

[54] AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT NAMED LITTLE AQUAMARINE

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[57] ABSTRACT

A new and distinct cultivar of African violet named Little Aquamarine characterized by its miniature growth habit; single violet-shaped, white flowers with blue center; strong stems which curve toward the center to form a compact bouquet above the leaves; profuse and continuous flowering; bright green, spear-shaped leaves; flowering 10–11 weeks after planting of unrooted shoot, and by its long lasting and non-dropping flowers.

1 Drawing Sheet

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The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of African violet plant, botanically known as *Saintpaulia ionantha*, and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar named Little Aquamarine.

The new cultivar was referred to during the breeding and selection process by the designation K 1/20 and is a product of a planned breeding program. The new cultivar was originated from a cross made by me in the controlled breeding program in Haffen, Federal Republic of Germany. The female, or seed parent was a cultivar designated H 25/z. The male, or pollen parent was a cultivar designated H 73/3.

Little Aquamarine was discovered and selected by me as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross in a controlled environment in Haffen, West Germany. Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by leaf cuttings, as performed by me at Haffen, West Germany, has demonstrated that the combination of characteristics as herein disclosed for the new cultivar are firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Little Aquamarine has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary significantly with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity and day length. The following observations, measurements and values describe the new cultivar as grown in a 4 cm pot in Haffen, West Germany and Nashville, Tenn. under greenhouse conditions which closely approximate those generally used in commercial practice.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be basic characteristics of Little Aquamarine, which in combination distinguish this African violet as a new and distinct cultivar:

- (1) Little Aquamarine will not grow taller than 8 cm.
- (2) Single violet-shaped, white flowers with blue center.
- (3) Strong wirelike and upright flower stems curving toward the center.
- (4) First flash of flowers form a tight bouquet above the leaves.
- (5) Profuse flowering; under good growing conditions continuous flowering.
- (6) Each plant carries 6–8 and more upright flower stems each of which carries 4–5 and more flowers.
- (7) Long lasting, non-dropping flowers.

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(8) Plant saleable 10 to 11 weeks after planting of unrooted shoot.

(9) Seed capsules push slightly through.

(10) Bright green, shiny leaves.

(11) Spear-shaped leaves are 1.5 to 2.5 cm in size.

(12) After maturity the flowers dry off, and remain on the peduncle.

The closest known variety is Little Opal, patent application Ser. No. 192,698, whose leaf shape and flower shape and color are similar to Little Aquamarine. Differences between Little Opal and Little Aquamarine are the darker and more clear-cut blue color and additional very small petals in the center of Little Aquamarine.

The accompanying color photographic drawing shows a typical specimen plant of the new cultivar growth in a 4 cm pot. The plant is pictured next to a pencil, highlighting the miniature size and growth habit of Little Aquamarine. The colors appearing in the photograph are as true as possible with color illustrations of this type.

In the following description, color reference are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Color Chart (RHS), except where general colors of ordinary significance are referred to. Color values were taken under natural sunlight conditions at approximately 1 p.m. in Nashville, Tenn.

Botanical classification: *Saintpaulia ionantha*, Ramat., c.v. Little Aquamarine.

Parentage:

Male parent.—H/73/3.

Female parent.—H 25/z.

Propagation: The new cultivar holds its distinguishing characteristics through successive propagations by leaf cuttings.

Plant: From 5 cm to 7 cm tall when growth in pots, and approximately 7–10 cm in diameter when fully grown.

Leaves.—General form: Spear-shaped. Diameter: 17–22 mm wide and 23–26 mm long. Texture: Leatherlike. Aspect: Shiny, hairy, slightly serrated. Veins: Upperside: visible; underside: well pronounced, light green, shiny. Color (upperside): Green Group 137 C. Color (underside): Greyed-Green Group 193 A. Petiole: Strong, green, hairy.

Plant 7,099

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Flowers.—Buds: Size: 4–6 mm just before opening. Shape: Bell-shaped. Color: Greenish white. Sepals: Five (5). Color: Green. Calyx: Shape: Funnel-shaped. Aspect: Spear-shape, hairy. Peduncle: Character: Strong upright, hairy. Color: Green.

Individual flowers.—Size: 22–25 mm. Shape: Single violet-shaped (3 large, 2 small petals) with occasionally 2–3 additional very small petals in the center. Color (upperside): White with center being Violet-Blue Group 93 B to C. Under cooler temperatures and more intensive lighting, the blue tends to intensify, Color (underside): Violet-Blue Group 93 B to C. Borne: Each flower stem carries 4–5 and more flowers on strong, upright peduncle that are free standing above the leaves, thereby forming a compact bouquet. Flowering habit: Flowers 10–11 weeks after planting an unrooted plantlet.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Two (2). Anthers: 2 composed of 4 anther cells; seed capsule pushes slightly through. Filaments: Yellowish green, 3–4 mm long. Styles: 5–6 mm long, purplish blue, base of ovary light green and hairy.

Roots.—Normally developed, white when young, turning slightly brownish when older.

Disease resistance: Good
General observations: Little Aquamarine is a super miniature violet, which does not grow taller than 8 cm. The single violet-shaped flowers are white with a blue center. The flowers are long-lasting and non-dropping. Occasionally, 2–3 additional very small petal develop in the center covering up the anthers. Under good growing conditions Little Aquamarine will bloom continuously. A nice bouquet of flowers free standing above the bright green, spear-shaped leaves develops approximately 10–11 weeks after planting an unrooted plantlet. Each of the 6–8 and more strong flower stems carries 4–5 and more flowers.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of African violet named Little Aquamarine, as described and illustrated, and particularly characterized by its miniature growth habit; single violet-shaped, white flowers with blue center; strong stems which curve toward the center to form a compact bouquet above the leaves; profuse and continuous flowering; bright green, spear-shaped leaves; flowering 10–11 weeks after planting of unrooted shoot, and by its long lasting and non-dropping flowers.

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U.S. Patent

Jan. 9, 1990

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