

**CYNGOR CEFN GWLAD CYMRU
COUNTRYSIDE COUNCIL FOR WALES**

SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST CITATION

POWYS

WEST LLANGYNOG SLATE MINE

<u>Date of Notification:</u>	1993
<u>National Grid Reference:</u>	SJ 048258
<u>O.S. Maps:</u>	1:50,000 Sheet number: 125 1:25,000 Sheet number: SJ 02
<u>Site Area:</u>	6.4 ha

Description:

This disused slate mine is an important overwintering roost for a mixed assemblage of bat species. During the last four years six different species have been recorded from the site, the most notable being the lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. At least 70 individuals of this species have been recorded at one time. This site is one of a number of old mines in the Upper Tanat Valley which together form one of the most important bat hibernaculum areas known in Wales.

The site consists of a disused mine cut into slate of Ordovician age, situated just south-west of Llangynog, near the confluence of the Rivers Tanat and Eirth in the upper reaches of the Tanat Valley. Opened in the late 18th century for the production of slate it achieved a peak output in the 1830s. After a brief period of inactivity the mine was reopened in 1904, producing slate sporadically until finally closing in the early 1940s. The mine consists of four large chambers interconnected by adits and shafts, in all extending to over 250 metres in length. Access is gained by a former ventilation adit, since the main entrance to the mine is now blocked by a roof-fall.

Horseshoe bats have been known to hibernate in this mine for over 30 years. Studies carried out from 1987 have established that lesser horseshoe bats are the principal species using the site. They have shown a steady increase in numbers throughout this period. A population in excess of 70 individuals now overwinters on the ceilings and walls of the main chambers and adits. The mine is also regularly used by Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*. Other species recorded sporadically include brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* and greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumeguinum*.

The land overlying the mine supports, in places, mixed coniferous/broadleaved woodland, grazed bracken/acidic grassland and agriculturally improved grassland. This

diverse vegetation is likely to provide a notable supply of invertebrate species, some of which will be utilised by the bats in the pre and post-hibernation period.

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