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(54) **CALIBRACHOA PLANT NAMED ‘SUNBEL 0579’**

(50) Latin Name: *Calibrachoa* sp.
Varietal Denomination: **Sunbel 0579**

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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 171 days.

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

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Calibrachoa* plant named ‘Sunbel 0579’, characterized by its compact and mounding plant habit; vigorous growth habit; freely branching and flowering plant habit; early and long flowering period; numerous single purple violet-colored flowers with darker purple coloration towards the throat; and good garden performance.

1 Drawing Sheet

1

Botanical designation: *Calibrachoa* sp.
Cultivar denomination: ‘Sunbel 0579’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Calibrachoa* plant, botanically known as *Calibrachoa* sp. and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘Sunbel 0579’.

The new *Calibrachoa* plant 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 compact, mounding and freely branching *Calibrachoa* plants with numerous attractive and uniquely colored flowers.

The new *Calibrachoa* plant originated from a cross-pollination conducted by the Inventors in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan in April, 2007 of a proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 9P9, not patented, as the female, or seed, parent with a proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 3137-1, not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Calibrachoa* plant was discovered and selected by the Inventors as a single flowering plant from within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse environment in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan in September, 2009.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Calibrachoa* plant by vegetative cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan since September, 2009 has shown that the unique features of this new *Calibrachoa* plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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

2

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of ‘Sunbel 0579’. These characteristics in combination distinguish ‘Sunbel 0579’ as a new and distinct *Calibrachoa* plant:

1. Compact and mounding plant habit.
2. Vigorous growth habit.
3. Freely branching and flowering plant habit.
4. Early and long flowering period.
5. Numerous single purple violet-colored flowers with darker purple coloration towards the throat.
6. Good garden performance.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can be compared to plants of the female parent selection. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* differ primarily from plants of the female parent selection in flower color as plants of the female parent selection have pink-colored flowers. In addition, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* are more mounding than and not as upright as plants of the female parent selection.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can be compared to plants of the male parent selection. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* differ primarily from plants of the male parent selection in flower color as plants of the male parent selection have red purple-colored flowers. In addition, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* have larger flowers than plants of the male parent selection.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can also be compared to plants of *Calibrachoa* ‘Sunbelao’, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 22,391. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* and ‘Sunbelao’ differed primarily in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* were more compact and mounding than plants of ‘Sunbelao’.
2. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* had shorter internodes than plants of ‘Sunbelao’.
3. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* and ‘Sunbelao’ differed slightly in flower color.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

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

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'Sunbel 0579' grown in a container.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet is a close-up view of a typical flowering plant of 'Sunbel 0579'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following observations, measurements and values describe plants grown in 15-cm containers in an outdoor nursery in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan and under cultural practices typical of commercial *Calibrachoa* production. During the production of the plants, day temperatures averaged 23° C. and night temperatures averaged 13° C. Plants were four months old when the photographs and the description were taken. 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: *Calibrachoa* sp. 'Sunbel 0579'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 9P9, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 3137-1, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots, summer.—About one week at 15° C. to 20° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About three weeks at 15° C. to 20° C.

Root description.—Fibrous; white in color.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Plant and growth habit.—Compact and mounding plant habit; freely branching habit with numerous lateral branches developing per plant; pinching enhances lateral branch development; vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 19 cm.

Plant diameter.—About 35 cm.

Lateral branch description:

Length.—About 17 cm.

Diameter.—About 2.5 mm.

Internode length.—About 7.1 mm.

Strength.—Strong.

Aspect.—Upright to outwardly.

Texture.—Pubescent.

Color.—Close to 143C.

Foliage description:

Arrangement.—Alternate, simple.

Length.—About 5.2 cm.

Width.—About 1.7 cm.

Shape.—Narrowly elliptic.

Apex.—Obtuse.

Base.—Cuneate.

Margin.—Entire.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Pubescent.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate; reticulate.

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

Petiole.—Length: About 5.5 mm. Diameter: About 0.7 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 144A.

Flower description:

Flower arrangement and habit.—Single salverform flowers arising from upper leaf axils; freely flowering habit with usually about 59 flowers developing per plant; flowers face upright or outwardly.

Fragrance.—None detected.

Natural flowering season.—Early flowering habit, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* initiate and develop flowers about three to four weeks after planting; 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 seven to ten days on the plant; flowers not persistent.

Flower diameter.—About 3.6 cm.

Flower length (depth).—About 3.2 cm.

Throat diameter.—About 1.1 cm.

Tube length.—About 2 cm.

Tube diameter, base.—About 2.3 mm.

Flower bud.—Shape: Cylindrical. Length: About 2.7 cm. Diameter: About 8.1 mm. Color: Towards the apex, close to 79B; base towards the mid-section, close to 145C.

Corolla.—Arrangement: Five petals fused at the base and opening into a flared trumpet. Petal length from throat: About 1.6 cm. Petal width: About 1.7 cm. Petal shape: Spatulate. Petal apex: Retuse. Petal margin: Entire. Petal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Throat texture: Smooth, glabrous. Tube texture: Pubescent. Color: Petal, when opening, upper surface: Close to N81A; towards the throat, close to 79A. Petal, when opening, lower surface: Close to N81C. Petal, fully opened, upper surface: Close to N81B to N81C; towards the throat, close to 79A to 79B; color becoming closer to N81D with development; venation, close to 83B. Petal, fully opened, lower surface: Close to N81C; color becoming closer to N81D with development; venation, close to N79A. Throat: Close to 6A; venation, close to 79B. Tube: Close to 149D; venation, close to N79A.

Calyx.—Arrangement: One star-shaped tubular calyx tube with five sepals fused at the base. Sepal length: About 7 mm to 10 mm. Sepal width: About 3.9 mm. Sepal shape: Lanceolate. Sepal apex: Obtuse. Sepal margin: Entire. Sepal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Sepal color: Immature, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 143C. Mature, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 144A.

Peduncles.—Length: About 2.1 cm. Diameter: About 0.8 mm. Angle: Semi-upright. Strength: Strong. Texture: Pubescent. Color: Close to 144B.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity: Five per flower. Stamen length: About 9 mm to 10 mm. Anther shape: Ellipsoidal. Anther size: About 1.5 mm by 1.2 mm. Anther color: Close to 10C. Pollen amount: Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 4A. Pistils: Quan-

tity: One per flower. Pistil length: About 8.9 mm.
 Style color: Close to 144D. Stigma shape: Trans-
 versely ellipsoidal. Stigma color: Close to 144B.
 Ovary color: Close to 144C.

Seeds and fruits.—Seed and fruit development have not
 been observed on plants of the new *Calibrachoa*.

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

5
10

Pathogen & pest resistance: Plants of the new *Calibrachoa*
 have not been observed to be resistant to pests and patho-
 gens common to *Calibrachoa* plants.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Calibrachoa* plant named ‘Sunbel
 0579’ as illustrated and described.

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