

## Fockea edulis

### Hottentot Bread

#### Quick Facts

Attribute	Details
Family	Apocynaceae – Subfamily Asclepiadoideae
Genus / Species	Fockea edulis K.Schum.
Common Name	Hottentot Bread (ethnic term outdated; retained in plant names)
Synonyms	Brachystelma macrorrhizum, Chymocormus edulis, Fockea cylindrica, Fockea glabra, Pergularia edulis
Native Range	South Africa, Namibia
Habitat	Sandy or rocky slopes, semi-arid scrubland
Growth Form	Caudiciform vine with large underground or partially exposed tuber, climbing stems, small fleshy leaves
Flowering	Summer; greenish-white (~1.5 cm); dioecious
USDA Hardiness	9b–11b
Toxicity	Milky latex can irritate skin and eyes; not for consumption in cultivation

#### Care Instructions

Category	Recommendation
Light	Bright light to full sun. Outdoors: protect from hottest afternoon sun. Indoors: south or west-facing window.
Temperature	Ideal: 18–28 °C (65–82 °F). Minimum safe: ~2 °C (36 °F) if kept dry. Frost-sensitive.
Watering	Spring–Fall: Water deeply, allow soil to fully dry (7–10 days). Winter: Light watering every 3–4 weeks.
Soil	40% pumice/perlite, 30% coarse sand, 30% gravel or crushed granite. pH 6.0–7.5. Optional: bone meal, charcoal.
Fertilizer	Balanced cactus/succulent fertilizer (10-10-10 or 20-20-20) every 4–6 weeks in growth. None in winter.
Humidity	Normal household humidity (40–60%).
Propagation	By seed; both male and female plants needed for seed set. Vegetative propagation rarely successful.
Pests & Problems	Aphids, mealybugs, spider mites; root rot if overwatered or soil remains wet.
Special Notes	Caudex can be gradually lifted for display but leaving it partly buried promotes stability and growth.

#### References

1. SANBI Red List of South African Plants – Fockea edulis profile.
2. Royal Horticultural Society – Fockea edulis horticultural notes.
3. Albers, F. & Meve, U. (2004). Illustrated Handbook of Succulent Plants: Asclepiadaceae. Springer.
4. Van Wyk, B-E. (2008). “A review of Khoi-San and Cape Dutch medical ethnobotany.” Journal of Ethnopharmacology 119: 331–341.
5. Van Wyk, B-E. (2011). “The potential of South African plants in the development of new food and beverage products.” South African Journal of Botany 77: 857–868.