



Scientific name	<i>Molinia caerulea</i> – <i>Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum</i> bog/heath
Common name	Purple Moor-grass – Deergrass bog/heath
Community code	HE4A

Vegetation

The main species in this community are *Molinia caerulea*, *Calluna vulgaris* and *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum*, but overall plant cover is not that high. *Erica tetralix* and *Potentilla erecta* are the other constants in the field layer. Frequently one will also find here *Nartheccium ossifragum*, *Carex panicea*, *Erica cinerea*, *Eriophorum angustifolium* and *Schoenus nigricans*. The bryophyte layer is pretty sparse, consisting mostly of *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, *Pleurozia purpurea* and *Hypnum jutlandicum*. *Sphagnum capillifolium*, *Sphagnum tenellum* and *Sphagnum papillosum* are each only occasional and no more frequent than the disturbance indicator *Sphagnum compactum*.

Ecology

This community occurs on the lower to middle slopes of hills and mountains (mean altitude = 254 m, $n = 25$) on wet, acidic and infertile peaty soils. It is a slightly degraded version of wet heath and lowland bog.

Sub-communities

No sub-communities have been described for this community.

Similar communities

Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum is more frequent here than in the other communities within the HE4 *Molinia caerulea* – *Polygala serpyllifolia* group or the degraded bogs of BG1C *Schoenus nigricans* – *Eriophorum angustifolium* bog community, which also usually supports *Rhynchospora alba*. *Schoenus nigricans* is less frequent and abundant in the present community than in any of the three main communities where it occurs: BG1C, BG2D and HE4C.

Records and distribution

<i>Number of records (all)</i>	
Clearly assigned:	188
Transitional:	91
Total:	279

<i>Number of records (mapped)</i>	
2001-2015:	138
1986-2000:	94
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	234

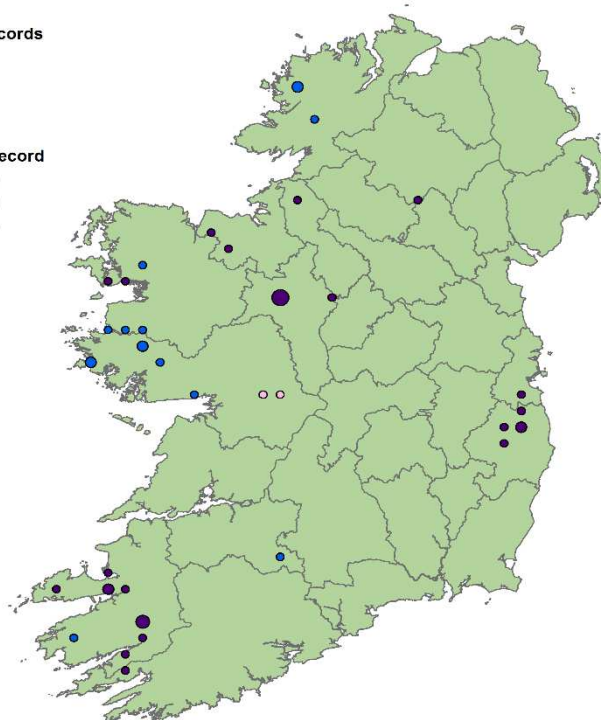
<i>Number of hectads (most recent records)</i>	
2001-2015:	23
1986-2000:	12
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	37

<i>Number of hectads (all mapped records)</i>	
2001-2015:	23
1986-2000:	14
1971-1985:	2
Pre-1971:	0

Number of records



Most recent record



Synoptic table (n = 152)

