to that shown in Figure 1 and is provided with an elongate hollow body 16 which is generally circular in section and is open at one end 12. Sections 18A, 18B and 18C of the upper portion of the body 16 are differently coloured and it will be noted that the upper end of the body portion 16 is provided with a bead 30 extending there around.

The generally elongate hollow body portion may receive a plant label which can be viewed through a transparent window of the body portion as with the earlier described markers. The cap 20 for the marker shown in Figure 1 is provided with an aperture 22 through which a selected one of the sections 18 on the outer surface of the body portion 16 may be viewed.

The lower portion of the inner surface of the skirt of the cap 20 is provided with a bead 32. The upper portion of the cap 20 is provided with two apertures 34 through which is passed a wire, cord or piece of twine 36 to form a loop as shown by means of which the marker may be supported on a plant (e.g. a tree or shrub) or on a support for or adjacent to a plant.

With the particular arrangement shown after a label has been placed in the body 16 and cap 20 pushed onto the end of the body the beads 32 and 30 of the cap and body respectively cooperate to hold the cap and body together. Thereafter the loop of cord or twine 34 may be used to hang the marker on a plant (if it be a large one) or a support adjacent the plant. In this way the efficacy of the marker embodying the present invention is increased.

If desired the marker shown in Figure 4 may be provided with a tapering bottom section as shown in dotted outline at 14. However, it will be appreciated that markers such as are shown in Figure 4 need not be provided with this spike formation if their intended use is to be hung on a plant (e.g. a tree or shrub).

It will be noted that if desired markers embodying the present invention may be provided as containers or receptacles for seed or other material usable by a gardener (for example fertiliser material) and which is to be sold, that is to say the hollow body 16 may contain seeds or other material which are being sold by a supplier.

In this is the case it will be appreciated the colour of the cap and/or body of the marker can be pre-determined by the seed supplier to give an indication to the eventual purchaser of the seeds of any particular treatment which they require.

All the above described arrangements are made of any suitable plastics material.

It will be appreciated that various modifications may be made to the arrangements described without departing from the scope of the present invention for example the body 16 provided in the arrangements of Figures 1 and 3 may be provided with a centrally located holder for receiving the plant label, which holder is rotatable to bring differently coloured sections

thereof into juxtaposition with a window formed in one wall of the hollow body portion. Again, the colour of a plant label or other insert placed in the hollow body to be visible through the window may be arranged to provide the desired indication - the cap and body being of one solid colour.

As described above the indication given by a marker embodying the present invention is by providing that certain, differently, coloured sections of the device are made visible to a user. It will be appreciated that, if desired, the indication to be given by the marker may be provided additionally and/or alternatively by providing sections which are of different patterns. Thus in this way the markers of the present invention will be of use to those who have poor colour vision.

If desired the marker may be provided with a solid body having differently coloured sections at the end thereof for use with a cap of the form shown in Figures 1 and 2 or of a solid colour and adapted for use with a plurality of differently coloured caps as described with reference to Figure 3. Whilst this will decrease the utility of the marker in supporting information concerning particular plants it will still enable a person to use them to indicate general information about them - as described above.

Although the arrangement of Figure 4 provides that the marker is supported on a plant, or a support for a plant, by means of a wire, cord or twine passing through an aperture in the cap it will be appreciated that other methods of supporting the marker may be used for example the marker may be supported on a plant, or a support adjacent the plant, by any suitable clamping or clipping means provided on the cap or body of the allowing it to be fixed in a desired position.

It is believed embodiments of the present invention provide, for gardeners, significant advantages provided in other forms - for example as labels which are stuck onto the marker body or cap as desired by a user.

It is believed embodiments of the present invention provide, for gardeners, significant advantages over the arrangements presently used to provide an indication of plants and of ways in which they should be treated.

