

---

## OV6

# *Cerastium glomeratum*-*Fumaria muralis* ssp. *boraei* community

### Synonymy

*Spergulo-Chrysanthemetum* (Br.-Bl. de Leeuw 1936) R.Tx. 1937 *sensu* Silverside 1977 p.p.; *Medicagi-Ranunculetum parviflori* Silverside 1977 p.p.

### Constant species

*Anagallis arvensis*, *Cerastium glomeratum*, *Fumaria muralis* ssp. *boraei*, *Juncus bufonius*, *Poa annua*, *Senecio vulgaris*, *Sonchus asper*.

### Rare species

*Allium babingtonii*, *Briza minor*, *Fumaria bastardii*, *Silene gallica*.

### Physiognomy

The *Cerastium glomeratum*-*Fumaria muralis* ssp. *boraei* community is one of the British weed assemblages in which fumitories figure with some prominence. *F. muralis* ssp. *boraei* is the most common taxon here and it can be abundant. Less frequent in the community, though locally prominent, are *F. officinalis* (a plant with a wider distribution nationally than *F. muralis* ssp. *boraei*), and the nationally scarce *F. bastardii* and *F. occidentalis*.

Other distinctive constants of this kind of vegetation are *Cerastium glomeratum* and *Juncus bufonius* with *Anagallis arvensis*, *Poa annua*, *Senecio vulgaris* and *Sonchus asper*. *P. trivialis* and *Coronopus didymus* are among the frequent associates but more striking is the common occurrence of *Chrysanthemum segetum* and the nationally rare or scarce *Ranunculus parviflorus*, *Briza minor* and *Silene gallica*. *Gladiolus byzantinus* is a common escape from the bulb crops among which this assemblage is often found.

Occasionals include *Veronica persica*, *Medicago arabica* and *Rumex acetosella* with the South African introduction *Oxalis pes-caprae* naturalised here, though with varying frequency in the different sub-communities, and another introduced sorrel *O. corniculata* occurring much more rarely.

### Sub-communities

***Aphanes microcarpa*-*Ranunculus muricatus* sub-community:** *Spergulo-Chrysanthemetum* (Br.-Bl. & de Leeuw 1936) R.Tx. 1937, *Briza minor* variant Silverside 1977 p.p. *Plantago lanceolata* and *Stellaria media* are more frequent here than elsewhere in the community but more distinctive preferentials are *Aphanes microcarpa* and the Mediterranean introduction *Ranunculus muricatus*. Also frequent are *Spergula arvensis*, *Cerastium fontanum*, *Myosotis discolor*, *Trifolium repens* and *Rumex crispus* with occasionals *Bellis perennis*, *Ranunculus repens*, *R. ficaria*, *Myosotis arvensis* and *Medicago polymorpha*.

***Valerianella locusta*-*Barbula convoluta* sub-community:** *Medicagi-Ranunculetum parviflori* Silverside 1977 p.p. *Veronica arvensis*, *Sagina procumbens*, *Agrostis stolonifera* and, among mosses of bare ground, *Bryum rubens* are all weakly preferential to this sub-community but among the vascular plants *Valerianella locusta*, *Urtica urens*, *Polycarpon tetraphyllum* and *Fumaria officinalis* are more striking, with *Barbula convoluta* and *Riccia sorocarpa* among the distinctive bryophytes. Other frequent plants are *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, *Rumex obtusifolius*, *Heracleum sphondylium* and *Chenopodium album* with *Fumaria bastardii*, *Allium babingtonii* and *Arum italicum* ssp. *neglectum* occasional.

***Vicia hirsuta*-*Papaver dubium* sub-community.** *Oxalis pes-caprae*, *Sonchus oleraceus* and *Galium aparine* are somewhat preferential in this kind of *Cerastium*-*Fumaria* vegetation but better distinguishing features are high frequencies of *Vicia hirsuta*, *Papaver dubium* and *Trifolium dubium* with *V. sativa* ssp. *nigra* and *Elymus repens* also common, *Erodium moschatum*, *Mercurialis annua*, *Anthriscus caucalis*, *Convolvulus arvensis* and *Ranunculus marginatus* var. *trachycarpus* occasional.

### Habitat

The *Cerastium-Fumaria* community is confined to fertile, light, non-calcareous soils in the extreme oceanic climate of the far south-west of Britain where bulb and vegetable cultivation provides the regular disturbance necessary for its development.

In some ways, this kind of weed vegetation can be seen as a replacement for the *Spergulo-Chrysanthemum* in the more equable and moist oceanic climate of the South-West Peninsula. It is similarly characteristic of more acidic sandy and loamy soils, sometimes even extending on to peats, that are more free-draining and relatively fertile, either inherently so or because of modest manuring. *C. segetum* itself remains very common here, while *S. arvensis* is somewhat more restricted but the particular assemblage of constants, with species like *Cerastium glomeratum*, *Anagallis arvensis* and *Fumaria muralis* ssp. *boraei* occurring along with *Juncus bufonius*, indicates a distinctive combination of a light texture with moistness that is often met on the cultivated soils of The Scillies and parts of Cornwall.

