

Thurso SERIES

A. SOIL MAP UNIT DESCRIPTION

SOIL CLASSIFICATION

SCOT: Noncalcareous
gleys
SSEW: Cambic
stagnogley soils

SOIL ASSOCIATION

THURSO

PARENT MATERIAL

Till of sandy clay loam
texture derived from
sandstones and flagstones
of Middle Old Red
Sandstone age (Caithness
Flagstones in Caithness,
Rousay Flags and
Stromness Flags in
Orkney.

DRAINAGE CLASS

Poor

PERMEABILITY CLASS

Slow or moderate

REFERENCES

soil maps —
1:63 360 sheets
109/115 (Achentoul/Reay
110/116 (Latheron/Wick)

1:50 000
Orkney-Hoy
Orkney-Mainland
Orkney-Northern Isles

memoirs —
Soils round Wick

Compiled by W. Towers
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SMUDS 4

LOCATION AND EXTENT

Northern Caithness (290 sq km); Orkney (84 sq km).
Total 374 sq km.

LANDFORM

Gently undulating plain; level and gentle slopes.

VEGETATION

Arable; permanent pastures; soft rush pasture; heath
rush-fescue grassland; sedge mires.

CLIMATE

	Caithness	Orkney
<i>av. ann. rainfall, mm</i>	800-1000	900-1100
<i>accum. temperature (day °C above 0°C Jan-Jun)</i>	1060-1230	no data
<i>maximum PSMD, mm</i>	110	70
<i>growing season, days</i>	215	no data
<i>field capacity</i>	mid-Oct to early Mar	no data

SOIL DESCRIPTION

topsoil

subsoil

colour

dark greyish brown

greyish brown,
locally brown, with
ochreous mottling

texture

sandy silt loam

sandy clay loam; in
places sandy loam
or sandy silt loam

structure

moderate medium
subangular blocky

moderate coarse
prismatic, less
commonly angular
blocky; massive at
depth

stone content

very slightly or
slightly stony

slightly or
moderately stony

potential rooting depth

generally 25-30 cm; roots penetrate the
subsoil, but with a much lower frequency

COMMENT

Compact, moderately fine-textured,
coarse-structured subsoils restrict rooting
depth and water movement. Bedrock is
generally present at depths of about 1 m.

SOIL CHEMISTRY

Percentage base saturation is high in the subsoil, with pH
values in the range 5.5-7. Amounts of total phosphorus are
low or moderate. Often high molybdenum contents.

MAP UNIT VARIATION

Small patches of Bilbster Series (freely and imperfectly
drained) and Hunster Series (very poorly drained) can
occur.