Claims

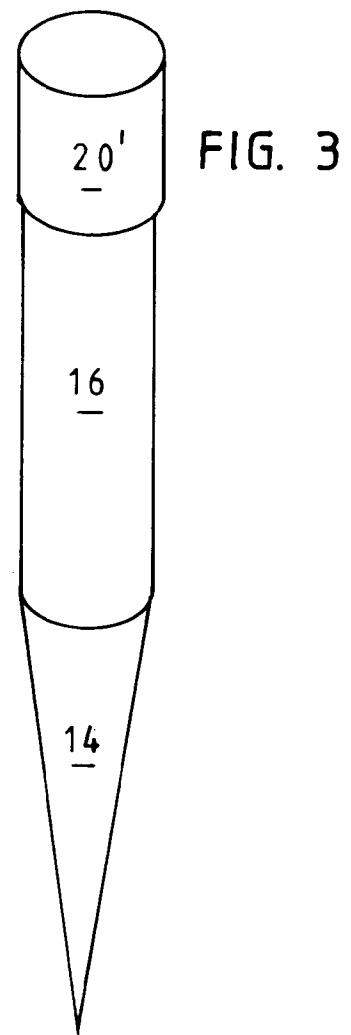
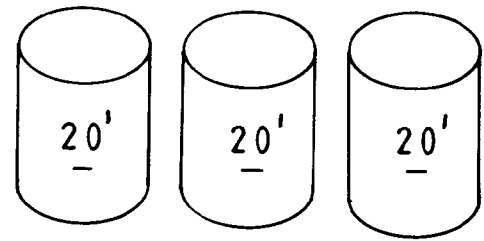
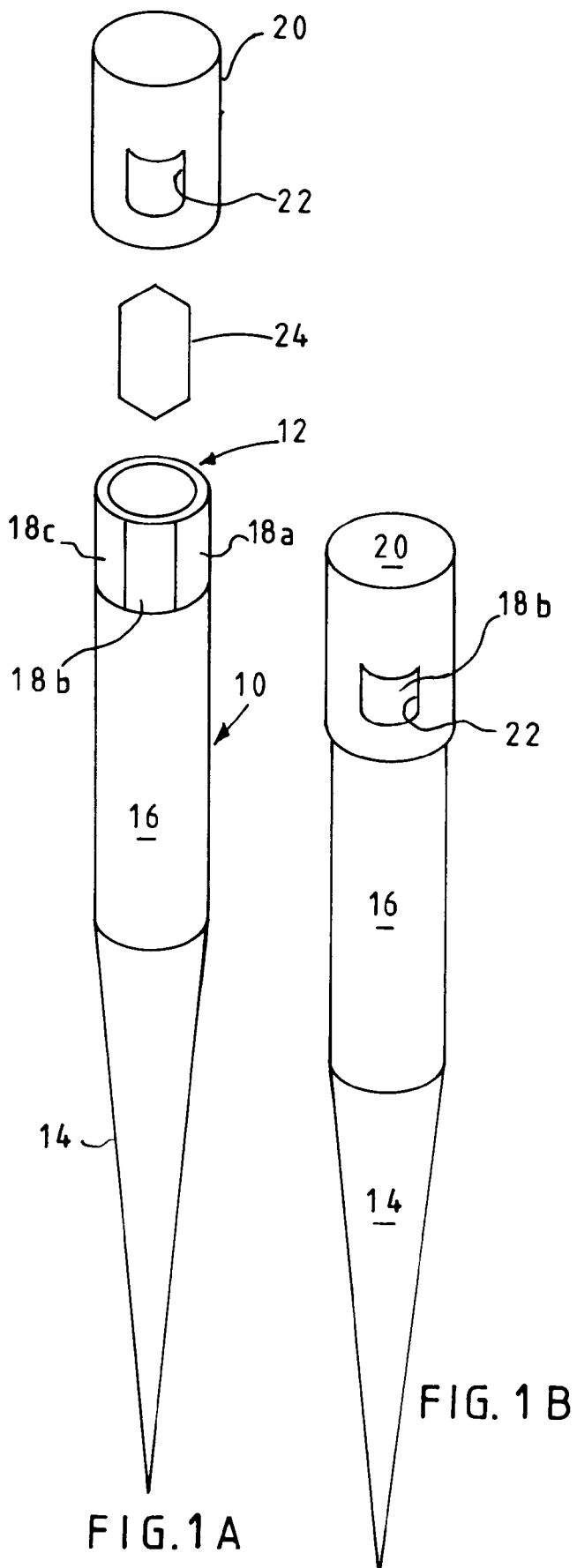
1. A marking device for use with plants, the device being adapted to support so as to readily display information concerning a plant with which the marker is to be associated, the device further being provided with means enabling its mounting on or adjacent a plant with which it is to be used.
2. A marking device as claimed in Claim 1, wherein part of the device carries a plurality of differently

