



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*. 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 = 303 m, $n = 45$), primarily occurring as wet heathland. Soils are rather poorly drained, acidic and infertile.

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* bog/heath, *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:	169
Transitional:	54
Total:	223

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2015:	88
1986-2000:	76
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	13
Total:	179

Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2015:	30
1986-2000:	23
1971-1985:	1
Pre-1971:	4
Total:	58

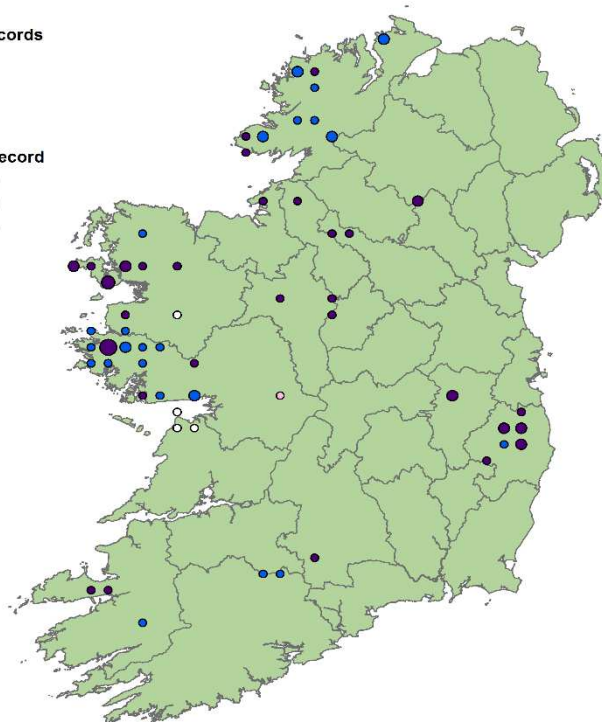
Number of hectads (all mapped records)

2001-2015:	30
1986-2000:	26
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	7

Number of records



Most recent record



Synoptic table (n =137)

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

Affinities

GHI: HH3 Wet heath / HH4 Montane heath

ZM: OXY-01A Ericion tetralicis Schwickerath 1933

EUNIS: F4.11 Northern wet heaths

NVC: M15c *Scirpus cespitosus* – *Erica tetralix* wet heath *Cladonia* sub-community (76.1%)

Annex I:4010 Wet heath / 4060 Alpine and subalpine heaths

Proxy environmental data

Light: 6.9 Reaction: 2.3 Wetness: 6.1 Fertility: 1.8 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

Many examples of this vegetation qualify as EU Annex I habitat 4010 Wet heath. However, also included here are marginal examples of 4060 Alpine and subalpine heath. This is on average a moderately species-poor community (species/4 m² = 16.5, n = 78).

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, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

Synopsis version: V1.0

Synopsis date: November 2017

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)