

Cephalopentandra ecirrhose

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Q. I bought a *Cephalopentandra ecirrhose*. It hasn't grown much and the leaves turn brown quickly. I thought it produced long vines?

A. This plant is in the squash family, *Cucurbitaceae*. Like most squash, cucumbers, gourds or melons, it likes lots and lots of water during warm weather, and is accustomed to growing under other plants, vining up into them. It does have a caudex, but that is for surviving the cool dry season, not the hot growing season. You probably aren't watering it enough. Treat it like a zucchini plant.

Make sure after watering, that the soil is actually wet. Many potting soil mixes will have only the surface wet, with water running down the outside of the root ball, and most of the soil dry. Run your finger into the soil 15 minutes after watering to check.

It does better with a little shade in our hot summers. It does even better planted out in the ground.