



Site Name: Pouladatig Cave SAC

Site Code: 000037

Pouladatig cave is a natural limestone cave situated near Inch bridge, west of Ennis, Co. Clare. It is used as a hibernating site for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat.

The site is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) selected for the following habitats and/or species listed on Annex I / II of the E.U. Habitats Directive (* = priority; numbers in brackets are Natura 2000 codes):

[8310] Caves [1303] Lesser Horseshoe Bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>)

The site comprises a relatively short, active stream cave with some rock falls and small chambers. The cave entrance is small and is sheltered by Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) trees. After the entrance there is a low bedding crawl but the cave then opens out into roomier passageways. Cave habitats include flowing water, mud banks, boulders, rock roof and walls.

The bats hang from the roof and along the walls of the main passageway. The surrounding scrub vegetation and hedgerows are included in the site as they provide suitable foraging habitat areas and shelter for the bats.

Lesser Horseshoe Bats have been using this cave for many years and approximately 100 bats have been recorded at this site each winter since 1986. The site is therefore of international importance.

Although there is an active stream in the cave, this does not pose any threat of flooding to the bats. This site is not subject to visitor disturbance and is considered to be a safe hibernating site for the Lesser Horseshoe Bat.