

Hard mulga



Landform	Rolling hills and hard ridges with slopes of 2–8%.
Woody vegetation	Mulga, lancewood, ironbark and bendee.
Expected pasture composition	<i>* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.</i>
Preferred	Mulga oats, mulga Mitchell grass, box grass, kangaroo grass.
Intermediate	Pitted bluegrass, curly windmill grass, mountain wanderrie grass.
Non-preferred	Rough speargrass, wiregrasses.
Legumes	Slender tick trefoil, native indigo, Birdsville indigo.
Suitable sown pastures	Not suitable for sown pastures
Introduced weeds	
Soils	Soils shallow to moderately deep (30–90 cm), stony or gravelly loamy red earths with areas of ironstone.
Description	Surface: Loamy hard surfaces; Surface texture: Sandy clay loam to clay loam; Subsoil texture: clay content may increase down profile to light clay; ironstone gravel common throughout profile.
Water availability	Low to medium.

Rooting depth	Shallow
Fertility	Very low (phosphorus, nitrogen, carbon).
Salinity	Very low
Sodicity	Non-sodic
pH	Acid to neutral throughout profile.

Utilisation 15%

Enterprise Mixed sheep and cattle or adult wethers only.

Land use and management recommendations

- Stock lightly during dry periods and post-drought to maintain ground cover.
- Any grass cover is better than none.
- Mulga fodder provides drought reserves.
- Wiregrasses often predominate in areas cleared of mulga.
- Opportunistic use of fire as management tool to control woody weeds.
- Maintenance of ground cover to minimise water and wind erosion and maximise rainfall use.
- Strip clearing is preferable to clearing of large areas to minimise erosion and degradation.

Land use limitations

- Fragile grazing lands.
- Difficult to reclaim if degraded.
- Poor surface structure, soil acidity and stoniness limit mechanical treatment options.
- Dense stands of broad-leaved plants (mulga fern, pimelea, weir vine) may limit pasture growth, productivity and be toxic to stock.

Conservation features and related management

- These areas provide potential habitat for rare and threatened fauna such as the pink cockatoo, woma python and yakka skink; and flora such as climbing caustic (*Euphorbia sarcostemmoides*).
- Hard mulga has been extensively cleared, and the remaining extent often has a highly modified structure and plant species composition.
- These areas can be heavily impacted by goats, which decimate the ground layer.
- Maintenance of vegetative cover is important in minimising excessive runoff and erosion of associated lands.
- Control of feral animals can help prevent degradation of the ground layer.

Regional ecosystems

6.7.1.

Land units; Map units; Land resource areas, Soil associations

Land Units (Galloway *et al* 1974) 24; Map Units (DPI 1984) 3 (89), 43; LRA (DPI 1987) Areas of hard mulga may occur in isolated patches in 10 - Macwood, 11 - Straun, 4 - Coogoon.