Other species in this community reflect the more distinctively oceanic character of the climate in this part of Britain. *Ranunculus parviflorus*, for example, is a native plant typical of damper habitats in regions of south-west Europe and the Mediterranean with a moister climate. Like *Medicago arabica* and *Erodium cicutarium*, less common but still distinctive here, it is a winter annual but frost-sensitive, so limited to areas with mild temperatures in the cold season. *Silene gallica* and the

introduced *Briza minor*, for which this vegetation provides their second major locus in Britain, are also restricted to more equable climates.

Bulb and vegetable cultivation provides the necessary disturbance that encourage seed germination and establishment of this assemblage.

### Zonation and succession

On the Scillies, the *Cerastium-Fumaria* community can be seen in close association with the *Briza-Silene* assemblage which tends to replace it on drier soils in bulb fields. More heavily fertilised areas may see a shift to the *Stellaria-Capsella* community. The annual cycle of bulb and cereal cultivation renews the conditions suitable for the community and effectively prevents any successional developments.

### Distribution

The community occurs only on The Scillies and in south-west Cornwall around Gulval, Trenance and Gweek (Silverside 1977).

### Affinities

The *Cerastium-Fumaria* community brings together the more oceanic samples which Silverside (1977) included in his *Spergulo-Chrysanthemum* as the *Briza minor* variant and what he defined as a new syntaxon, the *Medicagi-Ranunculetum*, characteristic of even more Atlantic conditions. The difference between these associations is preserved here at sub-community level.

## Floristic table OV6

	a	b	c	6
<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>	V (2–7)	V (2–5)	V (2–5)	V (2–7)
<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	V (2–5)	V (2–7)	V (1–3)	V (1–7)
<i>Fumaria muralis boraei</i>	IV (2–8)	V (2–7)	V (3–7)	V (2–8)
<i>Poa annua</i>	V (2–8)	V (2–7)	V (2–5)	V (2–8)
<i>Juncus bufonius</i>	IV (2–7)	V (2–5)	IV (2–5)	IV (2–7)
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	IV (2–7)	V (2–7)	IV (2–3)	IV (2–7)
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	IV (2–3)	V (2–3)	III (2–3)	IV (2–3)
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	IV (2–5)	II (1–4)	II (2–3)	III (1–5)
<i>Stellaria media</i>	IV (2–5)		II (2–3)	II (2–5)
<i>Aphanes microcarpa</i>	IV (2–7)		I (3)	II (2–7)
<i>Spergula arvensis</i>	III (2–8)	I (2)		II (2–8)
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	III (2–5)			II (2–5)
<i>Myosotis discolor</i>	III (2–5)	I (3)	I (1)	II (1–5)
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	III (2–3)	II (2–5)		II (2–5)
<i>Ranunculus muricatus</i>	III (2–8)			II (2–8)