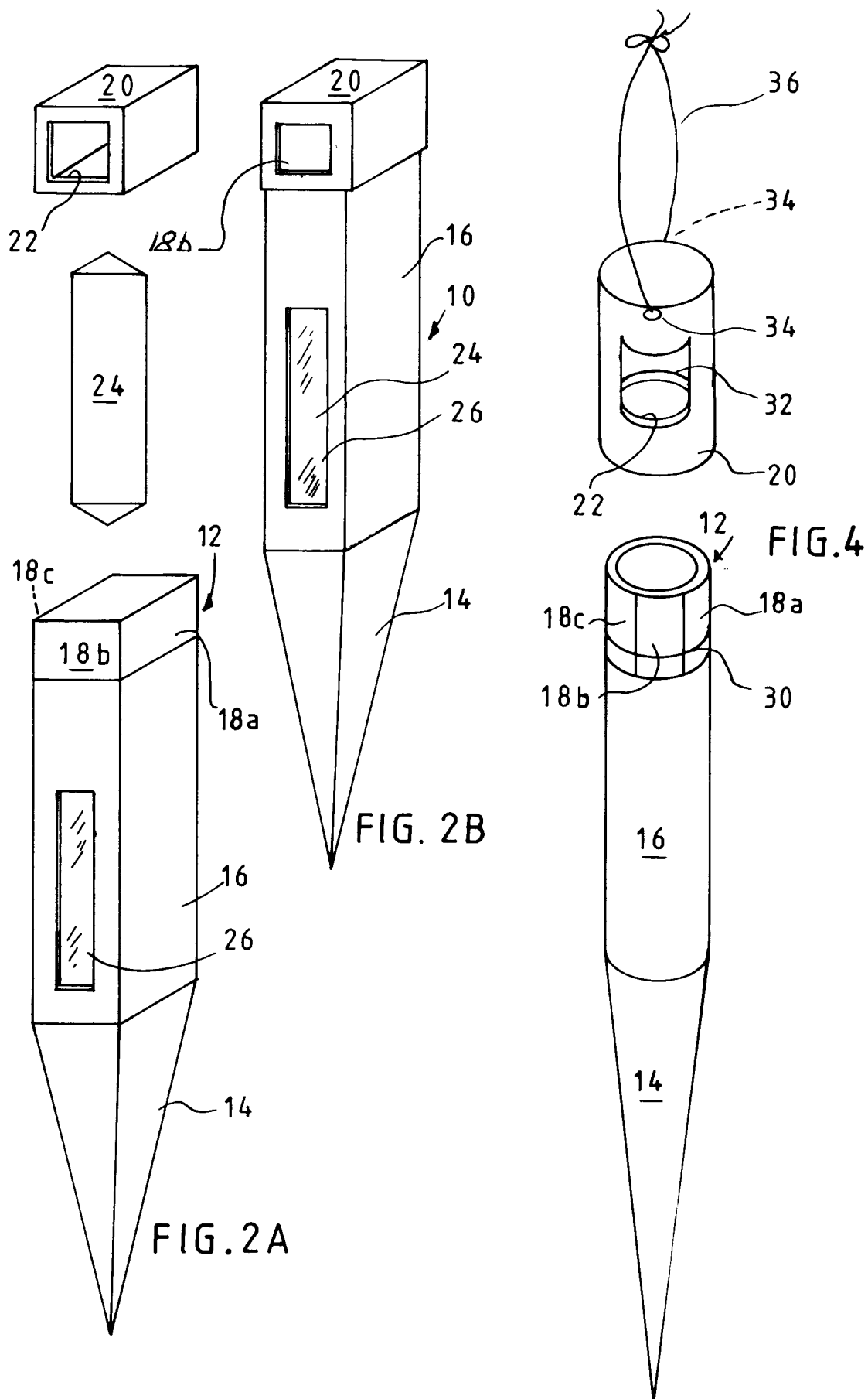
coloured or patterned elements to each of which the user may assign a different aspect of plant care, the device further being provided with means wherein one or more of said elements may by a user be selectively displayed.

