



Scientific name	<i>Hymenophyllum wilsonii</i> – <i>Isothecium myosuroides</i> crevice community
Common name	Wilson's Filmy -Fern – Mouse-tail Moss crevice community
Community code	RH2A

Vegetation

Saxifraga spathularis tends to be the most conspicuous species within this rocky habitat community, but it is also characterized by a suite of shade-loving bryophytes and the presence of ferns. *Diplophyllum albicans* and *Isothecium myosuroides* are the constant species alongside *Saxifraga*. Wefts of *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* are frequently found in the deeper shade, as are patches of *Mnium hornum*. Other frequent species are *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Frullania tamarisci*, *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, *Scapania gracilis*, *Dryopteris dilatata* and *Thuidium tamariscinum*. There can be small patches of dry heath vegetation with *Calluna vulgaris* and *Vaccinium myrtillus* occasionally found.

Ecology

This is a vegetation of shady crevices and overhangs in siliceous cliffs, outcrops and scree slopes in the uplands (mean altitude = 414 m, $n = 47$; mean slope = 72° , $n = 47$). Soils, where they accumulate, are skeletal (mean soil depth = 0.6 cm, $n = 47$; mean cover bare rock = 49%, $n = 47$). Conditions are moist and infertile.

Sub-communities

Two sub-communities are described for this community. The *Saxifraga-spathularis* – *Festuca vivipara* sub-community (RH2Ai) is predominantly found in the west of Ireland and supports the titular species plus *Herbertus aduncus* and *Pleurozia purpurea*. The *Dryopteris dilatata* – *Polypodium vulgare* sub-community (RH2Aii) lacks these species and is not restricted to the west.

Similar communities

Saxifraga spathularis, *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* and *Dryopteris dilatata* are more frequent in this community than elsewhere in the RH2 *Racomitrium lanuginosum* – *Saxifraga spathularis* group. The RH2D *Angelica sylvestris* – *Breutelia chrysocoma* ledge community also occurs on siliceous rock faces, but indicates areas of seepage where there is some basic enrichment. In the RH2B and RH2C scree communities, *Racomitrium* mosses are more prevalent.

Records and distribution

Number of records (all)

Clearly assigned:	47
Transitional:	7
Total:	54

Number of records (mapped)

2001-2015:	53
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	54

Number of hectads (most recent records)

2001-2015:	26
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	0
Total:	27

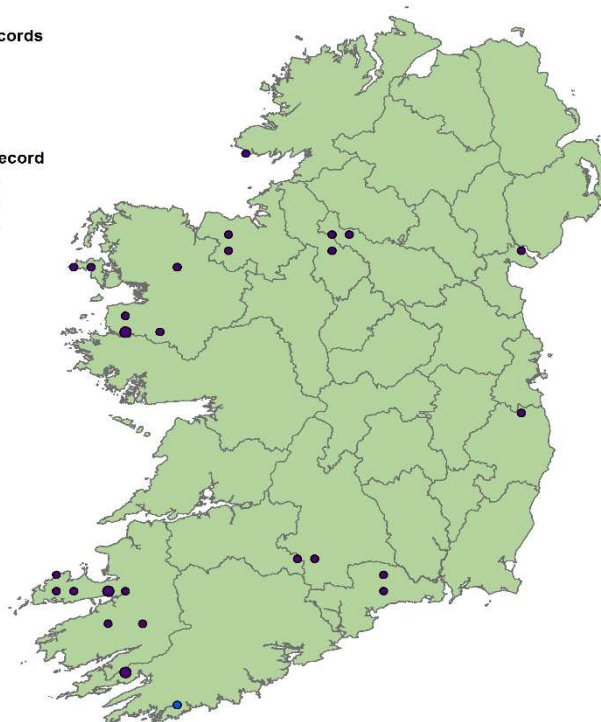
Number of hectads (all mapped records)

2001-2015:	26
1986-2000:	1
1971-1985:	0
Pre-1971:	30

Number of records



Most recent record



Synoptic table (n = 47)

Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max	Species	Frequency (from I-V)	Cover min (med) max
<i>Diplophyllum albicans</i>	V	+- (3)-6	<i>Saccogyna viticulosa</i>	II	+- (1)-3
<i>Isothecium myosuroides</i>	IV	+- (4)-5	<i>Festuca vivipara</i>	II	1-(3)-4
<i>Saxifraga spathularis</i>	IV	1-(4)-8	<i>Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans</i>	II	+- (2)-7
<i>Hymenophyllum wilsonii</i>	III	+- (4)-8	<i>Dicranum scoparium</i>	II	+- (1)-3
<i>Mnium hornum</i>	III	+- (1)-6	<i>Amphidium mougeotii</i>	II	+- (3)-5
<i>Hypnum jutlandicum</i>	III	+- (1)-4	<i>Polytrichum formosum</i>	II	+- (1)-3
<i>Frullania tamarisci</i>	III	+- (3)-5	<i>Campylopus flexuosus</i>	II	+- (+)-2
<i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>	III	+- (2)-4	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	II	+- (2)-5
<i>Scapania gracilis</i>	III	+- (2)-4	<i>Hylocomium splendens</i>	II	+- (1)-4
<i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>	III	2-(4)-5	<i>Epilobium brunnescens</i>	II	+- (1)-4
<i>Thuidium tamariscinum</i>	III	+- (1)-5	<i>Pellia endiviifolia</i>	II	3-(3)-3
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	II	1-(2)-4	<i>Trichostomum tenuirostre</i>	I	+- (3)-4
<i>Plagiochila spinulosa</i>	II	+- (2)-5	<i>Herbertus aduncus</i>	I	+- (3)-5
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	II	1-(3)-5	<i>Calypogeia arguta</i>	I	+- (+)-2
<i>Rhytidiadelphus loreus</i>	II	+- (1)-3	<i>Erica cinerea</i>	I	+- (3)-3
<i>Pellia epiphylla</i>	II	+- (2)-7	<i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>	I	1-(3)-4
<i>Heterocladium heteropterum</i>	II	+- (1)-4	<i>Plagiochila punctata</i>	I	+- (+)-3
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	II	+- (3)-4	<i>Polytrichum commune</i>	I	2-(2)-4
<i>Galium saxatile</i>	II	+- (1)-3	<i>Polypodium vulgare</i>	I	1-(3)-4
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	II	1-(3)-5	<i>Trichostomum brachydontium</i>	I	+- (+)-3

Affinities

GHI: ER1 Exposed siliceous rock / ER3 Siliceous scree and loose rock

ZM: THL-06B Androsacion alpinae Br.-Bl. et Jenny 1926

EUNIS: H3.19 Lowland northern- and middle-European siliceous cliffs

NVC: W17a *Quercus petraea* – *Betula pubescens* – *Dicranum majus* woodland *Isothecium myosuroides* – *Diplophyllum albicans* sub-community (47.3%)

Annex I: 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes / 8110 Siliceous scree

Proxy environmental data

Light: 5.3 Reaction: 3.4 Wetness: 6.0 Fertility: 2.6 Salinity: 0.1

Conservation value

Most examples of this community qualify as EU HD Annex I habitat 8220 Siliceous rocky slopes, but also included here are some plots from habitat 8110 Siliceous scree.

Management

Some more accessible areas of this vegetation may be sheep-grazed but it is essentially unmanaged. The impact of the non-native *Epilobium brunnescens* has not been investigated and hitherto no known management action has been taken. Climate change threatens arctic-alpine species which are restricted to upland sites such as these.

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.

Synopsis version: V1.0

Synopsis date: November 2017

Synopsis author(s): P.M. Perrin



Photo 1. RH2A *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* – *Isothecium myosuroides* crevice community, Baurearagh, Cahra Mountains, Kerry
(P. Perrin, August 2014)



Photo 2. RH2A *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* – *Isothecium myosuroides* crevice community, Glantrasna, Cahra Mountain, Kerry
(E. O'Sullivan, August 2014)