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Kievit et al.

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(54) **NEPETA PLANT NAMED ‘BALPRELURP’**

(50) Latin Name: *Nepeta* hybrid
Varietal Denomination: **Balprelurp**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Nepeta* plant named ‘Balprelurp’, characterized by its dark purple-violet colored flowers, medium green colored foliage, and moderately vigorous, upright-mounded growth habit, is disclosed.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Latin name of genus and species of plant claimed: *Nepeta* hybrid.

Variety denomination: ‘Balprelurp’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Nepeta* plant botanically known as *Nepeta* hybrid and hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name ‘Balprelurp’.

The new cultivar originated in a controlled breeding program in Hem, the Netherlands during the summer of 2017. The objective of the breeding program was the development of *Nepeta* cultivars having a long flowering season with an upright-mounded growth habit.

The new *Nepeta* cultivar is the result of open-pollination. The female (seed) parent of the new cultivar is Prelude Blue ‘Balneplud’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 31,901, characterized by its medium violet-blue colored flowers, medium green colored foliage, and moderately vigorous, upright-mounded growth habit. The male (pollen) parent of the new cultivar is unknown. The new cultivar was selected as a single flowering plant within the progeny of the above stated open-pollination during July 2018 in a controlled environment in Hem, the Netherlands.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal stem cuttings since July 2018 in Hem, the Netherlands 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 ‘Balprelurp’ as a new and distinct cultivar of *Nepeta* plant:

1. Dark purple-violet colored flowers;
2. Medium green colored foliage; and
3. Moderately vigorous, upright-mounded growth habit.

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Plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of the female parent primarily in having dark purple-violet colored flowers and taller inflorescences.

Of the many commercially available *Nepeta* cultivars, the most similar in comparison to the new cultivar is Neptune ‘Bokratune’, U.S. Plant Pat. No. 29,556. However, in comparison, plants of the new cultivar differ from plants of ‘Bokratune’ in at least the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new cultivar have larger flowers than plants of ‘Bokratune’; and
2. Plants of the new cultivar have lighter green colored foliage than plants of ‘Bokratune’.

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 ‘Balprelurp’. The plants were approximately 16 weeks old. The plants were grown three plants per pot in three-quart containers for approximately 6 weeks in an outdoor nursery in West Chicago, Ill. Plants were given two pinches prior to transplant and one pinch one week after transplant.

FIG. 1 illustrates a side view of the overall growth and flowering habit of ‘Balprelurp’.

FIG. 2 illustrates a close-up view of an inflorescence of ‘Balprelurp’.

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 June 2021 under natural light conditions in Naperville, Ill.

The following descriptions and measurements describe approximately 16-week old plants produced from cuttings from stock plants and grown under conditions comparable to those used in commercial practice. The plants were grown three plants per pot in three-quart containers for approximately 6 weeks in an outdoor nursery in West Chicago, Ill. Plants were given two pinches prior to transplant and one pinch one week after transplant. Prior to transplant plants were grown in liners in a poly-covered greenhouse in West Chicago, Ill. Greenhouse temperatures ranged from an average high of 79.5° F. (26.4° C.) to an average low of 68.5° F. (20.3° C.), and supplemental lighting was provided daily for five hours during short days. Measurements and numerical values represent averages of typical plants.

Botanical classification: *Nepeta* hybrid 'Balprelurp'.

Parentage:

Female parent.—Prelude Blue 'Balneplud', U.S. Plant Pat. No. 31,901.

Male parent.—Unknown.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal stem.

Time to initiate roots.—Approximately 10 to 12 days.

Time to produce a rooted cutting.—Approximately 5 to 6 weeks.

Root description.—Fine to medium, fibrous.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Commercial crop time.—Approximately 10 to 12 weeks from a rooted cutting to finish in a 15 cm pot.

Growth habit and general appearance.—Herbaceous perennial; moderately vigorous, upright-mounded growth habit.

Hardiness.—USDA Zone 5a (−20° F. to −15° F./−28.9° C. to −26° C.).

Size.—Height from soil level to top of plant plane: Approximately 19.5 cm. Width: Approximately 23.0 cm.

Branching habit.—Freely branching, pinching enhances lateral branching. Quantity of branches per plant: Approximately 8.

Lateral branch.—Shape: Square in cross section. Strength: Strong, flexible. Length to base of peduncle: Approximately 7.5 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm to 3.0 mm. Length of central internode: Approximately 2.5 cm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of young and mature stem: 146B.

Foliage description:

General description.—Quantity of leaves per branch: Approximately 8. Fragrance: Moderate minty. Form: Simple. Arrangement: Opposite.

