Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC)

www.biodiversityireland.ie/ivc

Community Synopsis

Scientific name	*Juncus subnodulosus – Mentha aquatica* fen
Common name	Blunt-flowered Rush – Water mint fen
Community code	FE1D

Vegetation

This community, which lies at the swampy end of the fen vegetation continuum, represents dense stands of the rush *Juncus subnodulosus*. These patches can have a fairly distinctive orange hue. It is a rather variable assemblage with only one other constant species in the form of the aromatic *Mentha aquatica*. Frequently the field layer will also contain *Phragmites australis*, *Molinia caerulea*, *Carex panicea* or *Galium palustre*. There can be a strong tall-herb element in the form of *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Lythrum salicaria*, *Equisetum* spp. or *Angelica sylvestris*. Beneath the taller vegetation, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* or *Menyanthes trifoliata* can be abundant. The chief bryophyte is *Calliergonella cuspidata*, but sometimes one may find some *Campylium stellatum*, *Scleropodium purum* or *Scorpidium scorpioides*.

Ecology

This community occurs typically in base-rich fens and flood meadows in the lowlands,

Sub-communities

No sub-communities are described.

Similar communities

The dominance of *Juncus subnodulosus* should serve to identify this community. Whilst this species can occur in both FE1A and FE1B, the cover of *Schoenus* and *Carex* species is much higher in those communities compared with FE1D.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	77
Transitional:	13
Total:	90

Number of records (mapped)

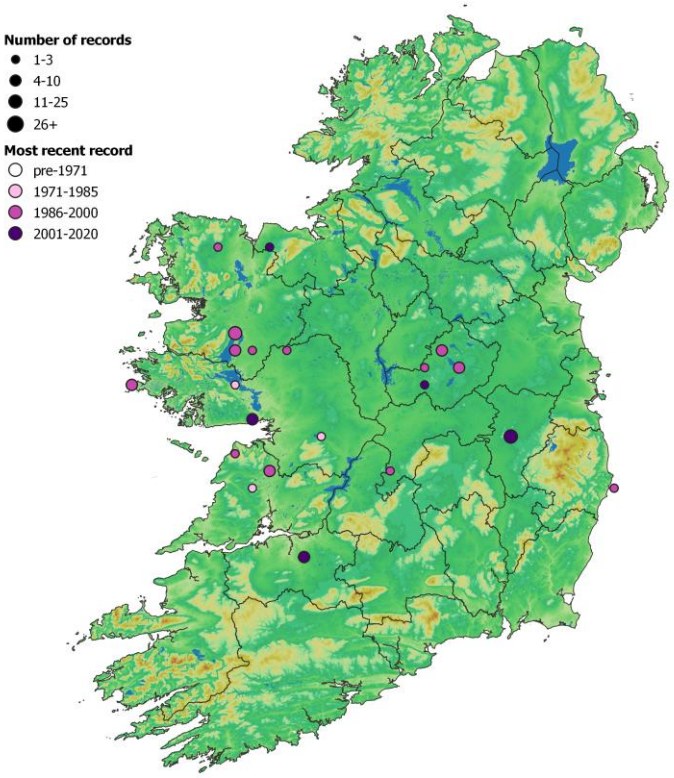
2001-2020:	16
1986-2000:	49
1971-1985:	17
Pre-1971:	6
Total:	88

Number of hectads (by most recent time period)

2001-2020:	5
1986-2000:	13
1971-1985	3
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	21

Number of hectads (records in each time period)

2001-2020:	5
1986-2000:	15
1971-1985	8
Pre-1971:	2



Synoptic table (*n* = 74)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
Juncus subnodulosus	V	5-(8)-10	*Carex nigra*	I	1-(3)-5
Mentha aquatica	IV	2-(4)-8	*Carex lasiocarpa*	I	2-(8)-9
Phragmites australis	III	1-(3)-5	*Carex flacca*	I	1-(3)-5
Molinia caerulea	III	2-(5)-8	*Schoenus nigricans*	I	3-(4)-5
Carex panicea	III	1-(5)-8	*Scleropodium purum*	I	3-(5)-8
Calliergonella cuspidata	III	+-(5)-8	*Scorpidium scorpioides*	I	2-(7)-8
Galium palustre	III	1-(3)-5	*Valeriana officinalis*	I	1-(3)-7
Hydrocotyle vulgaris	II	1-(3)-9	*Caltha palustris*	I	2-(2)-5
Agrostis stolonifera	II	2-(3)-7	*Cardamine pratensis*	I	2-(2)-3
Carex viridula	II	1-(3)-7	*Epilobium palustre*	I	1-(1)-3
Menyanthes trifoliata	II	2-(5)-9	*Potentilla palustris*	I	2-(2)-5
Succisa pratensis	II	2-(4)-7	*Calliergon giganteum*	I	2-(4)-5
Filipendula ulmaria	II	2-(3)-8	*Cirsium dissectum*	I	1-(3)-3
Ranunculus flammula	II	1-(3)-5	*Pedicularis palustris*	I	2-(2)-4
Campylium stellatum	II	2-(5)-8	*Potentilla erecta*	I	2-(3)-4
Equisetum fluviatile	II	2-(3)-8	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*	I	3-(3)-5
Lythrum salicaria	II	1-(3)-5	*Brachythecium rutabulum*	I	2-(3)-5
Equisetum palustre	II	1-(3)-7	*Eupatorium cannabinum*	I	2-(5)-5
Angelica sylvestris	I	2-(3)-5	*Drepanocladus cossonii/revolvens*	I	2-(5)-7
Holcus lanatus	I	1-(3)-5	*Juncus acutiflorus*	I	2-(5)-5

Affinities

GHI: FS1 Reed and large sedge swamps / PF1 Rich fen and flush

ZM: PA01A Caricion davallianae Klika 1934

EUNIS: E3.418 Blunt-flowered rush meadows

NVC: S25c *Phragmites australis-Eupatorium cannabinum* tall-herb fen *Cladium mariscus* sub-community (51.3%), but also M22c *Juncus subnodulosus-Cirsium palustre* fen-meadow *Carex elata* sub-community (44.2%)

Annex I: 7230 Alkaline fens

Proxy environmental data

Light: 7.6 Reaction: 6.4 Wetness: 8.5 Fertility: 3.6 Salinity: 0.1

Conservation value

Examples which support 'brown mosses' correspond with EU HD Annex I habitat 7230 Alkaline fens. Species diversity is rather poor on average (species/4 m^2 = 14.8, *n* = 30).

Management

Information on the management of these stands is somewhat lacking but it is likely that some are mowed or grazed by livestock. Similar to other fen communities, they are vulnerable to drainage, infilling, reclamation and eutrophication.

Key references

O'Criodain, C. (1988) Parvocaricetea in Ireland (Ph.D. thesis). University College Dublin.

Synopsis version: V1.1 **Synopsis date:** March 2025 **Synopsis author(s):** P.M. Perrin

Photo 1. FE1D *Juncus subnodulosus – Mentha aquatica* fen, Pollardstown Fen, Kildare (R. Hodd, August 2019)

Photo 2. FE1D *Juncus subnodulosus – Mentha aquatica* fen, Pollardstown Fen, Kildare (R. Hodd, August 2019)