

*Poa annua*-*Taraxacum officinale* community**Constant species**

*Poa annua*, *Taraxacum officinale* agg.

**Physiognomy**

The *Poa annua*-*Taraxacum officinale* agg. community comprises more or less open coarse weedy vegetation in which *Poa annua* and various dandelions are the sole constants. *Plantago major* is frequent throughout and *Senecio vulgaris*, *Chamomilla suaveolens*, *Lolium perenne* and *Stellaria media* are common in various of the sub-communities but otherwise only *Sagina procumbens* and *Bromus sterilis* are more than scarce.

**Sub-communities**

***Senecio vulgaris* sub-community.** Apart from the two community constants and *Plantago major*, only *Senecio vulgaris* and *S. squalidus* are frequent here with *Cerastium fontanum*, *Matricaria maritima*, *Holcus lanatus* and *Veronica arvensis* occasional.

***Cirsium vulgare*-*C. arvense* sub-community.** *L. perenne* and *C. suaveolens* join *Poa annua* and *Taraxacum officinale* agg. as constants in this sub-community and *Stellaria media* and *Trifolium repens* are common but more distinctive is the high frequency of the coarse tall herbs *Cirsium vulgare*, *C. arvense*, *Rumex obtusifolius*, *R. crispus* and *Chenopodium album*.

***Crepis vesicaria*-*Epilobium adenocaulon* sub-community.** *C. suaveolens* and *P. major* remain as frequent associates here but more distinctively preferential are *Crepis vesicaria* and *Epilobium adenocaulon* with *Sonchus oleraceus*, *Poa trivialis*, *Trifolium dubium*, *Cardamine hirsuta*, *Coronopus didymus* and *Capsella bursa-pastoris* occasional.

**Habitat**

The *Poa*-*Taraxacum* community occurs on disturbed, but only lightly trampled, loamy soils along tracksides, pathways, wall-bottoms, pavement edges and road verges, in gardens, farm fields and on waste ground.

Periodic disturbance without too much treading is the

typical feature of the habitat here. Such conditions can be found along verge edges where the *Senecio* sub-community is often found or on recently turned and neglected garden soil, ploughed-up grassland, waste ground, and churned up tracks where the *Cirsium* sub-community commonly occurs. This kind of *Poa*-*Taraxacum* vegetation is also frequently seen in leys and resown pastures where seeding has been poor or subsequent grazing management injudicious.

The *Crepis*-*Epilobium* sub-community is especially frequent in southern Britain where the two most characteristic preferentials began their spread from late last century – *C. vesicaria* is a south-west European introduction, *E. adenocaulon* is from North America – but it can be found widely further north, especially on waste ground and in the distinctive habitat of wall-bottoms and pavement edges.

**Zonation and succession**

Where the *Poa*-*Taraxacum* community occurs in poorly-seeded and badly-managed leys and pastures as the *Cirsium* sub-community, it typically passes to some kind of Lolio-Plantaginion grassland where the sward is more intact or, around trampled areas, to the *Polygonum*-*Chamomilla* or *Poa*-*Plantago* communities. On verges, too, away from the edge, the *Poa*-*Taraxacum* assemblage is replaced by Lolio-Plantaginion grasslands or, where management is not so assiduous, by the *Lolium*-*Dactylis* community. On waste ground, patches of *Urtica*-*Cirsium* vegetation are a common feature of these patterns.

**Distribution**

The community occurs very widely throughout the country.

**Affinities**

Vegetation of this kind, though extremely widespread and common, has rarely attracted much attention and has sometimes been subsumed in other Lolio-Plantaginion assemblages. Hutchinson & Seymour (1982), in their study of *Poa annua*, noted this sort of community and Oberdorfer (1983) recognised a similar *Poa annua*-Gesellschaft.

