

<b>Scientific name</b>	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> – <i>Valeriana officinalis</i> tall-herb swamp
<b>Common name</b>	Meadowsweet – Valerian tall-herb swamp
<b>Community code</b>	FW3F

### Vegetation

This is a rather variable assemblage of swampy ground which can be dominated by number of different species but plentiful *Filipendula ulmaria* is a constant feature. It is frequently joined by the tall forb species *Valeriana officinalis* and less often by *Iris pseudacorus*, *Lythrum salicaria*, *Lysimachia vulgaris* or *Angelica sylvestris*. In addition several graminoids may be present. *Phragmites australis*, *Carex disticha* and *Agrostis stolonifera* are frequent and the following species are all occasional: *Festuca arundinacea*, *Phalaris arundinacea*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Festuca rubra*, *Juncus effusus* and *Holcus lanatus*. *Equisetum fluviatile* occurs on the damper ground. Through the diverse flora may be found clambering stems of *Vicia cracca*, *Galium palustre* or *Lathyrus pratensis*. There may be a sparse bryophyte layer with *Calliergonella cuspidata* the most frequent species.

### Ecology

This community is likely to be found on periodically inundated, fairly fertile and base-rich ground close to lakes and rivers.

### Sub-communities

No sub-communities are currently described.

### Similar communities

The abundance of *Filipendula ulmaria* and other tall forb species set this community apart from the others in group FW3. The marsh-grassland communities, GL1B and GL2A, also exhibit an abundance of *Filipendula*, but they are of distinctly different structure, lacking the taller species commonly found here such as *Phragmites australis*.

### Records and distribution

#### Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	194
Transitional:	66
Total:	260

#### Number of records (mapped)

2001-2020:	117
1986-2000:	116
1971-1985:	17
Pre-1971:	6
Total:	256

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

2001-2020:	56
1986-2000:	12
1971-1985:	5
Pre-1971:	4
Total:	77

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

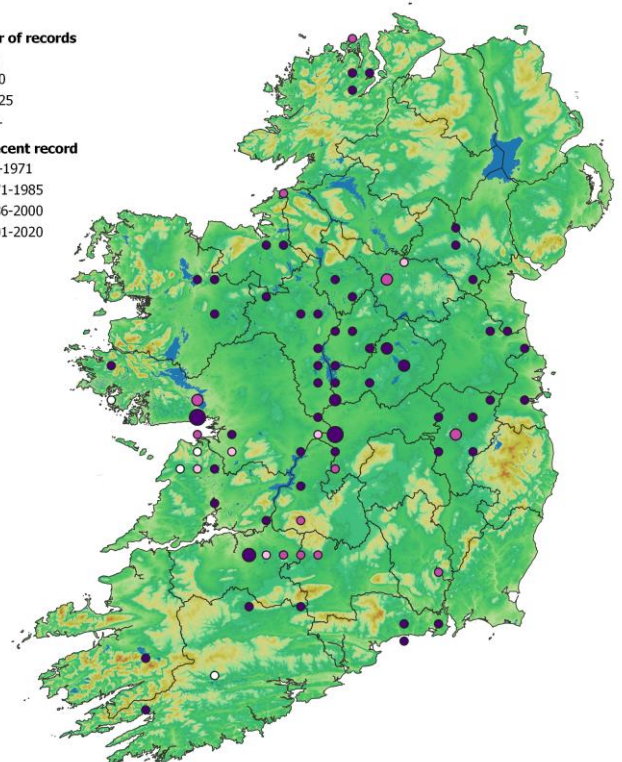
2001-2020:	56
1986-2000:	18
1971-1985:	8
Pre-1971:	4

#### Number of records

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

#### Most recent record

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



**Synoptic table (n = 144)**

Species	Frequency		Cover		Species	Frequency		Cover	
	(from I-V)		min	(med) max		(from I-V)		min	(med) max
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	V		2-	(6)-10	<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	I		+-	(3)-4
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	III		+-	(3)-8	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	I		+-	(3)-6
<i>Carex disticha</i>	III		2-	(4)-8	<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	I		+-	(3)-7
<i>Phragmites australis</i>	III		1-	(3)-8	<i>Carex lasiocarpa</i>	I		2-	(3)-5
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	III		1-	(4)-7	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	I		+-	(2)-5
<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>	III		+-	(3)-7	<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	I		1-	(3)-8
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	II		+-	(3)-5	<i>Phleum pratense</i>	I		2-	(3)-8
<i>Festuca arundinacea</i>	II		1-	(5)-7	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	I		+-	(3)-4
<i>Galium palustre</i>	II		+-	(3)-5	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	I		3-	(4)-8
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	II		1-	(3)-5	<i>Kindbergia praelonga</i>	I		+-	(2)-4
<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	II		+-	(4)-5	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	I		+-	(3)-5
<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	II		+-	(3)-5	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>	I		1-	(4)-7
<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>	II		+-	(5)-10	<i>Carex panicea</i>	I		1-	(3)-5
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	II		+-	(3)-5	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	I		1-	(4)-7
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	II		+-	(3)-7	<i>Juncus subnodulosus</i>	I		+-	(3)-7
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	II		+-	(4)-7	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	I		2-	(3)-6
<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	II		+-	(3)-6	<i>Potentilla palustris</i>	I		+-	(3)-6
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	II		1-	(3)-7	<i>Carex nigra</i>	I		1-	(4)-7
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	II		2-	(5)-8	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	I		+-	(3)-7
<i>Poa pratensis/humilis</i>	I		+-	(3)-6	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	I		+-	(4)-10

**Affinities**

GHI: FS2 Tall-herb swamps

ZM: CM08D *Filipendulion ulmariae* Segal ex Westhoff et Den Held 1969

EUNIS: E5.412 Western nemoral river bank tall-herb communities dominated by *Filipendula*

NVC: M27 *Filipendula ulmaria*-*Angelica sylvestris* mire (53.5%)

Annex I:6430 Hydrophilous tall-herb swamp

**Proxy environmental data**

Light: 7.0 Reaction: 6.2 Wetness: 7.6 Fertility: 5.2 Salinity: 0.3

**Conservation value**

This is a species-rich community compared to other swamp types (species/4 m<sup>2</sup> = 13.1, n = 117), being transitional to wet grassland. Examples of this vegetation are likely to correspond with EU HD Annex I habitat 6430 Hydrophilous tall herb.

**Management**

Most of these stands are probably unmanaged but some drier types may be used for rough grazing. They are threatened by eutrophication of nearby waters, drainage and agricultural improvement.

**Key references**

O'Neill, F.H., Martin, J.R., Devaney, F.M., Perrin, P.M. (2013) The Irish Semi-natural Grasslands Survey 2007-2012. *Irish Wildlife Manuals* No. 78. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.

Mooney, E. (1991) A phytosociological and palaeoecological study of the wetlands of the Lower Corrib Basin, Co. Galway, Ireland. (Ph.D. thesis). National University of Ireland Galway.

Regan, S., Conaghan, J. (2016) Eco-hydrological investigation of Tory Hill fen SAC, Co. Limerick, Office of Public Works, Trim.

**Synopsis version:** V2.1

**Synopsis date:** March 2025

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Photo 1. FW3F *Filipendula ulmaria* – *Valeriana officinalis* tall-herb swamp, River Corrib, Dangan, Galway  
(F. O'Neill, August 2014)



Photo 2. FW3F *Filipendula ulmaria* – *Valeriana officinalis* tall-herb swamp, River Corrib, Newcastle, Galway  
(J. Martin, August 2014)