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(54) **VERBENA PLANT NAMED ‘BALFIREAPE’**

(50) Latin Name: **Verbena hybrid**  
Varietal Denomination: **Balfireape**

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See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Verbena* plant named ‘Balfireape’, characterized by its deep purple-violet colored flower, medium green-colored foliage, and vigorous, mounded-spreading growth habit, is disclosed.

**1 Drawing Sheet**

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Latin name of genus and species of plant claimed: *Verbena* hybrid.  
Variety denomination: ‘Balfireape’.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

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

The new cultivar originated in a controlled breeding program in Arroyo Grande, Calif. during April 2013. The objective of the breeding program was the development of *Verbena* cultivars that are suited for use in hanging baskets, durable to environmental stresses, and have a mounded-spreading growth habit.

The new *Verbena* cultivar is the result of cross-pollination. The female (seed) parent of the new cultivar is the proprietary *Verbena* hybrid breeding selection coded 8614-1 not patented, characterized by its light purple-colored flowers, medium green-colored foliage, and vigorous, semi-upright growth habit. The male (pollen) parent of the new cultivar is the proprietary *Verbena* hybrid breeding selection coded PV-1033 not patented, characterized by its light purple-colored flowers, medium green-colored foliage, and vigorous, semi-upright growth habit. The new cultivar was discovered and selected as a single flowering plant within the progeny of the above stated cross-pollination during May 2014 in a controlled environment in Arroyo Grande, Calif.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal stem cuttings since May 2014 in Arroyo Grande, Calif., and West Chicago, Ill. 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.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

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

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- 1. Deep purple-violet colored flowers;
- 2. Medium green-colored foliage; and
- 3. Vigorous, mounded-spreading growth habit.

Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the female and male parents primarily in having a different flower color and a more mounded growth habit.

Of the many commercially available *Verbena* cultivars, the most similar in comparison to the new cultivar is EnduraScape Blue Improved ‘Balendluim’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 29,592. However, in side by side comparisons, plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of ‘Balendluim’ in at least the following characteristics:

- 1. Plants of the new cultivar have a flower color that is slightly different from plants of ‘Balendluim’;
- 2. Plants of the new cultivar have lighter green-colored foliage than plants of ‘Balendluim’; and
- 3. Plants of the new cultivar have longer pistils than plants of ‘Balendluim’.

**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 differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed description, which accurately describes the colors of ‘Balfireape’. The plants were grown in 4-inch pots for 12 weeks in a greenhouse in West Chicago, Ill. Plants were given one pinch one week after transplant.

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

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

**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 January 2018 under natural light conditions in West Chicago, Ill. The following descriptions and measurements describe plants produced from cuttings from stock plants and grown in a glass-covered greenhouse under conditions comparable to those used in commercial practice. The plants were grown in West Chicago, Ill. in 4-inch pots for 12 weeks utilizing a soilless growth medium. Plants were given one pinch one week after transplant. Greenhouse temperatures were maintained at approximately 68° F. to 72° F. (20° C. to 22° C.) during the day and approximately 64° F. to 66° F. (18° C. to 19° C.) during the night. Supplemental lighting was used. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plants.

Botanical classification: *Verbena* hybrid ‘Balfireape’.

Parentage:

*Female parent*.—Proprietary *Verbena* hybrid breeding selection coded 8614-1, not patented.

*Male parent*.—Proprietary *Verbena* hybrid breeding selection coded PV-1033, not patented.

Propagation:

*Type cutting*.—Terminal stem.

*Time to initiate roots*.—Approximately 6 to 9 days.

*Time to produce a rooted cutting*.—Approximately 24 to 28 days.

*Root description*.—Fibrous.

*Rooting habit*.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

*Commercial crop time*.—Approximately 5 to 7 weeks from a rooted cutting to finish in a 10 cm pot.

*Growth habit and general appearance*.—Vigorous, mounded-spreading.

*Size*.—Height from soil level to top of plant plane: Approximately 11.0 cm. Width: Approximately 46.0 cm.

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

*Branch*.—Shape: Square in cross section. Strength: Strong. Length: Approximately 21.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 3.0 mm. Length of central internode: Approximately 5.5 cm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of N92C and colorless, transparent. Color of young stems: 144A. Color of mature stems: 146B.

Foliage description:

*General description*.—Quantity of leaves per main branch: Approximately 10. Fragrance: None detected. Form: Simple. Arrangement: Opposite.

*Leaves*.—Aspect: Perpendicular to stem, obtuse angle with age. Shape: Ovate to oblong. Margin: Crenate. Apex: Broadly acute to rounded. Base: Truncate. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Length of mature leaf: Approximately 4.5 cm. Width of mature leaf: Approximately 3.5 cm. Texture of upper surface: Moderately pubescent. Texture of lower surface: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and

nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of upper surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 137A with venation of 147C. Color of lower surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 137B with venation of 147C.

