

# CLARE - COUNTY GEOLOGICAL SITE REPORT

**NAME OF SITE****Ballyvorgal South**

Other names used for site

**TOWNLAND(S)**

Ballyvorgal South, Ballyvorgal Beg and Cloghoolia

**NEAREST TOWN**

Sixmilebridge

**SIX INCH MAP NUMBER**

Clare 43

**NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE**

151325 168600 = R51325 68600

**1:50,000 O.S. SHEET NUMBER**58      **1/2 inch Sheet No. 17****Outline Site Description**

Streambank exposures.

**Geological System/Age and Primary Rock Type**Late Ordovician [fossiliferous](#) mudstone of the Ballymalone Formation.**Main Geological or Geomorphological Interest**

The Ballyvorgal site is an unusual Irish occurrence of an assemblage of deep-water fossils now found all over the world in rocks of Upper Ordovician age. The fauna has been well described and contains a characteristic mix of very small [trilobites](#) and tiny brachiopod shells. The type of assemblage at Ballyvorgal is also found in the Grangegeeth terrane (Oriel Brook) and the Northwestern Terrane (Pomeroy) and in Scotland (Whitehouse Group of Girvan) and other sites. The fauna exemplifies the breakdown of faunal provinciality (where species are restricted to certain regions) in the Iapetus Ocean during the Upper Ordovician.

As well as providing information on biogeographical patterns of migration, Ballyvorgal is an important site for understanding and dating the rocks of the Slieve Bernagh [Inlier](#). This site is the type locality for five species of trilobite.

**Site Importance**

The site is of National importance and is proposed for NHA designation under the IGH 2 Precambrian to Devonian Palaeontology theme of the GSI's IGH Programme.

**Management/promotion issues**

The gorse, bramble and other vegetation overgrowing the stream banks means there are currently only three small exposures of the brown mudstones, and no clear section of the trilobite bed. Whilst it would be necessary for some clearance to take place for any future study, if the landowner was to undertake any drainage work in the immediate vicinity of the stream, then a geological investigation should be made at the same time. Equally any major forestry work (felling/gripping/planting) in the adjacent western bank of the stream (not included within the site boundary) should be notified so that investigation may also occur of fresh exposures.



Left: A view over the site in the stream at the edge of the forestry, looking southwest from the northwest end of the site.

Right: Access to the main exposure in stream bank, excavated by earlier workers and overhung by trees.



# Ballyvorgal South

