

(12) **United States Plant Patent**
FitzGerald

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(54) **CEANOTHUS PLANT NAMED ‘FIT02’**

(50) Latin Name: *Ceanothus griseus* var. *horizontalis*
Varietal Denomination: **FIT02**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./226**
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new cultivar of *Ceanothus* named ‘FIT02’ that is characterized by chocolate brown and dark purple mature foliage, an upright, vigorous habit, and small clusters of flowers in Summer. In combination these traits set ‘FIT02’ apart from all other existing varieties of *Ceanothus* known to the inventor.

3 Drawing Sheets

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Latin name: *Ceanothus griseus* var. *horizontalis*.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Ceanothus* used as a potted shrub or hedging plant. The new cultivar is known botanically and will be referred to hereinafter by the cultivar name ‘FIT02’, but may also be known by the Breeder’s reference name ‘Plum Purple’. In 2001 the inventor discovered a spontaneously occurring, branch sport in a nursery grown batch of *Ceanothus griseus* var. ‘Autumnal Blue’ (unpatented) in Kilkenny, Republic of Ireland. That year, the inventor propagated the present variety through cuttings of the said branch sport. From a single surviving chocolate brown plant, repeated propagations have built up a population of plants that all exhibited a unique purple evergreen foliage of the type first discovered by the inventor. Thus, the essential characteristic of foliage color was considered by the inventor to have been firmly established.

The selection of FIT02 from the population was based on its overall appearance and growth habit. Thus, although ‘Autumnal Blue’ may be deemed as the ultimate parent of FIT02, the immediate parent is an unnamed one of many unnamed plants resulting from the extraction, propagation and multiplication of the initial 2001 branch sport discovery.

The distinguishing characteristic of ‘FIT02’ is its foliage which appears as a combination of chocolate and dark purple, with a vigorous bushy healthy upright growth habit. Otherwise, FIT02 exhibits the same characteristics of Autumnal Blue, including flowers that bloom in Summer as are typical of ‘Autumnal Blue’ which is the closest comparison plant within the species.

‘FIT02’ is suitable for use in temperate climates as an ornamental patio plant or contrast plant in a perennial border, and will survive mild winters. ‘FIT02’ was first asexually propagated by the inventor in Kilkenny, Republic of Ireland in 2001 using vegetative tip cuttings. The distinguishing characteristics of foliage color have been determined to be stable and uniform within the definitions of range described herein.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following represent the distinguishing characteristics of the new *Ceanothus* cultivar ‘FIT02’. In combination these traits set ‘FIT02’ apart from all other existing varieties of *Ceanothus* known to the inventor. ‘FIT02’ has not been tested under all possible conditions and phenotypic differences may be observed with variations in environmental, climatic, and cultural conditions, however, without any variance in genotype. 1. *Ceanothus* ‘FIT02’ exhibits foliage that is chocolate brown and dark purple. 2. *Ceanothus* ‘FIT02’ is a vigorous bushy evergreen shrub that will eventually spread to 300 cm. in width and 200 cm. in height at maturity. 3. *Ceanothus* ‘FIT02’ exhibits small clusters of flowers in Summer. 4. *Ceanothus* ‘FIT02’ is an ornamental shrub used effectively as an accent plant in containers or as a contrast plant in perennial borders. 5. *Ceanothus* ‘FIT02’ is suitable for temperate climates and will survive mild winters.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying color drawings illustrate the overall appearance of the new variety ‘FIT02’, showing colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Colors in the drawing may differ from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the actual colors of the new variety ‘FIT02’.

FIG. 1 is a view of a whole plant four years of age in the landscape showing the plant form and habit;

FIG. 2 is a close-up view of the foliage and flowers of the plant of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a close-up view of the leaves of FIG. 1.

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following is a detailed description of the *Ceanothus* cultivar named ‘FIT02’. Phenotypic differences may be observed with variations in environmental, climatic, and cultural conditions, without however, any difference in genotype. Color determinations are in accordance with The Royal Horticultural Society Color Chart except where general color terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. The grow-

ing requirements are similar to the species. The information below is directed to a four year old plant.

Botanical classification:	<i>Ceanothus</i> ‘FIT02’
Species:	<i>griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> .
Use:	Ornamental.
Commercial classification:	Shrub.
Parentage:	The parent of ‘FIT02’ is an unnamed plant from a population of plants that resulted from vegetative propagation cycles of the branch sport from <i>Ceanothus griseus</i> var. <i>horizontalis</i> ‘Autumnal Blue’.
Growth rate:	Vigorous. Grows approximately 15 cm. per month in spring.
Habit:	Upright.
Height (at maturity):	200 cm.
Width (at maturity):	300 cm. in width.
Propagation:	Vegetative tip cuttings.
Root system:	Fine to fibrous.
Soil:	Plant in well-drained soils.
Sunlight:	Plant in semi-shade or full sun.
Sexuality:	Monoecious.
Growth Cycle	Approximately 12-18 months
Branching habit:	Freely branching.
Seasonal interest:	Natural flowering season is summer-late summer.
Disease resistance and susceptibility:	No more susceptible to pests or disease than similar species.
Water Requirements	Low water needs, tolerates drought well
High Temperature Tolerance	At least up to 35° c.
Low Temperature Tolerance	At least hardy to USDA Zone 7b
Stem:	
Internode length (lateral stems).	Average is 2.5 cm. between nodes.
Angle at emergence	Lateral branches emerge at an average angle of 45 degree. to 60 degree. to vertical branches.
Lateral stem diameter.-	2 mm. in diameter.
Lateral stem length.	Average stem length of main branches: 90 cm. Average stem length of lateral branches: 14 cm.
Shape (vertical branches and lateral stems).	A combination of cylindrical and multicostate.
Lenticels.	Absent.
Quantity of leaves per lateral branch	Average: 13
Lateral color.	
Stem/Branch Color	Upper side greyed-purple Between 183A and 183B Under side yellow-green Between 144B and 144C, and flushed greyed-purple Between 183A and 183B Older stem greyed-purple to brown Between N186C and 200B
Foliage:	
Type	Evergreen.
Leaf arrangement.	Alternate.
Leaf division	Simple.
Leaf shape	Ovate.
Leaf base	Obtuse.
Leaf apex	Acute to obtuse.
Leaf tip	Rounded.
Leaf venation	Pinnate.
Vein color (upper side)	Yellow-green 146C
Vein color (under side)	Yellow-green 146C
Leaf surface (adaxial).	Young leaves are pubescent while older leaves are glabrous and glossy.
Leaf surface (abaxial)	Young and older leaves are matte and pubescent.

