

# Grass Tree



Scientific name: *Xanthorrhoea preissii*

Aboriginal name: Balga (Noongar)



Plant habit



Flower Spike



Flowers



Flower Stalk

## About ...

The Grass Tree is native to the south-west of Western Australia and has been used by the local Noongar people for thousands of years.

The plants are resistant to fire, which is known to stimulate flowering. The blackened trunks can resprout within a few months of a fire. Coloured bands caused by melting resin along the stems of Grass Trees can be used to age plants.

Grass Trees only grow between 10 – 20 millimetres each year.

## Aboriginal Uses

- Gum from flowering spikes can be made into cakes
- Flowers can be used to make a sweet drink
- Dead flowering spikes used to make fire or used as spear shaft
- Bardi grubs are collected from trunks of dying trees
- The black resin from the trunk can be used as an adhesive to attach spear heads to a shaft or to start a fire
- Bunches of dried leaves were made into torches
- Leaves used as thatching material for the roof of a hut

## Family

XANTHORRHOEACEAE

## Climate

Temperate

## Habitat

Ranges, coastal plains and watercourses on grey/black sands, loam or gravelly clay

## Form

Medium tree

Height: 5 m

Trunk is formed from old leaf bases and is often crooked

May branch into several crowns of foliage

## Foliage

Long, slender brittle leaves

Diamond shaped

Medium green, changing to brown

## Flower

Kambarang to Birak (November to January)

One flower spike per crown

Grows to 3 m

Thousands of small white flowers produced on each flower spike

Pollinated by insects

Developed by SERCUL for use with the *Bush Tucker Education Program*.

**SERCUL**

South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare  
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bushucker/



Used as food



Used as medicine



Used as resources



Local to SW WA

**Caution:** Do not prepare bush tucker food without having been shown by Indigenous or experienced persons. Some bush tucker if eaten in large quantities or not prepared correctly can cause illness.

ALGAE BUSTER



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