

Hottentot-Fig

(Carpobrotus edulis)



Habitat: Terrestrial, coastal
Family name: Aizoaceae



Hottentot-fig Infestation on Cliff-top

Description: Hottentot-fig is a succulent robust, flat-growing, trailing perennial herb. It roots at nodes and forms dense mats.

Competes aggressively for space with native plant species.

Hottentot-fig's can smother protected habitats of vegetated sea cliffs and dunes of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts



Hottentot-fig Infestation on Sand Dune



Hottentot-fig Yellow Flower

Flowers are solitary, 100–150mm in diameter, yellow, fading to pale pink. Plants in Ireland are

known to have reddish-purple, have numerous petals and stamens, only opening in the afternoon



Hottentot-fig Pink Flower



Hottentot-fig Fruit

Seeds can be dispersed over long distances by animals and people.

Plants can also be spread by birds using fragments as nesting material.



Triangular stem

Leaves are opposite and distinctively 3 angled and triangular in cross section. Leaves are very succulent, crowded along 60–130 x 10–12mm, sharply 3-angled arranged in opposite pairs

and are triangular in cross section with tiny serrations along the outermost angle.

Leaves may appear yellowish to grass green, and reddish when older.



Flower (close-up)

Reproduction: Vegetative propagation by runners (*rooting at nodes*)



also capable of reproducing from seed which ripens from July and September.

Plants are completely self fertile and slightly agamospermic (*seeds are produced from unfertilised ovules*).

While seeds generally remain within 10m of the parent plant they are dispersed by a wide variety of consumers.



Hottentot-fig Roots



Hottentot-fig Seeds

Viable seeds have been recorded up to 1km away from parent plants in deer faeces.

Plants have a dense fibrous

root system concentrated in the upper 50cm of the soil, with new roots forming at each node as the plant spreads outward. Un-germinated seeds remain viable for at least two years.