

(12) **United States Plant Patent**
Takamura et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US PP20,559 P2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Dec. 15, 2009**

(54) **CATHARANTHUS PLANT NAMED**
‘SUNNICHIRORO’

(50) Latin Name: *Catharanthus roseus*
Varietal Denomination: **Sunnichiroro**

(75) Inventors: **Naoto Takamura**, Yamanashi (JP);
Kiyoshi Miyazaki, Shiga (JP); **Takuro**
Ishihara, Tokyo (JP)

(73) Assignee: **Suntory Flowers Limited**, Tokyo (JP)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/217,748**

(22) Filed: **Jul. 7, 2008**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01H 5/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./263.1**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./263.1**
See application file for complete search history.

Primary Examiner—Annette H. Para
Assistant Examiner—Louanne C Krawczewicz Myers
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—C. A. Whealy

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Catharanthus* plant named
‘Sunnichiroro’, characterized by its trailing plant habit; vig-
orous growth habit; freely branching habit; freely flowering
habit; long flowering period; large red purple-colored flow-
ers; and good garden performance.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Botanical designation: *Catharanthus roseus*.
Cultivar denomination: ‘Sunnichiroro’.

RELATED TO CLOSELY-RELATED
APPLICATIONS

Title: *Catharanthus* Plant Named ‘Sunnichipink’.
Applicants: Naoto Takamura, Kiyoshi Miyazaki & Takuro
Ishihara.
Filed: Concurrently with this application.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar
of *Catharanthus*, botanically known as *Catharanthus roseus*
and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘Sunnichiroro’.

The new *Catharanthus* is a product of a planned breeding
program conducted by the Inventors in Higashiomi, Shiga,
Japan. The objective of the breeding program is to develop
new freely branching and flowering *Catharanthus* cultivars
with trailing plant habit and attractive and unique flower
coloration.

The new *Catharanthus* originated from a cross-pollination
conducted by the Inventors in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan in
2003 of a proprietary selection of *Catharanthus roseus* iden-
tified as code number 03CAT-7, not patented, as the female, or
seed, parent with a proprietary selection of *Catharanthus*
roseus identified as code number 03CAT-YM, not patented,
as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Catharanthus* was
discovered and selected by the Inventors as a flowering plant
from within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a
controlled greenhouse environment in Higashiomi, Shiga,
Japan in 2004.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Catharanthus* by vegeta-
tive cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in
Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan since 2004, has shown that the
unique features of this new *Catharanthus* are stable and
reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new *Catharanthus* has not been observed under all
possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary

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somewhat with variations in environment and cultural prac-
tices such as temperature, daylength and light intensity with-
out, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are
determined to be the unique characteristics of ‘Sunnichiroro’.
These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Sunnichi-
roro’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Catharanthus*:

1. Trailing plant habit.
2. Vigorous growth habit.
3. Freely branching habit.
4. Freely flowering habit.
5. Long flowering period.
6. Large red purple-colored flowers.
7. Good garden performance.

Plants of the new *Catharanthus* can be compared to plants
of the female parent selection. Plants of the new *Catharan-*
thus differ from plants of the female parent selection in the
following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* are more vigorous than
plants of the female parent selection.
2. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* have red purple-colored
flowers whereas plants of the female parent selection
have white-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Catharanthus* can be compared to plants
of the male parent selection. Plants of the new *Catharanthus*
differ from plants of the male parent selection in the following
characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* are more trailing than
and not as upright as plants of the male parent selection.
2. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* have red purple-colored
flowers whereas plants of the male parent selection have
white-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Catharanthus* can be compared to plants
of the *Catharanthus roseus* ‘Sunnichipink’, disclosed in a
U.S. Plant patent application Ser. No. 12/217,749, filed con-
currently. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* differ from plants
of ‘Sunnichipink’ in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* are slightly larger than
plants of ‘Sunnichipink’.
2. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* are more freely branch-
ing than plants of ‘Sunnichipink’.

3. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* have darker red purple-colored flowers than plants of 'Sunnichipink'.

Plants of the new *Catharanthus* can also be compared to plants of 'Frappe Orange', not patented. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan, plants of the new *Catharanthus* and 'Frappe Orange' differed in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* were taller than plants of 'Frappe Orange'.
2. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* were more freely branching than plants of 'Frappe Orange'.
3. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* had longer internodes than plants of 'Frappe Orange'.
4. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* had larger flowers than plants of 'Frappe Orange'.
5. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* had narrower petals than plants of 'Frappe Orange'.
6. Plants of the new *Catharanthus* and 'Frappe Orange' differed in flower color as plants of 'Frappe Orange' had light pink-colored flowers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new *Catharanthus*, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Colors in the photographs may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new *Catharanthus*.

