



SPECIES

Xanthorrea australis

COMMON NAME

Grass-tree or Black Boy

ORIGIN

Australia

DESIGN USE

The flowers contain considerable nectar which was used by aborigines to produce a sweet drink by soaking the flowers in water. The nectar also attracts honey eating birds



HEIGHT

1m -4m

SPREAD

1m

HABIT

Very slow growing, but they are also very long lived -- up to 600 years; ever-green Perennial

FORM

Its fire-blackened trunk can grow up to several metres tall and is often branched



FLOWERS

White or cream and very small; flowering spike grows out of the top of the plant. Flowers appear on the spike, usually covering 1/2-5/6 of the stem. The flowers of this particular species have 6 petals

FLOWERING PERIOD

X. australis is not often seen in bloom because this species requires fire to stimulate its reproductive cycle; July to December, but younger plants may flower in June---Spring

FRUIT

Flowers are followed by fruits containing a few hard, black seeds.

CLIMATIC TOLERANCES

The plant prefers light (sandy) and medium (loamy) soils, requires well-drained soil and can grow in nutritionally poor soil. The plant prefers acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It cannot grow in the shade. It requires moist soil



HORTICULTURE

Seed - sow spring in a warm greenhouse

REFERENCES

<http://asgap.org.au/x-aus.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xanthorrhoea_australis

<http://www.pfaf.org/database/plants.php?Xanthorrhoea+australis>