*Petiole*.—Length: Approximately 1.2 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of N92C and colorless, transparent. Color: 147C to 147D.

Flowering description:

*Flowering habit*.—‘Balfireape’ is freely flowering under outdoor growing conditions with substantially continuous blooming from spring through autumn and year-round in greenhouse environment.

*Lastingness of individual flower on the plant*.—Approximately 5 to 7 days.

Inflorescence description:

*General description*.—Type: Corymb. Shape: Hemispherical. Quantity per plant: Approximately 5. Fragrance: None detected. Length or height: 3.0 cm. Width: Approximately 6.0 cm. Quantity of fully open flowers per inflorescence: Approximately 14.

*Peduncle*.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Erect. Length: Approximately 4.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of N92C and colorless, transparent. Color: 137B.

Flower description:

*General description*.—Type: Sessile, salverform.

*Bud*.—Rate of opening: Generally takes 2 to 3 days for bud to progress from first color to fully open flower. Quantity of unopened inflorescences per plant: Approximately 8.

*Bud just before opening*.—Shape: Elongated, globular at apex. Length: Approximately 1.3 cm. Diameter: Approximately 3.0 mm. Color: Petal portion N82A, sepal portion 137B.

*Corolla*.—Shape: Round. Diameter: Approximately 1.9 cm. Depth: Approximately 2.9 cm.

*Petals*.—Quantity: 5, fused at base forming a tube. Shape: Obovate. Appearance: Dull. Margin: Entire. Apex: Emarginate. Length of upper petals from tube: Approximately 8.0 mm. Width of upper petals: Approximately 7.0 mm. Length of lateral petals from tube: Approximately 9.0 mm. Width of lateral petals: Approximately 9.0 mm. Length of lower petal from tube: Approximately 9.0 mm. Width of lower petal: Approximately 9.0 mm. Texture of upper surface: Glabrous with glandular pubescent base. Texture of lower surface: Sparsely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of N92C and colorless, transparent. Color of upper surface when first open: N81A tinted with N82A, small spot of 145D at base of lateral and lower petals, N92A at throat opening. Color of lower surface when first open: N81C. Color of upper surface when fully open: N81B tinted with N82A, small spot of 145D at base of lateral and lower petals, N92A at throat opening. Color of lower surface when fully open: N81D. Color of whiskers surrounding the opening of the corolla tube: 90A.

*Corolla tube*.—Length: Approximately 2.2 cm. Diameter at proximal end: Approximately 1.0 mm. Diam-

eter at distal end: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture of outer surface: Upper half moderately glandular pubescent, lower half glabrous. Gland color: Mixture of N92D and colorless, transparent. Texture of inner surface: Densely pubescent. Color of outer surface: 5 NN155B tinted with N81D at distal end. Color of inner surface: 145D.

*Calyx*.—Shape: Tubular with 5 acute tips. Length: Approximately 1.2 cm. Width: Approximately 3.0 mm.

*Sepals*.—Quantity per flower: 5, fused at base. Shape: Linear. Apex: Acute. Length: Approximately 1.2 cm. Width: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Moderately pubescent. Texture of outer surface: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of 15 N92C and colorless, transparent. Color of inner and outer surfaces: 137B.

*Stipules*.—Shape: Lanceolate. Apex: Acute. Length: Approximately 6.0 mm. Width at base: Approximately 20 1.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Glabrous. Texture of outer surface: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Mixture of N92C and colorless, transparent.

Color of inner and outer surfaces: 144A at base transitioning to 137A at apex.

*Reproductive organs*.—Androecium: Stamen quantity: 4, didynamous. Stamen length of longer pair: Approximately 2.0 mm. Stamen length of shorter pair: Approximately 1.0 mm. Anther shape: Bilobed, ovoid. Anther length: Approximately 1.0 mm. Anther color: 144A. Pollen amount: Abundant. Pollen color: 1D. Gynoecium: Pistil quantity: 1 per flower. Pistil length: Approximately 2.1 cm. Stigma shape: Bifid. Stigma length: Less than 1.0 mm. Stigma color: 137A. Style length: Approximately 2.0 cm. Style color: 145D. Ovary diameter: Approximately 1.0 mm. Ovary texture: Glabrous. Ovary color: 144A.

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

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

What is claimed is:

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

\* \* \* \* \*



FIG.1

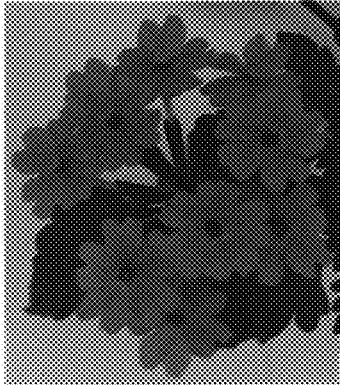


FIG.2