<i>Rumex crispus</i>	III (1–2)	I (2)	I (2)	II (1–2)
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	II (2)		I (2)	I (2)
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	II (1–8)	I (1–3)		I (1–8)
<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	II (2–3)			I (2–3)
<i>Medicago polymorpha</i>	II (2–5)		I (3)	I (2–5)
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	II (2–3)	I (3)		I (2–3)
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	III (1–4)	IV (2–5)	I (3)	III (1–5)
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	II (2–3)	IV (2–3)	III (2–3)	III (2–3)
<i>Bryum rubens</i>	I (1–6)	IV (1–3)	III (2–5)	III (1–6)
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	I (1–5)	IV (2–8)	III (2–7)	III (1–8)
<i>Barbula convoluta</i>		IV (2–3)	I (2)	III (2–3)
<i>Valerianella locusta</i>	I (2–5)	IV (2–5)	I (2–5)	III (2–5)
<i>Urtica urens</i>		IV (2–3)	I (2)	II (2–3)
<i>Polycarpon tetraphyllum</i>	I (5)	IV (2–5)	I (2)	II (2–5)
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	I (2–3)	III (2)	II (2–3)	II (2–3)
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	II (2–3)	III (2–5)	I (1)	II (1–5)
<i>Riccia sorocarpa</i>	I (2)	III (1–2)	II (2–3)	II (1–3)
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	I (3)	III (2–5)	II (2)	II (2–5)
<i>Dicranella staphylina</i>	I (1–2)	III (2–3)	I (2)	II (1–3)
<i>Pottia truncata</i>	I (1)	III (1–2)	I (2)	II (1–2)
<i>Phascum cuspidatum</i>	I (2)	III (2–3)	I (2)	II (2–3)
<i>Fumaria officinalis</i>		III (2–7)		II (2–7)
<i>Eurhynchium praelongum</i>	I (2–3)	II (2)	I (3)	II (2–3)
<i>Fumaria bastardii</i>	I (3)	II (2–5)	I (2–3)	I (2–5)
<i>Pleuroidium subulatum</i>	I (2–3)	II (1–2)	I (1–2)	I (1–3)
<i>Veronica hederifolia</i>	I (2)	II (2–3)	I (2)	I (2–3)
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	I (3)	II (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Allium babingtonii</i>	I (3)	II (2)		I (2–3)
<i>Aphanes arvensis</i>	I (2–3)	II (2)		I (2–3)
<i>Ceratodon purpureus</i>	I (1–3)	II (1–3)	I (2–3)	I (1–3)
<i>Viola arvensis</i>		II (2–5)	I (2)	I (2–5)
<i>Arum italicum neglectum</i>		II (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Galium aparine</i>	II (1–4)	III (2–3)	IV (2–3)	III (1–4)
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	II (1–5)	III (1–2)	IV (2)	III (1–5)
<i>Oxalis pes-caprae</i>	II (1–8)	III (2–7)	V (2–10)	III (1–10)
<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>	I (3)		V (2–7)	II (2–7)
<i>Papaver dubium</i>	I (2)	I (3)	IV (2–3)	II (2–3)
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	I (1–4)		IV (2–5)	II (1–5)
<i>Elymus repens</i>	I (5)		III (3–7)	II (3–7)
<i>Vicia sativa nigra</i>		II (2)	III (2–3)	II (2–3)
<i>Erodium moschatum</i>	I (2–3)	I (3)	II (2–3)	I (2–3)
<i>Mercurialis annua</i>		I (2)	II (1–2)	I (1–2)
<i>Anthriscus caucalis</i>			II (2)	I (2)
<i>Fumaria occidentalis</i>	I (7)		II (5–10)	I (5–10)
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>			II (2)	I (2)
<i>Ranunculus marginatus trachycarpus</i>			I (5)	I (5)
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	III (2–8)	III (2–5)	III (2–5)	III (2–8)
<i>Chrysanthemum segetum</i>	III (1–10)	III (2–3)	III (2–7)	III (1–10)
<i>Briza minor</i>	III (1–4)	II (2–3)	III (2–3)	III (1–4)

Floristic table OV6 (cont.)

	a	b	c	6
<i>Ranunculus parviflorus</i>	III (2–7)	III (2–3)	II (2–3)	III (2–7)
<i>Gladiolus byzantinus</i>	II (1–2)	III (2–5)	III (2–4)	III (1–5)
<i>Coronopus didymus</i>	III (2–5)	II (2–5)	II (2–3)	III (2–5)
<i>Silene gallica</i>	III (2–7)	II (2)	III (2–7)	III (2–7)
<i>Veronica persica</i>	II (1–5)	III (2–5)	II (3)	II (1–5)
<i>Medicago arabica</i>		III (2–8)	III (2–3)	II (2–8)
<i>Montia perfoliata</i>	II (2–5)	I (3)	II (3)	II (2–5)
<i>Rumex acetosella</i>	II (3–7)		II (2–5)	I (2–7)
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	I (2–8)	I (3)	I (2–3)	I (2–8)
<i>Allium triquetrum</i>	I (2)	I (3)	I (2)	I (2–3)
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	I (2)	I (2)	I (2)	I (2)
<i>Bryum bicolor</i>	I (1)	I (3)	I (2)	I (1–3)
<i>Bromus diandrus</i>	I (2)	I (1–2)	I (2–3)	I (1–3)
<i>Sherardia arvensis</i>	I (2)	I (2)	I (3)	I (2–3)
<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	I (2–3)	I (2)		I (2–3)
<i>Oxalis corniculata</i>	I (5)	I (2)		I (2–5)
<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	I (2)	I (2)		I (2)
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	I (2–5)	I (2)		I (2–5)
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	I (2–5)	I (2)		I (2–5)
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	I (1)	I (3)		I (1–3)
<i>Phalaris minor</i>	I (2–3)		I (2–5)	I (2–5)
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	I (2)		I (2)	I (2)
<i>Thlaspi arvensis</i>		I (2)	I (2)	I (2)
<i>Atriplex prostrata</i>		I (2)	I (2)	I (2)
<i>Allium roseum bulbiferum</i>		I (2)	I (3)	I (2–3)
<i>Ditrichum cylindricum</i>		I (2)	I (2)	I (2)
Number of samples	24	27	11	62
Number of species/sample	28 (18–41)	29 (20–37)	29 (12–39)	29 (12–41)

a *Aphanes microcarpa*-*Ranunculus muricatus* sub-communityb *Valerianella locusta*-*Barbula convoluta* sub-communityc *Vicia hirsuta*-*Papaver dubium* sub-community6 *Cerastium glomeratum*-*Fumaria muralis* ssp. *boraiei* community (total)