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Wilfret

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(54) **CALADIUM PLANT NAMED ‘FLORIDA IRISH LACE’**

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(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 60 days.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A distinct cultivar of Caladium plant named ‘Florida Irish Lace’, characterized by its compact and densely-foliated plant habit; upright, outwardly arching and symmetrical plant form; and dark green-colored leaves that are lanceolate in shape with undulate margins that give the leaves a ruffled appearance.

1 Drawing Sheet

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present Invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of Caladium plant, botanically known as *Caladium× hortulanum*, commercially referred to as a lance-leaf Caladium, and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name Florida Irish Lace.

The new cultivar is a product of a planned and controlled breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Bradenton, Fla. The objective of the breeding program is to create densely-foliated compact Caladium cultivars with lanceolate-shaped leaves. The new cultivar originated from a self-pollination made by the Inventor in 1982 of a proprietary lance-leaf Caladium selection identified as code number GC80-128, not patented. The cultivar Florida Irish Lace was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a plant within the progeny of the stated self-pollination in a controlled environment in Bradenton, Fla., in 1985.

Asexual propagation of the new cultivar by tuber divisions since 1985, in Bradenton, Fla., has shown that the unique features of this new Caladium plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual propagation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new Caladium has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity, fertilizer rate and type, and water status, without, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of ‘Florida Irish Lace’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Florida Irish Lace’ as a new and distinct cultivar:

1. Compact and densely-foliated plant habit.
2. Upright, outwardly arching and symmetrical plant form.
3. Dark green-colored leaves that are lanceolate in shape with undulate margins that give the leaves a ruffled appearance.

When grown in side-side comparisons in Bradenton, Fla., plants of the new Caladium differ from plants of the parent,

the selection GC80-128, primarily in leaf color. Plants of the new Caladium have solid dark green-colored leaves whereas plants of the selection GC80-128 have green-colored leaves with darker green venation and white-colored interveinal areas towards the margins.

Plants of the new Caladium are most similar to plants of the cultivar White Wing, not patented. However, in side-by-side comparisons conducted by the Inventor in Bradenton, Fla., plants of the new Caladium differ from plants of the cultivar White Wing in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new Caladium are more compact and shorter than plants of the cultivar White Wing.
2. Plants of the new Caladium are more densely-foliated and not as open as plants of the cultivar White Wing.
3. Plants of the new Caladium have solid dark green-colored leaves whereas plants of the cultivar White Wing have green and white-colored leaves.
4. Leaves of plants of the new Caladium have undulate margins giving a ruffled appearance to the leaves whereas leaves of plants of the cultivar White Wing have smooth margins and leaves are not ruffled in appearance.
5. Plants of the new Caladium have stronger petioles than plants of the cultivar White Wing.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPH

The accompanying colored photograph illustrates the overall appearance of the new cultivar, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Colors in the photograph may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new Caladium. The photograph comprises a side perspective view of a typical 7-week old plant of ‘Florida Irish Lace’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe 7-week old plants (from planting a tuber division) grown in Bradenton, Fla. during the summer in a shaded glass-covered greenhouse and under commercial production conditions in 15-cm containers. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 32 to

35° C., night temperatures ranged from 18 to 21° C., and light levels were about 5,000 to 6,000 foot-candles.

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Caladium*×*hortulanum* cultivar Florida Irish Lace.

Parentage: Self-pollination of proprietary *Caladium*×*hortulanum* selection identified as GC80-128, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By tuber division.

Tuber description.—Number of dominant buds per tuber: About 6 to 8. Diameter: About 3.8 to 6.4 cm.

Color: Epidermis, 199A; interior, 10B.

Time to initiate roots on a tuber division.—About 9 days at 26.7° C.

Time to produce a fully rooted tuber division.—About 37 days at 26.7° C.

Root description.—Dense, thick and white in color.

Plant description:

Plant habit.—Compact and densely-foliated.

Plant form.—Upright, outwardly arching and symmetrical plant habit.

Growth habit.—Mostly erect when leaves are developing, becoming outwardly arching as leaves develop. Plants of the new *Caladium* are typically grown in 10 to 15-cm containers.

Plant height.—About 25.5 cm from soil level to top of leaf plane.

Plant spread.—About 44 cm.

Growth rate.—Rapid growth rate; first leaf opens about 37 days after planting; about 7 weeks are required to

produce a finished plant in 15-cm container from a division.

Foliage description.—Quantity: About 23 per plant. Length: About 27 cm. Width: About 12.5 cm. Shape: Lanceolate. Apex: Elongated acuminate. Base: Obtuse to somewhat attenuate. Margin: Entire, undulate giving a ruffled appearance to the leaf. Aspect: Initially upright, then outwardly arching; concave. Texture, both surfaces: Smooth, glabrous, durable and flexible. Venation pattern: Penniform. Color: Upper surface: 137A; fine red, 47A, line encircles the margin; venation, same as lamina color. Lower surface: 138C; venation, 29C. Petiole: Aspect: Mostly erect with slight outward bend at leaf attachment. Length: About 25 cm. Diameter: About 8 mm. Strength: Strong. Color: 199B with 5 to 6 darker brown, 200A, longitudinal stripes, about 0.3 mm in width, and a few elongated dark brown, 200C, speckles.

Flower description.—Flower development has not been observed on plants of the new *Caladium*.

Disease/pest resistance: Plants of the new *Caladium* have not been observed to be resistant to pathogens or pests common to *Caladium*.

Temperature/weather tolerance: Plants of the new *Caladium* have been observed to be tolerant to temperatures as low as 10° C. and as high as 38° C. Plants of the new *Caladium* have been observed to be tolerant to rain and wind.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Caladium* plant named 'Florida Irish Lace', as illustrated and described.

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