



NPWS

An tSeirbhís Páirceanna
Náisiúnta agus Fiadhúla
National Parks and Wildlife
Service

**Derogation Number
DER-BAT-2026-36
(Survey Derogation)**

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (BIRDS AND NATURAL HABITATS) REGULATIONS, 2011
(S.I. No 477 of 2011)**

DEROGATION

Granted under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, hereinafter referred to as “the Habitats Regulations”.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage, in exercise of the powers conferred on him by Regulation 54 of the Habitats Regulations hereby grants to **Samantha Ball** of **Marine and Freshwater Research Centre, Atlantic Technological University Galway, County Galway, H91 T8NW** a derogation. It is stated that this derogation is issued:

:

- A. For the purpose of research and education, of re-populating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including artificial propagation of plants
- B. As there is no satisfactory alternative, and the action authorised by this derogation will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of **bats** referred to below at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

This derogation authorises the following:

1. Roost disturbance
2. Actions authorised within the derogation

The derogation is issued in respect of **all bat species**



Terms and Conditions

1. This derogation is granted solely to allow the examination of potential bat roosts, including **all bat species and all roost types**, as necessary in order to undertake environmental impact assessments for property owners or developers or scientific study within the Republic of Ireland.
2. All activities authorised by this derogation, and all equipment used in connection herewith, shall be carried out, constructed and maintained (as the case may be) so as to avoid unnecessary injury or distress to any species of **BAT**.
3. This derogation may be modified or revoked, for stated reasons, at any time.
4. The actions which this derogation authorises shall be completed between the **1st April – 31st October 2026, inclusive**.
5. All mist netting, harp trapping, hand netting and removal from bat boxes and subsequent handling of bats will be overseen by an experienced and fully licenced bat ecologist.
6. Bats captured will only be sampled if they are ***Pipistrellus nathusii* >6g in weight or *Nyctalus leisleri* >12g in weight**. All other specimens will be released immediately.
7. Pregnant or lactating bats of any species will be released immediately.
8. The **Bat Roost Survey Protocol** as set out below must be adhered to, in order to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats.
9. This derogation shall be produced for inspection on a request being made on that behalf by a member of An Garda Síochána or any authorised NPWS officer appointed under Regulation 4 of the Habitats Regulations.
10. On completion of the actions which this derogation authorises, all recordings of bat species affected will be made using the standardised data form provided below and must be submitted to the NPWS **within four weeks of the expiry date of this derogation**. Included with the below returns form, a report will also be submitted to wildlife.reports@npws.gov.ie detailing results of works and success of mitigation. **Both documents must be submitted to constitute a derogation return.**



Bat Roost Survey Protocol to ensure minimisation of disturbance to bats

1. For unknown roosts

- a) Check with owner/client re presence of bats.
- b) Check with Bat Conservation Ireland to determine roost records.
- c) Survey for external signs of bats and roost entry points. If positive signs, then treat as known /suspected roost.
- d) Entry to possible roost should be made cautiously especially if survey is carried out in the winter period when signs of bats may be difficult to find. Should signs of bats be noted then treat as a known/suspected roost.

2. For known/suspected roosts

- a) Generic measures to include:
 - i. Avoid using roost illumination apart from torches.
 - ii. Talking in low tone is preferred to whispering.
 - iii. Bats seen in situ should be counted where possible and then left alone.
 - iv. Handling of bats to confirm identification is only used as a last resort and is subject to separate licencing under the Wildlife Acts (S.23).
 - v. Samples of droppings, dead bats etc. may be removed to facilitate species identification.
 - vi. Care to be taken to avoid cooling or warming effects as described below.
- b) During potential hibernation season (November-March), only one person should enter roost area. If any hibernating bats are seen to be showing signs of waking, then the roost survey will be abandoned immediately.
- c) During the breeding season, known breeding roosts should be avoided unless emergency work is required. This will usually be the subject of a separate derogation.



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For the Minister for Housing, Local Government & Heritage

(an officer authorised by the Minister to sign on his behalf)

13 January 2026

Any query in relation to this derogation should be sent to reg54derogations@npws.gov.ie





Derogation Assessment

Name of Applicant: Samantha Ball

Location/Name of Project: Country-wide survey

Tick the following prohibition as chosen on the application:

(a) Deliberately capture or kill any specimen of the relevant species in the wild	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(b) Deliberately disturb these species particularly during the period of breeding, rearing, hibernation and migration	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Deliberately take or destroy eggs of the relevant species in the wild	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal, or	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Keep, transport, sell, exchange, offer for sale or offer for exchange any specimen of the relevant species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 12(2) of the Habitats Directive.	<input type="checkbox"/>
(a) Deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy any specimen of these species in the wild, or	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Keep, transport, sell, exchange, offer for sale or offer for exchange any specimen of these species taken in the wild, other than those taken legally as referred to in Article 13(1)(b) of the Habitats Directive.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Test 1: A reason(s) listed in Regulation 54 (a)-(e) applies to the proposed activity

i. Tick which reason the applicant claims should be applied to the derogation

(a) In the interests of protecting wild flora and fauna and conserving natural habitats,	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) To prevent serious damage, in particular to crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water and other types of property	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) In the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment,	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) For the purpose of research and education, of re-populating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including artificial propagation of plants, or	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(e) To allow, under strictly supervised conditions, on a selective basis and to a limited extent, the taking or keeping of certain specimens of the species to the extent specified therein, which are referred to in the First Schedule.	<input type="checkbox"/>



ii. Test 1: Conclusion

Please tick the following where it applies:

