ABSTRACT

A new and distinct variety of dwarf southern waxmyrtle distinguished by its compact production of branches and leaves spaced from 35 to 65 mm. apart along the ground-parallel stem and the overall tightness of branching growth; its rich light yellow-green leaves that mature to dark olive green, which are smaller than those of the species, and which grown from more closely spaced nodes thereby producing a much denser foliage. The plant is an evergreen shrub that will withstand temperatures as low as 0° F., it has full sun or partial shade tolerance and the average linear growth of the main stem is approximately six inches per year.

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

My new Myrica cerifera var. pumila originated at my nursery at Waynesboro, Georgia, in the spring of 1983 as an aberrant plant type found in a group of 150 seedlings planted at my nursery from seeds resulting from open pollination of a particularly compact form of dwarf southern waxmyrtle and the selection of this new variety was made by reason of the distinctive characteristics that were displayed by this unusual plant and which represented a new and improved combination of characteristics never before exhibited in any Myrica cerifera var. pumila of which I am aware.

Among the outstanding characteristics of this new variety, which distinguish it from other varieties of Myrica cerifera var. pumila and all other Myrica species, are a compact, broad spreading, suckering mound habit with an ultimate size approximately 12 to 18 inches in height and 30 to 36 inches in width, as well as rich, light yellow-green leaves that mature to dark olive green and are quite smaller than the species, and more closely spaced nodes and thus denser foliage with good tolerance of full sun and partial shade, all of which were retained by my asexual propagation of the discovery plant by cuttings and thereafter conducted through several successive generations, which demonstrated clearly that the novel characteristics of this new variety would hold true from generation to generation and appeared to be firmly fixed.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

My new variety of Myrica cerifera var. pumila is illustrated by the accompanying drawings which, in full color, show in FIG. 1, a view of a row of the new plants growing from a single, ground-parallel stem; in FIG. 2, a close-up view of one of the branches growing vertically from the main horizontal stem and showing buds and leaves; and in FIG. 3, a hand-made drawing showing a branch of the new variety and front and back side views of a single leaf, the colors shown being as close to those herein specified as it is reasonably possible to obtain by conventional photographic procedures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW PLANT

The following is a detailed description of my new variety of Myrica cerifera var. pumila as observed in 1986 from plants grown at my nursery in Waynesboro, Ga., with color designations according to The H.C.C. Colour Chart published in 1941 by The Royal Horticultural Society of London, England, with collaboration of The British Colour Council.

THE PLANT

Form: Broadleaf evergreen shrub.
Plant 6,411

For this new variety, such resistance is excellent. *Myrica cerifera* var. *pumila* displays excellent tolerance in insects and diseases and the present plant has been completely free of disease for more than four years that I have observed and grown it. Also, the new variety has not been eaten by rabbits or deer.

My new variety of *Myrica cerifera* var. *pumila*, which I call 'Georgia Gem', is particularly distinguished by its smaller leaves than the parent species, which have leaves much larger and up to about 1 to 3 inches long; and by the more closely-spaced nodes on the main stem and thus denser foliage. This new variety will withstand temperatures as low as 0° F. and its leaves are cold hardy to 0° F. with the stems withstanding temperatures to minus 5° F. Also, the new variety is full sun or partial shade tolerant and is easy to root from cuttings in August to October, which assures trueness to type.

This new variety also has a distinct bayberry candle fragrance to leaves and stems that is especially evident in large, mass plantings.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of dwarf southern wax-myrtle, *Myrica cerifera* var. *pumila*, as herein shown and described, particularly characterized by its compact, broad spreading, suckering, mounded habit with small, dainty, olive-green leaves that are very closely spaced along the upright stems creating a dense foliage mass; an evergreen constitution with foliage maintaining, olive-green color in cold weather; and with a particular adaptability to dry, sandy soils, with full sun to partial shade tolerance.

* * * * *