

# Naturtejo Geopark school programme Anim'a Rocha at Portas de Almourão geomonument

J. RODRIGUES<sup>1</sup>, C. NETO DE CARVALHO<sup>1,2</sup> & B. HENRIQUES<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional – UNESCO European and Global Geopark, Portugal. <sup>2</sup>Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova, Portugal. <sup>3</sup>Escola Básica e Secundária Pedro da Fonseca. Proença-a-Nova, Portugal E-mails: joana225@gmail.com.

11<sup>TH</sup>  
EUROPEAN  
GEOPARKS  
CONFERENCE

19 - 21 September 2012  
Arouca Geopark  
Portugal



**Anim'a Rocha (= Hearten Rock)** is an annual school programme designed for local schools, where Naturtejo Geopark works closely with teachers and students, in a long-term project approach, endorsing activities that reach the specific needs and interests of each school under the frame of the Geopark's territory.

Anim'a Rocha

The latest project was developed during Biology and Geology classes, by 20 students from the 11th grade (16 years old) from Pedro da Fonseca High School (Proença-a-Nova), and their teacher with the support of the Naturtejo Geopark staff, during the school year 2011/2012.

The students organized two field trips, the novelty of this project being that the students who guided the visit only knew the stops in theory, after studying them in the classroom, making these young rangers more aware about the features to be presented in each site.

## Walking Trail "Travel across the Earth bones" - Outcome

The students were divided in groups and they were the trail guides for the other colleagues, using as didactical tools the booklet and posters with schemes and models of geological processes. The teacher and the Geopark's staff only supported the teams, helping the pupils chasing the goals established by them previously or helping in the development of new objectives. The students saw the sites for the first time during this field trip and despite they already knew in theory the geological aspects of the region it was the first contact with the rocks and the structures. For most of the students this surprise approach involved them and increased the knowledge acquired in the classroom, by adapting to real examples.

## Classroom activities

At the classroom the students got the first contact with the geosites, together with the Geopark's staff.



## "There's gold at Foz!" - Outcome

The students experienced the ancient techniques used since Roman times in the area and practiced all the process from the sediment selection till the fine sediments washing (sluicing), and panning like the former miners.

The students filmed all the processes to prepare a small documentary "The Gold in Proença-a-Nova" combining previous knowledge with information achieved during this project.

This educational programme of Naturtejo Geopark was developed to answer to modern society changes, asking for more conscious and skilled citizens, where sustainable development is a priority. While students are working on the heritage around their school they are improving the sense of belonging, understanding geological concepts that otherwise would be studied only in the textbook and learning from examples which exist near them. This project not only contributed for raising awareness for Geology, Biology and Nature conservation but also developed their skills for interpretation and fellow communication.