

(12) **United States Plant Patent**
van den Top

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(54) **HOSTA PLANT NAMED ‘LITTLE JAY’**

(50) Latin Name: **Hosta**
Varietal Denomination: **Little Jay**

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patent is extended or adjusted under 35
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(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./353
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct *Hosta* plant named ‘Little Jay’ character-
ized by lance-leafed, dwarfsized, leaves with blue green
margins, light yellow to creamy leaf centers, vertical flower
scapes with light purple flowers, suitable for landscape, pot-
ted culture, or cut flower arrangements.

2 Draing Sheets

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Botanical classification: *Hosta* hybrid (Tratt.).
Variety denomination: ‘Little Jay’.

**SUMMARY, BACKGROUND AND ORIGIN OF
THE PLANT**

The present invention relates to the new and distinct *hosta*
plant, *Hosta* ‘Little Jay’ discovered by Hendrik Jan van den
Top at a nursery in The Netherlands. The Plant is an unin-
duced whole plant sport of the *Hosta* cultivar ‘Beauty Little
Blue’ (not patented). ‘Beauty Little Blue’ is a cross of *Hosta*
‘Blue Cadet’ (not patented) with *Hosta clausa* var. *normalis*
(not patented). The plant has been successfully asexually
propagated by division and tissue culture methods at a plant
nursery in Barneveld, The Netherlands and found to produce
identical plants that maintain the unique characteristics of
the original plant. The plant is stable and reproduces true to
type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Hosta ‘Little Jay’ differs from its parents, as well as all
other *hostas* known to the applicant, in that the plant has a
very narrow variegated leaf that emerges with the center pale
yellow in the spring and with sunlight and warmer tempera-
tures lightens to a white. The leaf margin is green with a
slight glaucous bloom producing a slightly bluish cast.

The most similar known *hosta* cultivar is *Hosta* ‘Fire-
works’ U.S. Plant Pat. Ser. No. 16,062. ‘Fireworks’ has a
larger and wider leaf, does not start up as yellow in the
center, and the flower is lighter lavender.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The photographs of the new plant demonstrate the overall
appearance of the plant, including the unique traits. The col-
ors are as accurate as reasonably possible with color repro-
ductions. Ambient light spectrum, source and direction may
cause the appearance of minor variation in color.

FIG. 1 shows the foliage early in the season in Barneveld,
Netherlands.

FIG. 2 shows the foliage after flowering in Barneveld,
Netherlands.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

There are about 3,500 cultivars registered with The
American *Hosta* Society, which is the International Cultivar
Registration Authority for the genus *Hosta*. *Hosta* ‘Little
Jay’ differs from these and all unregistered cultivars known
to the inventor in that it has:

1. Long lance-like blue green foliage with a light yellow
becoming creamy white center portion of the leaf;
2. Short habit, small-sized clumps with medium purple
flowers on creamy yellow scapes.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The following descriptions and color references are based
on the 2001 edition of The Royal Horticultural Society
Colour Chart except where common dictionary terms are
used. The new plant, *Hosta* ‘Little Jay’, has not been
observed under all possible environments. The phenotype
may vary slightly with different environmental conditions,
such as temperature, light, fertility, moisture and maturity
levels, but without any change in the genotype. The follow-
ing observations and size descriptions are of a two-year old
containerized plant in a nursery in Barneveld, Netherlands
under controlled shade canopy with supplemental water and
fertilizer.

Botanical classification: *Hosta* hybrid.

Parentage: naturally occurring sport of *Hosta* ‘Beauty Little
Blue’ (not patented).

Propagation:

Method.—By sterile laboratory tissue culture division
and garden division; Time to initiate roots from tis-
sue culture: about four weeks; Rooting habit:
normal, fleshy, lightly branching.

Plant description:

Plant shape and habit.—Hardy herbaceous perennial
with basal rosette leaves, symmetrical and arching
over, spreading by rhizomes.

Crop time.—Under normal summer growing conditions
18 to 20 weeks to finish in a one-liter container; plant

vigor is good to high in comparison to other center variegated *hostas*.

