



Hottentot fig

(*Carpobrotus* sp.)

Originated in South Africa and was imported to Europe during the 1900s for ornamental purposes and to stabilise soil against erosion.

Description

- Perennial, succulent plant, either creeper or overhanging on cliffs, that forms large beds
- V-shaped, pulpy leaves, opposing, green to red in colour, 8 to 11 cm long and 8 to 13 mm thick, with the cross section forming an equilateral triangle (*C. edulis*) or an isosceles triangle (*C. acinaciformis*)
- Single flowers at end of stalk, linear petals that are yellow (*C. edulis*) or purplish pink (*C. acinaciformis*), 5 to 12 cm in diameter
- Pulp fruit, fig shaped, edible, with many seeds in a very sticky mucilage

Ecology and reproduction

- Littoral, rocky or sandy areas, e.g. dunes, back sides of dunes, cliffs, rocky slopes
- Flowering in the beginning of spring (March to May), self-pollinating or cross-pollinating due to pollinating insects
- Dispersal of fruit via endozoochory (vertebrates) or myrmecochory (ants)
- Vegetative multiplication via layering or cuttings
- Hybrids between the two species are possible

Documentation

- Lamand F. (ed.), 2015. Invasive alien species in aquatic and related environments in continental France. Set of identification sheets. Onema. p. 35-36. (In French)
- Hauri J. and Clergeau P., 2014. Invasive species in Brittany, continental vertebrates and plants. AgroCampus Ouest and MNHN. p. 45-46. (In French)
- Muller S. (ed.), 2004. Invasive plants in France. MNHN, Paris, 168 p. (In French)
- Fried G., 2012. Guide to invasive plants. Éditions Belin, 272 p. (In French)

Authors: Doriane Blottière, IUCN French committee, for the Resource Centre on invasive alien species. October 2019. Published by the French Biodiversity Agency.

Classification

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| Order | Caryophyllales |
| Family | Aizoaceae |
| Genus | <i>Carpobrotus</i> |
| Species | <i>C. edulis</i> ((L.) N.E.Br, 1926) <i>C. acinaciformis</i> ((L.) L. Bolus 1927) |

