

Garvagh Lough, Shannon Pot and Whitefathers Cave

Information Sheet



Location: GARVAGH LOUGH, SHANNON POT AND WHITEFATHERS CAVE
Conservation designations: N/A
Grid reference: H 07376 33292 (Garvagh Lough), H 05118 32010 (Shannon Pot), H 05120 37557 (Whitefathers Cave)
Parking available: Yes
Personnel to be contacted prior to visit: None

Useful equipment:

- Camera
- Metre stick
- Hand lens

Relevance to national curriculum:

- Junior Cert Geography (The Earth's Surface)
- GCSE Geography (The Restless Earth)
- Leaving Cert Geography (Rock Cycle, Tectonic Cycle, Landform Development)
- AS/A2 Geography (Plate Tectonics, Climate Change – Past and Present)

Rock types and geological processes observed: limestone, sandstone
Geological structures: faults
Geomorphological features: stream sink, resurgence / spring, caves

Site specific hazards and risks:

- Uneven ground
- Deep water
- Slippery paths
- Livestock

Mitigation measures:

- Consult weather forecast
- Outdoor learning qualification
- First aid kit
- Appropriate teacher / student ratio
- Clear instructions to be given to students
- Ensure students have appropriate clothing / footwear

Did you know: The main rock types in this area are limestone and sandstone, all of which formed during the Carobniferous period. The limestone formed first and similar rocks are found in Stonehammer Geopark in Canada, as well as in Kenozero National Park in Russia. The sandstones formed slightly later and similar rocks are found in Ballycastle in Co. Antrim.

Topics to cover before visit: sedimentary rocks and processes, glacial processes and products

Keywords: caves, springs, sinks, limestone, sandstone, hydrology, hydrogeology



spring / resurgence



stream sink



dissolution cave

Description of spring / resurgence:

- Any natural situation where water flows from below ground and appears at the surface.

Description of stream sink:

- The point at which a stream or river disappears below ground. This can be simply sinking on a river bed, or can be a dramatic flow into a cave below.

Description of dissolution cave:

- Caves form in many ways but here they form as the dissolution of limestone occurs over long periods of time causing large voids to form.

Hydrogeological story:

The area around Garvagh Lough, Shannon Pot and Whitefathers Cave offers a unique opportunity to explore the hydrogeology, or the flow of water through rocks, on West Cuilcagh. The area is divided into two different river basins; the Erne and the Shannon. The water from Garvagh Lough sinks at Pollnaowen and reaches the Shannon Pot (and the Shannon River basin). The water at Whitefathers Cave begins at Pollnagossan Cave before travelling to Barran Risings, through Whitefathers Caves to Lough MacNean, before flowing as the Arney River and meeting the River Erne.