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5	Leaf attachment Petiole diameter
	Petiolate. Average length 8 mm Average width 1.5 mm Average height 1 mm Yellow green, Between 152B and 152C Flattened oval. Pubescent. Absent.
10	Petiole color Petiole shape: Petiole surface: Stipules. Leaf margins.
	Entire to sparsely serrulate, and revolute. Finely serrate (approx. 5 teeth per cm) Average 4.5 cm Average 3.5 cm
	Leaf length Leaf width Leaf color:
15	Young, upper side Mature, upper side
	Dark brown; in between 200A and 202A Dark yellow-green 147A but much darker and tinged brownish later fading yellow-green 147A
	Leaf color:
20	Young, under side Mature, under side Foliar fragrance Flower:
	Greyed-green 197A; heavily tinged dark yellow-green 147A yellow-green, Between 146A and 147A Absent.
25	Inflorescence Quantity of inflorescences Quantity of flowers per inflorescence Shape of inflorescence Inflorescence height Inflorescence width
	Dense panicle. Approximately 5-6 panicles per branch. Average: 76 Short and rounded. Average 5.7 cm Average: 3.6 cm
30	Flower shape Aspect Flower color:
	Campanulate. Facing outward.
	Color of petal (upper side)
35	Color of petal (under side)
	Violet blue, in between 92C and 94D; base lighter, in between 92D and 94D Violet blue, in between 92C and 94D; base lighter, in between 92D and 94D
40	Petals Petal shape Petal apex Petal base Petal margin Petal surface/texture Petal length Petal width Unfused or fused Bud color
	Five in number. Narrow oblanceolate, concave Rounded. Attenuate. Entire. Smooth. Average: 2.5 mm Average: 0.75 mm Petals are unfused. Violet blue 97A; top darker, between 96C and 96D
45	Bud shape Bud dimensions Shape of calyx
	Globular to flattened globular. 2 mm. in length and 2.25 mm. in diameter. Globose when closed and stellate when open. 3 mm. in diameter and 2.5 mm. in length.
50	Dimensions of calyx. Number of sepals Sepal color (mature, upper side) Sepal color (mature, under side) Sepal apex Sepal surfaces (adaxial and abaxial).
	Five sepals. Violet-blue, between 92D and 94D; tip darker, between 92C and 94D Violet-blue, between 92D and 94D; tip darker, between 92C and 94D Acute. Glabrous.
55	Sepals fused or unfused Sepal base Sepal margin Sepal shape Dimensions of sepal
	Basally fused. Truncate. Entire. Ovate. Average 1.5 mm. in width and 2.5 mm. in length.
60	Blooming period Quantity of flowers Peduncle dimensions
	Average: 1 week Approximately 600 flowers per plant. Average 5.3 cm in length and 1 mm in diameter
65	Color of peduncle Surface of peduncle
	Yellow-green 145A Puberulent.

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Pedicel dimensions	9 mm. in length and 0.5 mm. in diameter.
Pedicel color	Purple, between 77C and 77D; more violet-blue toward calyx, between 92D and 94D
Pedicel surface	Glabrous.
Fragrance	Slightly sweet.
<u>Reproduction organs:</u>	
Stamens	Five in number.
Form of stamen	Filament.
Dimensions of anther	0.50 mm. in width and 2 mm. in length.
Color of anther	Yellow 11C
Pollen color	Yellow 11D
Pistil	One in number.
Pistil shape	Columnar.
Dimensions of pistil	Average 1 mm. in length
Stigma shape	Trifid. Cleft (3-parted)
Stigma color	Violet-blue 94C
Style color	Violet-blue 94C
Style length	Average: 0.5 mm
Ovary position	Superior.

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Ovary color	Yellow-green 147A
Ovary shape	Flattened globular.
<u>Seed:</u>	
Fruit color	Greyed-purple 187A; base is yellow-green 145C
Fruit surface	Glossy when mature.
Fruit shape	3-lobed capsule.
Length of fruit	Average: 4.5 cm
Fruit texture	Granular and sticky; smooth, glossy.
Number of seeds	100 per inflorescence.
	Average 2 seeds per fruit.
Seed shape	Globular.
Seed color	Dark brown, in between 200A and 202A.
Seed dimensions	3 mm. in length and 2 mm. in diameter.

I claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of *Ceanothus* plant named ‘FIT02’ as described and illustrated.

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