

# Cudgen / Goodjing | Cudgen Plateau



**The rich volcanic soil, known as ferrosol or kraznomzem, is made from a breakdown of basaltic lava flows from Tweed volcanic period 23 million years ago. It is high in iron oxide, which is red, and very fertile.**

Cudgen, or Goodjing, is a Bundjalung word meaning red. People of this country are Goodjingburra and the area is a source of red ochre used for adornment. A Bundjalung story of this area is of the wounded kangaroo whose blood turns into red clay.

The Cudgen Plateau once supported lush rainforest that was completely cleared for farming. The following excerpt from the Australian Town and Country Journal of July 1886

provides an indication of the pre-clearing vegetation known as the Cudgen Scrub:

*... when in a state of nature, covered with dense scrub, [it] must be seen to be realised. From the topmost branches of lofty trees, vines with bright leaves trail in fantastic festoons to the ground, bangaloes [bangalow palms] with their feathery heads gently undulating with the breeze, graceful bunches of flowers hanging pendant from*

*the bases of the stalks of the leaves adding a finishing touch wild natural beauty of the scene. All this luxuriant foliage is soon cut down when men start work, using heavy brush hooks and keen 'American axes' with great effect.*

The Cudgen Plateau is now classified as State Significant Farmland. The economic value of the soil is widely recognised and several programs are in place to help farmers with soil conservation strategies, including re-vegetation of land and improvements to drainage.

Photographer Ryan Fowler