

Cruziiana

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monthly report of the Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional



In this Issue: – “Mineralogists” from all ages found gold – Teachers enjoy the Geopark- Naturtejo Geopark in the Nature Conservation National Fair – Adventure and Emotion in the Geopark for adolescents - Geointerview with Manuela Catana *and more...*

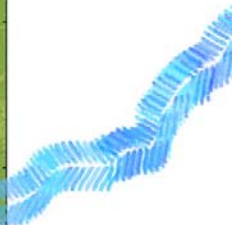
www.geoparknaturtejo.com



Olá/Hola/Ciao/Bonjour/Γειά σου/Hallo/God Dag/Salut/Zdravo/Hello

Man! Hard times we live in the Geopark: hard effort to satisfy all for the EGN Meeting, Fair and Conference, very hot visits with temperatures reaching easily more than 40°C! I could be drunk with all this work and so much water I need to avoid dehydration...if it was beer, I mean. Why are we working so hard in the harshest part of the year? I can show you by telling about my last weekend. As part of Geology in summer national Ciência Viva program we are receiving small groups of geoscience enthusiasts to visit the Geopark. We take this people to the most distant corners of the Geopark and we stay there talking for hours about what we are discovering together and about almost every subject they are curious to know more about. The visitors are single visitors to families, young teenagers to retired 70 years old people: the wonderful thing is that they all love geology and they come just to learn with geologists. Doing fieldwork under temperatures of 40°C is hard even for the most enthusiastic of the field geologists. But even with a serious risk of collapsing that people were there for listening and learning, driving early in the morning from far distant parts of the country, walking 4 to 6 hours, carrying all the water they can, drinking hot water. And at the end, being completely exhausted they were happy to discover new things in their lives, some of them being part of daily life, some of them being part of their evolution as living beings.

The EGN Conference is a very important moment to share experience among people willing to learn. It is highly important for strengthen the bonds between members but is becoming a powerful showcase to highlight the power of Geoparks to raise awareness of nature through geosciences among general publics, that is bringing more and more geoparks into the network. The EGN Conference is also a meeting occasion with local communities where we can show others doing hard work with the same, more or less efficient purposes, than us. Is like saying "believe in us, we are not alone". More than 170 participants in the Conference are coming from all the continents, for this still named "European" event. But also important is the local participation. And the community is deeply involved. This is the power of communication...and the result of hard work. It started well before 2000 for the EGN and we want to keep contributing for the evolution of EGN in 2009. The retribution of all hard work is the satisfaction found in that people's eyes.



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Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional is...



Armando Jacinto
Agronomist Engineer
Chairman of Naturtejo
Vice-president of Idanha

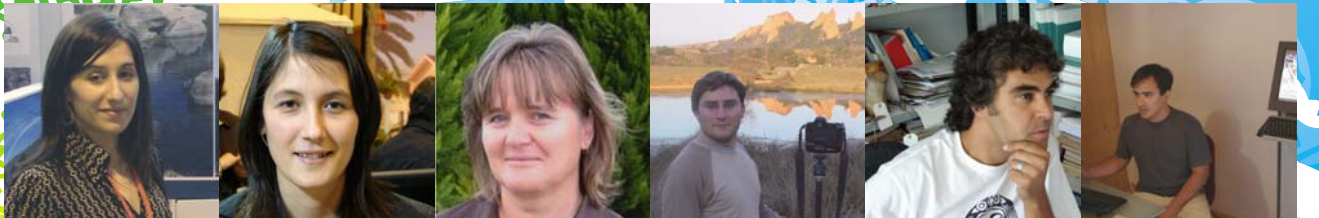
Carlos Neto de Carvalho
Geologist
Scientific Coordinator
Researcher

Rui Marques
Biologist
Marketing

Rafael André
Economist
Financial Planner

Cristina Preguiça
Journalist
Administrative

Jesus Alarcón
Commercial
Agent for Spain



Fátima Rodrigues
Agronomist Engineer
Tourism/Communication

Eliane Antunes
Financial Manager
Tourism/Webpage

Alice Marcelo
Accountant
Administration assistant

Pedro Martins
Ecotourism
Tourism/Photographer

Eddy Chambino
Anthropologist
Researcher

Nuno Capelo
Marketing
Marketing/Designer



Manuela Catana
Teacher of Natural
Sciences
Educational Programs

Ana Rita Mota
Tourism
Tourism Planner/Events

Miguel Costa Silva
Doctor of Law

Tiago Oliveira
Management
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Environment Engineer
Planner/Tourism Fairs

Joana Rodrigues
Geologist
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The team work!

