

**RESTORATION OF THE NURSERY AND HIBERNATING
COLONIES OF BATS IN THE TOURISTIC MUIERII CAVE
ROOST, BAIA DE FIER – ROMANIA**

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The most visited speleological site in Romania is Muierii Cave. Up to 1960, there were important colonies of 5 bat species: *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *R. hipposideros*, *Myotis myotis*, *Plecotus austriacus/auritus* and *Miniopterus schreibersii*. After 1962, the cave was adapted for intensive tourism and hibernating bat colonies suffered a drastic decline and nursery colonies disappeared totally. Increasing anthropogenic pressure on this roost oppose in this case conservation of bat species according to Romanian Law 90/2000. Application of this Law (prohibiting tourism in the roost) would affect the local community interest (loss of jobs and financial benefits from the tourism and infrastructure nearby). To avoid this situation we suggest a new solution which allows both tourism and conservation of bat species. This solution involves the restoration of the primary environmental conditions in order to encourage the reformation of the nursery colonies of the last century. At the same time hibernating colonies will increase both in the number of individuals and of possible new species: *Myotis bechsteinii*, *M. daubentonii*, *M. capaccinii* and *M. nattereri*.