



<b>Scientific name</b>	<i>Festuca rubra</i> – <i>Syntrichia ruraliformis</i> duneland
<b>Common name</b>	Red Fescue – Sand-hill Screw-moss duneland
<b>Community code</b>	DU2B

### Vegetation

In this fairly diverse duneland community, the grass *Festuca rubra* is a constant, but typically does not dominate. In season, it usually is accompanied by the yellow flowers of *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Lotus corniculatus* and *Galium verum*. Frequently, there are also tussocks of *Ammophila arenaria* and some low cover of *Taraxacum officinale* agg., *Senecio jacobaea*, *Cerastium diffusum* or *Anthyllis vulneraria*. Other species may include the duneland indicators *Elytrigia juncea* and *Carex arenaria*. Notable in this community is the well-developed yellow-green moss layer, usually formed of *Syntrichia ruraliformis* with *Homalothecium lutescens* frequently present.

### Ecology

This is a fixed dune (or grey dune) community of stabilised, slightly more calcareous sands, found landward of the mobile marram dunes.

### Sub-communities

No sub-communities are described.

### Similar communities

From the other duneland communities of the DU2 *Festuca rubra* – *Galium verum* group, the present community is chiefly distinguished by its high cover of bryophytes. The number of sand-loving species serve to differentiate it from *Festuca rubra* swards of the GL3 grassland group.

### Records and distribution

#### Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	188
Transitional:	37
Total:	225

#### Number of records (mapped)

2001-2017:	4
1986-2000:	102
1971-1985:	101
Pre-1971:	18
Total:	225

#### Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2017:	4
1986-2000:	34
1971-1985:	4
Pre-1971:	5
Total:	47

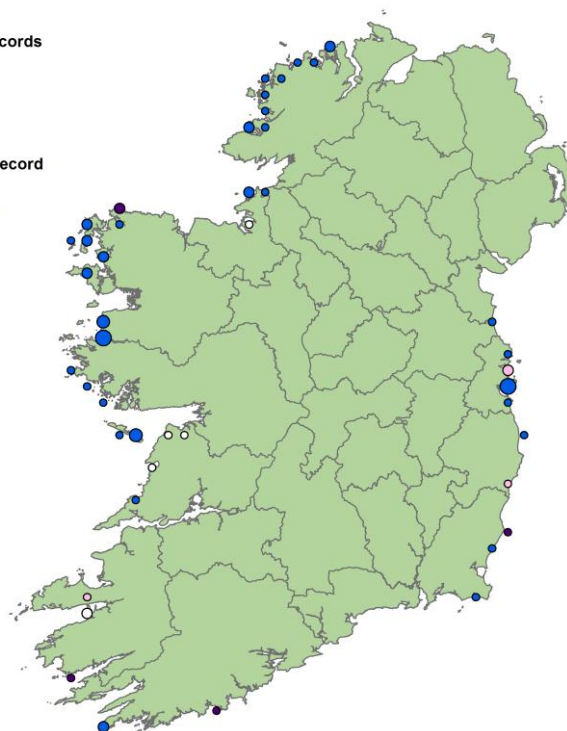
#### Number of hectads (all mapped records)

2001-2017:	4
1986-2000:	36
1971-1985:	8
Pre-1971:	7

#### Number of records



#### Most recent record



**Synoptic table (n = 173)**

Species	Frequency	Cover	Species	Frequency	Cover
	(from I-V)	min (med) max		(from I-V)	min (med) max
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	V	2-(5)-8	<i>Phleum arenarium</i>	II	2-(2)-5
<i>Syntrichia ruraliformis</i>	V	1-(5)-9	<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	II	2-(3)-8
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	IV	2-(3)-6	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	II	1-(2)-3
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	IV	2-(3)-7	<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	II	1-(4)-6
<i>Galium verum</i>	IV	1-(3)-8	<i>Peltigera canina</i>	II	1-(2)-7
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	III	2-(4)-8	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	I	1-(3)-5
<i>Homalothecium lutescens</i>	III	1-(5)-9	<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>	I	2-(2)-5
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	III	+- (2)-4	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	I	1-(2)-4
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	III	1-(2)-4	<i>Catapodium marinum</i>	I	1-(2)-3
<i>Cerastium diffusum</i>	III	1-(2)-7	<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	I	2-(2)-3
<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	III	+- (3)-7	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	I	+- (2)-5
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	III	+- (3)-5	<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	I	+- (3)-6
<i>Elytrigia juncea</i>	III	1-(3)-5	<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	I	2-(3)-5
<i>Carex arenaria</i>	III	1-(3)-7	<i>Erophila verna</i>	I	2-(2)-3
<i>Sedum acre</i>	III	1-(3)-7	<i>Plantago coronopus</i>	I	2-(3)-7
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	III	1-(3)-7	<i>Trifolium arvense</i>	I	2-(2)-3
<i>Poa pratensis/humilis</i>	II	1-(2)-4	<i>Luzula campestris</i>	I	+- (3)-4
<i>Arenaria serpyllifolia</i>	II	1-(3)-5	<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	I	1-(3)-7
<i>Leontodon saxatilis</i>	II	2-(3)-6	<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	I	1-(3)-4
<i>Viola tricolor</i>	II	2-(3)-8	<i>Vicia cracca</i>	I	2-(2)-5

**Affinities**

GHI: CD3 Fixed dunes

ZM: CJ Koelerio-Corynepherea canescentis (35.6%) / CM Molinio-Arrhenatheretea (28.2%) / DA Festuco-Brometea (19.5%)

EUNIS: B1.411 Crested-hairgrass dune communities

NVC: SD7d *Ammophila arenaria* – *Festuca rubra* semi-fixed dune community *Elymus pycnanthus* sub-community (67.5%), but also SD8c *Festuca rubra* – *Galium verum* fixed dune community *Tortula ruralis* ssp. *ruraliformis* sub-community (63.7%)

Annex I: \*2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes)

**Proxy environmental data**

Light: 7.8    Reaction: 6.3    Wetness: 4.0    Fertility: 3.5    Salinity: 1.0

**Conservation value**

Most examples of this vegetation correspond to EU HD Annex I habitat \*2130 Fixed dunes (grey dunes).

**Management**

Fixed dunes are often grazed by livestock and rabbits, and overgrazing or undergrazing can be a problem, as can recreation in popular coastal areas.

**Key references**

Crawford, I., Bleasdale, A., Conaghan, J. (1996) Biomar survey of Irish machair sites 1996. Volume 2: Plant communities. (unpublished). National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.

Beckers, A., Brock, T., Klerkx, J. (1976) A vegetation study of some parts of Dooaghtry, Co. Mayo, Republic of Ireland. (unpublished). National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dublin.

**Synopsis version:** V1.0

**Synopsis date:** November 2019

**Synopsis author(s):** P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. DU2B *Festuca rubra* – *Syntrichia ruraliformis* duneland, Garter Hill, Mayo (K. Connolly, August 2011)



Photo 2. DU2B *Festuca rubra* – *Syntrichia ruraliformis* duneland, Garter Hill, Mayo (K. Connolly, August 2011)