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'Sunnichiroro' grown in a container.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet comprises a close-up view of typical flowers and leaves of 'Sunnichiroro'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following observations, measurements and values describe plants grown in 13 cm. containers in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan, under commercial practice during the summer in an outdoor nursery. During the production of the plants, day temperatures averaged 25° C. and night temperatures averaged 15° C. Plants used for the description had been growing for four months. Plants used for the photographs had been growing for six months. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2001 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Catharanthus roseus* 'Sunnichiroro'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Catharanthus roseus* identified as code number 03CAT-7, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Catharanthus roseus* identified as code number 03CAT-YM, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About two weeks at 30° C.

Time to initiate roots, winter.—About three weeks at 25° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About five weeks at 30° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, winter.—About six weeks at 25° C.

Root description.—Fibrous; white in color.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching; moderately dense.

Plant description:

Plant and growth habit.—Trailing plant habit. Freely branching with about 17 primary lateral branches developing per plant. Vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 17.6 cm.

Plant diameter.—About 38.7 cm.

Lateral branch description:

Length.—About 23.8 cm.

Diameter.—About 3 mm.

Internode length.—About 2.5 cm.

Strength.—Strong.

Aspect.—Upright to outward.

Texture.—Pubescent.

Color.—Close to 145C.

Foliage description:

Arrangement.—Opposite, simple.

Length.—About 6.1 cm.

Width.—About 1.8 cm.

Shape.—Narrowly elliptic.

Apex.—Acute.

Base.—Obtuse.

Margin.—Entire.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Sparsely pubescent.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate; reticulate.

Color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to 143A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Close to 137C. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Close to 137A; venation, close to 145D. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 137C; venation, close to 145D.

Petiole.—Length: About 4 mm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Sparsely pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 145D.

Flower description:

Flower arrangement and habit.—Single salverform flowers arising from upper leaf axils. Freely flowering habit with usually about 24 flowers per plant at one time. Flowers face upright or outwardly.

Fragrance.—Not detected.

Natural flowering season.—Long flowering period; flowering commences naturally during the spring and plants flower continuously throughout the summer until late autumn in Japan.

Flower longevity.—Individual flowers last about two to three days on the plant. Flowers not persistent.

Flower diameter.—About 5.5 cm.

Flower length (depth).—About 3.1 cm.

Throat diameter.—About 1.7 mm.

Tube length.—About 3 cm.

Tube diameter, at the base.—About 1.3 mm.

Flower bud.—Shape: Cylindrical. Length: About 3.8 cm. Diameter: About 3.7 mm. Color: Close to 54A.

Corolla.—Arrangement: Five petals fused at the base and flaring outwardly forming a star-shaped flower. Petal length from throat: About 2.9 cm. Petal width: About 1.8 cm. Petal shape: Narrowly obovate. Petal apex: Mucronate. Petal base: Attenuate. Petal margin:

Entire. Petal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous; velvety. Throat texture: Smooth, glabrous. Tube texture: Sparsely pubescent. Color: Petal, when opening and fully opened, upper surface: Close to 58B; “eye”, close to 155C. Color does not fade with development. Petal, when opening and fully opened, lower surface: Close to 55B. Throat: Close to 145C. Tube: Close to 145C.

Calyx.—Arrangement: One star-shaped calyx tube with five sepals fused at the base per flower. Sepal length: About 4 mm. Sepal width: About 1.1 mm. Sepal shape: Lanceolate. Sepal apex: Acute. Sepal margin: Entire. Sepal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Sparsely pubescent. Color, immature and mature, upper surface: Close to 143A. Color, immature and mature, lower surface: Close to 143A.

Peduncles.—Length: About 3 mm. Diameter: About 1.8 mm. Angle: Upright to outward. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 145C.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity/arrangement: Five per flower. Stamen length: About 2.7 mm.

Anther shape: Narrowly ellipsoidal. Anther size: About 3 mm by 0.9 mm. Anther color: Close to 154C. Pollen amount: Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 1D. Pistils: Quantity: One per flower. Pistil length: About 2.5 cm. Style color: Close to 145C. Stigma shape: Transversely ellipsoidal. Stigma color: Close to 145A. Ovary color: Close to 145A. Seed/fruit: Seed and fruit development have not been observed on plants of the new *Catharanthus*.

Garden performance: Plants of the new *Catharanthus* have been observed to have good garden performance and to tolerate wind, rain and temperatures ranging from about 5° C. to about 35° C. to 40° C.

Pathogen/pest resistance: Plants of the new *Catharanthus* have not been observed to be resistant to pests and pathogens common to *Catharanthus*.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Catharanthus* plant named ‘Sun-nichiroro’ as illustrated and described.

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