

# Brigalow softwood scrub



<b>Landform</b>	Undulating low hills and steep hills (3–10% slopes).
<b>Woody vegetation</b>	Mostly cleared; brigalow softwood scrub, occasionally with belah.
<b>Expected pasture composition</b>	Minimal grassy understorey. <i>* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.</i>
Preferred	Forest bluegrass, Queensland bluegrass, Rhodes grass*.
Intermediate	Early spring grass, hooky grass, couch grass*, red Natal grass*.
Non-preferred	Wiregrasses, slender chloris.
Legumes	Woolly glycine, glycine pea.
Annual grasses	Small burr grass.
<b>Suitable sown pastures</b>	Rhodes grass, green panic, creeping bluegrass, leucaena, Shrubby stylo, Caatinga stylo, siratro, medics.
<b>Introduced weeds</b>	Lantana.
<b>Soil</b>	Grey and brown cracking clays with self-mulching surfaces (grey and brown clays). Variable gilgai development often present.
Description	<b>Surface:</b> medium to strongly self-mulching and cracking; <b>Surface texture:</b> Light to medium clay; <b>Subsoil texture:</b> medium to heavy clay.
Features	Brown clays often shallower than grey clays. Sometimes mottling of grey clay subsoils. Varying amounts of soft and concretionary lime below 30 cm, and occasional weathered rock fragments and iron/manganese.
Water availability	High; PAWC 150–200 mm in root zone.
Rooting depth	Effective rooting depth <0.8 m (grey clays) to >1 m (brown clays).
Fertility	Medium to high nitrogen; low (brown clays) to very high (grey clays) phosphorus; medium to high (grey clays) to very high (brown clays) potassium; medium zinc and copper.
Salinity	Low to very low at surface; medium to high at depths below 0.5 m.

<p>Sodicity</p> <p>pH</p>	<p>Non-sodic at surface; sodic (&lt;0.3 m) to strongly sodic (0.5 m) subsoils.</p> <p>Surface slightly acid (6.1) to neutral (7.0); moderately alkaline (8.0) to very strongly alkaline (9.5).</p>
<p><b>Utilisation</b></p>	<p>30% (sown)</p>
<p><b>Enterprise</b></p>	<p>Fattening</p>
<p><b>Land use and management recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable for grazing of native and improved pastures, dryland (brown clays) and irrigation (grey clays) cropping.</li> <li>• Adopt practices such as minimum tillage, stubble mulching, and weed control to maintain soil structure and reduce erosion.</li> <li>• Include cover crops in crop rotations and retain crop residues.</li> <li>• Use broad based banks to reduce effect of cracking.</li> <li>• Do not cultivate on slopes greater than 8%.</li> <li>• Maintain adequate surface cover at all times.</li> <li>• Spell pastures when flowering and seeding.</li> <li>• Control weeds and regrowth (lantana, brigalow, scrub species).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land use limitations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soils may become hard-setting with cultivation.</li> <li>• Workability difficult immediately after rain, irrigation or when soil is dry.</li> <li>• Highly erodible if bare or cultivated on slopes &gt;2%.</li> <li>• Sodicity (below 0.5 m), salinity, poor drainage, depth to bedrock can limit effective rooting depth.</li> <li>• Low phosphorus and slow drainage that may cause water logging in brown clay soils.</li> <li>• High salinity in subsoils, particularly grey clays, can reduce plant available water capacity to 100–150 mm. Saline outbreaks may occur on lower slopes.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conservation features and related management</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensively cleared for pasture and cropping.</li> <li>• Only very small areas of the original vegetation remain.</li> <li>• Remnant areas are used by migratory birds such as yellow robins, grey fantails, varied trillers and rufous fantails.</li> <li>• These scrubs provide habitat for a wide range of fauna including the woodland birds (e.g. bush stone-curlew, squatter pigeon, brown treecreeper, grey-crowned babbler bush turkeys), black-striped wallabies, and a highly diverse reptile community of geckos, skinks and dragons that inhabit fallen timber, dead trees and exfoliating bark.</li> <li>• Remaining patches of scrub are threatened by weed invasion and fire on their margins (e.g. climbing asparagus fern, exotic grasses and tree pear).</li> <li>• The use of fire breaks and cool season burns reduce this risk.</li> <li>• The ideal scenario for conservation would be to fence these unique areas off from grazing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional ecosystems</b></p>	<p>12.3.9, 12.3.10a, 12.9-10.6.</p>
<p><b>Land resource area</b></p>	<p>Scrub Walloons, 6b (Noble, 1996).</p>