

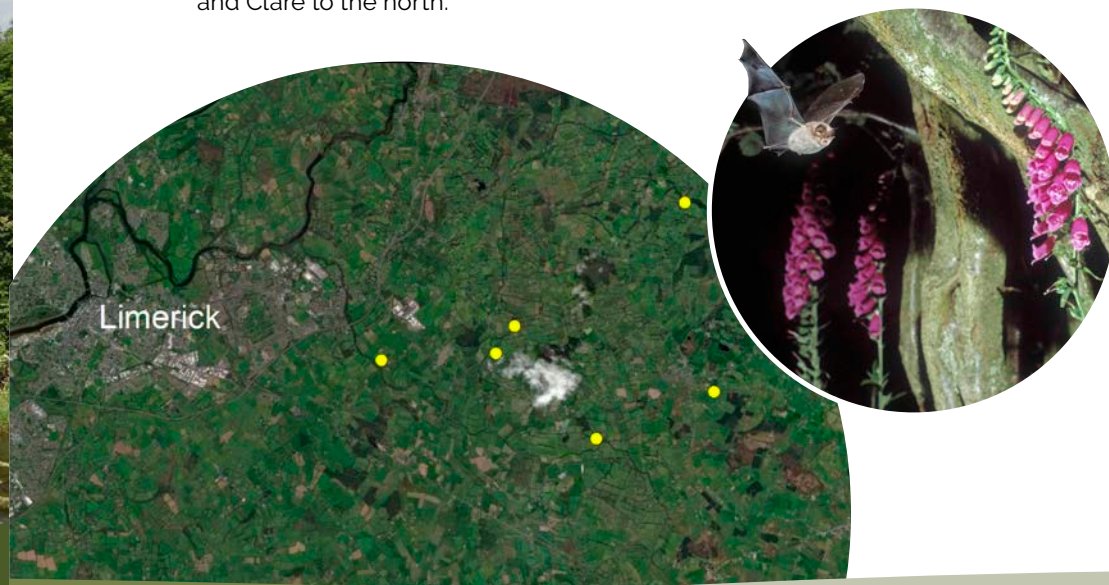
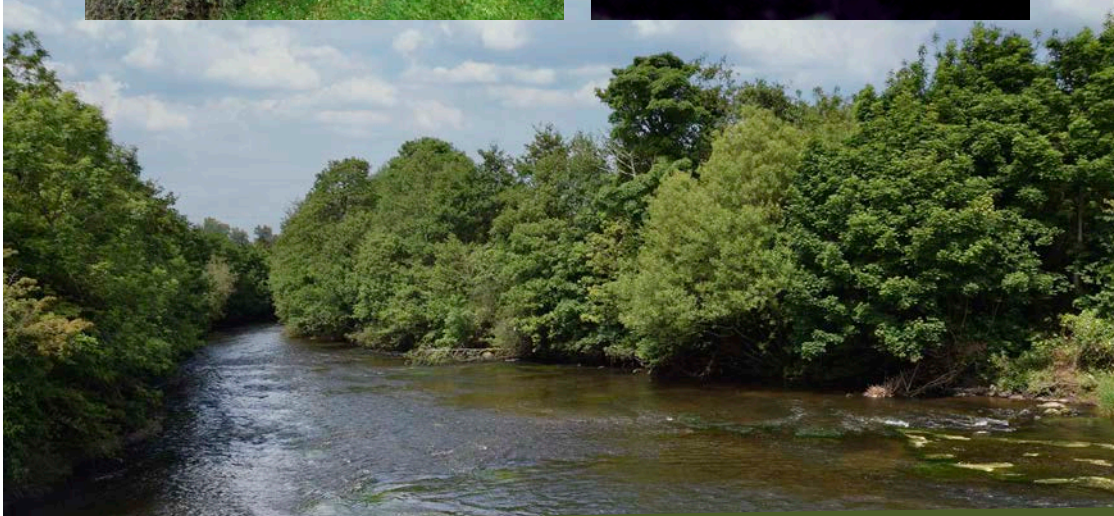
Mulkear Lesser Horseshoe Bat Conservation Project



The Mulkear Lesser Horseshoe Bat Conservation Project is a European Innovation Partnership Project co-funded by Ireland and the European Union under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020.



The aim of the project is to assist farmers in east Limerick to provide new and permanent roosts (bat houses) for the lesser horseshoe bat in the Mulkear River Catchment. Research shows that vegetated rivers, like the Mulkear River, are safe corridors for horseshoe bats to fly along. County Limerick has a small population of horseshoe bats, primarily due to a lack of suitable roosts, so it is hoped that the new bat houses (represented as yellow circles below) will provide the species with more secure roosting spaces. Limerick's lesser horseshoe bats are critical links to the significant horseshoe bat populations in Kerry to the south and Clare to the north.



