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(12) **United States Plant Patent**
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(54) ***PETUNIA* PLANT NAMED 'BALCUSHITE'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Petunia* x *hybrida***
Varietal Denomination: **Balcushite**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **Plt./356.15**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Petunia* plant named 'Balcushite', characterized by its white-colored flowers, dark green-colored foliage, and vigorous, mounded-spreading growth habit, is disclosed.

1 Drawing Sheet

Latin name of genus and species of plant claimed: *Petunia* x *hybrida.*

Variety denomination: 'Balcushite'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Petunia* plant botanically known as *Petunia* x *hybrida* and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name 'Balcushite'.

The new cultivar originated in a controlled breeding program in Arroyo Grande, Calif. during July 2015. The objective of the breeding program was the development of *Petunia* cultivars with single-type flowers, unique flower coloration and patterns, and vigorous, mounded-spreading growth habit.

The new *Petunia* cultivar is the result of cross-pollination. The female (seed) parent of the new cultivar is SUPERTUNIA White 'KL 1117', U.S. Plant Pat. No. 25,485, characterized by its white-colored flowers, medium green-colored foliage, and vigorous, mounding and outwardly spreading growth habit. The male (pollen) parent of the new cultivar is SUN SPUN White 'Balspunwhi', not patented, characterized by its white-colored flowers, dark green-colored foliage, low growth vigor and compact-mounded growth habit. The new cultivar was discovered and selected as a single flowering plant within the progeny of the above stated cross-pollination during April 2016 in a controlled environment in Arroyo Grande, Calif.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal stem cuttings since April 2016 in Arroyo Grande, Calif., and West Chicago, Ill. has demonstrated that the new cultivar reproduces true to type with all of the characteristics, as herein described, firmly fixed and retained through successive generations of such asexual propagation.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following characteristics of the new cultivar have been repeatedly observed and can be used to distinguish 'Balcushite' as a new and distinct cultivar of *Petunia* plant:

1. White-colored flowers;
2. Dark green-colored foliage; and
3. Vigorous, mounded-spreading growth habit.

Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the female parent primarily in having darker green-colored foliage and larger petals with length measured from tube opening. Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the male parent primarily in having larger plant width and greater growth vigor.

Of the many commercially available *Petunia* cultivars, the most similar in comparison to the new cultivar is SUPERTUNIA VISTA Silverberry 'USTUNI60-01M' U.S. Plant Pat. No. 20,903. However, in side-by-side comparisons, plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of 'USTUNI60-01M' in at least the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new cultivar have a green-colored petal venation that is different from the red-purple colored petal venation in plants of 'USTUNI60-01M'; and
2. Plants of the new cultivar have larger diameter corollas than plants of 'USTUNI60-01M'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs show, as nearly true as it is reasonably possible to make the same in color illustrations of this type, typical flower and foliage characteristics of the new cultivar. Colors in the photographs may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed description, which accurately describes the colors of 'Balcushite'. The plants were approximately 3.5 months old and grown in 6-inch pots for approximately 10 weeks in a greenhouse in West Chicago, Ill. Plants were given one pinch at transplant.

FIG. **1** illustrates a side view of the overall growth and flowering habit of 'Balcushite'.

FIG. **2** illustrates a close-up view of an individual flower of 'Balcushite'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The new cultivar has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions to date. Accordingly, it is possible

that the phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in the environment, such as temperature, light intensity, and day length, without, however, any variance in genotype.

The chart used in the identification of colors described herein is The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England, 2015 edition, except where general color terms of ordinary significance are used. The color values were determined in February 2019 under natural light conditions in West Chicago, Ill.

The following descriptions and measurements describe approximately 3.5-month old plants produced from cuttings from stock plants and grown in a glass-covered greenhouse under conditions comparable to those used in commercial practice. The plants were grown in West Chicago, Ill. in 6-inch pots for approximately 10 weeks utilizing a soilless growth medium. Plants were given one pinch at transplant. Greenhouse temperatures were maintained at approximately 67° F. to 72° F. (19° C. to 22° C.) during the day and approximately 65° F. to 68° F. (18° C. to 20° C.) during the night. Supplemental lighting was used. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plants.

Botanical classification: *Petunia* x *hybrida* 'Balcushite'.

Parentage:

Female parent.—SUPERTUNIA White 'KL 1117', U.S. Plant Pat. No. 25,485.

Male parent.—SUN SPUN White 'Balspunwhi', not patented.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal stem.

Time to initiate roots.—Approximately 6 to 9 days.

Time to produce a rooted cutting.—Approximately 21 to 28 days.

Root description.—Fibrous.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Commercial crop time.—Approximately 6 to 8 weeks from a rooted cutting to finish in an 11 cm pot.

Growth habit and general appearance.—Vigorous, mounded-spreading.

Size.—Height from soil level to top of plant plane: Approximately 15.0 cm. Width: Approximately 62.0 cm.

Branching habit.—Freely branching, pinching improves basal branching. Quantity of main branches per plant: Approximately 7.

Branch.—Strength: Moderate. Length: Approximately 32.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 4.0 mm. Length of central internode: Approximately 3.1 cm. Texture: Densely glandular pubescent with a mixture of long and short hairs. Gland color: Colorless. Color of young and mature stems: 144A.

