

Scientific name	<i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum</i> heath
Common name	Heather – Deergrass heath
Community code	HE2E

Vegetation

Calluna vulgaris tends to dominate this community, accompanied by a mixture of *Erica cinerea*, *Molinia caerulea* and *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum*. *Potentilla erecta* is a constant species, while *Erica tetralix* is frequent and occasionally there are patches of *Nardus stricta*, *Carex binervis*, *Carex panicea* or *Eriophorum angustifolium*. Rarely, one may encounter *Juniperus communis* or *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. The bryophyte layer is not very extensive, with *Hypnum jutlandicum* the mainstay, although it is frequently joined by the grey-green mounds of *Racomitrium lanuginosum*. *Cladonia portentosa* is also often met with here.

Ecology

This is a community of hills and mountains, occurring on the middle slopes (mean altitude = 300 m, $n = 46$; mean slope = 14.3° , $n = 29$), primarily occurring as wet heathland. Soils are rather poorly drained, acidic and infertile (mean extent of bare rock = 6.2%, $n = 29$).

Sub-communities

No sub-communities have been described for this community

Similar communities

Both *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* and *Racomitrium lanuginosum* are more frequent here than in the other communities of group HE2. In community BG2F *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* – *Eriophorum angustifolium* peatland, *Trichophorum* is dominant and *Eriophorum angustifolium* far more plentiful. Furthermore, *Erica cinerea* is not frequent within communities of the BG division.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	172
Transitional:	63
Total:	235

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2020:	93
1986-2000:	81
1971-1985:	4
Pre-1971:	29
Total:	207

Number of hectads (by most recent time period)

2001-2020:	34
1986-2000:	21
1971-1985:	4
Pre-1971:	14
Total:	73

Number of hectads (records in each time period)

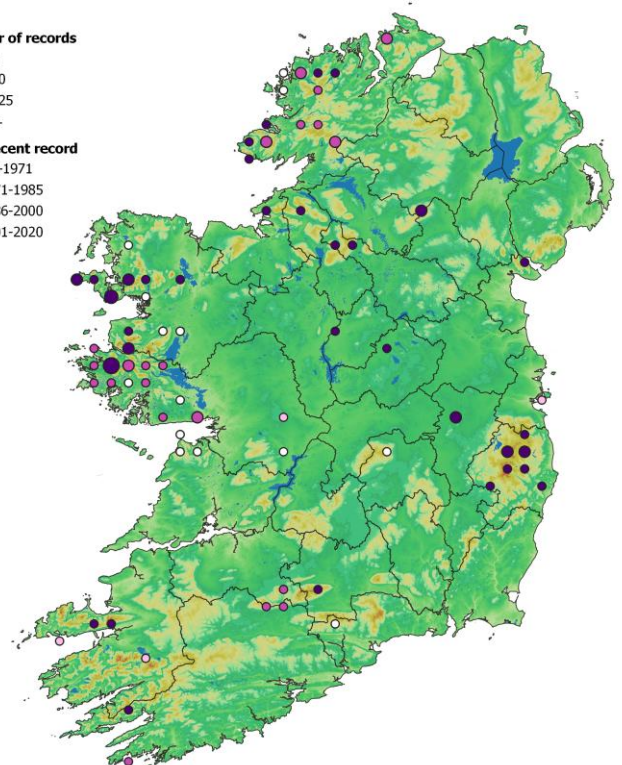
2001-2020:	34
1986-2000:	28
1971-1985:	4
Pre-1971:	20

Number of records

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

Most recent record

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



Synoptic table (n = 139)

Species	Frequency	Cover	Species	Frequency	Cover
	(from I-V)	min (med) max		(from I-V)	min (med) max
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	V	4-(7)-9	<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	I	1-(3)-5
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	V	1-(3)-5	<i>Agrostis canina/vinealis</i>	I	+- (3)-5
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	V	1-(4)-7	<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	I	+- (2)-5
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	IV	1-(4)-7	<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	I	+- (3)-9
<i>Trichophorum cesp./germanicum</i>	IV	1-(5)-9	<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	I	+- (2)-3
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	IV	+- (3)-8	<i>Odontoschisma sphagni</i>	I	+- (2)-5
<i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>	III	+- (3)-8	<i>Leucobryum glaucum</i>	I	+- (3)-6
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	III	1-(3)-7	<i>Breutelia chrysocoma</i>	I	1-(3)-5
<i>Cladonia portentosa</i>	III	+- (2)-8	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	I	2-(5)-7
<i>Carex panicea</i>	II	+- (3)-5	<i>Pleurozium schreberi</i>	I	+- (2)-5
<i>Cladonia uncialis</i>	II	+- (2)-4	<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	I	1-(2)-4
<i>Carex binervis</i>	II	+- (3)-5	<i>Scapania gracilis</i>	I	+- (1)-3
<i>Nardus stricta</i>	II	1-(4)-7	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	II	+- (3)-5	<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>	I	+- (3)-5
<i>Polygala serpyllifolia</i>	II	+- (2)-3	<i>Frullania tamarisci</i>	I	+- (2)-7
<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	II	+- (2)-7	<i>Danthonia decumbens</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Sphagnum capillifolium</i>	II	2-(3)-8	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	I	2-(5)-7
<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	II	+- (2)-5	<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Pleurozia purpurea</i>	II	1-(3)-5	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	I	+- (2)-2
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	II	+- (2)-4	<i>Ulex gallii</i>	I	2-(3)-7

Affinities

GHI: HH3 Wet heath / HH4 Montane heath / PB2 Upland blanket bog

ZM: CH02B Calluno-Genistion pilosae P. Duvigneaud 1945 / PB01A Ericion tetralicis Schwickerath 1933

EUNIS: D1.21 Hyperoceanic low-altitude blanket bogs, typically with dominant *Trichophorum* / F2.251 Hiberno-Scotian dwarf mountain heaths / F4.11 Northern wet heaths

NVC: M15c *Scirpus cespitosus*-*Erica tetralix* wet heath *Cladonia* sub-community (74.8%)

Annex I: 4010 Wet heath / 4060 Alpine and subalpine heath / 7130 Blanket bog (active)*

Proxy environmental data

Light: 7.1 Reaction: 2.3 Wetness: 6.2 Fertility: 1.9 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

Many examples of this vegetation qualify as EU HD Annex I habitat 4010 Wet heath. However, also included here are marginal examples of habitats 7130 Blanket bogs* and 4060 Alpine and subalpine heath. This is on average a community of medium species richness (species/4 m² = 16.8, n = 81).

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. Other threats are agricultural improvement and afforestation.

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, Dublin. [and associated series of site reports from the National Survey of Upland Habitats]

Kirkpatrick, A.H. (1988). A vegetation survey of heath and moorland in Northern Ireland and Donegal. (Ph.D. thesis). New University of Ulster.

Synopsis version: V2.1

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Synopsis author(s): P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. HE2E *Calluna vulgaris* – *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* heath, Caheracruttra, Slieve Mish Mountains, Kerry (J. Roche, June 2014)



Photo 2. HE2E *Calluna vulgaris* – *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* heath, Commas, Cuilcagh, Cavan (P. Perrin, September 2012)