



Scientific name	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> invasive community
Common name	Rhododendron invasive community
Community code	IN1A

Vegetation

This community represents dense, species-poor thickets of the invasive non-native *Rhododendron ponticum* occurring outside woodland. There are few other vascular plants; occasionally some persisting stems of *Rubus fruticosus* agg. or *Ulex europaeus*, or rarely a scattering of *Oxalis acetosella*. Numerous woodland bryophytes may be found here in the shade, but they are largely infrequent and sparsely growing. The main mosses are *Thuidium tamariscinum*, which is constant, and *Dicranum majus*, which is frequent. Others include *Dicranum scoparium*, *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Mnium hornum* and *Rhytidiadelphus loreus*.

Ecology

This community has currently only been recorded from the Connemara National Park, but undoubtedly is more widespread, invading acidic heaths, grasslands, bogs and woodland margins.

Sub-communities

No sub-communities are described.

Similar communities

This is a straightforward community that is unlikely to cause confusion. Note, however, that *Rhododendron* is a common invader of the acidic oakwoods represented by the WL1 *Quercus petraea* – *Luzula sylvatica* group. When *Rhododendron* is encountered beneath such a canopy, communities of that group should be considered. As infestation progresses, stands are likely to become transitional between those communities and this one.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	11
Transitional:	0
Total:	11

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2017:	11
1986-2000:	0
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	11

Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2017:	1
1986-2000:	0
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	1

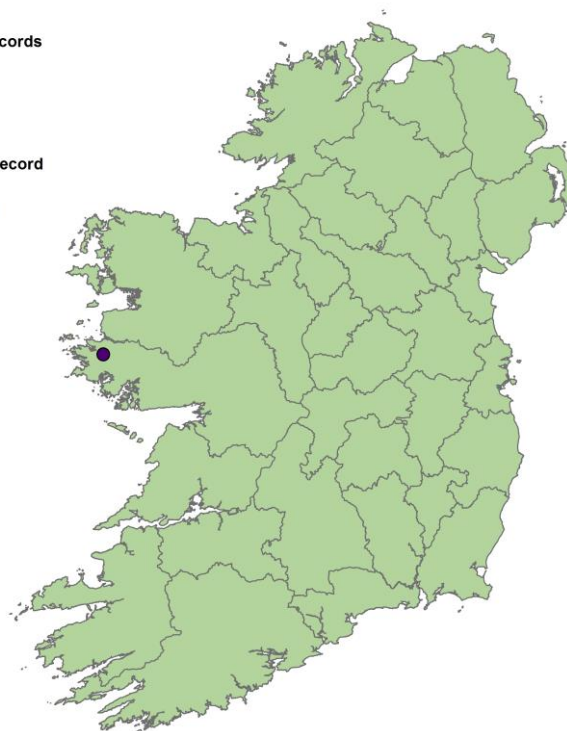
Number of hectads (all mapped records)

2001-2017:	1
1986-2000:	0
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0

Number of records



Most recent record



Synopsis table (n = 11)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>	V	7-(9)-9	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	IV	2-(2)-5	<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Dicranum majus</i>	III	2-(2)-2	<i>Sphagnum palustre</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Hypnum cupressiforme</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Plagiothecium undulatum</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Calypogeia muelleriana</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Sphagnum subnitens</i>	II	2-(2)-2	<i>Scapania undulata</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Plagiomnium undulatum</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Odontoschisma sphagni</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	I	2-(3)-3			
<i>Hookeria lucens</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	I	3-(3)-3			
<i>Saccogyna viticulosa</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Thamnobryum alopecurum</i>	I	2-(2)-2			
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	I	3-(3)-3			
<i>Calliergonella cuspidata</i>	I	2-(2)-2			

Affinities

GHI: WS3 Ornamental / non-native shrub

ZM: CA Carpino-Fagetea sylvaticae (27.3%) / CJ Koelerio-Corynephoretea canescentis (27.3%) / IA Alnetea glutinosa (18.2%)

EUNIS: Not defined

NVC: No meaningful affinity

Annex I: No significant correspondence

Proxy environmental data

Light: 5.0 Reaction: 3.1 Wetness: 5.1 Fertility: 3.0 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

This is an invasive community, typically with very low conservation value, although the shaded and humid conditions can support rare bryophytes.

Management

Rhododendron thickets can be removed by cutting, uprooting or injection of herbicide. Follow-up work is imperative to prevent reinfestation, for example spraying of regrowth, treatment of stumps and removal of seedlings.

Key references

Sullivan, C. (2005) The distribution and impact of *Rhododendron ponticum* in Connemara National Park. (B.Sc. thesis). National University of Ireland, Galway.

Barron, C. (2009) The control of rhododendron in native woodlands. Native Woodland Scheme Information Note No. 3. Forest Service, Ireland.

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