



APPLICATIONS UNDER EXAMINATION

FOUNTAIN GRASS

**FOUNTAIN GRASS**  
*(Pennisetum setaceum)*

**Proposed denomination:** 'Sky Rocket'  
**Application number:** 09-6745  
**Application date:** 2009/10/16  
**Applicant:** Ronald Strasko and ItSaul Plants, LLC, Alpharetta, Georgia, United States of America  
**Agent in Canada:** BioFlora Inc., St. Thomas, Ontario  
**Breeder:** Ronald Strasko, Leola, Pennsylvania, United States of America  
Karen R. Stever, ItSaul Plants, LLC, Alpharetta, Georgia, United States of America

**Varieties used for comparison:** 'Fireworks' and 'Ivory Fountain'

**Summary:** *The leaf blades of 'Sky Rocket' are longer than those of 'Ivory Fountain'. The leaf blades of 'Sky Rocket' are variegated while those of 'Ivory Fountain' are not. 'Sky Rocket' differs from both reference varieties in the colour of the upper side of the leaf blade. The lower side of the leaf blades of 'Sky Rocket' are medium green with yellow while those of 'Fireworks' are medium green and red with white and those of 'Ivory Fountain' are light green. The rachis of 'Sky Rocket' is light green while that of 'Fireworks' is dark purple red. The bristles at the base of the spikelet of 'Sky Rocket' have weak red colouration while those of 'Fireworks' have strong red colouration. The colour of the stigma of 'Sky Rocket' differ from those of 'Fireworks'.*

**Description:**

**PLANT:** vegetatively propagated, annual type, upright-bushy to arching growth habit, vigorous, dense foliage

**CULM:** medium green mature shoot, erect aspect, absent or very weak pubescence, weak glabrousness

**LEAF:** alternate arrangement, simple type

**LEAF BLADE:** linear, acute apex, sheathed base, entire margin, absent to very sparse pubescence on upper side, absent to very sparse pubescence on lower side, variegated, upper side mainly dark green to brown green (RHS 137A-B) with yellow green to white (RHS 150D-white) longitudinal bands mostly along margin, lower side mainly medium green with some yellow-white longitudinal bands mostly along margin

**FLOWERING:** mid to late season, long flowering period

**INFLORESCENCE:** spike-like panicle, light green (RHS 145A-B) rachis, erect to arching panicle aspect

**GLUME:** whitish-yellow

**BRISTLES:** weak intensity of red colouration, white (RHS NN155B) aging to dark purple red (RHS 59A)

**STIGMA:** white (RHS NN155B)

**ANTHERS:** yellow/orange early colour

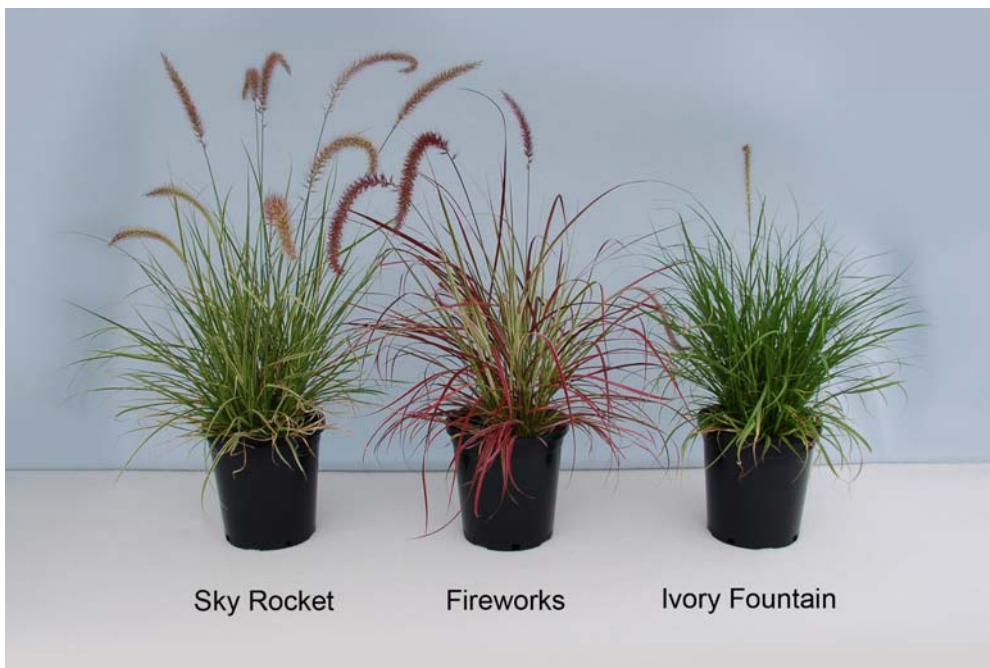
**Origin and Breeding:** 'Sky Rocket' was discovered and developed by the breeders Ronald Strasko and Karen R. Stever, in Alpharetta, Georgia, USA. The Pennisetum variety 'Sky Rocket' was discovered as a culm sport of *Pennisetum setaceum* 'Fireworks' during a division of a stock plant in a nursery in Alpharetta, Georgia in March of 2009. The new variety was selected based on foliage colour, foliage colour pattern, flower period, plume colour and non invasive growth habit. Asexual reproduction of the new variety 'Sky Rocket' was first conducted by culm divisions in Alpharetta, Georgia, United States in May 2009.

**Tests and Trials:** Trials for 'Sky Rocket' were conducted in a polyhouse during the summer of 2010 in St. Thomas, Ontario. Trials included 15 plants each of the candidate and reference varieties. Rooted cuttings were transplanted into 3.8 litre containers on May 19, 2010. Observations and measurements were taken from 10 plants of each variety on July 7, 2010. All colour determinations were made using the 2007 Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Colour Chart.

Comparison table for 'Sky Rocket'

	'Sky Rocket'	'Fireworks'*	'Ivory Fountain'*
<i>Leaf blade length (cm)</i>			
mean	38.3	40.5	31.6
std. deviation	3.31	5.16	1.83
<i>Colour of upper side of leaf blade (RHS)</i>			
main	longitudinal bands more yellow than 137A-B	137B-C longitudinal bands with 47B-D mostly on distal half of leaf	lighter than 147B
secondary	longitudinal bands 150D to white	NN155B mostly on basal half of leaf, becoming red with age	N/A
<i>Colour of rachis (RHS)</i>			
main	145A-B	59B	145C
<i>Colour of bristle (RHS)</i>			
main	NN155B aging close to 59A	59A aging to NN155A	NN155B aging to 59B
<i>Colour of stigma (RHS)</i>			
main	NN155B	187A	NN155B

\*reference varieties



Fountain Grass: 'Sky Rocket' (left) with reference varieties 'Fireworks' (center) and 'Ivory Fountain' (right)



Fountain Grass: 'Sky Rocket' (left) with reference varieties 'Fireworks' (center) and 'Ivory Fountain' (right)