



Scientific name	<i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i> heath
Common name	Heather – Heath Plait-moss heath
Community code	HE2B

Vegetation

This community represents dense, mature expanses of *Calluna vulgaris* which dominates strongly, resulting in there being few other constant species. *Erica cinerea* is usually present, as is *Potentilla erecta*, a near ubiquitous species in Irish heaths. Beneath the dwarf shrub canopy, a bryophyte layer composed mostly of pleurocarpous mosses can be found; *Hypnum jutlandicum* is chief amongst these, but *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* and *Hylocomium splendens* are also frequent. Tufts of *Molinia caerulea* are frequently encountered but it is seldom plentiful. Occasional species include *Vaccinium myrtillus*, *Deschampsia flexuosa* and *Eriophorum angustifolium*.

Ecology

This is mainly a community of the middle altitudes of hills and mountains (mean altitude = 341 m, $n = 104$), primarily heathland where grazing pressure is relatively light. Soils in these instances are relatively well-drained, acidic and infertile. It may also be encountered on deep, bogland peats where there has been extensive turf-cutting and/drainage.

Sub-communities

No sub-communities have been described for this community.

Similar communities

Calluna vulgaris is at its most abundant in this community. *Ulex gallii* is far less abundant here than in HE2A and wet heath indicators such as *Molinia caerulea* and *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* are not as abundant as they are in the remaining communities of group HE2.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	264
Transitional:	48
Total:	312

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2015:	132
1986-2000:	140
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	8
Total:	282

Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2015:	38
1986-2000:	19
1971-1985:	1
Pre-1971:	2
Total:	60

Number of hectads (all mapped records)

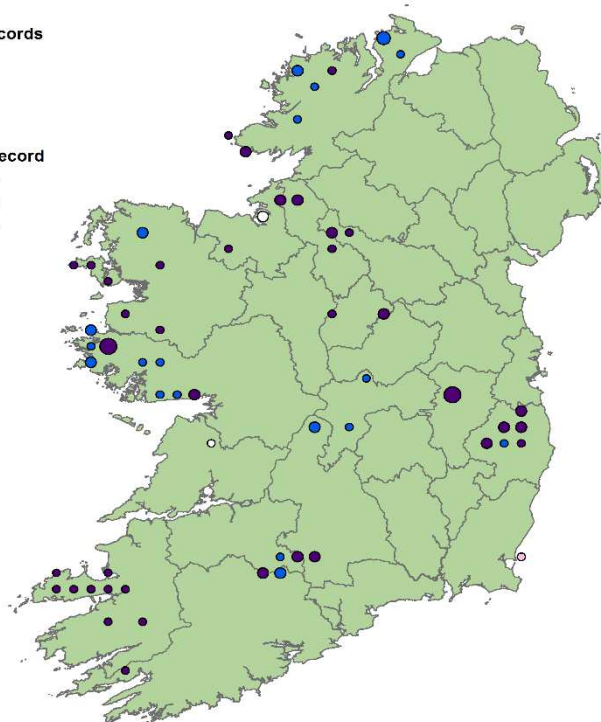
2001-2015:	38
1986-2000:	26
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	4

Number of records

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

Most recent record

- 2001-2015
- 1986-2000
- 1971-1985
- pre-1971



Synoptic table (n = 201)

Species	Frequency	Cover		Species	Frequency	Cover	
	(from I-V)	min	(med) max		(from I-V)	min	(med) max
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	V	5-	(9)-10	<i>Polytrichum commune</i>	I	+-	(2)-7
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	V	1-	(5)-10	<i>Lophocolea bidentata</i>	I	+-	(3)-7
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	V	+-	(4)-7	<i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>	I	+-	(3)-5
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	IV	+-	(2)-5	<i>Scapania gracilis</i>	I	+-	(2)-4
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	III	+-	(3)-5	<i>Agrostis canina/vinealis</i>	I	+-	(2)-5
<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	III	+-	(3)-7	<i>Trichophorum cesp./germanicum</i>	I	+-	(3)-5
<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	III	1-	(3)-5	<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	I	+-	(2)-7
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	II	+-	(3)-7	<i>Daboecia cantabrica</i>	I	2-	(3)-5
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	II	+-	(2)-8	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	I	+-	(3)-5
<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	II	+-	(3)-7	<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	I	+-	(1)-4
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	II	+-	(3)-7	<i>Galium saxatile</i>	I	+-	(2)-5
<i>Pleurozium schreberi</i>	II	+-	(2)-5	<i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i>	I	+-	(3)-7
<i>Scleropodium purum</i>	II	+-	(2)-7	<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	I	+-	(2)-4
<i>Plagiothecium undulatum</i>	II	+-	(2)-5	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	I	2-	(2)-5
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	I	+-	(3)-5	<i>Sphagnum capillifolium</i>	I	+-	(2)-7
<i>Carex binervis</i>	I	+-	(3)-5	<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	I	+-	(2)-5
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	I	+-	(3)-6	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	I	+-	(2)-4
<i>Cladonia portentosa</i>	I	+-	(3)-8	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	I	+-	(3)-7
<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	I	+-	(2)-7	<i>Breutelia chrysocoma</i>	I	+-	(3)-7
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	I	+-	(3)-5	<i>Cladonia uncialis</i>	I	+-	(2)-4

Affinities

GHI: HH1 Dry siliceous heaths
 ZM: UL1-01A Ericion cinereae Böcher 1940
 EUNIS: F4.25 Boreo-Atlantic *Erica cinerea* heaths
 NVC: H12a *Calluna vulgaris* – *Vaccinium myrtillus* heath *Calluna vulgaris* sub-community (67.5%)
 Annex I:4030 European dry heaths

Proxy environmental data

Light: 6.7 Reaction: 2.2 Wetness: 5.8 Fertility: 2.0 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

Most examples of this vegetation qualify as EU Annex I habitat 4030 Dry heaths. This is on average a moderately species-poor community in terms of plants (species/4 m² = 14.2, n = 133).

Management

These heaths, which often form parts of commonages, may be used as rough grazing land (typically for sheep). Burning may be periodically used across large areas to suppress the dwarf shrubs and encourage grass growth. Overgrazing can also be a problem. Another threat is agricultural improvement.

Key references

Perrin, P.M., Barron, S.J., Roche, J.R. & O’Hanrahan, B. (2014) Guidelines for a national survey and conservation assessment of upland vegetation and habitats in Ireland. *Irish Wildlife Manuals*, No. 79. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Synopsis version: V1.0

Synopsis date: November 2017

Synopsis author(s): P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. HE2B *Calluna vulgaris* - *Hypnum jutlandicum* heath, Arraglen, Masatiompan, Kerry (P. Perrin, August 2011)



Photo 2. HE2B *Calluna vulgaris* - *Hypnum jutlandicum* heath, Dunmakeever, Cuilcagh, Cavan
(R. Hodd, September 2012)