



CRUZIANA

GEOPARK NATURTEJO DA MESETA MERIDIONAL-EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL GEOPARK - MONTHLY REPORT

In this issue: – Monsanto geomonument awarded the best orienteering track in the world - GEOPARK moving tourism in FITUR – International Tourism Trade Show of Madrid – Rivers Project started in Idanha - Termas de Monfortinho gastronomy festival...and more!



Olá/Hola/Ciao/Bonjour/Γειά σου/Hallo/God Dag/Salut/Zdravo/Hello/Ahoj/Helo/Helló/ Hei/
Dia duit/Bok/Kaixo/Pozdravljeni/Czesc/Halló/Merhaba

Geo-stories of our places and people: Escalos de Cima

Without any surprise, Escalos de Cima appears right after a gentle waving in a profoundly flat landscape. The big village dominates this platform of Castelo Branco, which in the horizon rises at 12km from here. The granite floor, being so flat by more than 50 million years of climate changes, is quite monotonous between 370 and 390 m altitude, extending beyond the 15,41km² belonging to Escalos. The landscape is, thus, composed by the giant granite “boulders” reminiscent of this abrasive erosion and by small streams that timidly flow across the plains towards the Ponsul river, by escaping through the existing joints. The proximity to Alcains justifies the scars caused in this “white” granite by centuries providing raw material for the stonemason workshops in the region.

Actually with 938 inhabitants, Escalos de Cima past dates back to the Roman period or earlier, resulting in several findings in Vale de Alagoa and Val-Vaqueiro, from inscriptions to several votive objects. From that period nothing lasts in loco. When we walk by the picturesque streets of Escalos de Cima we may find some few significant monuments, such as the Saint Peter's Church, dated from 1704, Saint Amaro and the Virgin of “Ajuda” chapels, the oldest building aged from 15th to 16th century, as well as the manors of the Viscounts of Castelo Novo and the Family Botelho, from 18th century, but it is the whole granite set that becomes harmonic. However, protrudes well above the others, by its chromatic volumetry, a symbol of the regional Art Nouveau, the recently restored Chateau of “Mr. African”, dating 1908, a distinct welcome to those coming from north. Worth to mention in Escalos de Cima is also the diversified local commerce, the small industry, the associative dynamics of the young and the artist diversity, from different styles of painting to cork objects and, of course, the original silk-in-linen Embroidery Castelo Branco. This village is one of the booster centers of these masterpieces inspired by the Discovers period mas also deeply rooted in the secular culture of the region. Located in one of the most important roadways in the region, connecting some of the main tourist sites, Escalos de Cima may contribute significantly in the future to value the Embroidery of Castelo Branco, through the development of a atelier-school/shop/interpretative centre-art gallery that can promote this symbol of identity Castelo Branco and that showcase the work of the local artists. Local dynamics is reinforced by the closeness to the city, which makes Escalos de Cima the right potential connection, between the cultural vibrations of the city with the surrounding countryside that is the statement of its identity.

Recommended references:

Matos, J.R. 2005. Apontamentos para a História de Escalos de Cima. Alma Azul, 304p.
www.escalosdecima.net

The Editor
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Front page: (Projecto Objectiva: Geopark, www.naturtejo.com/objectiva)

ACTIVITIES OF THE MONTH



January – Monsanto awarded world title. Monsanto inselberg geosite at Naturtejo Global Geopark was awarded in 2013 as the best Orienteering circuit in the world.

The award was attributed by the most important webportal of this sport, the "World Of O", www.worldofo.com, which by the end of every year, invites runners all over the world to vote the best track of the year.

The results elected the track of the Portuguese Tiago Romão in Monsanto, in the Sprint stage of "Portugal O' Meeting 2013", that was organized between 9 and 12 February 2013 at Naturtejo Global Geopark. The organization of the international run was a partnership between the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and the Association of the Disabled from the Armed Forces (ADFA), with the support of Naturtejo Global Geopark. The decision for the Orienteering circuit of Monsanto "shows that the Geopark, and Monsanto in particular, provide excellent conditions for the practice of nature sports", says Armindo Jacinto, president of Naturtejo and Mayor of Idanha-a-Nova

18 January – Learning from the biodiversity of the International Tagus: birds, amphibians and mushrooms!. The local environmental association Quercus organized with the support of Naturtejo Geopark an interpretative trekking in Monte Barata, with the main aim of providing the contact with the beauty and diversity of landscape, learning about fauna and flora of the region. Tejo International Nature Park shows a very rich natural heritage and a relatively low impact of human activities. Vegetation includes cork and holm oak hoods, willow galleries along the rivers, where many species of wild mushrooms can be found. The presence of species of animals with high status for conservation includes the Griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*), the Bonelli eagle (*Hieratus fasciatus*), the Black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) and the Iberian-Imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*), the Royal-eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), the amphibians Western spadefoot (*Pelobates cultripes*), the Mediterranean tree frog (*Hyla meridionalis*) and the Iberian newt (*Triturus boscai*). The trekking was open to everybody and 50 interested people participated in this day for biodiversity guided by the environmentalists and experts.