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1) *Activities*

1st July – **Idanha-a-Nova teachers party.** School year has come to an end...but not for teachers in our Geopark! The annual party of retired teachers from the Primary Schools of Idanha-a-Nova had a special guest: Manuela Catana presented a talk about Naturtejo Geopark as a tool for sustainable local development.

4th July – **IFIF presented in Lisbon.** The Idanha's Film and Internet Festival was created to promote the 8th European Geoparks Conference among the national general public and abroad. IFIF do not pretend to be just a cinema festival but an event to celebrate a global movement of citizens towards culture and environment through the power of multimedia. IFIF is an alternative view of the world based on ancient culture that can be nowadays used sustainably with technology. It is a festival that dives into the past to bring new ideas and concerns for the future. With IFIF we are creating dialogue among cultures without competition. It is open to everybody and the communities from the Geopark are invited to assist for free. In the place of the Conference venue and by internet. For that, IFIF created **Docks on the Rocks** that will present international movies within nature or historical sites where local environment is the screen of each film.

It will be a meeting place for ideas, producers and their work, pretending to exhibit and promote how close and dependent we are from our home-Earth. But it is also an event that aims to develop seeds of action. Cinema is still an art of revolution, a weapon for consciousness. This first year the main theme is the World Geoparks and we have a very special surprise for the Opening of the European Geoparks Conference in Penha Garcia, one of the best kept secrets in Portugal...

IFIF was presented to the national media in Ler Devagar bookshop at Lx-factory, Lisbon with a very nice session with a good combination of music. Deputy Jorge Seguro Sanches from National Assembly was there with Pedro Machado, President of the Centre Tourism Region, the cinema expert Rui Pedro Tendinha as well as Álvaro Rocha, the mayor of Idanha-a-Nova and Armindo Jacinto for the Geopark.

4-5th July – **Teachers enjoy the Geopark.** Halcon Viagens tour operator brought 38 teachers to enjoy the Geopark with our local ranger João Geraldés. During this hot time they visited the Fossils Trail, Idanha-a-Velha Roman ruins, Monsanto inselberg and the boat trip to Portas de Ródão Natural Monument with a visit to King Wamba castle. Our guests were surprised by the medieval dinner and the gold they found in Foz do Cobreão.



5th July -

“Mineralogists” from all ages found gold! Amateur and professional mineralogists from the Portuguese Club of Mineralogists met in the Geopark for a day full of sulphides, carbonates and native elements. The group of 25 people started to visit the very ancient Ingadanais Cooper Mine with Carlos Neto de Carvalho and a very special guest “Stony” Martins, a local expert in minerals from Vila Velha de Ródão. They visited the “Roman” mining remains and collected several samples. Professor Fernando Barriga, the director of the National Museum of Natural History and famous mineralogist was among the participants for fun and was a healthy contribution for discussions. After the “miners lunch” at Foz do Cobrão the group met an old miner and went to Ocreza River panning for gold about 4 hours! The tuffest found gold; among them a very young teen girl. Professor Barriga was happy at the end.



8th July – **Schools still are coming this year.** After students...teachers are coming now to prepare the next school year. 37 teachers and 8 kids from Guimarães were with Manuela and our trainee in Ecotourism Vânia Gonçalves visiting the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia.



9-11th July – **US family volunteered for work in the Geopark.** John Ellefson, director of stock management of Volkswagen-Porsche-Bentley-Ferrari in the States and his family came to Portugal to work during vacations. He would like to provide a good geological environment for his family during two days and Naturtejo Geopark was the right choice! They stayed in Salvaterra do Extremo in Casa do Forno Geo-bakery. Carlos Neto de Carvalho gave them some hard work to perform with almost 40°C at the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia: cleaning trace fossils from the House of Fossils and locating trace fossil's slabs with GPS. Of course they finished the work swimming in the river with a trilobite and an orthoceratid...

