

Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

Carpobrotus acinaciformis

(commonly known as Elands Sourfig, Elandssuurvy or Sally-my-handsome)

The carpet weeds (Aizoaceae, fig marigold family) are a species-rich plant family from the order Caryophyllales (carnation-like). The main area of distribution is Africa.

The generic name *Carpobrotus* is derived from the Greek words „karpos“ for fruit and „brota“ for edible. The genus covers 13 kinds; it was already described and designated by *Carl Linnaeus*, but classified only 1927 by *Harriet Margaret Louisa Bolus* in today's valid classification. It is far common also in the Mediterranean area and one finds it frequently also on Crete.



Carpobrotus are succulent, bald dwarf bushes with creeping shoot axis, 50 to 300 cm long and mats forming. The fibre-shaped roots rise from the knots. The sheets sitting at the stems are oppositely arranged and at the edge weakly grown together with one another, thick-fleshy and in the cross section round triangular. They are entire dentate; stipules are missing.

The terminal inflorescences stand upright and are brachiate, the blooms stand individually (see fig., Photo: U. Kluge, NLUK 2004). The eye-catching blooms are tubular and have a diameter of 3 - 15 cm. The four to five calyx lobate are from unequal size; those about 250 petals are usually pink (red), but they can be yellow, white or cream.



The up to 600 stamens stand upright, the stamps have eight to twelve carpels, the ovary is eight to twelfefold. A pistil is missing, the scars is radial and pinnate. The fruits are fleshy, edible berries; up to 1000 seeds are shining brown, obovate and squeezed together, an arillus is missing.

The wheel-shaped blooms of *Carpobrotus acinaciformis* appear from May to Septembers. The plant prefers a sunny location and stands temperatures to - 6° C. The forb grows on Crete with priority on sand and sandy shingly soils and feels well in dry substrates.



Ingredients of the midday flower find use also in preparations to the skin care (see fig.); „the antipruritics skin preparations, caring lotion midday flower and intensively cream midday flower combine the freshly pressed juice of the midday flower with a combination of different natural oils, like e.g. oil of avocado, mango butter, Shea butter, almond and Jojoba oil, which are adapted exactly with the needs of the very dry and neurodermatitis skin“ (so the advertisement).

This article is based on the article: [<http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mittagsblume>] from the free encyclopaedia Wikipedia and belongs to the GNU license for free documentation.