

<b>Scientific name</b>	<i>Hymenophyllum wilsonii</i> – <i>Isothecium myosuroides</i> crevice community
<b>Common name</b>	Wilson's Filmy -Fern – Mouse-tail Moss crevice community
<b>Community code</b>	RH2A

### Vegetation

*Saxifraga spathularis* tends to be the most conspicuous species within this rocky habitat community, but it is also characterized by a suite of shade-loving bryophytes and the presence of ferns. *Diplophyllum albicans* and *Isothecium myosuroides* are the constant species alongside *Saxifraga*. Wefts of *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* are frequently found in the deeper shade, as are patches of *Mnium hornum*. Other frequent species are *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Frullania tamarisci*, *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, *Scapania gracilis*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Blechnum spicant* and *Thuidium tamariscinum*. There can be small patches of dry heath vegetation with *Calluna vulgaris* and *Vaccinium myrtillus* occasionally found.

### Ecology

This is a vegetation of shady crevices and overhangs in siliceous cliffs, outcrops and scree slopes in the uplands (mean altitude = 411 m,  $n = 42$ ; mean slope = 72.8°,  $n = 42$ ). Soils, where they accumulate, are skeletal (mean soil depth = 0.6 cm,  $n = 42$ ; mean extent of bare rock = 48.0%,  $n = 42$ ). Conditions are moist and infertile.

### Sub-communities

Two sub-communities are described for this community. The *Saxifraga spathularis* – *Festuca vivipara* sub-community (RH2Ai) is predominantly found in the west of Ireland and supports the titular species. The *Dryopteris dilatata* – *Polypodium vulgare* sub-community (RH2Aii) typically lacks these species and is not restricted to the west.

### Similar communities

*Saxifraga spathularis*, *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* and *Dryopteris dilatata* are more frequent in this community than elsewhere in the RH2 *Racomitrium lanuginosum* – *Saxifraga spathularis* group. The RH2D *Angelica sylvestris* – *Breutelia chrysocoma* ledge community also occurs on siliceous rock faces, but indicates areas of seepage where there is some basic enrichment. In the RH2B and RH2C scree communities, *Racomitrium* mosses are more prevalent.

### Records and distribution

#### Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	42
Transitional:	13
Total:	55

#### Number of records (mapped)

2001-2020:	54
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	55

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

2001-2020:	26
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	27

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

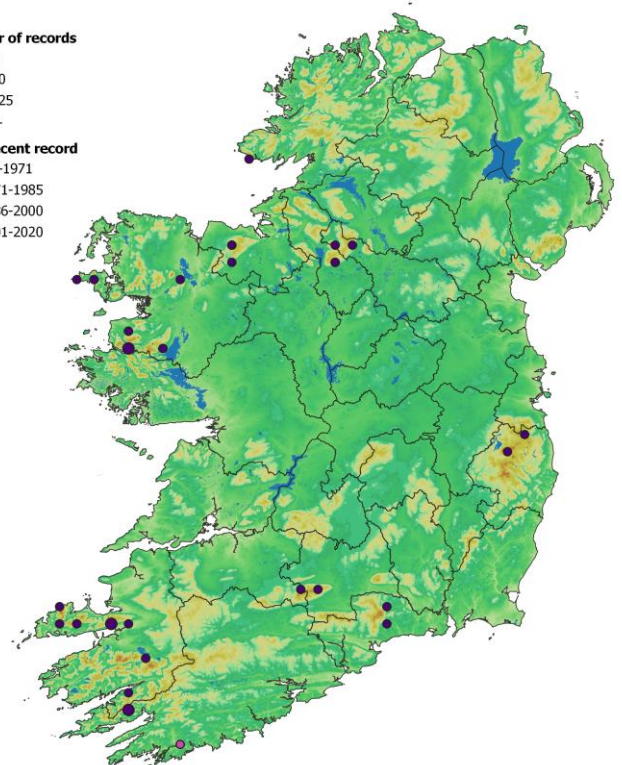
2001-2020:	26
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0

#### Number of records

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

#### Most recent record

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



### Synoptic table (n = 42)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	V	+-(3)-6	<i>Galium saxatile</i>	II	+-(1)-3
<i>Isothecium myosuroides</i>	V	1-(4)-5	<i>Saccogyna viticulosa</i>	II	+-(1)-3
<i>Saxifraga spathularis</i>	IV	1-(4)-8	<i>Amphidium mougeotii</i>	II	+-(3)-5
<i>Hymenophyllum wilsonii</i>	III	+-(4)-8	<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	II	+-(+)-2
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	III	+-(1)-6	<i>Epilobium brunnescens</i>	II	+-(1)-4
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	III	+-(1)-4	<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	II	1-(2)-5
<i>Frullania tamarisci</i>	III	+-(3)-5	<i>Calypogeia arguta</i>	II	+-(+)-2
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	III	2-(4)-5	<i>Festuca vivipara</i>	II	1-(2)-4
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	III	+-(1)-5	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	II	+-(2)-5
<i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>	III	+-(2)-4	<i>Trichostomum tenuirostre</i>	II	+-(3)-4
<i>Scapania gracilis</i>	III	+-(2)-4	<i>Plagiochila punctata</i>	I	+-(+)-3
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	III	1-(3)-5	<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	I	1-(3)-4
<i>Plagiochila spinulosa</i>	II	+-(3)-5	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>	I	+-(1)-3
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	II	1-(2)-4	<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	I	+-(1)-4
<i>Heterocladium heteropterum</i>	II	+-(1)-4	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	I	+-(1)-3
<i>Pellia epiphylla</i>	II	+-(2)-7	<i>Lejeunea patens</i>	I	+-(+)-2
<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	II	+-(1)-3	<i>Lophozia ventricosa</i>	I	+-(+)-1
<i>Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans</i>	II	+-(2)-7	<i>Marsupella emarginata</i>	I	+-(2)-5
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	II	+-(3)-4	<i>Plagiothecium succulentum</i>	I	+-(1)-2
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	II	+-(1)-3	<i>Polytrichum alpinum</i>	I	+-(1)-3

#### Affinities

GHI: ER1 Exposed siliceous rock / ER3 Siliceous scree and loose rock

ZM: KB02C Hymenophyllion tunbrigensis Tx. in Tx. et Oberd. 1958

EUNIS: H3.19 Lowland northern- and middle-European siliceous cliffs

NVC: W17a *Quercus petraea*-*Betula pubescens*-*Dicranum majus* woodland *Isothecium myosuroides*-*Diplophyllum albicans* sub-community (44.4%), but siliceous crevice communities not covered by the NVC

Annex I: 8110 Siliceous scree / 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes

#### Proxy environmental data

Light: 5.3    Reaction: 3.4    Wetness: 6.1    Fertility: 2.7    Salinity: 0.1

#### Conservation value

Most examples of this community qualify as EU HD Annex I habitat 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes, but also included here are some plots from habitat 8110 Siliceous scree. Species/4 m<sup>2</sup> = 20.1, n = 12.

#### Management

Some more accessible areas of this vegetation may be sheep-grazed but it is essentially unmanaged. The impact of the non-native *Epilobium brunnescens* has not been investigated and hitherto no known management action has been taken. Climate change threatens arctic-alpine species which are restricted to upland sites such as these.

#### 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*]

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



Photo 1. RH2A *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* – *Isothecium myosuroides* crevice community, Baurearagh, Caha Mountains, Kerry  
(P. Perrin, August 2014)



Photo 2. RH2A *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* – *Isothecium myosuroides* crevice community, Glantrasna, Caha Mountain, Kerry (E. O'Sullivan, August 2014)