9-12th July – **Naturtejo Geopark in the Nature Conservation National Fair.** Naturtejo Geopark was in the 4th edition of the National Fair on Natural Parks in Olhão. This time was representing also the Centre of Portugal Tourism Region. The theme of the fair was "Water and Tourism" and included outdoor ecotourism activities for visitors, workshops, a tourism business meeting and alternative travels, exhibitions, market of handicraft and biological products, gastronomy, projects of environmental education and an international seminar on the main subject. This Fair constitutes a privileged place for promotion and sensitization of protected areas and raising awareness on projects, products and services provided by entities and organizations related with nature conservation, nature tourism and environment.



14th July – **What is Naturtejo Geopark?** Geopark went to the Social Centre of Padres Redentoristas Primary School in Castelo Branco. Manuela Catana presented the Geopark to 80 pupils and 6 teachers.



16-25th July – **Adventure and Emotion in the Geopark for adolescents.** Arawak tour operator prepared a very special program for 22 adolescents from Madrid: adventure and emotions at the Naturtejo Geopark. This crazy program of complete adrenaline in Nature was for 10 days, with temperatures exceeding 40°C! They started with Tiago Oliveira (the hero of event) learning and climbing in the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia that finish with happy swimming with our trilobite. Then they visited the historical village of Monsanto and the surrounding geology by the boulders trail and finished kayaking in the warm and soft waters of Idanha dam. They did the boat trip in Tejo river to Portas de Ródão Natural Monument and visited King Wamba's tower. Afterwards their energy was consumed in the Adventure Camp of Vila Velha de Ródão. Next day it was time to hike on the most difficult trail of the Geopark: 17 km in the Gardunha mountain! That day they had time for a visit to the old town of Castelo Branco. One day more and more to walk: this was time to discover the secrets of Almourão geomonument and to find some gold in the waters of Ocreza river. The day was finished with the visit to the Living Science Centre -Forest and a local fluvial beach of Proença-a-Nova. Next day they walked on Idanha-a-Nova village visiting monuments and Geopark's headquarters at Raiano Cultural Centre. During the afternoon they learn about traditional games. They walked in the refreshing Geotrail of Orvalho and moved to Nisa to hike in S. Miguel Mountain to discover Conhal do Arneiro Roman gold mine. The group finished this adventure with the golden-key.

18th July – **Party for Spanish.** CLUB CRISTAL DE ROCA, a Spanish tour operator, came to the Geopark with 110 people for a medieval party organized in the IdanhaNatura hotel.

19-21st July – **Families in the Geopark.** A family of 4 came for a tourist programme involving the Fossils Trail, boat trip to Portas de Ródão Natural Monument and the fossil trees from the House of Arts and Culture of Tejo in Vila Velha de Ródão.



21st July - **Learning for fun in Monsanto.** A local NGO from Nisa brought 50 6 to 14 years old kids to visit Monsanto inselberg. Once again the Association for Development of Nisa by its 5 monitors cooperates with the Geopark during school summer vacations. Manuela Catana was again in action.

23rd July –**Protocol for the new Villuercas Geopark was signed.** Armindo Jacinto was invited for the signature of the protocol to create a Geopark in the SE of Extremadura. Geoparque Villuercas, Ibores, Jara – Cáceres is just 200 km from Naturtejo Geopark and it is mostly composed by the same stratigraphy and Appalachian-type landforms as the Portuguese Geopark, located in a more mountainous area. This protocol was celebrated in Guadalupe, the biggest town of the area, by the President of Extremadura Province, the President of Cáceres and the University of Extremadura.



31st July-4th August – **Nisartes 2009 centered in the new thermal complex.** NISARTES 2009 - after successful editions of 2007 and 2008 this fair of handicraft with national proportions, organized by Nisa municipality, attracted 20000 visitors having as main theme the opening of the new thermal spa complex. NISARTES – International Fair aims to promote local handicraft and traditional arts by attracting visitors and contributing for tourism development of the Geopark. 150 stands presented local, national and international handicraft and Naturtejo Geopark was there by Rita Mota that was born in Nisa. The regional stand of the Geopark attracted a lot of interested people.



