



Site Name: Poulmagordon Cave (Quin) SAC

Site Code: 000064

This site is a natural limestone cave situated in a field south of Quin, Co. Clare. The cave is used as a hibernation site by 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 (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*)

The cave consists of a large entrance which leads into a wide chamber from which there are three passages. The cave is a fine example of a phreatic rift maze formed by solution along the joints by very slow moving water. There are large numbers of fossil corals which have been left outstanding while the limestone around them has been removed. Cave habitats include slow moving water, thick mud, boulders, pools of water, rock walls and roof. Bats have been found in all three passages although most of the bats seem to prefer to roost in the most sheltered passage to the left of the entrance.

The entrance to the cave is sheltered with Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) trees and the surrounding vegetation is scrub and hedgerows which provides suitable foraging habitat and shelter for the bats.

This cave is well known and frequently visited by locals. Such visits could cause disturbance to the bats. The site would benefit from grilling. Some dumping of rubbish at the entrance has occurred in the past.

The number of Lesser Horseshoe Bats hibernating here varies from over 50 to less than 20. As over 50 have been recorded, the site is of international importance. This site is also important as it is at the eastern limit of the species' distribution in Ireland. The site is a fine example of a natural cave, a habitat listed on Annex I of the E.U. Habitats Directive.