The Significance of the Records

Illies (1955), in his account of the lotic fauna of Western Europe describes distribution of lotic invertebrates from high, medium and low altitudes. He describes Ireland as having only invertebrates of general European distribution. In the British Isles northern Scotland has a high altitude community and northern England a community of medium altitude. The results given here suggest that the Irish fauna may be more complex than hitherto supposed. The Wicklow hill streams contains a community typically found at a moderate height (300-500 m O.D.) in Scotland and northern England. A similar community is likely to occur also in Co. Kerry, because cursory examination has confirmed some of the Glenmalur species there, but work to establish its existence in other Irish mountain systems remains to be carried out.

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REFERENCES


SOME RECENTLY RECORDED GRASS VARIETIES

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Taxonomic studies on Irish grasses were initiated in 1964 and concluded in 1969. During the two of these studies two new hybrid fescues were recorded. In addition many morphologically distinct botanical varieties were found, most of them for the first time. A full report on the hybrid fescues will appear later, in the meantime, the botanical varieties noted are described below.

1. Agrostis canina L. ssp. montana (Hartm.) Hartm. var. mutica Gaud.
   This form of brown bent was found at Ticknock, Co. Dublin (H 21), and is characterized by its awnless lemmas: the central lemma nerve remains very short, only one-half or less, as long as its lemma. It is not very frequent in the area though it does not show any difference in ecological requirements to that of the more common form, var. montana.

2. Agrostis gigantea Roth var. ramosa (Gray) Phil.
   This particular variety has already been reported once before by Prendergast (1948). The writer found it on the College farm at Celbridge, Co. Kildare (H 19). The infrequency with which it has been reported may be due to some extent to the fact that it resembles A. stolonifera very closely, but it differs clearly in the presence of rhizomes.

3. Agrostis stolonifera L. var. palustris (Huds.) Farw.
   Marsh Bentgrass is a common and well known form of creeping bent, scattered throughout the country. The writer has noted its occurrence in counties Dublin (H 21), Wexford (H 12), Cavan (H 30) and Longford (H 24).

4. Agrostis tenuis Sibth. var. aristata (Parn.) Druce
   The awned form of common bent was located in two areas in Co. Dublin (H 21), one was on the roadside at Glasnevin, the other was near the ninth lock of the wheel.
Grand Canal, Clondalkin. It can be distinguished readily from the common awned bentgrass—*A. canina*—by the laxness of its panicle branches, and by the presence of a comparatively long palea.


Bulbous oatgrass, or onion couch, is fairly frequent, and is easily recognised by its very bulbous base. It seems to favour light dry soils.


Another form of tall oatgrass, var. *biaristatum*, is distinguishable from the common form by its monomorphic awns. The common form has dimorphic awns, the awn of the upper floret being short and straight, or absent entirely. The specimen located by the writer was found on the canal bank, at Celbridge, Co. Kildare (H 19).

7. *Avena fatua* (L.) var. *glabrata* Peterm.

Some samples of wild oats collected in Co. Wexford (H 21), in 1968, showed two new botanical varieties in addition to the type specimen. The first of these was var. *glabrata*, a form characterized by the complete absence of hairs from the dorsal surface of the lemma and the yellowish or straw-colour of the latter. In this variety, as in all varieties, hairs are present on the callus.

8. *Avena fatua* (L.) var. *pilosa* Syme

This is the second new variety, and it may be recognized by the presence of a few scattered hairs on the lemmas and the grey colour of the latter, particularly in the mature grain.


This is the small flowered form of the common tussock grass. It was first recorded in 1968 (Farragher, 1968c).

10. *Holcus mollis* L. var. *hibernicus*

Var. *hibernicus* is the tentative name given to a 3-flower form of Yorkshire fog. In addition to the difference in flower number it shows other minor variations in the floral parts.


The hairless form of soft brome was located at Castlefreke, Co. Cork (H 4) in 1968. Since then the writer has seen it at the Neale, Co. Mayo (H 26).


This variety was recorded by Scannell (1962) in Co. Wexford (H 12). Since then the writer has seen it in abundance at Monastery Road, Clondalkin, Co. Dublin (H 21) and at Rathcoole, Co. Kildare (H 19). At Monastery Road, it occurs side by side with the common form, var. *lepidus*.

13. *Brachypodium pinnatum* (L.) Beauv. var. *pubescens* Gray

This form of chalk false-brome may be found in abundance along the railway embankment about two miles east of Monasterevin, Co. Kildare (H 19). It differs from the common form, var. *pinnatum*, in having densely hairy spikelets.


This variety has already been reported by the writer (Farragher, 1968b). It occurs with the rare form of slender brome at Monastery Road, Clondalkin, Co. Dublin, and also at the tenth lock of the Grand Canal, Clondalkin.

15. *Dactylis glomerata* L. var. *pubescens* Opiz

Pubescent cocksfoot has been noted in a hedgerow at Clondalkin, Co. Dublin. It has very distinctive hairy sheaths.


This variety is similar to the common form, var. *ovina*, in all respects except that it has hairy spikelets. It is less frequent but occurs in similar situations. The two varieties generally occur in the same plant community. The writer has seen it on Mount Brandon, Co. Kerry (H 12).
17. *Festuca ovina* ssp. *ovina* L. var. *vivipara* (L.) Sm.

Viviparous fescue is particularly frequent in the south eastern and western coastal counties, and less frequent in parts of Dublin (H 21) and Wicklow (H 20).


The hairy form of fine-leaved sheep's fescue is a plant of rare occurrence. The writer has only seen it in two areas, on Mount Brandon, Co. Kerry (H 2) and in Sligo (H 29). It has very hairy spikelets. The common form, var. *tenuifolia*, occurs in the same areas.


This form of red fescue is frequent on sanddunes.


This is another form of red fescue with hairy spikelets. It occurs occasionally in hedgerows and old pasture throughout the country.


This variety is similar to var. *barbata* but is glaucous in all its parts. It is of frequent occurrence in coastal areas.

22. *Festuca rubra* L. ssp. *rubra* var. *pruinosa* (Hack.) Howarth

This, the fourth red fescue variety, resembles var. *glaucescens* but has pruinose leaves and hairless spikelets. It is, however, less frequent but occurs in similar situations.


This variety was first recorded by the writer in 1967 (Farragher, 1968a). It differs from the common variety, var. *rubra*, in having large lax panicles, long lemmas and wide leaves, up to 3.00 mm wide.


This is another tentative name given by the writer to a new form of very wide leaved red fescue. It resembles var. *multiflora* in the inflorescence but has leaves up to 5.5 mm wide. There are also some leaf anatomical differences between it and *multiflora*.


Var. *serica* is a rare form of annual meadowgrass, and was located by the writer on the side of Mount Brandon, Co. Kerry (H 2). It is characterized by having all 5 nerves of the lemma distinctly hairy. Furthermore, from the material studied by the writer, it appears to favour wet, muddy soils.


Var. *pubescens* represents the third possible new variety currently under investigation by the writer. It was located two years ago at Clondalkin, Co. Dublin (H 21), and differs from the common form, var. *pratensis*, in having distinctly hairy blades and sheaths.


This, the final variety, was collected by the writer near Neale, Co. Mayo (H 26). It differs from the other rare form, var. *temulentum*, in being awnless, or in only having very minute bristles.

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