Maria Manuela Catana, 30 years old, was born in the core of the Naturtejo Geopark. Teacher of Natural Sciences, before working in the Educational Programs of the Geopark she taught several years in public and private middle and high schools in Portugal. Her Master Thesis on Geological Heritage was developed in the Fossils Trail of Penha Garcia, with the development of didactic materials.



Cruziana: What is the difference between the Naturtejo Geopark Educational Programs and other educational activities?

Manuela Catana: Our educational programs for schools are based on Geology, but always mingled in a multidisciplinary approach (e.g. History and Physical Education). On the other hand we guarantee an approach to the curricula of geosciences disciplines made by Geopark monitors scientific-pedagogical qualified in Geology and/or Geological Heritage. For development of educational programs we are following the curricula programs established by the Ministry of Education from Portugal in order to complement with field experience.

Cruziana: Tell us in general what kind of different activities can be done in the Educational Programs.

Manuela Catana: We offer two types of educational programs:

“School meets the Geopark” and “Geopark goes to School”.



Portas do Ródão Natural Monument Boat Trip

These include field excursions in the Geopark’s geosites where it is also possible to practice several nature sports and do bird watching; workshops for casting/modeling fossils; pre-field trip classroom sessions; celebration of thematic days (International days of Forest, Environment, Earth); interactive exhibitions and challengers on Geopark’s geological heritage; talks in schools on Geoparks and Geological Heritage and the

importance of geosciences to Society.



"Searching for the Waters", for elementary school (7-8 years old)

Cruziana: What school levels are Educational Programs destined for?

Manuela Catana: They were prepared for all the school levels, from kindergarten (starting from 4 years of age) to professional schools, universities and senior universities.

Cruziana: Why is it so important to the Naturtejo Geopark Educational Programs the specialized qualification of the monitors?

Manuela Catana: To guarantee that educational programs are a real complement of school curricula of geoscience-related disciplines being useful tools for teachers and pupils in the process of teaching-apprenticeship. In a way to mobilize and link programmatic contents between what is being learnt and previous knowledge.

Cruziana: During the last year Geopark Naturtejo Educational Programs had about 3000 participants, from inside and outside the territory. Do you think was there any impact in the local community?

Manuela Catana: Yes, local communities benefit with educational programs mostly because we are supporting the local citizens of tomorrow contributing to a broader acceptance of the world; also restaurants, youth hostels, campsites and hotels, handicraft and outdoor companies and other indirect companies such as supermarkets and fuel stations.



"Mice in the Lab" in the Living Science Center

Cruziana: In your personal opinion, the Natural Sciences teachers the visit Naturtejo Geopark are prepared to answer to their student's doubts about Geology, Geoparks and Geoconservation?

Manuela Catana: From my own experience as monitor of educational programs of Naturtejo Geopark and the teachers I had contact with, I think they are well prepared concerning geology concepts. But Geoparks and Geoconservation are subjects too recent in Portugal, therefore initial formation of geoscience teachers still has few spared time. To deepen their knowledge on the subjects there are already workshops for long-life professional training.



"Rock Detectives" for primary schools

Cruziana: In a territory located in a very unpopulated region, far from big urban centres what is the meaning of 2500 students and 300 teachers in the Naturtejo Geopark, in the last year?

Manuela Catana: I think these numbers reflect recognition by the teachers of the quality of our educational programs since that, from 1000 participants we had this year almost 3000, and just only in two years. On the other hand they are supporting local economy.

Cruziana: In your opinion how important is to educate the general public to Geosciences?