Plant size.—Foliage height at flowering is 11 to 15 cm tall from soil line to the top of the leaves and 20 to 25 cm wide above the soil line.

Foliage description:

Shape and size.—Elliptic to lanceolate leaf blades, narrowly acute apex and base acutely tapered toward petiole. The leaf blades are 6 to 9 cm long and 2.5 to 3.0 cm wide; margin is entire, and the variegation pattern on the darker edge varies in different regions of the leaf from 2 to 8 mm wide; 4 and 6 pairs of major parallel veins the same color as the surrounding leaf tissue on the top and bottom of the leaves; top and bottom surfaces are dull without slight glaucous bloom; Color of young emerging leaves: Top center surface: between RHS 3B and RHS 3C; Top margin surface: between RHS 141B and RHS 143A; Underside center: RHS 3D; Underside margin: RHS 141B with some intermediate between the margin and center on both top and bottom of RHS N144A and lighter than RHS N144C. Color of mature leaves: Top surface center: lighter than RHS 2D; top surface margin: RHS 133A with some intermediate colors of RHS 133 C and RHS 144C; Underside center: closest to RHS 2D; underside margin: closest to RHS 133B with intermediate colors of RHS 133 D and lighter than RHS 133D.

Petioles.—3 to 5 cm long and about 5 mm wide. The leaf margin variegation continues down the petiole about 1 mm wide of RHS 141 C on young foliage on both top and underside, and center is nearest RHS 154 D on both surfaces. On older foliage the petiole the margin of both surfaces is RHS 143 B, and both surfaces of the center are lighter than RHS 2D.

Flower description:

Buds.—One day prior to opening about RHS 85 C; approximately 3.2 cm long, up to 1.0 cm wide, clavate with acute ovoid apex and longer thin base.

Flowers.—10 to 18 per scape; funnelform; 2.5 to 2.8 cm wide and about 3.5 cm long, (distal flowers being smaller), persists for a normal period, usually one day on or cut from plant, and the scapes remain

effective from mid July into August. No detectable fragrance.

Tepal.—Two sets of three fused at the base; clavate with acute apex; entire; approximately 3.5 cm long and 1.0 cm wide, about RHS N82 D on the outside of both sets becoming lighter toward the base; inside about RHS N 76 C.

Gynoecium.—Single; Style—3.5 to 3.8 cm long, white, lighter than RHS 11 D, 1 mm diameter, slightly curved at distal end; Stigma—1 mm to 2 mm in diameter, white, lighter than RHS 11 D; Androecium—Filaments—six, white, lighter than RHS 11 D, less than 1 mm in diameter, about 3.0 cm long; Anthers—4 mm long, 1.0 mm wide, RHS 83B; Pollen—elliptical, less than 0.1 mm long, nearest RHS 15 A;

Bracts.—Bracts below flowers sessile, completely or nearly completely wrapped around scape; normally up to 1.5 cm long and 8 mm wide; smaller and protruding when subtending flowers; margin of both surfaces RHS 141 B; center of both surfaces when exposed to direct sun between RHS 3C and RHS 3D;

Peduncle.—One per mature division, approximately six per clump; erect 20 to 28 cm tall and about 4 mm in diameter, pale yellow color RHS 3D with slight glaucous surface.

Pedicel.—Approximately 0.6 cm long and 2 mm wide; RHS 3C; curled slightly downward.

Fruit.—Viable seed has not been observed.

Disease resistance: Resistance beyond that of other *hostas* has not been observed. The plant grows best with plenty of moisture and adequate drainage, but is able to tolerate some drought when mature. Hardiness at least from USDA zone 3 through 9, and other disease resistance is typical of that of other *hostas*.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of ornamental *Hosta* plant named 'Little Jay' herein described and illustrated, with lance-like leaves of light yellow to cream in the center and blue green margins, with light purple flowers and dwarf habit, suitable as a potted plant, for the garden, and for cut flower arrangements.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2