

Softwood scrub



Landform	Undulating to steep, low hills and rises.
Woody vegetation	Brigalow, belah, wilga open forest with poplar box and softwood scrub species such as bottle tree, crow's ash, peach bush, currant bush, quinine, bitterbark and ironwood. Occasional silver-leaved and narrow-leaved ironbark.
Expected pasture composition	* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.
Preferred	Green panic* often dominates the softwood scrub land type on the Darling Downs; Queensland bluegrass, forest bluegrass and black speargrass often appear as soil fertility declines.
Intermediate	Pitted bluegrass and barbwire grass.
Non-preferred	Wiregrasses, green couch, urochloa* and slender bamboo grass.
Common forbs and legumes	Trefoils, glycine and rhynchosia. Cotton bush* (non-preferred).
Suitable sown pastures	Rhodes grass (Katambora types), Gatton panic, green panic, digit grass, creeping bluegrass (Bisset) and buffel grass in western areas. Lucerne, Caatinga stylo, desmanthus, leucaena and medics (barrel and button).
Introduced weeds	Tree pear, African boxthorn, African lovegrass, mother-of-millions and lantana.
Soil	Texture contrast soil with a hardsetting surface and impermeable subsoil (dermosol, chromosol).
Description	Surface: massive to weakly structured; Surface texture: dark brown to grey-brown, sandy loam to clay loam; Subsoil texture: brown, dark reddish brown, grey-brown or yellowish brown heavy to medium clay.
Water availability	Low to moderate; plant available water capacity (PAWC) 50 – 150 mm.
Rooting depth	20 – 40 cm.
Fertility	Low to moderate fertility; responds to nitrogen, phosphorus and copper and occasionally sulphur and potassium.

Salinity

Moderate at depth.

Sodicity

Sodic to strongly sodic in subsoils.

pH

Slightly acid pH 6.0 – 6.5 at surface; neutral to moderately alkaline at depth (pH 7.0 – 8.5)

Long-term carrying capacity information (A condition)

Based on fully watered area for 1AE = 450 kg animal consuming 8kg DM/day				
Median annual rainfall 582 – 729 mm				
Pasture type	Median tree cover (TBA m ² /ha) (FPC %)	Median annual pasture growth (DM kg/ha)	Safe annual utilisation pasture growth (%)	LTCC (ha/AE)
Native species	0 TBA/FPC	4530 - 5070	30%	1.9 – 2.2
	16 TBA 39 FPC	1770 – 2730	30%	3.6 – 5.5
Sown			35%	

Enterprise

Growing and finishing.

Land use and management recommendations

- Easy to germinate seeds and establish pasture in this soil type.
- Responds quickly to small falls of rain and more productive than heavier clay soils in dry years.
- Persistently overgrazed patches are quickly overtaken by couch, increasing surface runoff and reducing water infiltration into the soil.
- Sulphur is required to maintain sown species.
- Low pH may cause nutrient imbalances.

Land use limitations

- PAWC is limited by depth to sodic/saline subsoils.
- Shallow depth.
- Rocky.
- Some soil types have a hardsetting surface.
- Susceptible to severe sheet and gully erosion.
- Marsupial overgrazing (particularly in cleared areas verging on forest).
- Woody weeds.
- Quinine, bitterbark, flannel weed, ironwood and sally wattle often encroach pastures.
- Green panic grazed continuously may lead to calcium deficiency.

Conservation features and related management

- Conservation status of remnant vegetation is endangered.
- Habitat for threatened fauna species including pale imperial hairstreak butterfly (*Jalmenus eubulus*).
- Protection from fire is necessary. Belah (*Casuarina cristata*) is fire sensitive, although germination can be good in bare areas. Brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla*) is soft-seeded, so germination is not promoted by fire.
- Maintain fire management of surrounding country so that wildfires will be very limited in extent. Frequent fire at the edge of this land type keeps fuel loads low.

