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Scheiber et al.

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- (54) **VERONICA PLANT NAMED ‘BALMOODLUIM’**
- (50) Latin Name: *Veronica spicata*
Varietal Denomination: **Balmoodluim**
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A01H 6/68 (2018.01)
- (52) **U.S. Cl.**
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- (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 cultivar of *Veronica* plant named ‘Balmoodluim’, characterized by its dark violet-blue colored flowers, dark green-colored foliage, and moderately vigorous, compact, upright growth habit, is disclosed.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Latin name of genus and species of plant claimed:
Veronica spicata.
Variety denomination: ‘Balmoodluim’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Veronica* plant botanically known as *Veronica spicata* and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name ‘Balmoodluim’.

The new cultivar originated in a controlled breeding program in Cochranville, Pennsylvania, during March 2014. The objective of the breeding program was the development of *Veronica* cultivars that do not require vernalization to flower, have attractive colored inflorescences, long peduncles, and a compact, upright growth habit.

The new *Veronica* cultivar was the result of cross-pollination. The female (seed) parent of the new cultivar is MOODY BLUES Pink ‘Novaverpin’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 25,748, characterized by its light pink-colored flowers, dark green-colored foliage, and moderately vigorous, compact-mounding growth habit. The male (pollen) parent of the new cultivar is MOODY BLUES Dark Blue ‘Novaverblu’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 26,602, characterized by its dark violet-blue colored flowers, dark green-colored foliage, low growth vigor, and a compact-mounding growth habit. The new cultivar was discovered and selected as a single flowering plant within the progeny of the above stated cross-pollination during September 2017 in a controlled environment in Cochranville, Pennsylvania.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal stem cuttings since August 2017 in Cochranville, Pennsylvania and Elburn, Illinois has demonstrated that the new cultivar reproduces true to type with all of the characteristics, as herein described, firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of such asexual propagation.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following characteristics of the new cultivar have been repeatedly observed and can be used to distinguish ‘Balmoodluim’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Veronica* plant:

1. Dark violet-blue colored flowers;
2. Dark green-colored foliage; and
3. Moderately vigorous, compact, upright growth habit.

Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the female parent primarily in having a dark violet-blue flower color that is different from the light pink flower color of the female parent. Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the male parent primarily in having a slightly darker violet-blue flower color, a more upright growth habit, and increased growth vigor.

Of the many commercially available *Veronica* cultivars, the most similar in comparison to the new cultivar is MOODY BLUES Sky Blue ‘Novaversky’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 27,835. However, in side-by-side comparisons, plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of ‘Novaversky’ in at least the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new cultivar have darker violet-blue colored flowers than plants of ‘Novaversky’;
2. Plants of the new cultivar have a darker green leaf color than plants of ‘Novaversky’; and
3. Plants of the new cultivar have smaller diameter corollas than plants of ‘Novaversky’.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs show, as nearly true as it is reasonably possible to make the same in color illustrations of this type, typical flower and foliage characteristics of the new cultivar. Colors in the photographs may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed description, which accurately describes the colors of ‘Balmoodluim’. The

plants were approximately four months old and grown three plants per pot in 2.5-quart containers for approximately two months in an outdoor nursery environment in West Chicago, Illinois. Plants were given one pinch approximately one week after transplant.

FIG. 1 illustrates a side view of the overall growth and flowering habit of ‘Balmoodluim’.

FIG. 2 illustrates a close-up view of an inflorescence of ‘Balmoodluim’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The new cultivar has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions to date. Accordingly, it is possible that the phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in the environment, such as temperature, light intensity, and day length, without, however, any variance in genotype.

The chart used in the identification of colors described herein is The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England, 2015 edition, except where general color terms of ordinary significance are used. The color values were determined in June 2023 under natural light conditions in Naperville, Illinois.

The following descriptions and measurements describe approximately four-month old plants produced from cuttings from stock plants and grown in a polycarbonate-covered greenhouse under conditions comparable to those used in commercial practice. Approximately six weeks after sticking, rooted plants were transplanted three plants per 2.5-quart container utilizing a soilless growth medium and grown for four weeks. Plants were then transferred to an outdoor nursery environment in West Chicago, Illinois and grown for approximately two months. Plants were given one pinch approximately one week after transplant. Prior to transferring outdoors, plants were grown in a polycarbonate greenhouse in West Chicago, Illinois. Greenhouse temperatures were maintained at approximately 70° F. to 75° F. (21.1° C. to 23.9° C.) during the day and approximately 60° F. to 65° F. (15.6° C. to 18.3° C.) during the night. Supplemental lighting was used. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plants.

Botanical classification: *Veronica spicata* ‘Balmoodluim’.

Parentage:

Female parent.—MOODY BLUES Pink ‘Novaverpin’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 25,748.

Male parent.—MOODY BLUES Dark Blue ‘Novaverblu’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 26,602.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal stem.

Time to initiate roots.—Approximately 7 to 10 days.