Ireland's European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas



An Roinn Talmhaíochta, Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Important features of a bat house

Natural slate roof

To maximise solar gain

Adjacent hedgerow

Suitable feature for bats to fly along

Bat box fitted to the outside

Bat box suitable for the other eight bat species

A bat opening

Opening needs to be at least 460mm x 225mm'

Predator tilt tray at a bat opening

Roof felt

Slates lined with rough bitumastic felt for bats to hang from

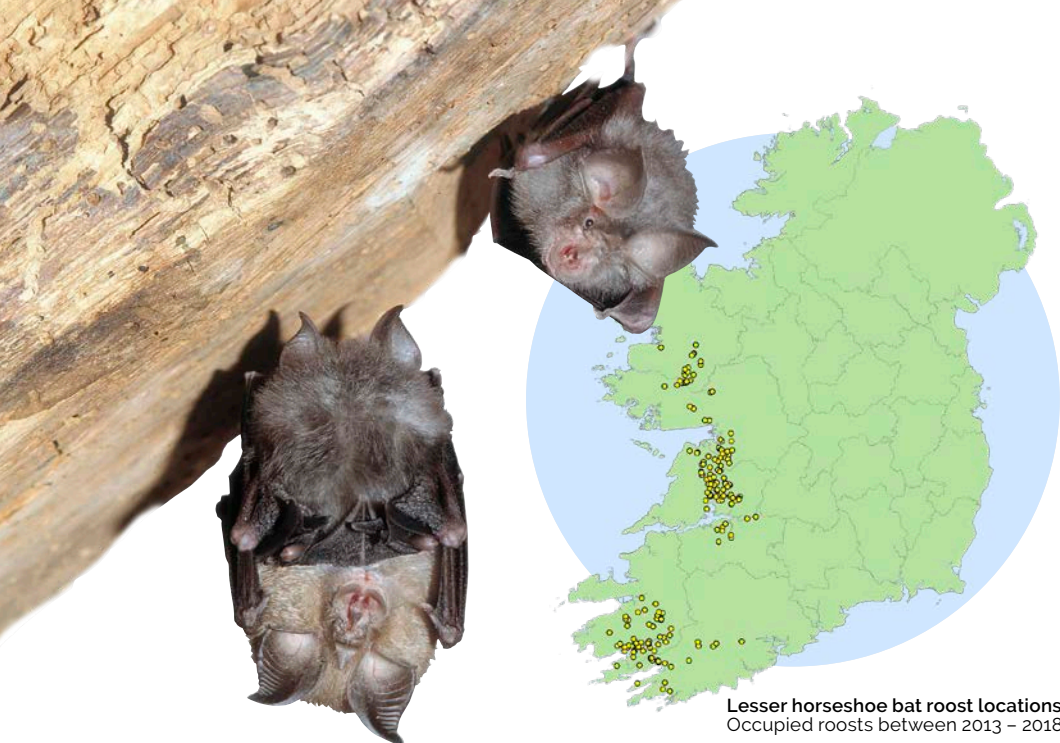
Loft floor showing hatch

Opening into dark and warm roof space

Bee brick in situ

Additional biodiversity feature





Lesser horseshoe bat facts

- Weighs the same as a €2 coin
- Only 13,000 horseshoe bats in six western counties
- Distinctive horseshoe-shaped flap of skin around its nostrils
- Roosts in unoccupied buildings in rural areas in summer
- Flies directly into its roosts and always hangs upside down
- Gives birth to one young once a year
- Hibernates in underground sites in winter
- Prefers to feed in deciduous broadleaf woodland
- Avoids flying in open and urban areas
- Flies close to hedgerows and stone walls to avoid predators
- Is extremely sensitive to artificial lighting

Irish farms and the lesser horseshoe bat – more practical steps

The Mulkear Lesser Horseshoe Bat Conservation Project is an important initiative working with farmers to conserve this species. Below are actions that other farmers can take on their farms that would benefit it and the other eight bat species. In return, Irish bats will consume millions of insects each year, including midges and mosquitoes.

- Allow some hedgerows to grow wide and tall
- Infill gaps of more than 5m in hedges and stone walls
- Reduce the use of pesticide and herbicide sprays
- Provide openings (460mm x 225mm) into old buildings
- Keep out predators from buildings used by bats
- Direct security lights away from buildings used by bats
- Fit timber sheeting to the underside of rafters in open roof spaces to create a warm area for the bats

Further information:

www.mulkeareip.com/horseshoe-bat-project

www.vincentwildlife.ie

www.batconservationireland.org

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