
BENT BALGA SPIKES

WITH regard to Jennifer Young's comment about bent Balga spikes under power lines (WW 7/2 p16), Betty and Bob Wemm of Kalbarri comment: "We have noticed over the years that grass trees usually produce bent flowers consecutively, although not always. These bent spikes also occur everywhere, we've seen them all over the State. Some Kalbarri National Park and Eradu plants have evidence of three consecutive bent flowers and were a considerable distance from

electricity. We cannot offer any explanation but it would seem to have something to do with the plant, rather than external influences."

(I had a look at some on my road verge, under a power line, and at every bend gum had oozed out, indicating that the stem had been damaged at that point. I wonder if, at a young stage of spike formation, insects such as weevils could be responsible? {see the note on banksia spikes in WW 4/3 p15} Ed.)