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Gomez Bullis

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(54) ***NEOREGELIA* PLANT NAMED 'MARIA'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Neoregelia* hybrid**
Varietal Denomination: **Maria**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search** Plt./370
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Neoregelia* plant named 'Maria', characterized by its upright and outwardly arching growth habit; leaves of vegetative plants are green and red purple bi-colored becoming solid red purple with development; and good interiorscape and landscape performance.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical designation: *Neoregelia* hybrid.
Cultivar denomination: 'Maria'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Neoregelia* plant, botanically known as *Neoregelia* hybrid and hereinafter referred to by the name 'Maria'.

The new *Neoregelia* plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Princeton, Fla. The objective of the breeding program is to create new *Neoregelia* plants with uniquely colored leaves.

The new *Neoregelia* plant originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in 2002 in Princeton, Fla. of an unnamed proprietary selection of *Neoregelia macrosepala*, not patented, as the female, or seed, parent with the *Neoregelia* hybrid 'Rivera', not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Neoregelia* plant was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a single plant within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse environment in Princeton, Fla. in 2002.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Neoregelia* plant by offsets in a controlled environment in Princeton, Fla. since 2002, has shown that the unique features of this new *Neoregelia* plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new *Neoregelia* have not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment and cultural practices such as temperature and light intensity without, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'Maria'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'Maria' as a new and distinct cultivar of *Neoregelia:*

1. Upright and outwardly arching growth habit.
2. Leaves of vegetative plants are green and red purple bi-colored becoming solid red purple with development.
3. Good interiorscape and landscape performance.

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Plants of the new *Neoregelia* differ from plants of the female parent selection in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Neoregelia* have fewer whorls of leaves than plants of the female parent selection.
2. Leaves of plants of the new *Neoregelia* are shorter and broader than leaves of plants of the female parent selection.
3. Leaves of vegetative plants of the new *Neoregelia* are green and red purple in color whereas leaves of vegetative plants of the female parent selection are green in color.

Plants of the new *Neoregelia* differ from plants of the male parent, 'Rivera', in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Neoregelia* have wider leaves than plants of 'Rivera'.
2. Plants of the new *Neoregelia* are more low temperature tolerant than plants of 'Rivera'.
3. Plants of the new *Neoregelia* are not as susceptible to root rots as plants of 'Rivera'.

Plants of the new *Neoregelia* can be compared to plants of the *Neoregelia* 'Tangerine', not patented. Plants of the new *Neoregelia* and 'Tangerine' differ in leaf quantity and shape as plants of the new *Neoregelia* have fewer and broader leaves than plants of 'Tangerine'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new *Neoregelia* plant, 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 *Neoregelia.*

The photograph at the bottom of the first sheet is a side perspective view of a typical vegetative plant of 'Maria' grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the first sheet is a top perspective view of a typical vegetative plant of 'Maria'.

The photograph at the bottom of the second sheet is a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'Maria' grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the second sheet is a top perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'Maria'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following observations, measurements and values describe plants grown in 15-cm containers in Princeton, Fla. during the spring under commercial practice in a polypropylene-covered shade house with day temperatures ranging from 10° C. to 32° C., night temperatures ranging from 7° C. to 29° C. and light levels averaging 3,200 foot-candles. Single plants used for the photographs and description were 18 months old. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2007 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Neoregelia* hybrid 'Maria'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Unnamed proprietary selection of *Neoregelia macrosepala*, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—*Neoregelia* hybrid 'Rivera', not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By offsets.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About 30 days at 30° C. to 32° C.

Time to initiate roots, winter.—About 45 days at 30° C. to 32° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About three to four months at 30° C. to 32° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, winter.—About three to four months at 18° C. to 22° C.

Root description.—Medium in thickness, fibrous; yellow to tan in color.

Rooting habit.—Moderately freely branching; medium density.

Plant description:

Plant form/growth habit.—Upright and outwardly arching growth habit; rosette leaves are erect when young, becoming outwardly arching with development; plants readily produce uniform offsets; vigorous growth habit.

Plant height, vegetative plants.—About 25 cm.

