

<b>Scientific name</b>	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> – <i>Triglochin maritimum</i> grassland
<b>Common name</b>	Creeping Bent – Sea Arrowgrass grassland
<b>Community code</b>	SM6B

### Vegetation

This is a fairly distinctive community dominated by dense swards of *Agrostis stolonifera*. Other species are each only occasional at best, with the most likely scattered companions being *Glaux maritima*, *Triglochin maritimum*, *Plantago maritima*, *Atriplex prostrata*, *Festuca rubra*, *Aster tripolium* and *Juncus gerardii*. Mean maximum vegetation height = 50.6 cm,  $n = 6$ .

### Ecology

This community has predominantly been defined based on data from upper saltmarshes and lagoon margins that are infrequently inundated by saline or brackish water. However, it also provides a home for some inland swards dominated by *Agrostis stolonifera*. Conditions are circumneutral (mean pH = 7.1,  $n = 6$ ).

### Sub-communities

Two sub-communities are described. The *Glaux maritima* – *Aster tripolium* sub-community (SM6Bi) represents coastal saltmarsh swards whilst the *Holcus lanatus* – *Anthoxanthum odoratum* sub-community (SM6Bii) represents swards occurring more inland

### Similar communities

Nowhere else on the saltmarsh does *Agrostis stolonifera* tend to achieve such dominance. Inland swards could be confused with the GL2A *Agrostis stolonifera* – *Ranunculus repens* marsh-grassland, where *Agrostis* is also the main species, but that is a more diverse assemblage frequently containing *Ranunculus repens*, *Galium palustre* and *Filipendula ulmaria*.

### Records and distribution

#### Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	243
Transitional:	49
Total:	292

#### Number of records (mapped)

2001-2020:	141
1986-2000:	88
1971-1985:	56
Pre-1971:	5
Total:	290

#### Number of hectads (by most recent time period)

2001-2020:	75
1986-2000:	26
1971-1985:	14
Pre-1971:	4
Total:	119

#### Number of hectads (records in each time period)

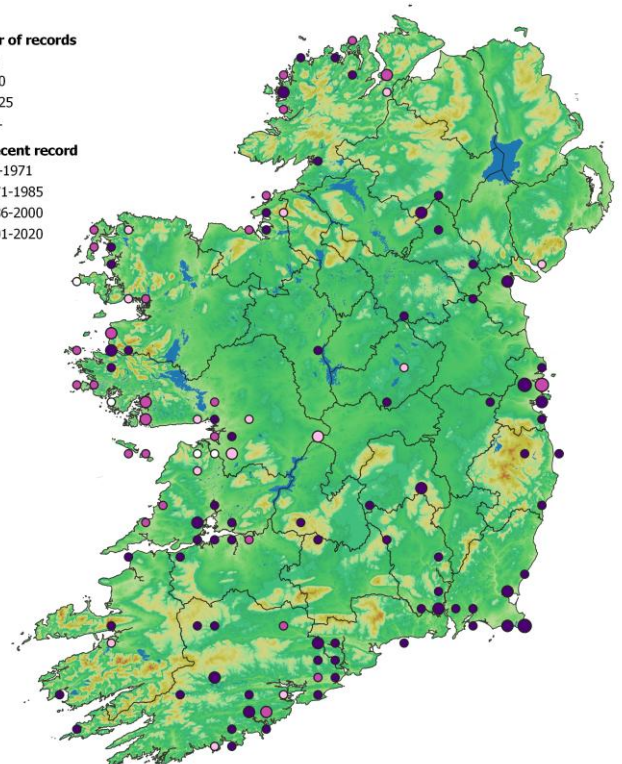
2001-2020:	75
1986-2000:	33
1971-1985:	26
Pre-1971:	5

#### Number of records

- 1-3
- 4-10
- 11-25
- 26+

#### Most recent record

- pre-1971
- 1971-1985
- 1986-2000
- 2001-2020



**Synoptic table (n = 210)**

Species	Frequency	Cover	Species	Frequency	Cover
	(from I-V)	min (med) max		(from I-V)	min (med) max
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	V	4-(8)-10	<i>Elytrigia repens</i>	I	1-(5)-7
<i>Glaux maritima</i>	II	+- (3)-7	<i>Eleocharis uniglumis</i>	I	3-(5)-8
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	II	1-(4)-5	<i>Juncus maritimus</i>	I	2-(5)-7
<i>Juncus gerardii</i>	II	2-(3)-8	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	I	3-(4)-8
<i>Triglochin maritimum</i>	II	1-(3)-7	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	I	1-(3)-4
<i>Atriplex prostrata</i>	I	+- (3)-7	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	I	2-(3)-6
<i>Aster tripolium</i>	I	2-(3)-5	<i>Plantago coronopus</i>	I	2-(3)-7
<i>Plantago maritima</i>	I	2-(3)-5	<i>Triglochin palustre</i>	I	2-(3)-4
<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	I	+- (3)-4	<i>Armeria maritima</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	I	+- (3)-7	<i>Poa pratensis/humilis</i>	I	2-(3)-3
<i>Puccinellia maritima</i>	I	+- (5)-8	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	I	3-(6)-8
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	I	2-(4)-6	<i>Samolus valerandi</i>	I	2-(4)-8
<i>Juncus articulatus</i>	I	2-(3)-7	<i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	I	2-(3)-7	<i>Carex nigra</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i> agg.	I	2-(2)-7	<i>Hydrocotyle vulgaris</i>	I	+- (2)-3
<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>	I	1-(3)-7	<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>	I	2-(4)-5
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	I	+- (2)-3	<i>Carex rostrata</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	I	+- (3)-7	<i>Persicaria maculosa</i>	I	1-(2)-3
<i>Bolboschoenus maritimus</i>	I	2-(3)-5	<i>Ranunculus flammula</i>	I	+- (2)-3
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	I	2-(3)-5	<i>Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani</i>	I	2-(3)-5

