

Gidgee



Landform	Undulating plains and lower slopes (slopes 3%), minor ridges and scarp retreats of dissected residuals in the west and north-west; on flat to gently undulating plains in Blackall district; and plains associated with major watercourses in the south (e.g. Warrego).
Woody vegetation	Gidgee low woodland to woodland with mulga, boree, coolibah, yapunyah, mountain yapunyah, whitewood, brigalow, and false sandalwood in some areas.
Expected pasture composition	<i>Uncleared: Sparse pasture dominated by saltbushes, copperburrs, twinleaf, red spinach, pigweed, button grass and fairy/yakka grass in wet seasons.</i> <i>* Denotes non-native "Expected Pasture Composition" species.</i>
Preferred	Mitchell grasses (hoop, curly, bull), buffel grass* (naturalised), silky umbrella grass, early spring grass, neverfail.
Intermediate	Slender chloris, bottlewasher grasses, curly windmill grass, dwarf mulga grass, native millet, western rat's tail grass, katoora, fairy/yakka grass, five-minute grass.
Non-preferred	Wiregrasses (e.g. feathertop).
Annual grasses	Native couch, comb chloris, button grass, barnyard grass, pepper grass, weeping lovegrass, small Flinders grass. Bunched kerosene (non-preferred).
Common forbs	Giant pigweed, red spinach, lamb's tail, burrs (goathead), tangled and woolly copperburrs, desert Chinese lantern, saltbushes (e.g. climbing, Mueller's), ruby saltbush, <i>Maireana</i> spp., soda bush, soft roly poly, <i>Abutilon</i> spp., sidas (e.g. high, pin), speedy weed.
Suitable sown pastures	Buffel grass in softer gidgee land zones (to the east of the region).
Introduced weeds	Parkinsonia, parthenium and African boxthorn.

Soil	Shallow to very deep grey, brown and red cracking clays and texture contrast soils, varying in stoniness and gilgai development. Deeper on flat land and lower slopes.
Description	Surface: Predominantly cracking, self-mulching; some hard-setting; Surface texture: light to medium-heavy clays; Subsoil texture: medium to heavy clays.
Features	High sodicity limits effective soil depth.
Water availability	Variable; low to moderate on surface increasing with depth.
Rooting depth	High sodicity of soils at >60 cm depth limits effective soil depth.
Infiltration	Higher on self-mulching soils; lower on hard-setting soils.
Fertility	Low; low organic carbon; total nitrogen low to very low.
Salinity	Mostly non-saline; some soils have saline subsoils.
Sodicity	Non-sodic at surface, subsoils sodic to strongly sodic.
pH	Variable; generally neutral to strongly alkaline at surface, increasing down the profile.
Utilisation	20% (25% where buffel grass is well established).
Enterprise	Mixed cattle and sheep.
Land use and management recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pasture on texture contrast soils respond to light falls of rain. • Moderate susceptibility of soils to erosion. • Some areas are suitable for establishment of improved pastures (buffel grass). • Low drought grazing capacity unless buffel grass is well established. • Maintenance of vegetation cover to minimise soil erosion on steeply sloping land. • Development of lands should only be undertaken if there is sufficient flexibility to spell areas to achieve sufficient fuel for a hot fire.
Land use limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High sodicity can limit effective soil depth and reduce plant available moisture. • Fertility may limit production. • Dense gidgee, cassia, brigalow and false sandalwood regrowth can severely limit productivity.
Conservation features and related management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gidgee areas provide habitat for birds (thornbills, red-browed pardalotes, blue bonnet and Bourke's parrots); insectivorous bats; and reptiles (marbled velvet gecko, Burn's lash-tail dragon) that use the fallen woody material on the ground. • Gilgai areas are particularly important for frog breeding especially for the burrowing frog species (e.g. <i>Cycloranas</i>). • Maintenance of ground cover in gidgee areas is important to minimise soil erosion and help protect the wildlife habitat. • Use of fire could assist in controlling regrowth and woody weeds, and enhance productivity and habitat potential of the land zone.
Regional ecosystems	6.3.4, 6.3.6, 6.4.1, 6.9.4.