The genus *Othonna* contains members that vary from annuals to shrubs, to semi-succulent shrubs, to pachycauls with swollen trunks, and to true geophytes, with most of the plant safely underground and only the annual leaves and flowers exposed. Most othonnas in cultivation come from South Africa, with a few from Namibia, and a few elsewhere in East Africa. All of the geophytic othonnas in cultivation are winter growing succulents — dormant and leafless from the first real summer heat until night time temperatures get into the low 50s. *Othonna* are members of the *Asteraceae* with garden asters, sunflowers and dandelions as distant relatives.

Cultivation of *Othonna* is relatively simple. They are winter growers that start to develop new leaves in late September or October. They are more sensitive to night temperatures than they are to day temperatures and will start to leaf out when night temperatures are near 50 F for a week or so. This is the time when they need water and at least a little fertilizer. Some species flower almost as soon as the leaves appear but most wait until late winter or early spring. The flowers are pollinated by bees and anything that will pollinate a dandelion. Some natural and grower hybrids exist, but hybridization is fairly rare. Othonnas do best when never allowed to get bone dry. A little water in summer particularly when grown in very dry climates will prevent complete desiccation and loss of roots. A little water is a little water, not flooding and without fertilizer. The plants are dormant and leafless and the roots should never be consistently wet. If this happens then the plants may get root rot, with the rot spreading up the plant. Many growers use pure or nearly pure pumice as a growing medium to help prevent this. Pure pumice goes a long way towards preventing rot and greatly eases the difficulties of summer watering but requires some fertilization during the growing period.

Othonna propagation by seed is not difficult. Bees and other insects do most of the pollinating if the plants are exposed. If controlled pollination is desired, then a small brush or even a fingertip will transfer pollen from one plant to another. Female flowers are ray flowers located around the edge of the inflorescence. The center (disc) flowers are either male or perfect, depending on the species. Most species are not self-fertile, and two plants will be required to produce seeds. If successful pollination occurs, the flowers will fade fairly quickly. After the flowers fade the floral stem will gradually turn brown. The seed is enclosed in a small fruiting body and comes with a small wind.