

12. Whitestone Swamp Unit

The soils in this unit are found in the low-lying, inundated, former swamp areas in the basaltic plains to the south of the study area. These swamps have largely been drained by man-made ditches and channels. The soils are all black or grey, cracking, uniform clay soil with self-mulching surface layers. The soils are calcareous throughout with many slickensides and are seasonally waterlogged: there is fine orange rootline mottling in the B horizons. Seasonal shrinking and swelling of the soils creates difficult conditions for plant growth.

Geology: Recent Quaternary swamp deposits

Slope: <1%

Dominant landform: Plain

Soils:

Dominant: Ug5.1, Ug5.2. Black and grey self mulching clays. The texture is medium to heavy clay throughout and the soils are calcareous throughout. The soils are characterised by strong swelling and shrinking properties and are intractable when wet.

See appendix 21 for a typical soil profile description from this unit.

Stone rock outcrop: None

Pans: Nil

Land use: Grazing is the main land use.

Observed land deterioration: None besides being prone to waterlogging during extended wet periods.

Susceptibility to land deterioration:

Very low to all forms.

Land capability classification:

Generally, land capability class 3 with drainage as the determinant factor (see Table 1). The depressions in which the external drainage has not been improved by man-made ditches and drains are class 4.