



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Carpobrotus edulis*¹

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Introduction

A common road-side ground cover in California, few test plantings of Ice Plant have been tried in Florida (Fig. 1). There is at least one planting in Clearwater. Those in California grow nicely in full sun in hot conditions. The plant stays low to the ground or will cascade over a retaining wall. Flowers are produced on a regular basis.

General Information

Scientific name: *Carpobrotus edulis*

Pronunciation: kar-poe-BROE-tus ED-yoo-liss

Common name(s): Ice Plant

Family: *Aizoaceae*

Plant type: ground cover

USDA hardiness zones: 7B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 7: year round

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: ground cover

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

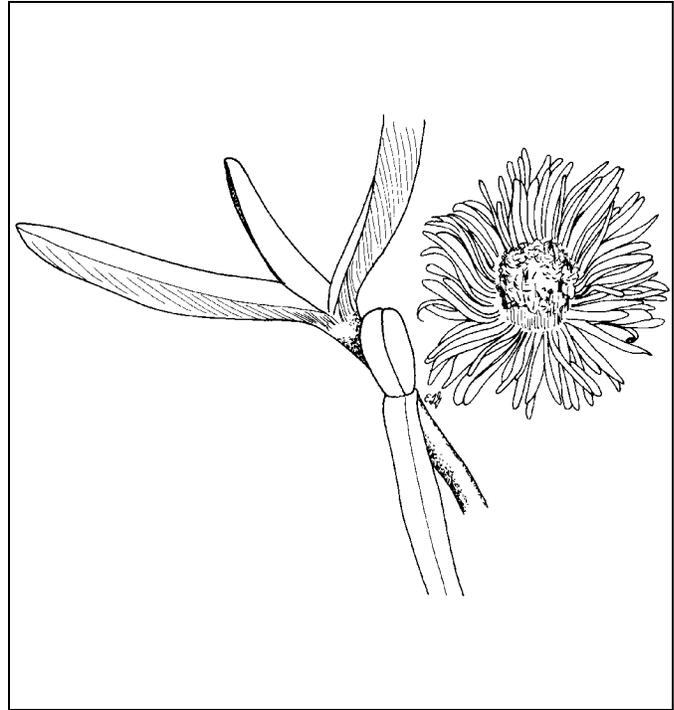


Figure 1. Ice Plant.

Description

Height: .5 to 1 feet

Spread: depends upon supporting structure

Plant habit: prostrate (flat); spreading

Plant density: dense

Growth rate: fast

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: opposite/subopposite

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf shape: lanceolate
Leaf venation: none, or difficult to see
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: less than 2 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: pink; yellow
Flower characteristic: summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: unknown
Fruit length: unknown
Fruit cover: unknown
Fruit color: unknown
Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: not applicable
Current year stem/twig color: green

Current year stem/twig thickness: very thick

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in full sun
Soil tolerances: sand; loam; acidic; loam
Drought tolerance: high
Soil salt tolerances: unknown
Plant spacing: 24 to 36 inches

Other

Roots: not applicable
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: aggressive, spreading plant
Pest resistance: very sensitive to one or more pests or diseases which can affect plant health or aesthetics

Use and Management

Ice Plants are regularly irrigated in the desert, California climate. However, in Florida, root rot may be the greatest concern in an irrigated landscape. You might try locating it in a place where drainage is exceptionally good (on a sandy ridge) and where irrigation does not reach.

Pests and Diseases

The plant has not been tested well enough in Florida to report on pest or disease problems.