Vila Velha de Museum gives the introduction to the field trip

Manuela Catana: It is extremely important because geosciences enable, on one hand, to prevent and/or solve problems for or resulted from Man, like water-supply, agriculture, fishing, pollution, natural hazards, use of energy-related resources, search and use of

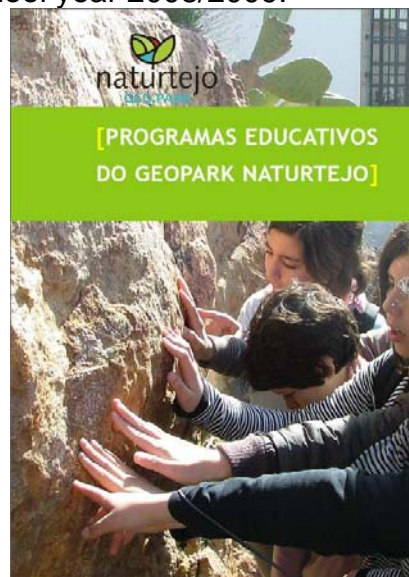
raw materials and building. Consciousness and education of people is important to develop well-prepared and active citizens. By the other hand, geosciences contribute to understand the History of Earth and Life enabling people meet, love and protect our planet.



Tectonics for the Universities

Cruziana: What was the importance of the SKAL Award in 2008 for the Educational Programs category?

Manuela Catana: It was recognition attributed by an international entity annually awarding Nature Tourism under several categories. I believe that this award contributed for the growth of the participants number in the educational programs for the school year 2008/2009.



Booklet of the Educational Programs (2008/2009)

Cruziana: What can be expected for the next year?

Manuela Catana: We hope to develop and acquire pedagogical tools that enable to improve interactivity of pupils during the proposed programs and to an even more significant apprenticeship. We hope to have educational programs with schools from other countries besides Spanish and tight the bonds between the Geopark and local schools.

Cruziana: What advices would you leave for the Naturtejo

Geopark and European Geoparks Network?

Manuela Catana: The bet of geosciences educational programs for schools is fundamental starting in the kindergarten but also for long-life apprenticeship. I would like that we could share experiences respecting resources/educational tools, namely through EGN workshops, that could result in common educational resources and approaches to all European Geoparks Network.

Family Photos in the Naturtejo Geopark Geomonuments



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3) Geopark's Impact in Media

Newspapers/Magazines

- July (Ensino Magazine) - "Smuggling Trail"
- July (O Concelho de Vila Velha de Ródão) - "Launching of the book "Ródão, the most fantastic travel of a sand grain"
- July (O Concelho de Vila Velha de Ródão) - "Thousands of people visited Ródão"
- 1st July (Gazeta do Interior) - "Portas de Ródão welcome visitors"
- 1st July (Gazeta do Interior) - "Audio-guide helps tourists"
- 1st July (Gazeta do Interior) - "Nisa handcraft is recognized"
- 2nd July (Reconquista) - "MP4 helps tourists"
- 7th July (Povo da Beira) - "Seminar "Archeology and Geology in Ródão"
- 7th July (Povo da Beira) - "Associação de Estudos do Alto Tejo launches children's book"
- 8th July (Gazeta do Interior) - "Ecological cinema in the rocks of Penha Garcia"
- 9th July (Reconquista) - "Fantastic journey of a sand grain"
- 9th July (Reconquista) - ""Green" cinema projected in the rocks of Idanha"
- 9th July (Reconquista) - "World Geoparks meet in the region"
- 9th July (Reconquista) - "Castelo Branco in the cathedral route"
- 14th July (Povo da Beira) - "IX Pine Wood Fair with a luxurious programme"
- 21st July (Povo da Beira) - "Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional and Schist Villages"
- 24th July (Gazeta do Interior) - "Sweet Contest in the municipality"
- 30th July (Reconquista's first page) - "Future mayors of Timor training in the region"

TV

- 23rd July (RTP1 national public TV) - Armino Jacinto was interviewed about the Geopark in the talk show "Verão Total" live from Monsanto. Also Petiscos & Granitos geo-restaurant was presented.

4) Publications

Promotional

- *Guide of Fluvial Beaches from the Centre Interior. Blanche, Castelo Branco, 133 p. (in Portuguese).*



The EGN Conference is out there!



XIV FEIRA RAIANA
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Feira de Artesanato
Espectáculos Taurinómicos
Espectáculos Músicos
Armação Medieval

Idanha Film and Internet Festival 2009

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