WINDPROOF BEACH BLANKETS AND TOWELS

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Related U.S. Application Data

Provisional application No. 61/856,134, filed on Jul. 19, 2013.

ABSTRACT

A windproof beach blanket provides built-in weights at the corners and in the centers of the long edge seams. The weights are secured in pockets in the edges and corners of the blanket 10 using hook-and-loop fastener strips 13, so that they may be removed when the blanket 10 is laundered. The invention may be applied to blankets, beach towels, or any other fabric item which must lay flat and be secured against the wind.
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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/856134 filed Jul. 19, 2013, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not Applicable

PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT

[0003] Not Applicable

REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTING, A TABLE, OR A COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING COMPACT DISK APPENDIX

[0004] Not Applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The invention relates generally to beach and swimming pool accessories and in particular to a windproof beach blanket or towel. Anyone who has spent a day at the beach or an outdoor swimming pool is familiar with the problem of beach blankets and towels being blown around by the wind. Using personal items, such as a cooler or a bottle of suntan lotion, to weight down the corners of the blanket or towel is an incomplete and inconvenient solution at best. A windproof beach blanket or towel, with built-in weights at the corners and in the centers of the long edge seams, would solve this problem conveniently. In particular a blanket or towel with weights which are secured in the edges and corners of the blanket using hook-and-loop fastener strips, so that they may be removed when the blanket is laundered would be ideal. The design may be used for blankets, beach towels, or any other fabric item which must lay flat and be secured against the wind.

[0006] In the prior art, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US2010/0017960 by Blauuboor ("Blauubooter") teaches a weighted beach cover of blanket that provides weights in pockets about the perimeter. Blauubooer is notably distinguished from the present invention by its absence of closures of any kind for the weighted pockets, where the present invention provides hook-and-loop fastener closures by which the perimeter weights are retained. Further, Blauuboor is limited in its disclosure to absorbent materials, whereas the present invention contemplates the advantageous use of non-absorbent materials, as in commonly used towels and blankets, which may be quickly dried for transport to and from a beach setting, as well as impervious materials, which serve to protect the user and the user’s items from wet ground.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] Accordingly, the invention is preferably directed to a windproof beach blanket or towel, with built-in weights at the corners and in the centers of the long edge seams. The weights are secured in pockets in the edges and corners of the blanket using hook-and-loop fastener strips, so that they may be removed when the blanket is laundered. The design may be used for blankets, beach towels, or any other fabric item which must lay flat and be secured against the wind.

[0008] Additional features and advantages of the invention will be set forth in the description which follows, and will be apparent from the description, or may be learned by practice of the invention. The foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary and explanatory and are intended to provide further explanation of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0009] The accompanying drawing is included to provide a further understanding of the invention and is incorporated into and constitutes a part of the specification. It illustrates one embodiment of the invention and, together with the description, serves to explain the principles of the invention.

[0010] The FIGURE shows a top transparency view of the first exemplary embodiment, displaying the blanket 10, the corner weights 11, the side weights 12, the hook-and-loop fastener strips 13, the corner pockets 14, and the side pockets 15.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0011] Referring now to the invention in more detail, the invention is directed to a windproof beach blanket, with built-in weights at the corners and in the centers of the long edge seams. The weights are secured in pockets in the edges and corners of the blanket 10 using hook-and-loop fastener strips 13, so that they may be removed when the blanket 10 is laundered. The invention may be applied to blankets, beach towels, or any other fabric item which must lay flat and be secured against the wind; the Applicant refers to these items generically as fabric items, with the generic analog of the blanket 10 being termed a fabric sheet. A generic fabric sheet may, but need not be rectangular in footprint, thereby necessarily having four 90° corners and four sides. In this configuration, four corner pockets 14 and four corner weights 11 are provided, and two side pockets 15 and two side weights 12 may be provided along the long edges only; or different numbers of side weights may be provided on the long and short edges, depending upon user preference and upon the length and relative proportion of the edges.

