Irish Vegetation Classification (IVC)

www.biodiversityireland.ie/ivc

Community Synopsis

Scientific name	*Agrostis stolonifera – Ranunculus repens* marsh-grassland
Common name	Creeping Bent – Creeping Buttercup marsh-grassland
Community code	GL2A

Vegetation

Agrostis stolonifera is the main species of this marshy community, with *Ranunculus repens*, *Galium palustre*, *Trifolium repens* and *Potentilla anserina* being the other constants. These are frequently accompanied by *Cardamine pratensis*, *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Mentha aquatica*, *Leontodon autumnalis* and *Senecio aquaticus*. The community differs from others in this group (GL2) in its higher forb component and the presence of more species tolerant of seasonal flooding. *Calliergonella cuspidata* tends to be the only bryophyte. The vegetation is typically calf-height (mean graminoid height = 29.8 cm, *n* = 77; mean forb height = 24.7 cm, *n* = 77).

Ecology

The *Agrostis stolonifera – Ranunculus repens* marsh-grassland is a variable grouping of vegetation predominantly from mesotrophic, wet grassland and marsh on gleys and basin peats in the lowlands (mean altitude = 45 m, *n* = 77; mean slope = 0.3°, *n* = 77). Soils are relatively base-rich, quite fertile and fairly organic (mean organic content = 28.8%, *n* = 52).

Sub-communities

No sub-communities are currently described for this community.

Similar communities

This community differs from the closely related GL1B *Agrostis stolonifera – Filipendula ulmaria* marsh-grassland in being species-poor, more fertile, and also more heavily grazed.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	297
Transitional:	104
Total:	401

Number of records (mapped)

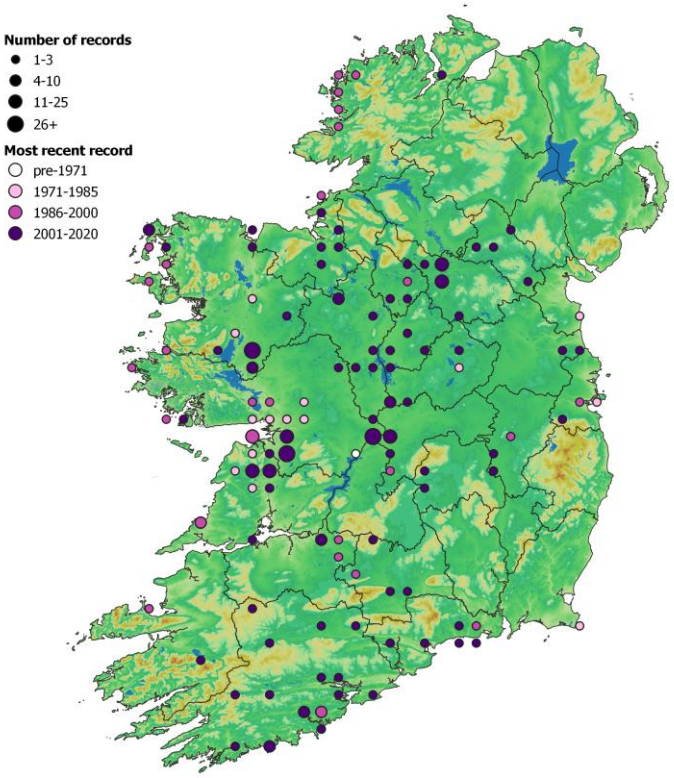
2001-2020:	195
1986-2000:	101
1971-1985:	92
Pre-1971:	7
Total:	395

Number of hectads (by most recent time period)

2001-2020:	81
1986-2000:	26
1971-1985	14
Pre-1971:	1
Total:	122

Number of hectads (records in each time period)

