

# Pebbly downs



Photo: F5 (Vergemont) Land System

## General description

Flat to very gently sloping open Mitchell grass plains on moderately cracking clay soils with ironstone or gidgee stone cover prominent. Can be dominated by sparse forbland or annual grassland. Generally drain into open or wooded alluvial plains and adjacent to soft mulga and/or hard gidgee.

## Landform

Flat to very gently sloping plains.

## Woody vegetation

Scattered whitewood, vine tree, leopardwood, boonaree and occasionally western bloodwood or cassias.

## Expected pasture composition

*\* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.*

### Preferred

Mitchell grass (mainly barley), Queensland bluegrass, finger panic.

### Intermediate

Star grass/native millet, lovegrasses, knottybutt grass, bottlewasher grasses.

### Non-preferred

Feathertop.

### Annual grasses

Flinders grass, button grass, downs couch, pepper grass.

### Common forbs

Native legumes (e.g. grey rattlepod, glycine, rhynchosia), lamb's tongue, daisy burr, wild carrot, sida, potato bush, saltbush (e.g. Mueller's), pigweed, red spinach, soda bush. Non-preferred species include black roly poly, goathead burr, gidgee burr, copperburrs, roly poly.

## Suitable sown pasture

Not suitable for sown pastures.

## Introduced weeds

Parthenium, mesquite (hybrid), prickly acacia, Bathurst burr.

## Soil

Deep, red clays with self-mulching surfaces dominated by scattered stones through to stone pavement in parts with some shallower clay soils. Clay soils moderately cracking to depth.

## Description

**Surface:** Self-mulching with stone cover; **Surface texture:** heavy clay; **Subsoil texture:** heavy clay.

<b>Features</b>	Prevalent ironstone and gidgee stone cover. Gilgai depressions benefit from run-on. Gypsum is present at depth.					
<b>Water availability</b>	Moderate					
<b>Rooting depth</b>	Deep					
<b>Infiltration</b>	High initially on a dry soil profile, slowing to moderate levels after 35 mm of rain as cracks close and to low levels after 60 mm of rain. High runoff following 60 mm of rain. Estimates based on low to moderate intensity storm rain.					
<b>Fertility</b>	Moderate					
<b>Salinity</b>	Non-saline at surface, increasing to very high levels with depth.					
<b>Sodicity</b>	Non-sodic at surface; subsoils sodic.					
<b>pH</b>	Neutral to mildly alkaline throughout profile.					
<b>Utilisation</b>	22%					
<b>Enterprise</b>	Breeding, fattening and wool production.					
<b>Land use and management recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for grazing of native pastures.</li> <li>• Rotational wet season spelling to maintain perennial pasture composition.</li> <li>• Maintain adequate ground cover to minimise soil erosion.</li> </ul>					
<b>Land use limitations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of shade and browse trees.</li> <li>• Seasonal prominence of poisonous plants, such as pimelea.</li> <li>• Light clay soils that require 25–50 mm of rain for Mitchell grasses to grow.</li> </ul>					
<b>Conservation features and related management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential habitat for rare and threatened fauna including bilby, kowari and plains wanderer.</li> </ul>					
<b>Regional ecosystems</b>	4.4.1x5, 4.4.1x6, 4.9.2a, 4.9.5, 4.9.5a, 4.9.5b, 4.9.5d.					
<b>WARLUS land systems</b>	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
	F2, F3	F2, F3, F4	F1		F5	F4