[0012] The corner weights 11 are preferably V-shaped with each arm preferably six inches in length and one-half inch in diameter, and the arms 90° apart. The side weights 12 are preferably bar shaped, six inches in length and one-half inch in diameter. Each of the weights is preferably one-eighth inch thick with an oval cross-section. The first exemplary embodiment features one corner weight 11 at each of its four corners, and one side weight 12 at the center of each of its two long edge seams, for a total of four corner weights 11 and two side weights 12. The blanket or towel is preferably sixty inches long and thirty inches wide. A blanket or towel to be shared by more than one person is also contemplated that is sixty inches long and seventy inches wide. Beach blankets and beach towels of several different sizes are contemplated. More or fewer weights are also contemplated for the different sizes.

[0013] Each of the corner weights 11 is secured in a contoured corner pocket 14 with stitched inner seams, and outer edge closures which are preferably secured with hook and loop fastener strips 13 or similar fasteners. Similarly, each of the side weights 12 is secured in a contoured side pocket 15.
with stitched inner seams, and outer edge closures which are preferably secured with hook and loop fastener strips 13 or similar fasteners.

[0014] To use the first exemplary embodiment, the user spreads out the blanket 10 on the ground. The user then inserts a corner weight 11 in each corner pocket 14, and a side weight 12 in each side pocket 15, closing each pocket with the hook and loop fastener strips 13 after a weight is inserted.

[0015] The blanket 10 is preferably manufactured from a flexible, durable material that is easily laundered, such as cotton or a cotton-rayon blend, though nonabsorbent materials such as nylon or water impervious materials such as vinyl are also contemplated. The corner weights 11 and side weights 12 are preferably manufactured from a rigid, durable material of substantial mass that is corrosion resistant, such as stainless steel or aluminum. The hook-and-loop fastener strips 13 are preferably manufactured from a flexible, durable material such as plastic or nylon.

[0016] Components, component sizes, and materials listed above are preferable, but artisans will recognize that alternate components and materials could be selected without altering the scope of the invention.

[0017] While the foregoing written description of the invention enables one of ordinary skill to make and use what is presently considered to be the best mode thereof, those of ordinary skill in the art will understand and appreciate the existence of variations, combinations, and equivalents of the specific embodiment, method, and examples herein. The invention should, therefore, not be limited by the above described embodiment, method, and examples, but by all embodiments and methods within the scope and spirit of the invention.

1. A weighted fabric item comprising a fabric sheet; said fabric sheet having disposed about its perimeter a plurality of corner pockets and a plurality of side pockets; each of said plurality of corner pockets being contoured to complementarily accept one of a plurality of corner weights; each of said corner weights being of a solid nongranular material; each of said plurality of side pockets being contoured to complementarily accept one of a plurality of side weights; each of said plurality of corner pockets and each of said plurality of side pockets having a contoured closure affixed about its outer edge relative to said fabric sheet.

2. The weighted fabric item of claim 1 wherein said fabric sheet is rectangular in footprint; wherein said plurality of corner pockets is four in number; and wherein each of said plurality of corner pockets and each of said plurality of corner weights is configured in a ninety degree v-shape.

3. The weighted fabric item of claim 2 wherein each of said plurality of corner weights and each of said plurality of corner pockets is bar shaped, one half inch in diameter, and six inches in length in both axial dimensions.

4. The weighted fabric item of claim 2 wherein each of said plurality of side weights and each of said plurality of side pockets is bar shaped, one half inch in diameter, and six inches in length.

5. The weighted fabric item of claim 3 wherein each of said plurality of side weights and each of said plurality of side pockets is bar shaped, one half inch in diameter, and six inches in length.

6. The weighted fabric item of claim 1 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

7. The weighted fabric item of claim 2 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

8. The weighted fabric item of claim 3 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

9. The weighted fabric item of claim 4 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

10. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

11. The weighted fabric item of claim 1 wherein said fabric sheet is made of an absorbent material.

12. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said fabric sheet is made of a non-absorbent material.

13. The weighted fabric item of claim 1 wherein said fabric sheet is made of an impervious material.

14. The weighted fabric item of claim 1 wherein said fabric item is selected from the group of blankets and beach towels.

15. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said fabric sheet is made of an absorbent material.

16. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said fabric sheet is made of a non-absorbent material.

17. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said fabric sheet is made of an impervious material.

18. The weighted fabric item of claim 5 wherein said fabric item is selected from the group of blankets and beach towels.

19. The weighted fabric item of claim 17 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

20. The weighted fabric item of claim 18 wherein said closure is a hook and loop fastener.

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