2001-2020:	81
1986-2000:	35
1971-1985	26
Pre-1971:	3



Synoptic table (*n* = 226)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
Agrostis stolonifera	V	4-(7)-9	*Carex disticha*	I	2-(4)-8
Ranunculus repens	V	+-(4)-8	*Lolium perenne*	I	1-(3)-5
Potentilla anserina	IV	1-(3)-8	*Lotus corniculatus*	I	1-(3)-7
Galium palustre	IV	+-(3)-5	*Juncus articulatus*	I	+-(3)-8
Trifolium repens	IV	+-(3)-9	*Ranunculus flammula*	I	+-(2)-5
Cardamine pratensis	III	+-(2)-5	*Potentilla erecta*	I	2-(3)-5
Filipendula ulmaria	III	2-(3)-8	*Poa pratensis/humilis*	I	+-(3)-7
Calliergonella cuspidata	III	+-(3)-5	*Caltha palustris*	I	+-(2)-5
Senecio aquaticus	III	+-(3)-7	*Plantago major*	I	+-(2)-4
Mentha aquatica	III	1-(3)-7	*Carex panicea*	I	+-(3)-7
Leontodon autumnalis	III	+-(3)-5	*Juncus effusus*	I	+-(3)-6
Rumex crispus	II	+-(2)-5	*Deschampsia cespitosa*	I	2-(3)-8
Plantago lanceolata	II	+-(3)-7	*Holcus lanatus*	I	+-(3)-7
Cerastium fontanum	II	+-(2)-5	*Juncus × surrejanus*	I	2-(3)-7
Carex hirta	II	+-(3)-6	*Ranunculus acris*	I	+-(2)-5
Hydrocotyle vulgaris	II	2-(3)-5	*Festuca arundinacea*	I	2-(3)-5
Carex nigra	II	2-(3)-5	*Festuca rubra*	I	2-(3)-5
Myosotis scorpioides	II	1-(3)-5	*Prunella vulgaris*	I	2-(3)-3
Poa trivialis	I	+-(3)-6	*Carex flacca*	I	+-(3)-5
Taraxacum officinale agg.	I	+-(2)-5	*Rumex acetosa*	I	+-(2)-5

Affinities

GHI: FL6 Turloughs / GM1 Marsh / GS4 Wet grassland

ZM: CM05B Calthion palustris Tx. 1937

EUNIS: E3.442 Flood swards

NVC: SD17a *Potentilla anserina-Carex nigra* dune-slack community *Festuca rubra-Ranunculus repens* sub-community (55.2%), but also MG14a *Carex nigra-Agrostis stolonifera-Senecio aquaticus* grassland typical sub-community (53.1%)

Annex I:6430 Hydrophilous tall-herb swamp

Proxy environmental data

Light: 7.1 Reaction: 6.4 Wetness: 6.6 Fertility: 5.4 Salinity: 0.6

Conservation value

This is a fairly species-poor grassland community (species/4 m^2 = 17.7, *n* = 184). A limited number of examples with good cover of plants such as *Filipendula ulmaria*, *Iris pseudacorus* and *Equisetum fluviatile* may correspond with EU HD Annex I habitat 6430 Hydrophilous tall herb.

Management

These swards are managed as rough grazing land (typically for cattle). The main threats to these marshy grasslands include improvement, abandonment and changes to the flooding regime.

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.

Moran, J. (2005) Skealoghan turlough, Co. Mayo: Implications of grazing and flooding regimes for plant and carabid beetle communities with reference to turlough farming systems in the region. (Ph.D. thesis). National University of Ireland Galway.

Synopsis version: V2.1 **Synopsis date:** March 2025 **Synopsis author(s):** P.M. Perrin

Photo 1. GL2A *Agrostis stolonifera – Ranunculus repens* marsh-grassland, Ballyrafter Flats, Waterford (M. Gabbett/F. O'Neill, May 2008)

Photo 2. GL2A *Agrostis stolonifera – Ranunculus repens* marsh-grassland, Killourney, Clare (C. MacMahon/K. McNutt, May 2011)