

Scientific name	<i>Ulex europaeus</i> – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. scrub
Common name	Gorse – Bramble scrub
Community code	SC1D

Vegetation

The tall, spiny, blue-green growth of *Ulex europaeus* dominates this species-poor scrub community. Both *Pteridium aquilinum* and *Rubus fruticosus* agg. are also constants, and whilst sometimes abundant, usually offer moderate cover. No other species are more than occasional; companions to be noted here include *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Dactylis glomerata* and *Holcus lanatus*. In spring, the blue flowers of *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* may be seen.

Ecology

This community forms scrub on abandoned land in the lowlands and may also be found along field boundaries. Due to its thorny and rather commonplace nature, it has been vastly under-recorded

Sub-communities

No sub-communities are described.

Similar communities

This community is rather closely aligned with the SC1C *Pteridium aquilinum* – *Rubus fruticosus* agg. scrub, but *Ulex* is much less abundant there.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	10
Transitional:	2
Total:	12

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2020:	2
1986-2000:	7
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	1
Total:	12

Number of hectads (by most recent time period)

2001-2020:	2
1986-2000:	5
1971-1985:	1
Pre-1971:	1
Total:	9

Number of hectads (records in each time period)

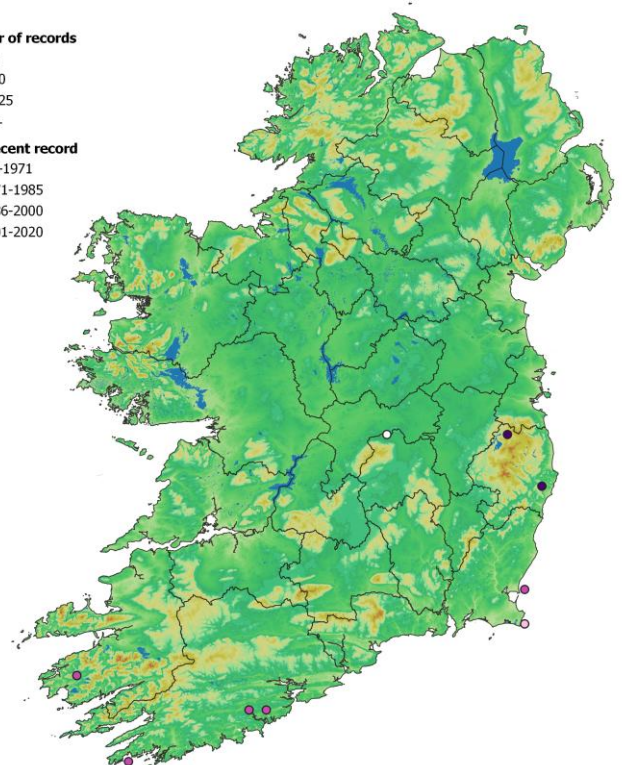
2001-2020:	2
1986-2000:	5
1971-1985:	1
Pre-1971:	1

Number of records

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

Most recent record

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



Synoptic table (n = 8)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	V	5-(8)-9	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>	IV	3-(4)-7	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	IV	3-(5)-9	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	I	5-(5)-5
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	II	2-(3)-5	<i>Luzula campestris</i>	I	+-(+)-+
<i>Lotus pedunculatus</i>	II	2-(3)-3	<i>Orchis morio</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	II	3-(3)-3	<i>Orobanche rapum genistae</i>	I	7-(7)-7
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	II	2-(3)-3	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	II	2-(2)-3	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	II	3-(4)-5	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	II	3-(4)-5	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	II	3-(3)-3	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	I	+-(+)-+
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	I	3-(3)-3	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>	I	5-(5)-5	<i>Salix aurita</i>	I	5-(5)-5
<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>	I	+-(+)-+	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	I	2-(2)-2
<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>	I	3-(3)-3	<i>Stachys palustris</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Festuca ovina</i>	I	7-(7)-7	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	I	3-(3)-3
<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	I	3-(3)-3	<i>Stellaria holostea</i>	I	5-(5)-5
<i>Galium aparine</i>	I	2-(2)-2	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	I	+-(+)-+
<i>Hedera helix</i>	I	3-(3)-3	<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	I	5-(5)-5
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	I	5-(5)-5	<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	I	+-(+)-+

Affinities

GHI: WL1 Hedgerows / WS1 Scrub

ZM: FE03A Sarothamnion scoparii Oberd. 1957

EUNIS: F3.15 *Ulex europaeus* thickets

NVC: W23c *Ulex europaeus*-*Rubus fruticosus* underscrub *Teucrium scorodonia* sub-community (56.2%)

Annex I: No significant correspondence

Proxy environmental data

Light: 6.5 Reaction: 4.9 Wetness: 5.3 Fertility: 3.8 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

Vegetation corresponding to this community is typically perceived to be of relatively low botanical value, but scrub can provide valuable habitat for bird, mammals and invertebrates.