Time to produce a rooted cutting.—Approximately 35 to 42 days.

Root description.—Fibrous.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Commercial crop time.—Approximately 10 to 12 weeks from a rooted cutting to finish in a 15 cm container.

Growth habit and general appearance.—Herbaceous perennial, moderately vigorous, compact, upright.

Hardiness.—USDA Zone 4b (−25° F. to −20° F./−31.7° C. to −28.9° C.).

Size.—Height from soil level to top of plant plane: Approximately 27.0 cm. Width: Approximately 21.0 cm.

Branching habit.—Freely branching, pinching enhances basal branching. Quantity of main branches per plant: Approximately 5.

Branch.—Strength: Moderate. Branch height to bottom of inflorescence: Approximately 13.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 4.0 mm. Length of central internode: Approximately 1.5 cm. Texture: Densely pubescent with appressed hairs. Color of young stems: 146B. Color of mature stems: 146B, becoming woody 200D with age.

Foliage description:

General description.—Quantity of leaves per main branch: Approximately 14. Fragrance: None detected. Form: Simple. Arrangement: Opposite, decussate.

Leaves.—Aspect: Primarily perpendicular to stem. Shape: Narrowly ovate. Margin: Serrate. Apex: Broadly acute. Base: Rounded. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Length of mature leaf: Approximately 7.0 cm. Width of mature leaf: Approximately 2.5 cm. Texture of upper surface: Glabrous. Texture of lower surface: Moderately pubescent only on venation. Color of upper surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to NN137A with venation of 147B. Color of lower surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 137B with venation of 147C.

Petioles.—Length: Approximately 1.0 cm. Width: Approximately 3.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent. Color: 147B to 147C.

Flowering description:

Flowering habit.—‘Balmoodluim’ is a long-day facultative not requiring vernalization, freely flowering under outdoor growing conditions blooming from early spring through first frost.

Lastingness of individual flower on the plant.—Approximately 7 days.

Inflorescence description:

General description.—Type: Terminal raceme, self-cleaning. Fragrance: None detected. Height: Approximately 6.0 cm to 13.0 cm. Width: Approximately 2.0 cm to 2.5 cm. Quantity per plant: Approximately 9.

Peduncle.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Erect and acute angle to stem Length: Approximately 1.5 cm to 3.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm to 3.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with appressed hairs. Color: 146B.

Flower description:

General description.—Type: Single, salverform. Aspect: Outward. Quantity of fully open flowers per inflorescence: Approximately 60 to 80.

Bud.—Rate of opening: Generally takes 3 to 4 days for bud to progress from first color to fully open flower.

Bud just before opening.—Shape: Oblong. Length: Approximately 6.0 mm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Glabrous. Color: 93B to 93C.

Corolla.—Depth: Approximately 7.0 mm. Diameter: Approximately 5.0 mm.

Petals.—Quantity: 4. Appearance: Dull. Shape: Elliptic. Margin: Entire, slightly wavy. Apex: Rounded. Base: Fused into tube. Length: Approximately 4.0 mm. Width: Approximately 2.0 mm to 4.0 mm. Texture of upper and lower surfaces: Glabrous.

Color of upper surface when first and fully open: 93B. Color of lower surface when first and fully open 93C.

Corolla tube.—Length: Approximately 3.0 mm. Diameter at tube opening: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Densely pubescent at tube opening. Color of pubescence: NN155D. Texture of outer surface: Glabrous. Color of inner and outer surfaces: 93C with NN155D at base.

Calyx.—Shape: Cupped. Depth: Approximately 3.5 mm. Diameter: Approximately 4.0 mm.

Sepals.—Quantity per flower: 4. Shape: Lanceolate, fused at base. Apex: Acute. Length: Two larger sepals approximately 3.5 mm and two smaller sepals approximately 3.0 mm. Width of all sepals: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture of upper (inner) surface: Sparsely pubescent. Texture of lower (outer) surface: Moderately pubescent. Color of upper and lower surfaces: 137A with 146B at base.

Pedicel.—Strength: Strong, flexible. Aspect: Approximately 45° angle from peduncle. Length: Approx-

mately 2.0 mm. Diameter: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with appressed hairs. Color: 146B.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Stamen quantity: 2 per flower. Stamen length: Approximately 8.0 mm. Filament color: 93B. Anther shape: Sagittate, dorsifixed. Anther length: Approximately 1.0 mm. Anther color: 93A. Pollen amount: Abundant. Pollen color: 155D. Gynoecium: Pistil quantity: 1 per flower. Pistil length: Approximately 6.0 mm. Stigma shape: Rounded. Stigma length: Less than 1.0 mm. Stigma color: 93A. Style length: Approximately 4.0 mm. Style color: 93B. Ovary length: Approximately 2.0 cm. Ovary color: 144B.

Seed and fruit production: Neither seed nor fruit production has been observed.

Disease and pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to *Veronica* has not been observed.

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Veronica* plant named 'Balmoodluim', substantially as herein illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2