

# Spinifex sandplains



Photo: S2 (Athelstane) Land System

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>General description</b>          | Flat sandplains supporting wooded spinifex grassland on alluvial clay depressions and occasional low rises, of deep sandy red earths. Often internally drain into clay swamps and adjacent to soft mulga.   |
| <b>Landform</b>                     | Flat sandplains.  |
| <b>Woody vegetation</b>             | Western bloodwood, beefwood, mulga and eastern dead finish, occasionally with Normanton box on harder country, coolibah and river red gum fringing swamps with lignum within the swamps. Generally with a well developed shrub layer of turkey bush, hakea, broom bush, native cotton and false sandalwood. |
| <b>Expected pasture composition</b> | <i>* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.</i>   |
| Preferred                           | Soft spinifex, desert bluegrass, kangaroo grass.  |
| Intermediate                        | Lovegrasses, buck spinifex.   |
| Non-preferred                       | Wiregrasses.  |
| Annual grasses                      | Bottlewasher grasses.   |
| Common forbs                        | Tarvine, silky bluebush, sida, potato bush, narrow-leaved indigo.   |
| <b>Suitable sown pastures</b>       | Not suitable for sown pastures.   |
| <b>Introduced weeds</b>             | Harrisia cactus.  |
| <b>Soil</b>                         | Deep sandy red earths and sandy texture contrast soils with minor desert loams associated with rock shelves and shallow grey clays in swamps.   |
| Description                         | <b>Surface:</b> Loose; <b>Surface texture:</b> sand to sandy loam; <b>Subsoil texture:</b> sand to sandy loam.  |
| Features                            | Ironstone gravel, lime and manganese inclusions in the profile.   |

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| <b>Water availability</b>                           | Low to moderate.  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Rooting depth</b>                                | Deep  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Infiltration</b>                                 | High to very high in deep sands, low to moderate in texture contrast soils. High runoff following 5 mm of rain on texture contrast soils. Estimates based on low to moderate intensity storm rain.  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Fertility</b>                                    | Moderate to low.  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Salinity</b>                                     | Non-saline  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Sodicity</b>                                     | Non-sodic   |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>pH</b>   | Slightly acid to moderately alkaline.   |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Utilisation</b>                                  | 15%   |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Enterprise</b>                                   | Breeding 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>• Provides shade and limited top feed.</li> <li>• In texture contrast soils, maximise surface cover, particularly with standing pasture, to increase infiltration and increase pasture production.</li> <li>• Maximise ground cover to reduce soil erosion.</li> <li>• Mosaic burning to increase spinifex palatability and availability of green forage.</li> </ul> |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Land use limitations</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low fertility soils limit production.</li> <li>• Livestock may need phosphorus supplements.</li> <li>• Texture contrast soils are prone to scalding and sheet erosion.</li> <li>• Some erosion and thickening.</li> </ul>  |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Conservation features and related management</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spinifex areas are potential habitat for rare bird, pictorella mannikin.</li> <li>• Spinifex needs patch burning regime to maintain diversity and reduce risk of extensive wildfires.</li> </ul>   |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>Regional ecosystems</b>                          | 4.5.8, 4.5.8x1.   |            |        |    |    |        |
| <b>WARLUS land systems</b>                          | I   | II         | III    | IV | V  | VI     |
|   |   | S2, S4, S6 | S2, N1 |    | S2 | S1, S2 |