Plant height, flowering plants.—About 16 cm.

Plant diameter or spread, vegetative plants.—About 37 cm.

Plant diameter or spread, flowering plants.—About 42 cm.

Internode length, vegetative and flowering plants.—About 4 mm.

Foliage description:

Arrangement.—Rosette, spiral phyllotaxis; simple; sessile, clasping.

Shape.—Oblong to broadly ensiform.

Apex.—Cuspidate.

Base.—Truncate.

Margin.—Serrate, spinose.

Length.—About 23.5 cm.

Width.—About 7 cm.

Texture.—Smooth, glabrous; leathery.

Venation pattern.—Parallel.

Color.—Developing leaves, vegetative plants, upper surface: Close to 147A tinted with close to 187A. Developing leaves, vegetative plants, lower surface: Close to 146A. Developed leaves, vegetative plants, upper surface: Close to 147A overlain with close to 187A to 187B; towards the base, close to 195A; venation, close to 147A. Developed leaves, vegetative plants, lower surface: Close to 146A tinted and streaked with close to 184A to 184B; venation, close to 146A. Upper leaves, flowering plants, upper surface: Close to 59B to 59C; towards the base, close to 156D; venation, close to close to 147A. Upper leaves, flowering plants, lower surface: Close to 59B to 59C; towards the base, close to 156D; venation, close to 146A.

Inflorescence description:

Inflorescence form.—Terminal flat-topped compact corymb located inside the leaf rosette; about 107 flowers develop per inflorescence.

Flower longevity.—Individual flowers last about one to two days on the plant; flowers persistent.

Inflorescence length.—About 5.7 cm.

Inflorescence diameter.—About 6 cm.

Flower size.—Length: About 4.7 cm. Diameter: About 7 mm.

Fragrance.—None detected.

Flower buds.—Length: About 3.5 cm. Diameter: About 5 mm. Shape: Elongated oblong. Color: Close to 91B.

Petals.—Quantity per flower: Three in a single whorl. Shape: Oblanceolate. Apex: Mucronate. Base: Truncate. Margin: Entire. Length: About 3.4 cm. Width: About 5 mm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: When opening, upper surface: Close to 91A. When opening, lower surface: Close to 91B. Fully opened, upper surface: Towards the apex, close to 91A; center, close to 91B; towards the base, close to NN155D. Fully opened, lower surface: Towards the apex, close to 91B; center, close to 91C; towards the base, close to NN155D.

Flower bracts.—Quantity per flower: One. Shape: Oblanceolate. Length: About 3.8 cm. Width: About 1 cm. Texture: Membraneous. Color: Towards the apex, close to 146D; towards the base, close to N157D.

Sepals.—Quantity per flower: Three in a single whorl. Shape: Lanceolate. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Truncate. Margin: Entire. Length: About 2.6 cm. Width: About 5 mm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Towards the apex, close to 144A; center, close to 144D; towards the base, close to 157D.

Peduncles.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Typically erect. Length: About 4.5 cm. Diameter: About 1.4 cm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to NN155A.

Pedicels.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Typically erect to somewhat outward. Length: About 5 mm. Diameter: About 2 mm Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to NN155A.

Stamens.—Quantity per flower: About six. Filament length: About 1.6 cm. Filament color: Close to NN155D. Anther shape: Lanceolate. Anther length: About 5 mm. Anther color: Close to NN155A. Pollen amount: Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 155A.

Pistils.—Quantity per flower: One. Pistil length: About 3.6 cm. Stigma shape: Rounded. Stigma color: Close to NN155B. Style length: About 2.2 cm. Style color: Close to NN155C. Ovary color: Close to NN155C.

Seed/fruit.—Seed and fruit production have not been observed.

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new *Neoregelia* have been observed to tolerate temperatures ranging from about 4° C. to about 37° C.

Interior & garden performance: Plants of the new *Neoregelia* have been observed to have good postproduction longevity under interior conditions and to have good garden performance.

Disease/pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to *Neoregelia* has not been observed.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Neoregelia* plant named 'Maria' as illustrated and described.

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