13 to 15, 17 January – Starting of the “Rivers Project” in the school EB2,3/S José Silvestre Ribeiro and Professional School of Raia, in Idanha-a-Nova.

The “Rivers Project” is a project of environmental education aiming for the adoption and monitoring of a river's 500 m long sector. It is based on the social participation in the conservation of river areas, by following the objectives presented for the Decade of Education of the United Nations for the Sustainable Development and contributes for implementing the Earth Charter and the EU Water Framework Directive. It is promoted in Portugal since 2006 by the Portuguese Association of Environmental Education (ASPEA), Geography Teachers Association (APG), League for the Protection of Nature (LPN), and the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Oporto (FEUP). In the municipality of Idanha the project has started to be implemented in the school year 2012/2013 with the support of Naturtejo Geopark. The chosen river was the Ponsul because it is the most important river born and crossing the county. This year, and besides the two already adopted six new sectors were included in the project, with a sum of 4km of river already adopted by local pupils and teachers. Introductory sessions were made for 98 pupils and 6 teachers from the 6thB; 8thA; 8thB; 8thC; 9th Vocational; 9thB classes of the school EB 2,3/S José Silvestre Ribeiro, and to 53 pupils and 2 teachers from two classes (9th grade – Vocational; 10th grade – Environmental and Countryside Tourism) of the Professional School (EPRIN). The organizers are the local teacher Arlindo Cardoso, Hugo Oliveira and Manuela Catana. During the school year two field trips to each sector of Ponsul River adopted will be made. The classes will present a final report based on photos and a contest for selection of the best work will be made, with a travel as prize for the winners. This project is included at the school EB2,3/S José Silvestre Ribeiro under the plan of activities of the Eco-Schools Program promoted by the Europe's Blue Flag Association.



18 to 19 January – Fair of local gastronomy at Termas de Monfortinho.

18 to 19 January – Fair of local gastronomy at Termas de Monfortinho. Termas de Monfortinho, in the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova, welcomed thousands of people during the weekend for the 2nd edition of the Festival of Hunting and Gastronomy". Two days dedicated to the promotion of tourism and the best regional cuisine in an event organized by the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and by the Union of the villages of Monfortinho and Salvaterra do Extremo, with the support of Naturtejo. In the countryside, visitors tasted the best food in the region and visited about 100 stands of local products. "This is part of the Idanha-a-Nova municipality plan for local economic development and support to activities that create wealth and jobs in the countryside" pointed out Armindo Jacinto during the fair. The municipality of Idanha-a-Nova is highlighted by a pivotal affirmation of the countryside potentialities, based on local products and sustainable development of tourism, farming and even creative industry. During Sunday afternoon the SIC national tv liveshow "Party in Portugal" was broadcasted from Termas de Monfortinho.



21 to 23, 28 to 30 – First fieldtrips under "Rivers Project" for six classes from the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova. The field trip dedicated to the adopted sectors of Ponsul river meant for the general analysis of the selected area. Pupils collected data and took photos. Os alunos recolheram dados relativos ao troço que foram anotados numa Ficha de Campo e tiraram fotografias. During six days each class, respectively, studied their selected sector: 9ºB – "Rosa Cometa"; 6ºB – "Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia"; 9th grade Vocational (EPRIN) – Sr.ª da Graça; 8ºA – Várzea; 9th Vocational – Idanha-a-Velha; 8ºC – Idanha reservoir. A total of 115 pupils and 6 teachers were involved. The encharged staff were the teacher Arlindo Cardosa, Hugo Oliveira and Manuela Catana.



22 to 26 January – GEOPARK moving tourism in FITUR – International Tourism Trade Show of Madrid

22 to 26 January – GEOPARK moving tourism in FITUR – International Tourism Trade Show of Madrid .

Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional was once again in Madrid for FITUR – International Tourism Trade Show to promote the tourism potential of geoparks in general, and Naturtejo Global Geopark in particular. One of the largest trade fairs in the world, with 54000m2 distributed by 611 stands from 165 countries, with a total number of participants of almost 218000, FITUR has been an opportunity for Naturtejo Geopark to “accomplish a mission of representing the European and Global Geoparks, under the auspices of UNESCO, together with the promotion of tourist products of Naturtejo Geopark, with emphasis for lodging, restaurants and outdoor companies”, said Armindo Jacinto, president of Naturtejo.