3. A marking device as claimed in Claim 2, being provided with an elongate hollow body portion closable by a cap, a part of the wall of the body portion being formed of transparent material to form a window, wherein the hollow body portion is operable in use to support means displaying through said window a selected one or more of said plurality of different elements. 5
4. A marker as claimed in Claim 3, wherein said body portion supports an inner member sections of the surface of which inner member form said plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned elements and wherein said inner member is rotatable to bring one or more of said plurality of elements to a position in which they may be viewed through said window. 10
5. A marker as claimed in Claim 3, wherein said hollow body portion is arranged to receive one or more insert elements selected by a user from a plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned insert elements. 15
6. A marker as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein an outer surface of the body portion is provided with a plurality of differently coloured and/or patterned sections to each of which a user may assign a different aspect of plant care, the device being further provided with a cap mountable on the body portion and having a skirt which in use extends over the body portion and covers said sections, said skirt being apertured such that by appropriately positioning said cap a user may display one or more of said sections. 20
7. A marker as claimed in Claim 6, wherein the body portion and cap are each circular in section and the cap is rotatable by a user to enable display of a selected one or more of said sections. 25
8. A marker as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, and a plurality of caps mountable thereon, the caps being differently coloured and/or patterned to enable a user to assign to each a different aspect of plant care, and allow him to select from amongst the plurality a cap to mount on the body portion. 30
9. A marker as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 8, and provided with an elongate hollow body portion for receiving a sheet carrying information 35

concerning a plant with which the marker is to be associated.

10. A marker as claimed in Claim 9, wherein said hollow body portion is provided with a window of transparent material through which information on said sheet may be viewed. 40
11. A marker as claimed in Claim 9 or Claim 10, wherein said sheet is of a plastics material. 45
12. A marker as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein said means for mounting the marker comprises an elongate tapered section extending from one end of said body portion by means of which the marker may be mounted in the ground adjacent a plant with which it is to be associated. 50
13. A marker as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, and including means enabling its attachment to a plant or a support therefore. 55
14. A marker as claimed in Claim 13, wherein the elongate body portion or a cap for the device if provided is apertured and receives a wire, cord or string by means of which the marker may be attached to a plant or a support therefore. 60
15. A marker as claimed in Claim 13, wherein said body portion or a cap for the device if provided carries means by which the marker may be clipped, clamped or otherwise attached to a plant or a support therefore. 65
16. A receptacle for receiving seeds or other material usable by a gardener and which is to be sold, which receptacle comprises a device as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 15. 70







European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 93 30 2347

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X	US-A-4 972 616 (J. DOLL) * abstract; figures 1-5 *	1,12	G09F3/20
Y	---	13-15	
Y	US-A-1 766 704 (F. CHASE) * claim 1; figures *	13-15	
X	EP-A-0 352 927 (M. BROUGHAM-PICKARD) * the whole document *	1,9-12, 16	
X	US-A-1 875 137 (F. POLLOCK) * claims; figures *	1,9,10, 12	
X	US-A-2 625 760 (L. CLEAL) * the whole document *	1,9-15	
X	US-A-2 790 257 (J. WARE) * claim 1; figures *	1,9-16	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			G09F
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 02 JULY 1993	Examiner GALLO G.G.
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons</p> <p>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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