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Preil et al.

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(54) **RHODODENDRON PLANT NAMED**
'MICROHIRS3'

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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(50) Latin Name: ***Rhododendron hybrid***
Varietal Denomination: **Microhirs3**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01H 5/02 (2006.01)

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(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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patent is extended or adjusted under 35
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct *Rhododendron* hybrid plant that exhibits
a compact habit and numerous flowers.

(22) Filed: **Aug. 12, 2015**

4 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical classification: *Rhododendron* hybrid.
Varietal denomination: 'Microhirs3'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention comprises a new and distinct cul-
tivar of *Rhododendron* hybrid known by the varietal name
'Microhirs3'. The new variety was discovered in 1997 in
Ahrensburg, Germany. The new variety is the result of a
planned breeding program, with the intended purpose of
providing lime tolerant rootstock varieties, between an
unnamed and unpatented *Rhododendron hirsutum* variety
(female parent) and an unnamed and unpatented *Rhododen-*
dron micranthum variety (unpatented male parent).
'Microhirs3' exhibits similar corolla form and size to its
female parent, but differs from its female parent in flower
color and amount. Additionally, 'Microhirs3' exhibits a
similar number of flowers per inflorescence to its male
parent, but differs from its male parent in corolla color and
form. When compared to *Rhododendron* variety 'Interme-
dium' (unpatented), the new variety is similar in corolla and
leaf form, but differs in the color of and amount of flowers.
'Microhirs3' has been trial and field tested and has been
found to retain its distinctive characteristics and remain true
to type through successive propagations.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying photographic drawings illustrate the
new variety at approximately 4 years of age, with the color
being as nearly true as is possible with color illustrations of
this type:

FIG. 1 shows a view of the new variety grown to a
flowering plant;

FIG. 2 shows a close-up view of the blooms of the new
variety;

FIG. 3 shows a view of the new variety with unopened
buds; and

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FIG. 4 shows a close-up view of the unopened buds of the
new variety.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following detailed description sets forth the charac-
teristics of the new cultivar. The data which defines these
characteristics were collected by asexual reproductions per-
formed via cuttings or in vitro culture in 2003 carried out in
Barmstedt, Germany. Plants of the new variety were grown
under natural daylight, under typical garden conditions, with
yearly mineral and horn shaving applications. The color
readings and measurements were taken indoors with a white
background behind the variety under a mixture of natural
daylight and overhead lighting on 12 year old plants grown
in containers. Color references are primarily to The 1986
R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society of
London.

PLANT

Time to develop roots: About 50 days at 22-25° C.
Time to produce a finished flowering plant from a rooted
cutting: About 110 weeks in a 3 liter container. Thus,
flower buds may not appear until 2-3 years after propa-
gation by cutting.
Overall growth habit: Slow, broadly upright, dense, and
well-branched.
Rooting habit: Spreading.
Height: 70 cm.
Diameter: 105 cm.
Vigor: Strong, but slow-growing.
Branching habit: Compact and dense.
Disease, temperature, and drought resistance: No observa-
tions made to date.
Trunk:
Diameter: 0.8-1.3 cm at 30 cm above soil height at 12
years.

Bark color.—200C to 200D.
Texture.—Hard.
Pubescence.—Absent.
Form.—Straight, but angular.

Lateral branches: 5
Diameter.—1.5 mm at 1 year; 2 mm at 2 years; 3 mm at 3 years.
Internode length.—2-6 mm.
Texture.—Flexible in green (144A and 153A) regions, but hard in brown (165B) regions. 10
Pubescence.—None, but scaly.
Color.—144A at 1 year; 165B basal and 153A terminal at 2 years.

Leaves: 15
Nature.—Evergreen.
Arrangement.—Alternate.
Length.—35 mm maximum.
Width.—12 mm maximum.
Shape.—Lanceolate to broadly lanceolate.
Apex.—Acute. 20
Base.—Tapering.
Margin.—Entire.
Texture.—Generally, smooth and flexible for both leaf surfaces. Mature leaves have an upper surface that is shiny and only slightly scaly and a lower surface that is densely scaly. 25
Appearance.—Glossy and healthy.
Pubescence (both surfaces).—None, but scaly.
Color.—Upper surface: 144A for young leaves and 137A for mature leaves. Lower surface: 137C for young leaves and 146A for mature leaves. 30
Venation pattern.—Net-veined.
Vein color.—Upper surface: N144C. Lower surface: N144C.
Stipules.—None present. 35
Bracts.—None present.
Pedicels.—General description: Round. Length: 21 mm maximum. Width: Approximately 1 mm. Color: 145A.
Petioles.—General description: Straight; scaly on lower surface. Length: 5 mm maximum. Diameter: Approximately 1 mm. Color: 144A. 40

Flowers: 45
Natural flowering season.—End of May until the middle to end of June in Northern Germany.

Form.—Short raceme.
Type.—Single.
Overall shape.—Tubular-campanulate.
Overall corolla width.—9-15 mm.
Overall corolla length.—12-13 mm.
Lastingness of bloom.—Up to three weeks.
Average number of blooms on a plant.—Approximately 1,000 on a plant at 12 years.
Fragrance.—None.
Buds (described before bursting).—Shape: Round and tapered. Diameter: 5-7 mm. Length: 5-10 mm. Color: Various — 165B, 167A, and 166C.
Spike.—Number of flowers per spike: 20-30. Length: Approximately 3.5-4.5 cm. Diameter: Approximately 4-5 cm.
Corolla petals.—Form: Actinomorphic and fused. Shape: Tubular-campanulate. Number: 5. Length: 12 mm maximum. Width: Up to 6 mm. Diameter: Up to 10 mm. Margin: Even to slightly wavy. Texture and appearance: Soft and delicate (both surfaces). Color: When opening: Upper surface: 55B and 55C with 56A, and 155D areas. Lower surface: 62A, with 58C and 58D areas. Fully opened: Upper surface: 155D, with 56B areas. Lower surface: 155D, with 56B and 56C areas.
Corolla throat.—Tube length: Approximately 4-5 mm. Color: 155D. Texture: Soft.
Sepals.—Form: Single and tapered. Length: 1-2 mm maximum. Shape: Triangular. Apex: Acute. Texture: Hairy, with scales on lower surface.

Reproductive organs:
Stamens.—Number: 10. Length: Longer than the pistils. Filament length: 4-9 mm.
Anthers.—Shape: Normal *Rhododendron* type. Length: Approximately 1 mm.
Pollen amount.—Scarce.
Pistils.—Number: 1. Length: Up to 6 mm. Styles: Length: Up to 5.6 mm. Stigmas: Shape: Small and flat.

I claim:
 1. A new and distinct variety of *Rhododendron* hybrid plant, as is herein illustrated and described.

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Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4