Last years, the participation of Naturtejo in FITUR has resulted in the increase of contacts with tour operators, and an increasing number of sold packs for groups. But also the promotion of the territory has been worked both for Spanish and Portuguese markets, which due to the geographic proximity “brings many people to visit the territory by their own means”, pointed out Armindo Jacinto. For the president of Naturtejo, loyalty and attraction of new publics, even in this context of crisis, could be fostered by the “offer of competitive tourism products in terms of cost and distinction”.

During FITUR, the special designed stand of Geoparks has been zippy by the offer of the best cheese, bread, wine, tea, pudding and other gastronomic delicacies of the region which are delightful for the visitors.

Under the main subject of FITUR “Moving Tourism” Tuk Tuk Idanha-a-Nova was exhibited. Widely photographed by many tour operators and other businessmen, media and visitors in general, the tricycle decorated with landscapes and built heritage from the territory is “a distinctive and nice proposal and constitutes one more idea to attract tourist and visitors”, explained by the president of Naturtejo.

Besides Madrid, which has been a success, Naturtejo is going to participate also in ITB Berlin, from 5th to 9th March, another world's largest trade show this time together with other Global Geoparks, such as Magma from Norway, TERRA.Vita from Germany and Grutas del Palacio from Uruguay.



24 January – Boulderscape...in the granite inselberg of Monsanto. 25 pupils and 3 teachers from the 10th and 11th grades of St. Peter's School, coming from the city of Palmela, under the scope of their discipline of Biology and Geology visited the Granite Inselberg of Monsanto with Hugo Oliveira.

27 January – Bio and Geodiversity educational program in the gorge of Segura . Hugo Oliveira prepared a visit for 8 years old pupils and their teacher from the Primary School of Idanha-a-Nova, under the frame of the discipline of Study of the Environment. They visited the “Lands of Idanha” Biodiversity Interpretative Centre at the village of Segura and tried to find the answers of their exploration guide. Later a short trail lead them to the Erges valley and the geomonument. They looked for local animals, plants and rocks, using also a botanical guidebook.

31 January to 2 February – A short trail in the Geopark . Arawak tour operator from Spain brought 56 clients to the border between Portugal and Spain. In the area of the Geopark they walked by the Vultures Trail in Salvaterra do Extremo guided by the company Actigeo.



IMPACT OF GEOPARK IN MEDIA

Radio

2 January (Radio Cova da Beira) – Penamacor integrates Naturtejo

Newspapers & www

January (Raiano) – School contest “Water that unites us” – Desertification – New educational programs of Naturtejo Geopark

8 January (Gazeta do Interior) – Termas de Monfortinho hosts the 2nd edition of the Festival of Gastronomy and Hunting

8 January (Gazeta do Interior) – Mushroom walk in Vale Feitoso reunited more than 150 people

9 January (Reconquista) – Best Orienting Trail 2013 – Idanha-a-Nova reacts to the distinction awarded to Monsanto

9 January (Reconquista) – Olive oil Route opens registrations for this year's edition

15 January (Gazeta do Interior) – The festival of hunting and gastronomy

16 January (Reconquista cover) – Gastronomy and hunting with fair at Monfortinho

16 January (Reconquista) – Tourism promoted at Holland

21 January (Povo da Beira) – Hunting is important lever for the Idanha county

22 January (Gazeta do Interior) – Termas de Monfortinho celebrates hunting and gastronomy

27 January (Ambitur Online) – Naturtejo Geopark successful in FITUR

27 January (Diário Digital de Castelo Branco) – Naturtejo Geopark makes success in the Tourism Fair in Madrid

27 January (Jornal de Oleiros) – Naturtejo Geopark makes success in the Tourism Fair in Madrid

28 January (Povo da Beira) - Naturtejo Geopark makes success in the Tourism Fair in Madrid

28 January (Povo da Beira) – Lynx in Malcata never before 2016

29 January (Gazeta do Interior) – Naturtejo Geopark in FITUR

29 January (Gazeta do Interior) – Borderland Fair presented at FITUR

30 January (Reconquista) – Naturtejo is promoted in Madrid

30 January (Reconquista) – Car built in Idanha

30 January (Reconquista) – Lynx is brand already



PROMOTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Neto de Carvalho, C. & Martins, P. – Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional: 600 million years illustrated. Naturtejo, EIM, Castelo Branco (3rd edition both in Portuguese and English versions)





PROMOTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

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Educação

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Websites: www.geonaturescola.com; www.geoparknaturtejo.com


