



US00PP20623P3

(12) **United States Plant Patent**
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(10) **Patent No.:** **US PP20,623 P3**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jan. 5, 2010**

(54) **LIRIOPE MUSCARI PLANT NAMED 'LIRTP'**

(50) Latin Name: *Liriope muscari*
Varietal Denomination: **LIRTP**

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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 82 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/077,554**

(22) Filed: **Mar. 20, 2008**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2008/0235839 P1 Sep. 25, 2008

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Provisional application No. 60/919,771, filed on Mar. 23,
2007.

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

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./450**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./450
See application file for complete search history.

Primary Examiner—Annette H Para

(57) **ABSTRACT**

'LIRTP' is a distinctive variety of *Liriope muscari* which is
characterized by the combination of its tall plant height, tall
inflorescence length combined with narrow leaf width,
dense foliage and a purple flower color.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Latin name of the genus and species: The Latin name of
the genus and species of the novel variety disclosed herein is
Liriope muscari.

Variety denomination: The inventive variety of *Liriope*
disclosed herein has been given the variety denomination
'LIRTP'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct peren-
nial variety of *Liriope muscari*, which has been given the
variety denomination of 'LIRTP'. Its market class is that of
an ornamental plant. 'LIRTP' is intended for use in land-
scaping and as a decorative plant.

The *Liriope muscari* variety 'LIRTP' was finally selected
in 2005 in an Australian nursery in the state of New South
Wales following a selection process carried out from 2002 to
2005 involving approximately 20000 seedlings of *Liriope*
muscari cultivar 'Big Blue' (unpatented) production stock.
'LIRTP' is a seedling selection from open pollinated *Liriope*
muscari cultivar 'Big Blue'. 'LIRTP' was selected due to its
tall plant height with tall inflorescence length combined with
narrow leaf width, dense foliage and a purple flower color.
'LIRTP' was first propagated asexually by division in the
state of New South Wales, Australia and has since been
asexually propagated by division and micropropagation. The
distinctive characteristics of the inventive 'LIRTP' variety
are stable from generation to generation; clones of the vari-
ety produced by asexual reproduction maintain the distin-
guishing characteristics of the original plant.

'LIRTP' has an upright to semi upright growth habit with
a medium shoot density whereas 'Big Blue' has a semi
upright growth habit with a medium shoot density. 'LIRTP'
has a tall plant height whereas 'Big Blue' has a medium-tall
plant height 'LIRTP' has a narrow-medium leaf width
whereas 'Big Blue' has a broad leaf width.

An application for plant breeders' rights for variety
'LIRTP' has been lodged with the Australian Plant Breeders'
Rights Office, and was first gazetted in 27 March 2006 under
Application No. 2006/036.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

'LIRTP' is a distinctive variety of *Liriope muscari* which
is characterized by the combination of its tall plant height,
tall inflorescence length combined with narrow leaf width,
dense foliage and a purple flower color.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 shows a 'LIRTP' plant.

FIG. 2 shows an inflorescence of an 'LIRTP' plant show-
ing flower detail.

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following is a detailed botanical description of a new
and distinct variety of a *Liriope muscari* ornamental plant
known as 'LIRTP'. Plant observations were made on plants
grown in New South Wales, Australia. Unless indicated
otherwise, the descriptions disclosed herein are based upon
observations made in February 2006 of mature 'LIRTP', 24
months old, plants grown in nursery pots.

Those skilled in the art will appreciate that certain charac-
teristics will vary with older or, conversely, younger plants.
'LIRTP' has not been observed under all possible environ-
mental conditions. Where dimensions, sizes, colors and
other characteristics are given, it is to be understood that
such characteristics are approximations or averages set forth
as accurately as practicable. The phenotype of the variety
may vary with variations in the environment such as season,
temperature, light intensity, day length, cultural conditions
and the like. Color notations are based on The Royal Horti-
cultural Society Colour Chart, The Royal Horticultural
Society, London, 1995 edition. Note that generic color
descriptions such as 'pink' do not exist in the RHS charts and
the corresponding RHS colors are quoted.

'LIRTP' is a perennial *Liriope muscari* plant which is a
seedling selection from a *Liriope muscari* cultivar 'Big
Blue'. After its selection, 'LIRTP' was asexually propagated
by division and then by micropropagation. 'LIRTP' has a
green leaf color and purple flowers displayed above the foli-
age.

These features and other characteristics are apparent from the description provided below.

Growth habit, dimensions and color:

‘LIRTP’ is a tall plant forming an upright clump with slightly spreading leaves and arching and weeping leaves as the foliage matures. Average plant height is to 75 cm and average plant spread is to 85 cm in a mature plant grown in a garden in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (observed January 2007). A representative ‘LIRTP’ plant is shown in FIG. 1. The upper side of the mature leaf is yellow green in color (observed January 2007) corresponding to approximately RHS 147A.

