

This week Ireland’s Classic Hits Radio is the unique ecological karst landscape of South Roscommon.

**Did you know….**

* Karst is a surface and subsurface landscape that has developed over millions of years where soluble carbonate bedrock is dissolved by slightly acidic rain water.
* Karst is characterized by distinctive surface features including sinkholes, grikes, disappearing streams, and karst springs that connect through its dissolved cracks and fissures into extensive underground systems, including nutrient-rich streams, lakes and caves.
* The surface of karst is infilled by glacial deposits, erosion, and decomposed organic materials which support productive forest ecosystems. Subsurface karst includes moist caves with cool stable environments and nutrient-rich aquatic systems. Karst’s thin soils and hydrological systems are easily damaged by above-ground soil disturbance.
* The karst landscape provides different habitat niches and microclimatic conditions both on the surface and underground. Karst supports a range of dependent species, including rare plants that favour the calcium-rich nutrients, cave invertebrates, salamanders, frogs, bats, and potentially significant microbiological biodiversity.

**Karst dependent species are unusual:**

• **Troglobites**: evolved to live exclusively in total darkness and stable temperatures in underground environments, e.*g*. remnant invertebrates that survived last ice age.

• **Troglophiles**: are species capable of living in this habitat or out of it.  Some individuals may choose to live entire life cycle in Karst habitat, e.g. species of salamanders, spiders, crickets.

• **Trogloxenes**: use Karst habitat for specific purposes but not entire lives e.g. bats.

**For More Information:**

[www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/groundwater/activities/understanding-irish-karst/karst-landforms/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/groundwater/activities/understanding-irish-karst/karst-landforms/Pages/default.aspx)

[www.farmingfornature.ie/nominees/liam-kildea/](http://www.farmingfornature.ie/nominees/liam-kildea/)