Leaves.—Aspect: Acute angle to stem with blade perpendicular and tips slightly downward turning with age. Shape: Ovate. Margin: Serrate. Apex: Acute. Base: Rounded. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Length of mature leaf: Approximately 4.0 cm. Width of mature leaf: Approximately 2.0 cm. Texture of upper surface: Moderately pubescent. Densely pubescent with

a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of upper surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 137B with venation of 137A. Color of lower surface of young and mature foliage: Closest to 147B with venation of 147C.

Petiole.—Length: Approximately 8.0 mm. Diameter: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color: 146C.

Flowering description:

Flowering habit.—'Balprelurp' is a long-day obligate, freely flowering blooming from late spring through summer under outdoor growing conditions.

Lastingness of individual floret.—Approximately 6 to 7 days.

Inflorescence description:

General description.—Type: Terminal, dense, multi-flowered head-like cyme. Quantity of open inflorescences per plant: Approximately 9. Fragrance: Slight minty. Length or height of inflorescence: Approximately 9.0 cm. Width of inflorescence: Approximately 6.0 cm. Quantity of fully-open flowers per inflorescence: Approximately 3 to 9.

Peduncle.—Strength: Strong. Aspect: Erect. Length: Approximately 3.0 cm. Diameter: Approximately 2.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color: 146B.

Flower description:

Type.—Single, zygomorphic.

Bud just before opening.—Shape: Clavate. Length: Approximately 1.8 cm. Diameter: Approximately 6.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color: 146D with N88A.

Corolla.—Shape: Bilabiate with a bell-shaped tube, upper lip of two lobes and lower lip having three lobes. Aspect: Facing outward. Width: Approximately 1.0 cm. Length: Approximately 1.3 cm. Depth: Approximately 3.5 cm.

Upper lip lobes.—Shape: Oblong. Margin: Entire. Apex: Rounded. Length from throat: Approximately 7.0 mm. Width: Approximately 5.0 mm. Texture of upper (inner) surface: Glabrous. Texture of lower (outer) surface: Sparsely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of upper (inner) surface when first and fully open: N88B. Color of lower (outer) surface when first and fully open: N88B with N87B.

Lower lip, lateral lobes.—Shape: Ovate. Margin: Entire. Apex: Rounded. Length from throat: Approximately 6.0 mm. Width: Approximately 4.0 mm. Texture of upper (inner) surface: Glabrous. Texture of lower (outer) surface: Sparsely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of upper (inner) surface when first and fully open: N88B. Color of lower (outer) surface when first and fully open: N88B with N87B.

Lower lip, central lobe.—Shape: Fan-like with a central ridge. Margin: Crenate. Apex: Emarginate. Length from throat: Approximately 8.0 mm. Width: Approximately 6.0 mm. Texture of upper (inner)

surface: Densely pubescent at throat opening and on central ridge. Texture of lower (outer) surface: Sparsely glandular pubescent. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of upper (inner) surface when first and fully open: N88A. Color of lower (outer) surface when first and fully open: N88B.

Corolla tube.—Length: Approximately 2.7 cm. Width at opening: Approximately 1.0 cm. Width at base: 1.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Glabrous. Texture of outer surface: Moderately pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of inner surface: N88B with N87B. Color of outer surface: N88A to N88B with N87B.

Calyx.—Shape: Funnel with 5 tips. Length: Approximately 1.3 cm to 1.4 cm. Diameter: Approximately 4.0 mm.

Sepals.—Quantity per flower: 5. Apex: Acute. Base: Fused. Length: Approximately 1.3 cm to 1.4 cm. Width: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture of inner surface: Glabrous. Texture of outer surface: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color of inner surface: 147C. Color of outer surface: 146B to 146C with slight streaking of N186A.

*Pedice**l*.—Strength: Strong, flexible. Aspect: At an acute angle. Length: Approximately 2.0 mm to 3.0

mm. Diameter: Approximately 1.0 mm. Texture: Densely pubescent with a mixture of glandular and nonglandular hairs. Gland color: Colorless, transparent. Color: 146B.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Stamen quantity: 4 per flower. Stamen length: Approximately 3.1 cm to 3.3 cm. Filament length of free portion: Approximately 1.4 cm to 1.6 cm. Filament color: N88B. Anther shape: Divergent, opening by a common slit. Anther length: Approximately 1.0 mm. Anther color: N89A. Pollen amount: Abundant. Pollen color: NN155D. Gynoecium: Pistil quantity: 1 per flower. Pistil length: Approximately 3.3 cm. Stigma shape: Bifurcate. Stigma length: Approximately 1.0 mm. Stigma color: 86A. Style length: Approximately 3.0 cm. Style color: NN155D with an overlay of 86B near stigma. Ovary length: Approximately 2.0 mm. Ovary color: N144D.

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

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

What is claimed is:

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

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2