Foliage description:

General description.—Quantity of leaves per main branch: Approximately 14. Fragrance: Slight. Form: Simple. Arrangement on flowering stem: Opposite.

Leaves.—Aspect: Acute angle to stem. Shape: Ovate. Margin: Entire. Apex: Broadly acute. Base: Broadly attenuate. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Length of mature leaf: Approximately 5.5 cm. Width of mature leaf: Approximately 3.9 cm. Texture of upper and lower surfaces: Moderately glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless. Color of upper surface of young and mature foliage: 137A with venation of 147C to indistinguishable. Color of lower surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 138B with venation of 147C to indistinguishable.

Petiole.—Length: Approximately 1.1 cm. Width: Approximately 3.0 mm. Texture: Densely glandular pubescent with a mixture of long and short hairs. Gland color: Colorless. Color: 147C.

Flowering description:

Flowering habit.—'Balcushite' is freely flowering under outdoor growing conditions with substantially continuous blooming from spring through autumn and year-round in greenhouse environment.

Lastingness of individual flower on the plant.—Approximately 10 to 12 days.

Flower description:

General description.—Type: Simple, salverform. Quantity per plant: Approximately 19. Fragrance: Slight.

Bud.—Rate of opening: Generally takes 2 to 3 days for bud to progress from first color to fully open flower. Quantity per plant: Approximately 12.

Bud just before opening.—Shape: Oblong. Length: Approximately 3.3 cm. Diameter at apex: Approximately 7.0 mm. Diameter at base: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Densely glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless. Color of petal portion: 145D with venation of 145A. Color of tube: 145B with venation of 145A.

Corolla.—Diameter: Approximately 6.0 cm.

Petals.—Quantity: 5, fused to form a tube. Shape: Obovate. Appearance: Dull. Margin: Entire, slightly wavy. Apex: Cuspidate. Length from tube: Approximately 3.2 cm. Length of free portion: Approximately 1.2 cm. Width: Approximately 2.7 cm. Texture of upper surface: Glabrous. Texture of lower surface: Sparsely glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless. Color of upper surface when first open: NN155D, midveins of 146C. Color of lower surface when first and fully open: NN155D, midveins of 145A. Color of upper surface when fully open: NN155D, midveins of 146D.

Corolla tube.—Length: Approximately 3.0 cm. Diameter at distal end: Approximately 9.0 mm. Diameter at proximal end: Approximately 3.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Glabrous. Texture of outer surface: Densely glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless. Color of inner surface: Base of 150C transitioning to NN155D toward tube opening, venation of 146C. Color of outer surface: Base of 145C transitioning to NN155D toward petals, venation of 145A.

Sepals.—Quantity per flower: 5, fused at base. Shape: Linear. Apex: Acute. Length: Approximately 2.3 cm. Width: Approximately 4.0 mm. Texture of upper and lower surfaces: Densely glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless. Color of upper surface: 137A. Color of lower surface: 138A with 144A at base.

Peduncle.—Strength: Strong, flexible. Aspect: Acute angle to stem. Length: Approximately 2.5 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Densely glandular pubescent with a mixture of long and short hairs. Gland color: Colorless. Color: 144A.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Stamen quantity: 5, basifixed. Stamen length: Approximately 2.5 cm. Filament length of fixed portion: Approximately 9.0 mm. Filament color: NN155A. Anther shape: Bilobed. Anther length: Approximately 1.0 mm.

Anther color: 158A. Pollen amount: Abundant. Pollen color: 158B. Gynoecium: Pistil quantity: 1 per flower. Pistil length: Approximately 2.7 cm. Stigma shape: Funnel. Stigma length: Approximately 1.0 mm. Stigma color: 145D. Style length: Approximately 2.3 cm. Style color: 145D. Ovary length: Approximately 3.0 mm. Ovary color: 144A.

Seed and fruit production: Neither seed nor fruit production has been observed.

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

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Petunia* plant named 'Balcushite', substantially as herein illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1

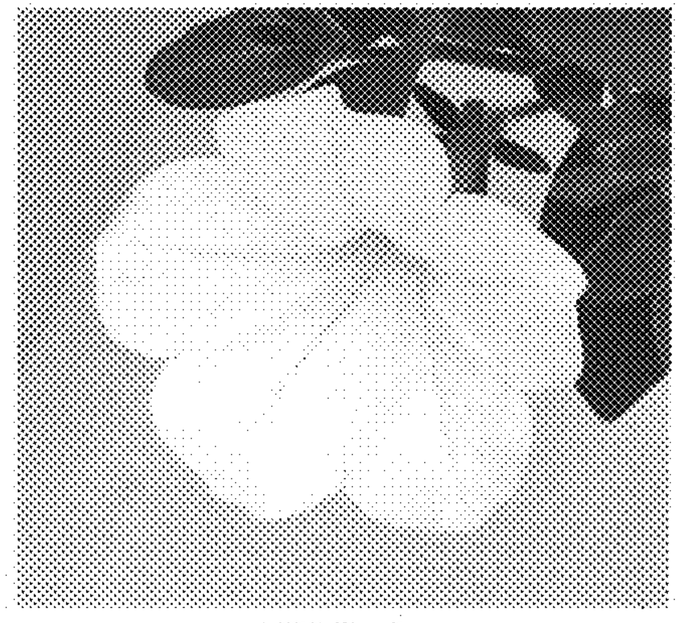

FIG. 2