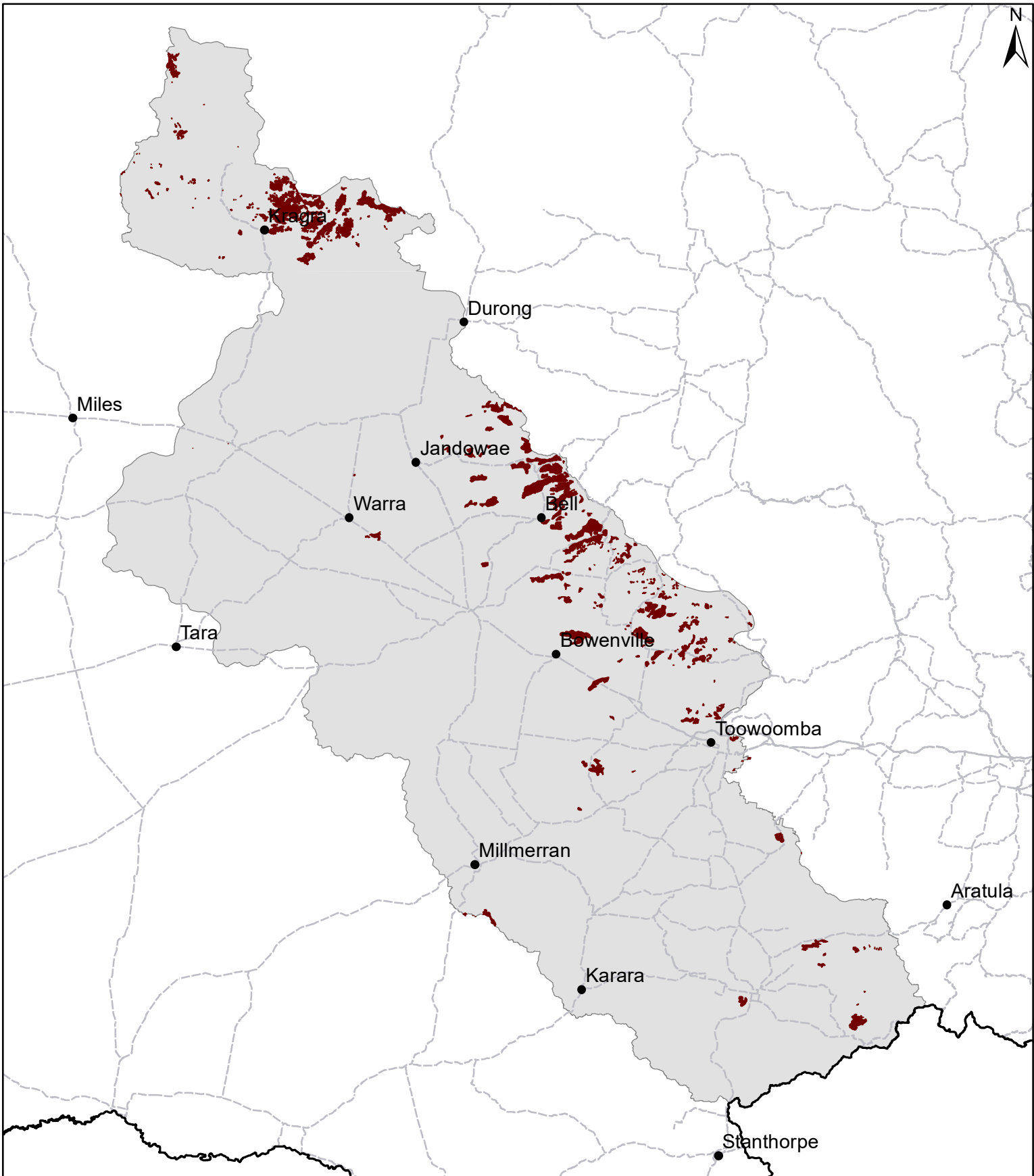
Regional Ecosystems

11.8.3, 11.9.4a, 11.9.4c, 11.9.5, 11.9.6, 12.5.13, 12.8.21

Land units; Agricultural management unit; Soil associations

Central Darling Downs Land Management Manual: 6b (*Clayburn, Diamondy, East, Toolburra, Walker*); Understanding and Managing Soils in the Murilla, Tara and Chinchilla Shires: 5c: (*Cadarga, Moola*). Land Inventory and Technical Guide Eastern Downs Area: (*Douglas, Emlyn, Norbell, Sugarloaf, Walker*); Description and Management of the Soils of the Eastern Darling Downs Queensland: (*Boundary, Toolburra*).

DD15 Softwood scrub



Area of land type in region: 2%
Median rainfall (region): 580 – 909 mm
Average rainfall (region): 585 – 927 mm
Area of land type with FPC: 40%
Median FPC: 39%
Median TBA: 16 m²/ha



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