

## **Bulbine (*Bulbine frutescens*)**

### **Description and Distribution**

Bulbine is a perennial, fast growing, evergreen, prostrate 'aloe-like' succulent. It grows in the northern cape, western cape and eastern cape of South Africa, as well as along the Fish River Canyon in Namibia and the southern most regions of the Namib Desert. The Bulbine is a drought resistant plant but if cultivated it prefers compost and regular watering. (1)

### **Harvesting and Processing**

The leaves are harvested and used to make a juice or gel. The leaves are simply cut off whenever needed. Once the leaves have dried, one cannot make a gel. The freshly cut leaves are cold pressed, filtered and pasteurised into the gel. As the plant is mainly found in South Africa, the production of the gel is done there. (2) The roots and stems of the plant are used less. They contain knipholone-type anthraquinones. (3)



### **Uses and Properties**

The leaf gel is said to be used in the healing of cuts, burns, rashes, cracked lips, acne, cold sores, mouth ulcers, areas of cracked skin, eczema and mosquito bites. The leaf gel is also may also be used in many cosmetic products. It is claimed to enhance cell-cell interactions, help lipid synthesis, enhance aquaporin-3 expression, improve elasticity and tensile strength of the skin, and reduce water loss from the skin. Therefore the leaf gel is used in anti-aging creams, moisture creams, skin repair creams and after-sun soothing creams. It is also used in oral care products and deodorants due to its ability to reduce odour producing microorganisms. (2)

## **References**

1. [http://www.lifile.com/Encyclopedia/SUCCULENTS/Family/Asphodelaceae/11123/Bulbine\\_frutescens](http://www.lifile.com/Encyclopedia/SUCCULENTS/Family/Asphodelaceae/11123/Bulbine_frutescens)
2. <https://www.google.co.za/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=13&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj3nv6Nu4zXAhWHtxQKHeOSAKkQFghcMAw&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.researchgate.net%2Ffile.PostFileLoader.html%3Fid%3D57ad89b5615e270bf326ab01%26assetKey%3DAS%253A394178027638790%25401470990773640&usg=AOvVaw1q8iiJS1mYVKOK9sFX2xVQ>
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4. <http://www.timola.co.za/timola-skin-care-range.html>