Floristic table OV22

	a	b	c	22
<i>Poa annua</i>	V (1–7)	IV (2–9)	V (2–6)	V (1–9)
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	IV (1–4)	IV (1–3)	IV (2–7)	IV (1–7)
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	IV (1–7)	III (1–4)	I (1–2)	III (1–7)
<i>Senecio squalidus</i>	III (1–4)	I (1–4)	II (1–4)	II (1–4)
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	II (2–3)	I (3)		II (2–3)
<i>Matricaria maritima</i>	II (2–5)	I (1–3)	I (1–4)	II (1–5)
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	II (1–3)	I (2)	I (2)	I (1–3)
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	II (1–5)	I (2)	I (5)	I (1–5)
<i>Reseda lutea</i>	I (3–7)			I (3–7)
<i>Silene alba</i>	I (3–8)			I (3–8)
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	I (1–2)	V (1–3)	II (1–3)	III (1–3)
<i>Chamomilla suaveolens</i>	II (2–3)	IV (1–4)	III (2–4)	III (1–4)
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	II (2)	IV (2–7)	II (2–4)	III (2–7)
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	I (1–2)	IV (1–6)	I (1–2)	II (1–6)
<i>Stellaria media</i>	II (1–3)	III (1–7)	II (1–3)	II (1–7)
<i>Trifolium repens</i>		III (2–6)	II (1–8)	II (1–8)
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	I (2–4)	III (1–5)	II (1–3)	II (1–5)
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	I (1–2)	II (1–2)	I (1)	I (1–2)
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	I (1–3)	II (1–7)		I (1–7)
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>		II (2–5)		I (2–5)
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>		II (1–4)		I (1–4)
<i>Spergula arvensis</i>		I (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Lolium multiflorum</i>		I (2–5)		I (2–5)
<i>Conium maculatum</i>		I (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Elymus repens</i>		I (3–7)		I (3–7)
<i>Crepis vesicaria</i>	I (4)	II (1–4)	IV (2–6)	III (1–6)
<i>Epilobium adenocaulon</i>	I (2)	I (2–3)	IV (1–5)	II (1–5)
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	II (1–2)	I (2)	III (1–3)	II (1–3)
<i>Poa trivialis</i>	I (3)	I (2–3)	II (2–5)	II (2–5)
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>		I (2)	II (1–7)	I (1–7)
<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>			II (1–3)	I (1–3)
<i>Coronopus didymus</i>		I (2–3)	II (2–6)	I (2–6)
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	I (1–3)	I (3)	II (1–7)	I (1–7)
<i>Linaria purpurea</i>			I (2)	I (2)
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>			I (1–4)	I (1–4)
<i>Parietaria diffusa</i>			I (2–7)	I (2–7)
<i>Cheiranthus cheiri</i>			I (1–3)	I (1–3)
<i>Plantago major</i>	III (2–4)	III (1–5)	III (1–5)	III (1–5)
<i>Sagina procumbens</i>	II (1–3)		II (2–3)	II (1–3)
<i>Bromus sterilis</i>	I (3)	II (2–6)	II (1–5)	II (1–6)
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	I (3)	I (1–4)	I (2)	I (1–4)
<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	I (3)	I (2–3)	I (4)	I (2–4)
<i>Polygonum arenastrum</i>	I (2)	I (7)	I (2–3)	I (2–7)
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	I (4)	I (4)	I (2)	I (2–4)
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	I (3)	I (1–4)	I (3)	I (1–4)
<i>Malva sylvestris</i>	I (3)	I (2)	I (2–4)	I (2–4)

**Floristic table OV22 (cont.)**

	a	b	c	22
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	I (3)	I (2–3)	I (3)	I (2–3)
<i>Lactuca serriola</i>	I (2–3)	I (3)	I (1–2)	I (1–3)
<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>	I (2)	I (2–4)		I (2–4)
<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	I (2)	I (2)		I (2)
<i>Bryum argenteum</i>	I (2)	I (2)		I (2)
<i>Funaria hygrometrica</i>	I (2)	I (5)		I (2–5)
<i>Atriplex prostrata</i>	I (2)	I (3)		I (2–3)
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	I (2)	I (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Atriplex patula</i>	I (1)	I (2–4)		I (1–4)
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	I (2)	I (3–4)		I (2–4)
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	I (2)	I (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	I (2)	I (2–3)		I (2–3)
<i>Polygonum persicaria</i>	I (1)	I (2–3)		I (1–3)
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	I (2)	I (1–3)		I (1–3)
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	I (1–6)	I (3)		I (1–6)
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>		I (2)	I (2–3)	I (2–3)
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>		I (3)	I (2–6)	I (2–6)
<i>Hordeum murinum</i>		I (2–3)	I (2–5)	I (2–5)
<i>Bromus hordeaceus hordeaceus</i>		I (2–5)	I (1–5)	I (1–5)
<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i>		I (2–3)	I (3–4)	I (2–4)
<i>Cerastium glomeratum</i>		I (3)	I (2–3)	I (2–3)
Number of samples	12	15	18	45
Number of species/sample	14 (9–23)	19 (7–42)	12 (6–23)	14 (6–42)

a *Senecio vulgaris* sub-communityb *Cirsium vulgare*-*Cirsium arvense* sub-communityc *Crepis vesicaria*-*Epilobium adenocaulon* sub-community22 *Poa annua*-*Taraxacum officinale* community (total)