Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC)

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Community Synopsis

Scientific name	*Teucrium scorodonia – Mycelis muralis* pavement community
Common name	Wood Sage – Wall Lettuce pavement community
Community code	RH1B

Vegetation

This is usually a sparsely vegetated community. The constant species in the field layer are *Asplenium ruta-muraria*, *Teucrium scorodonia*, *Sesleria caerulea*, *Geranium robertianum* and the non-native *Mycelis muralis*. These are frequently joined by *Ceterach officinarum*, *Hedera helix*, *Thymus polytrichus*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium* and *Senecio jacobaea*. There is often also a scrub element to the flora with some patchy growth of *Prunus spinosa*, *Corylus avellana*, *Rosa spinosissima* or *Rubus fruticosus* agg.

Ecology

This is a community of karstic limestone pavement (mean cover of bare rock = 83%, *n* = 151) occurring in the lowlands (mean altitude = 58 m, *n* = 125; mean slope = 1.8°, *n* = 28). Soils are skeletal and can be largely confined to the shady grykes, which thus support much of the vegetation. Conditions are base-rich, fairly infertile and fairly dry.

Sub-communities

No formal sub-communities have been described for this community.

Similar communities

The RH1A *Asplenium trichomanes – Ctenidium molluscum* community may also occur on limestone pavement, but there *Asplenium ruta-muraria*, *Teucrium scorodonia* and *Mycelis muralis* are less frequent. That community is also somewhat more open with lower frequencies of woody species. The RH1B community often occurs in mosaic with patches of limestone grassland belonging to the GL3A *Briza media – Thymus polytrichus* grassland community, which has a greater overall vegetation cover, lower fern cover and greater graminoid cover.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	160
Transitional:	7
Total:	167

Number of records (mapped)

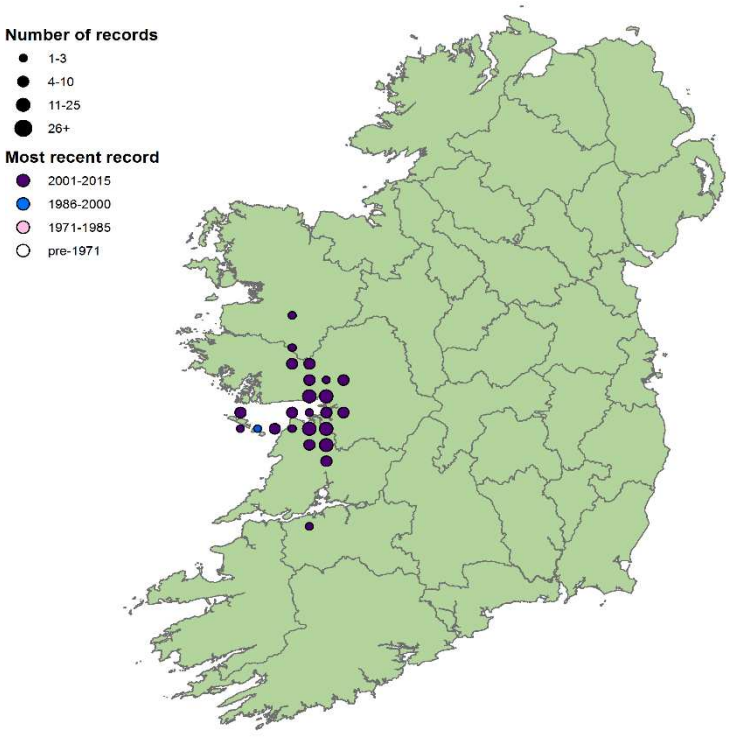
2001-2015:	156
1986-2000:	5
1971-1985:	1
Pre-1971:	5
Total:	167

Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2015:	23
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	24

Number of hectads (all mapped records)

2001-2015:	23
1986-2000:	3
1971-1985	1
Pre-1971:	4



Synoptic table (*n* = 154)					
Species	**Frequency (from I-V)**	**Cover min (med) max**	**Species**	**Frequency (from I-V)**	**Cover min (med) max**
Asplenium ruta-muraria	V	+-(2)-3	*Rosa spinosissima*	II	+-(3)-4
Teucrium scorodonia	V	+-(2)-6	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.	II	+-(3)-4
Sesleria caerulea	V	+-(3)-7	*Succisa pratensis*	II	+-(2)-3
Fissidens dubius	V	+-(2)-3	*Carlina vulgaris*	II	+-(+)-2
Geranium robertianum	V	+-(2)-3	*Scapania aspera*	I	+-(2)-3
Mycelis muralis	IV	+-(2)-3	*Viola riviniana/reichenbachiana*	I	+-(1)-2
Tortella tortuosa	IV	+-(2)-3	*Geranium sanguineum*	I	+-(2)-3
Ceterach officinarum	III	+-(2)-3	*Hypochaeris radicata*	I	+-(1)-2
Hedera helix	III	+-(3)-5	*Crataegus monogyna*	I	+-(2)-4
Thymus polytrichus	III	+-(2)-4	*Pilosella officinarum*	I	+-(1)-2
Senecio jacobaea	III	+-(1)-3	*Linum catharticum*	I	+-(1)-2
Neckera crispa	III	+-(2)-4	*Solidago virgaurea*	I	+-(1)-3
Prunus spinosa	III	+-(3)-5	*Brachypodium sylvaticum*	I	1-(2)-3
Ctenidium molluscum	III	+-(2)-4	*Pteridium aquilinum*	I	+-(2)-4
Phyllitis scolopendrium	III	+-(1)-3	*Encalypta streptocarpa*	I	+-(2)-2
Taraxacum officinale agg.	II	+-(1)-2	*Plantago maritima*	I	1-(2)-2
Asplenium trichomanes	II	+-(1)-2	*Potentilla erecta*	I	+-(2)-3
Corylus avellana	II	+-(4)-7	*Fraxinus excelsior*	I	+-(2)-4
Lotus corniculatus	II	+-(2)-4	*Lonicera periclymenum*	I	+-(2)-3
Carex flacca	II	+-(2)-4	*Asperula cynanchica*	I	+-(2)-3

Affinities

GHI: ER2 Exposed calcareous rock

ZM: ASP-01A Asplenio scolopendrii – Geranion robertiani Ferrez 2010

EUNIS: H3.511 Limestone pavements

NVC: OV38 *Gymnocarpium robertianum – Arrhenatherum elatius* community (34.3%)

Annex I: 8240 Limestone pavement*

Proxy environmental data

Light: 6.1 Reaction: 6.4 Wetness: 4.9 Fertility: 3.7 Salinity: 0.1

Conservation value

Almost all examples of this community qualify as EU HD Annex I priority habitat 8240 Limestone pavement*.

Management

Limestone pavement sites are traditionally winter grazed by cattle and the main threats there are scrub encroachment, quarrying and destruction for purposes of agricultural improvement. The non-native *Mycelis muralis* is not regarded as a problematic species and no management actions have been taken to control the species.

Key references

Wilson, S. & Fernández, F. (2013) National survey of limestone pavement and associated habitats in Ireland. *Irish Wildlife Manuals*, No. 73. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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Photo 1. Plot recording in RH1B *Teucrium scorodonia – Mycelis muralis* pavement community, Menlough, Galway (F. O'Neill, July 2014)

Photo 2. RH1B *Teucrium scorodonia – Mycelis muralis* pavement community, Coolagh, Galway (J. Martin, July 2014)