There is a valid reason(s) listed in Regulation 54 (a)-(e) which applies to the proposed activity:	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion:

The application form and associated documentation provided by the applicant has been reviewed in full. The application relies on regulation 54(2)(d) *‘for the purpose of research and education, of re-populating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including artificial propagation of plants’* as the reason chosen for a derogation that they believe applies to the proposed activity.

In the detail provided, it is clear that the applicants are relying on the purposes of research and education aspect of Reason D. As outlined in the accompanying report, a derogation is required to take biological samples from extant, wild Irish bat populations

The objective of this activity is to identify whether offshore windfarms are a potential threat to migratory bat species in Ireland. This information is needed to “inform the design of offshore wind farms” and “supports research into the potential migration of Irish bat species in relation to offshore wind farm activity”. The report further outlines that the results “will be disseminated through scientific publications in peer reviewed journals and a report for the NPWS and Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).”

The applicants have provided evidence as to the nature and scale of the research and education activity, which is necessary to achieve these overall objectives. Based on the above this application has passed Test 1 and can now proceed to Test 2.



Test 2: Absence of a satisfactory alternative

Please tick the following where it applies and add a comment below to support the recommendation:

The applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that alternative solutions have been considered and have given reasons why the proposed approach is the only satisfactory alternative:	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion (If you wish to add additional conditions please complete pg. 6):

The applicant has demonstrated the need for the samples to be taken to fill in critical gaps in our understanding of bat migration. She has examined various alternative solutions, including “Opportunistic sampling from cadavers” and the “Use of non-invasively collected faecal material” and explained why these are not currently feasible. The proposed approach is the only satisfactory option

Upon completion of your assessment, please return this Recommendation to WLU to continue the application process.



Test 3: Impact of a derogation on conservation status of the species

Please tick the following where it applies and add a comment below to support the recommendation:

The derogation would NOT be detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species in question at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please outline your analysis below and state how the applicant has provided evidence to support your conclusion. (If you wish to add additional conditions please complete pg. 6)

The proposed study has been commissioned by NPWS in collaboration with SEAI. The research is needed to fill a critical gap in our understanding of the migratory habits of two of our bat species. Two species which are deemed to be at particular risk of collision with off-shore windfarms.

The techniques been used (wing biopsies and hair samples) have been widely and successfully used across Europe. The planned handling and sampling of the bats can be done with minimum stress and disturbance providing experienced bat ecologists are involved and supervising the applicant at all times.

The two species in question – Nathusius pipistrelle and Leisler’s bat - are both in favourable conservation status in Ireland. A sampling regime has been designed to minimize the impact on any particular roost and providing the conditions included below are incorporated into the licence I am satisfied that there should be no significant negative impact on the conservation status of the species involved

If the answer above is Yes then the derogation may be granted, providing Tests 1 and 2 have also been met.

Upon completion of your assessment, please return this Recommendation to WLU to continue the application process.



Derogation decision

The application for a derogation under Regulation 54 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 (S.I. 477 of 2011), as amended, has been assessed by officials in the Department and the following decision has been made:

Tick box where appropriate:

There is no satisfactory alternative

and the derogation is not detrimental to the maintenance of the populations of the species to which the Habitats Directive relates at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

Therefore, a derogation may be granted to the applicant, since it is—

(a) in the interests of protecting wild fauna and flora and conserving natural habitats

(b) to prevent serious damage, in particular to crops, livestock, forests, fisheries and water and other types of property,

(c) in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment,

(d) for the purpose of research and education, of repopulating and re-introducing these species and for the breeding operations necessary for these purposes, including the artificial propagation of plants, or

(e) to allow, under strictly supervised conditions, on a selective basis and to a limited extent, the taking or keeping of certain specimens of the species to the extent specified therein, which are referred to in the First Schedule.

OR This application has been refused as one or more of the conditions set out above have not been met



The following conditions should be attached to the derogation:

1. All mist netting, harp trapping, hand netting and removal from bat boxes and subsequent handling of bats will be overseen by an experienced and fully licenced bat ecologist.
2. Bats captured will only be sampled if they are *Pipistrellus nathusii* >6g in weight or *Nyctalus leisleri* >12g in weight. All other specimens will be released immediately.
3. Pregnant or lactating bats of any species will be released immediately.

[add additional conditions where required] |

Signed: .

Date: January 13, 2026

Position: Ecologist