Leaf margins and mid ribs do not contrast prominently with the leaf blade. The leaf lower side color corresponds to the upper leaf side but has a less glossy surface texture. The leaf is generally 5–8 mm in width, and reaches an average length of 60–70 cm. The leaf shape is ligulate-ensiform, leaf base is cauline, leaf margin is entire, leaf apex is acute and leaf surface texture is glossy and glabrous. The leaf venation pattern is parallel; the color is the same as the rest of the leaf. The leaf attitude is erect to semi erect with arching and weeping of foliage at maturity.

Roots:

The roots of ‘LIRTP’ are colored white and fleshy and thick, similar to other *Liriope muscari*.

Inflorescence: The inflorescence is a raceme with flowers borne in clusters of typically 4 or 5 and reducing in number near the apex. Each flower cluster consists of pedicellate flowers ranging from a very short pedicel length (almost sessile) to up to 5 mm long. Inflorescence length is approximately 80 cm on average and the raceme position is mainly above the foliage at anthesis. Raceme length is 20–30 cm typically with flower clusters prominent along most of the emerged peduncle. Peduncle color is yellow green approximately RHS 146A. Each flower cluster is subtended by a small bract colored yellow green approximately RHS 146A. Pedicel color is violet RHS 83D. The flowering season in Sydney, NSW, Australia is early December until Late February.

Flowers: Flower bud color is violet approximately RHS 86A. Mature petal color is violet RHS 83C. Anthers are yellow RHS 6D and stigma is violet RHS 83D. Flower diameter is approximately 5–6 mm when fully opened.

Comparison of LIRF with other varieties of *Liriope muscari*:

‘LIRTP’ has a narrower leaf width and denser foliage than common *Liriope muscari*.

‘LIRTP’ has a narrow leaf width and very dense foliage whereas ‘Big Blue’ has a broad leaf width (11–12 mm) and medium density foliage. ‘LIRTP’ has a ‘purple’ looking flower color corresponding to purple RHS 83C whereas ‘Big

Blue’ has a ‘lighter purple’ looking flower color corresponding to violet RHS 86B. ‘LIRTP’ has tall, prominent inflorescences displaying flowers predominantly above the foliage whereas ‘Big Blue’ has less prominent inflorescences displaying flowers predominantly within the foliage.

‘LIRTP’ differs from the variety ‘Bigun’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,474) as it has a taller plant height, narrower leaf width, an absence of leaf twisting and darker purple flower color whereas ‘Bigun’ has a medium plant height (to 60 cm), broad leaf width (to 18 mm), leaf twisting present and lighter colored flowers corresponding to violet blue RHS 92A.

‘LIRTP’ differs from the variety ‘Royal Purple’ (unpatented) as it has a narrower leaf width, strong shoot density, tall inflorescence height and long raceme length whereas ‘Royal Purple’ has a broad leaf width, weak shoot density, medium inflorescence height with flowers displaying slightly above the foliage and short raceme length (approximately 12–18 cm).

The combination of its tall plant height, tall inflorescence length combined with narrow leaf width, dense foliage and a purple flower color makes ‘LIRTP’ a desirable ornamental plant suited for mass production for pot and landscape use.

Asexual reproduction:

After its initial discovery, ‘LIRTP’ was transplanted into a 140 mm pot for further trials and testing. After divisions were made for several subsequent generations, ‘LIRTP’ was observed to retain color and size characteristics that were noted in the original ‘LIRTP’ seedling. Divisions of ‘LIRTP’ root within 2 to 3 weeks. ‘LIRTP’ was divided into several pots for further evaluation. Potting mix used contained 50% sand and 50% peat. Plants were divided into 90 mm×50 mm×50 mm tubes.

‘LIRTP’ has been propagated in vitro using micropropagation and has been observed to reproduce from generation to generation in a uniform and stable manner maintaining original color and size characteristics.

Environmental tolerances:

‘LIRTP’ has typical shade tolerance for the species. The winter hardiness of ‘LIRTP’ is at least to zone 8a–8b in the Southeastern United States, and evaluation of winter hardiness is ongoing. ‘LIRTP’ has moderate to good drought tolerance. ‘LIRTP’ has moderate to good recovery with watering after severe wilting. ‘LIRTP’ does well in sandy soils, but also tolerates heavy, clay-type soils well.

Disease resistance:

‘LIRTP’ has typical resistance to fungal and bacterial pathogens compared to other similar *Liriope muscari* cultivars.

That which is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct variety of *Liriope muscari* plant named ‘LIRTP’, substantially as described and illustrated herein.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2

