Soft mulga sandridge

Photo: S1 (Sunnyside) Land System

General description

Flat to very gently sloping sandplains and deep red earths dominated by mulga shrubland with eastern dead finish, beefwood and western bloodwood. Usually drains into wooded alluvial plains and adjoins open downs and jump ups.

Landform

Flat to very gently sloping sandplains.

Woody vegetation

Mulga associated with eastern dead finish, beefwood, ironwood and western bloodwood. Leopardwood and whitewood are locally common. Occurrences of turkey bush, cassia, hakea, native cotton, wild orange, broom bush, currant bush and false sandalwood.

Expected pasture composition

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

Preferred	Desert bluegrass, kangaroo grass, silky umbrella grass, mulga Mitchell, cotton panic.
Intermediate	Woollybutt wanderrie grass, mountain wanderrie grass, bottlewasher grasses.
Non-preferred	Wiregrasses.
Annual grasses	Bottlewasher grasses, lovegrasses, three-awn wanderrie grass, windmill grass.
Common forbs	Tarvine, silky bluebush, tropical speedwell, tomato bush, narrow-leaved indigo. Non-preferred species include lifesaver burr.

Suitable sown pastures

Not suitable for sown pastures.

Introduced weeds

Mother-of-millions, cactus (snake, devil's rope, harrisia and coral).

Soil

Mostly moderately deep sandy red earths and minor sandy light clays with some sandy texture contrast soils.

Description

Surface: Loose; ***Surface texture:*** sand to sandy loam; ***Subsoil texture***: sand to sandy loam.

Features	Nodules of ironstone and manganese are present in the profile as well as ironstone gravel and lime inclusions.
Water availability	Low to moderate.
Rooting depth	Deep
Infiltration	High to very high in deep sands, low to moderate in texture contrast soils. High runoff following 10 mm of rain on texture contrast soils. Estimates based on low to moderate intensity storm rain.
Fertility	Moderate to low.
Salinity	Non-saline
Sodicity	Non-sodic
pH	Slightly acid to moderately alkaline.

Utilisation

15%

Enterprise

Breeding and wool production.

Land use and management recommendations

- Suitable for grazing of native pastures.
- In texture contrast soils, maximise surface cover, particularly with standing pasture, to increase infiltration and increase pasture production.
- Maximise ground cover to reduce soil erosion.
- These areas provide good runoff for adjacent country.
- Provides shade and reasonable top-feed.

Land use limitations

- Dense gidgee thickening, stone and gravel cover, slope and fragile soils limit productivity.
- Thickening of woody species (false sandalwood) may limit productivity.

Conservation features and related management

- Mulga soils tend to have modified ground layer.
- Spinifex areas are potential habitat for endangered night parrot.
- Spinifex needs patch burning regime to maintain diversity and reduce risk of extensive wildfires.
- Fencing to manage total grazing pressure and wet season spelling can be beneficial.

Regional ecosystems

4.5.3x1a, 4.5.3x1b, 4.5.4, 4.5.5a, 4.5.5c.

WARLUS land systems

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