Species	Frequency	Cover	Species	Frequency	Cover
	(from I-V)	min (med) max		(from I-V)	min (med) max
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	V	2-(5)-8	<i>Campylopus atrovirens</i>	II	+-(2)-5
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	V	+-(4)-7	<i>Sphagnum papillosum</i>	II	+-(2)-6
<i>Trichophorum cesp./germanicum</i>	V	1-(4)-8	<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	II	+-(1)-3
<i>Erica tetralix</i>	V	1-(3)-7	<i>Sphagnum compactum</i>	II	1-(2)-5
<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	IV	+-(2)-5	<i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i>	I	+-(2)-9
<i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>	IV	+-(3)-7	<i>Juncus squarrosus</i>	I	1-(3)-5
<i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>	III	+-(3)-8	<i>Sphagnum subnitens</i>	I	1-(2)-5
<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>	III	+-(3)-7	<i>Pedicularis sylvatica</i>	I	+-(2)-4
<i>Pleurozia purpurea</i>	III	+-(3)-8	<i>Juncus bulbosus</i>	I	1-(2)-3
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	III	+-(2)-7	<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	I	+-(1)-3
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	III	+-(2)-5	<i>Rhytidadelphus loreus</i>	I	+-(2)-2
<i>Carex panicea</i>	III	+-(3)-5	<i>Leucobryum glaucum</i>	I	+-(2)-3
<i>Cladonia portentosa</i>	III	+-(2)-5	<i>Cephalozia bicuspidata</i>	I	+-(1)-2
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	III	+-(2)-3	<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	I	+-(1)-3
<i>Cladonia uncialis</i>	II	+-(2)-5	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	I	+-(2)-3
<i>Polygala serpyllifolia</i>	II	+-(1)-3	<i>Sphagnum subsecundum</i> agg.	I	+-(1)-4
<i>Odontoschisma sphagni</i>	II	+-(1)-3	<i>Carex echinata</i>	I	+-(2)-3
<i>Sphagnum capillifolium</i>	II	+-(2)-5	<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	I	+-(2)-3
<i>Sphagnum tenellum</i>	II	+-(2)-5	<i>Campylopus introflexus</i>	I	1-(2)-3
<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>	II	+-(2)-3	<i>Nardus stricta</i>	I	1-(2)-3

Affinities

GHI: HH3 Wet heath / PB3 Lowland blanket bog

ZM: OXY-01A *Ericion tetralicis* Schwickerath 1933 / OXY-01B *Oxycocco* – *Ericion tetralicis* Nordhagen et. Tx 1937

EUNIS: F4.11 Northern wet heaths / D1.21 Hyperoceanic low-altitude blanket bogs, typically with dominant *Trichophorum* /

NVC: M17a *Scirpus cespitosus* – *Eriophorum vaginatum* blanket mire *Drosera rotundifolia* – *Sphagnum* sub-community (70.2%)

Annex I:4010 Wet heath / 7130 Blanket bog (active)*

Proxy environmental data

Light: 7.2 Reaction: 2.7 Wetness: 7.3 Fertility: 1.6 Salinity: 0.0

Conservation value

This is on average a fairly species-poor peatland community (species/4 m² = 15.7, n = 55). Most examples will qualify as either EU HD Annex I habitat 4010 Wet heath or habitat 7130 Blanket bog (active)*.

Management

This vegetation is degraded to some degree, typically as a result of turf-cutting and the associated drainage, and also by overgrazing and trampling from livestock (sheep or cattle). Other threats include afforestation and burning.

Key references

Perrin, P.M., Barron, S.J., Roche, J.R. & O’Hanrahan, B. (2014) Guidelines for a national survey and conservation assessment of upland vegetation and habitats in Ireland. *Irish Wildlife Manuals*, No. 79. National Parks and Wildlife Service, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

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Synopsis author(s): P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. HE4A *Molinia caerulea* – *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* bog/heath, Cullinagh, Killarney National Park, Kerry (J. Denyer/P. Perrin, July 2011)



Photo 2. HE4A *Molinia caerulea* – *Trichophorum cespitosum/germanicum* bog/heath, Cloghmeen, Arroo Mountain, Leitrim (E. O'Sullivan, September 2012)