**Affinities**

GHI: CM2 Upper salt marsh / GS4 Wet grassland  
 ZM: MF03C Armerion maritima Br.-Bl. et De Leeuw 1936  
 EUNIS: A2.5313 Atlantic *Festuca-rubra-Agrostis stolonifera* swards  
 NVC: SM20 *Eleocharis uniglumis* salt-marsh community (66.8%)  
 Annex I:1330 Atlantic salt meadows

**Proxy environmental data**

Light: 7.3 Reaction: 6.8 Wetness: 6.5 Fertility: 5.6 Salinity: 1.4

**Conservation value**

Almost all coastal examples of this vegetation qualify as EU HD Annex I habitat 1330 Atlantic salt meadows. It is typically a medium richness saltmarsh community (species/4 m<sup>2</sup> = 6.9, n = 104) that can support some specialist species.

**Management**

The main immediate threat to saltmarsh examples of this community is probably grazing by livestock. Sea-level rises as a result of climate change will have an impact, particularly in areas susceptible to coastal squeeze.

**Key references**

McCorry, M., Ryle, T. (2009) Saltmarsh Monitoring Project 2007-2008. 5 volumes. (unpublished). National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.  
 Roden, C.M. (1998) A survey of the flora and vegetation of sixteen Irish coastal lagoons. Part three of 1998 lagoon survey. (unpublished). Dúchas, The Heritage Service, Dublin.  
 Murray, A. (2003) A study of the flora of Malahide saltmarsh during the construction of the northern motorway. (unpublished). Fingal County Council, Swords.

**Synopsis version:** V2.1

**Synopsis date:** March 2025

**Synopsis author(s):** P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. SM6B *Agrostis stolonifera* - *Triglochin maritimum* saltmarsh, Argideen Estuary, Timoleague, Cork  
(M. Penk, July 2016)

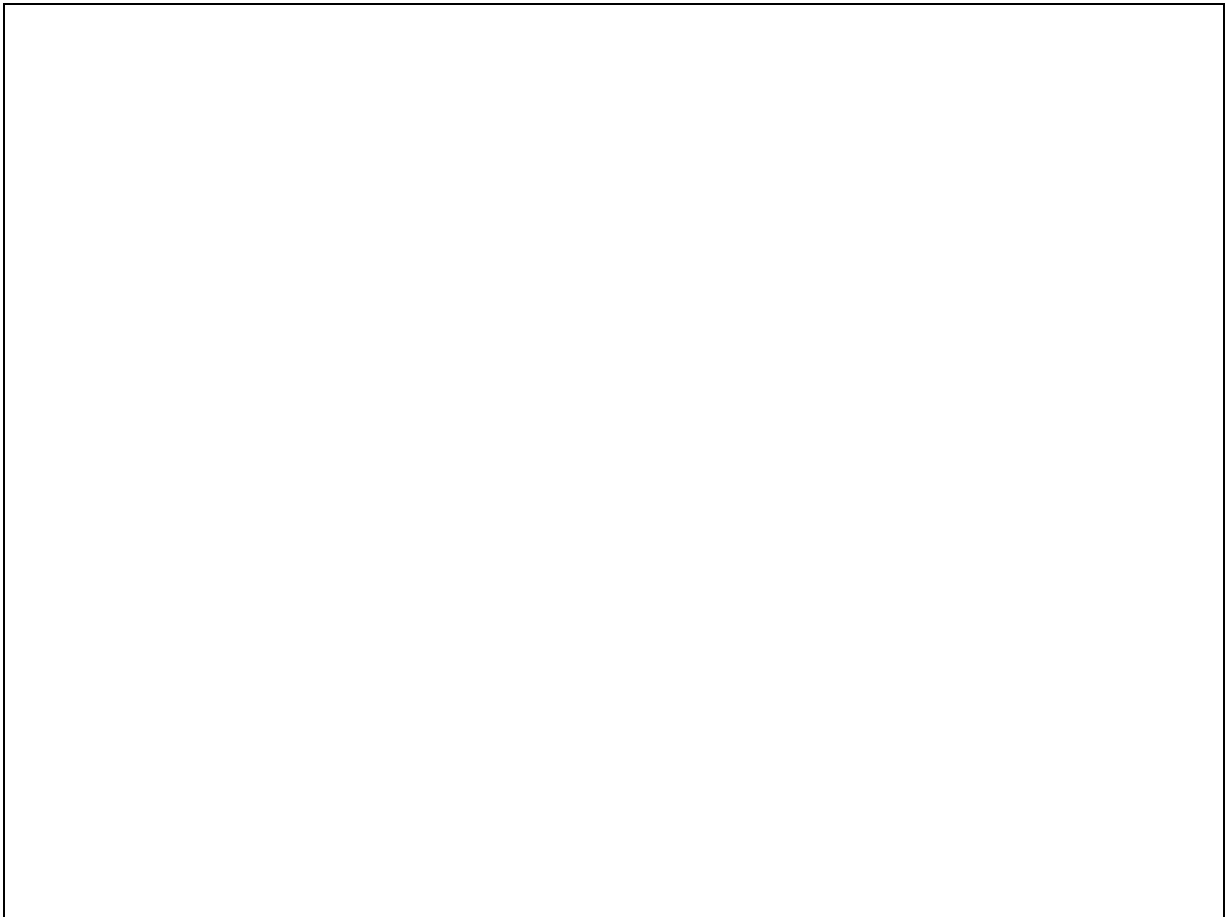


Photo required