Management

Field boundaries and scrub may be lost due to enlargement of fields, agricultural improvement and urban developments. Gorse scrub is commonly cleared by burning it.

Key references

Browne, A. (1998) Vegetation-environment interactions in the vicinity of a pharmaceutical plant near Kinsale, Co. Cork. (Ph.D. thesis). University College Dublin.

Bourke, D., Hochstrasser, T., Nolan, S., Schulte, R. (2007) Historical Grassland Turboveg Database Project: 2067 Relevés Recorded by Austin O'Sullivan 1962-1982. (unpublished). National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.

Synopsis version: V2.1

Synopsis date: March 2025

Synopsis author(s): P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. Vegetation ascribable to SC1D *Ulex europaeus* – *Rubus fruticosus* agg. scrub, Briarleas, Meath
Barron, April 2021)

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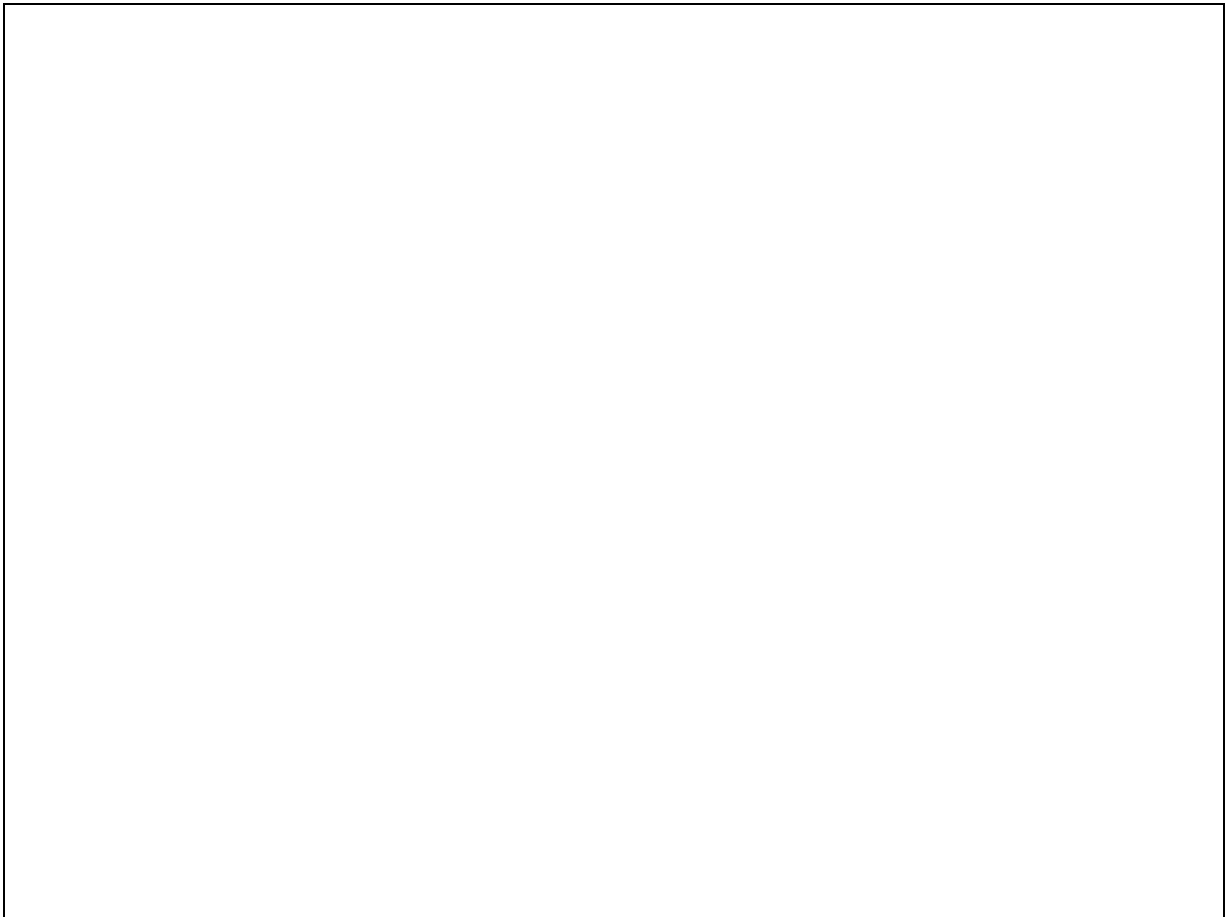


Photo required