NOTES: Terms and special programs for schools in the Naturtejo Geopark

www.geonaturescola.com

CONCURSO ESCOLAR
ANO LETIVO 2013/2014
ALUNOS E PROFESSORES DAS
ESCOLAS DO GEOPARK NATURTEJO

**Água
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» DESERTIFICAÇÃO

Conferência 

ECOTURISMO
20 Fev. 14h30 Sala 40

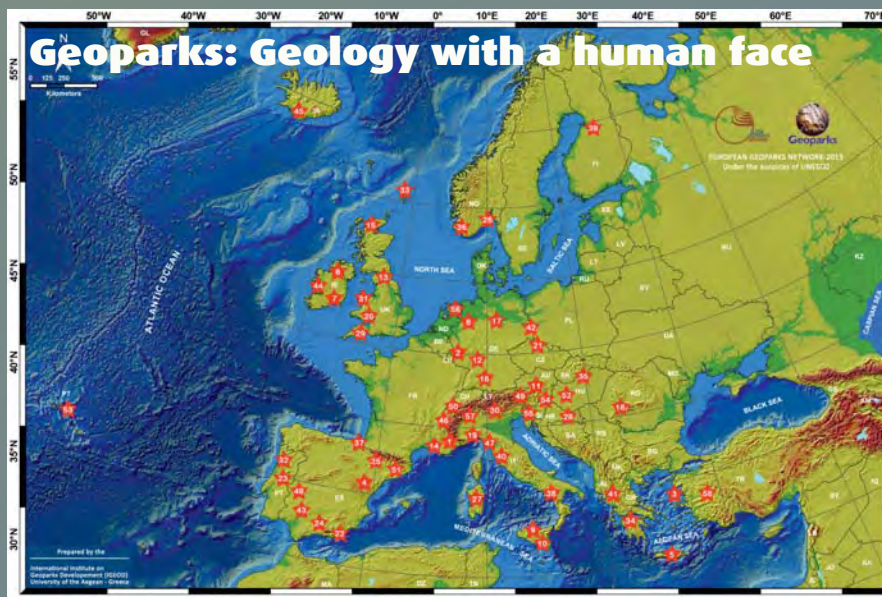
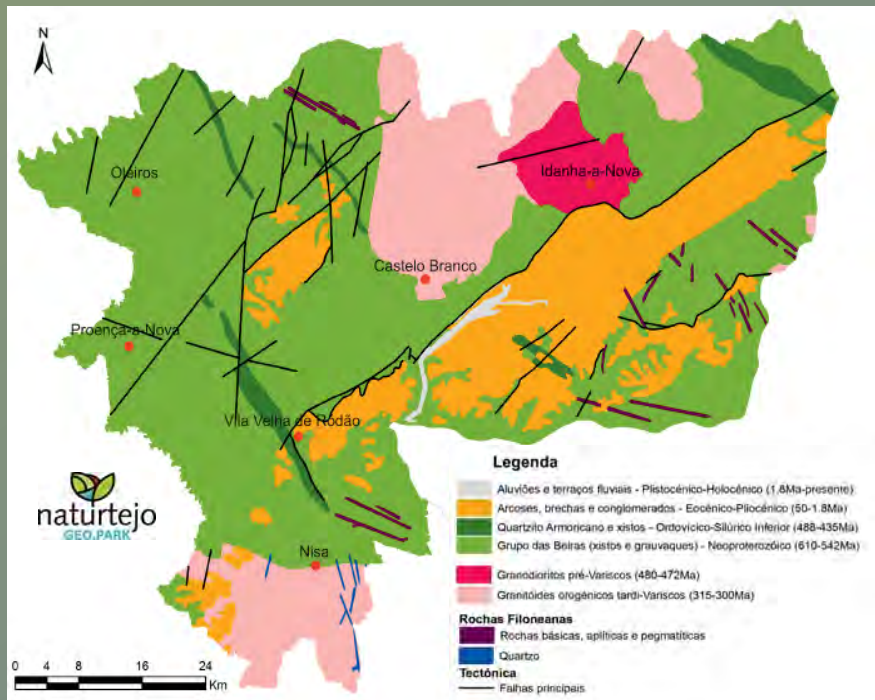
CONVIDADOS:

EVOA
(Espaço de Visitaçao e Observação de Aves)
"EVOA, um espaço de conservação, lazer e aprendizagem na Lezíria do Tejo"

BirdWatching Portugal
"O Turismo de Natureza e a preservação do património natural"

Transumância e Natureza
Geopark Naturtejo
"Ecoturismo e conservação da natureza: O caso Fata Brava (Rebuilding Europe)"

"Tantas pela Geopark Naturtejo sob os auspícios da UNESCO: aprender e conviver com a Natureza."



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