

Cruziana

ପଞ୍ଚମ ଘରାଡ଼ି in ପ୍ରାଚୀନ ବିହାର

monthly report of the Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional



In this issue: – Ministries of Environment from Portugal and Brazil for Geoparks – Launching of the European Geoparks Week - New GeoTrail with 650 enthusiasts – Geointerview with the dynamic Paulo Urbano *and more...*

www.geoparknaturtejo.com



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

No, *Cruziana* is still alive and moving towards sustainability. For two months we were silent but active as ever. Geopark revalidation, European Geoparks Conference, European Earth Festival, Geopark Educational Programmes, Geopark tours, Geopark promotion, Geopark protection against national-importance projects, Geopark working with communities...well, time and this space are too short to tell you all our adventures to command this territory in highly revolving waters. But we are glad that this year the European Geoparks Week was run mostly by the enthusiasm of communities. Fewer activities than last years, that is true. But 19 well organized activities truly involving local people with their local interests meant more than 61000 local and visitor participants, tourism, economic dynamics...and less work to us! Again Oleiros was the most enthusiastic municipality organizing the majority of the events by the very professional leadership of Cláudia and Inês. The promotional panel was fantastic using a stratigraphic log to present the calendar of events (see below): such creativeness! Also the new sticker “we live in a Geopark!!!” rose awareness of Oleiros children and parents about the importance of Oleiros geosites for the Geopark. 657 hikers was the magic number that opened one of the most fantastic Geotrails from the Geopark. A special event celebrated by locals as the annual party of Orvalho and transmitted to all the country and Portuguese-speaking countries live for a radio talk show. Recently, there was found in this special trail, a very special kind of forest: the “Lost World” coming directly from Miocene times and subtropical climates, thriving among exotics.

But the most impressive event was the Olive Oil national Biennale with about 60000 visitors. During three days this event supported by Naturtejo Geopark had so much to taste and to learn, so many activities and culture, amusing from the youngest children to the eldest experts in olives and olive oil. The olive oil culture is very important in the Geopark producing high-quality oils with protected denomination, for locals the best of Portugal. This fat party organized by Castelo Branco Municipality right in the leisure centre of the city capital of district has shown that Castelo Branco has capacity to develop national-level events that can have direct and long-term impact, and fostering, rural economic activities. Finally, I would like to emphasize the courage of a local company to organize a small-scale environmentally-more friendly off-road tour showing that people can learn, have fun and act for the environment while doing a very appreciated, but usually highly-destructive and polluting “sport” activity. We never stop to improve ourselves and try to benefit life from others. We never stop to love our life-consuming work.



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Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional is...



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

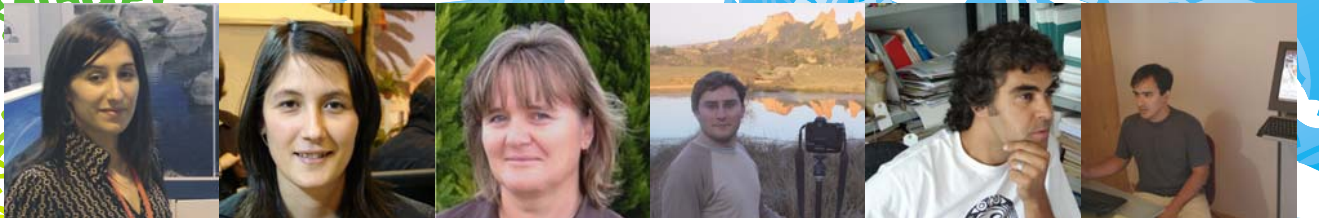
Carlos Neto de Carvalho
Geologist
Scientific Coordinator
Researcher

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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Joana Rodrigues
Geologist
Geoheritage

The team work!

Where...

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Contact us! tel: +(351)277 202 900

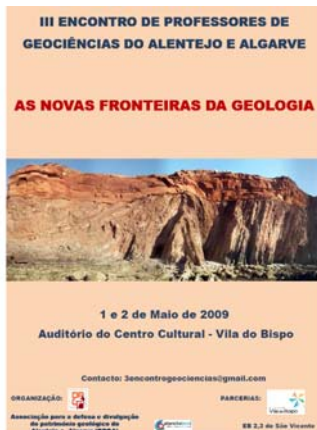
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Activities



1st May – Naturtejo

Geopark presented in the Meeting of Geoscience Teachers of Alentejo and Algarve. “The new geoscience frontiers” was the main theme of the teachers’ annual meeting from the South of Portugal, held in Vila do Bispo. Joana Rodrigues was invited to talk about the scientific and cultural importance of Geoparks using Naturtejo Geopark as example. This event was good promotion for the educational programmes of Naturtejo Geopark.



1st May – School teachers from Braga District

visit the Geopark. Yes, now teachers are coming *en masse* and without students to learn more about the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia and the Hill-island of Monsanto. The first geomonument is now described in the most used school books for the disciplines of Natural Sciences and Geology. 49 people from 13 schools and several disciplines from Middle and High School joined for this visit with Manuela Catana.

1-2nd May – **Discovering the Templar Geopark.** Halcon viagens tour operator brought a group of 14 people to discover the Templar vestiges and ruins with Tiago Oliveira.

1-3rd May – **Monsanto Medieval Fair brings thousands.** Monsanto Historical Village is the right place to do a medieval fair. Three days of activities, theatre, street performances, medieval fair as tournament in the castle, as well as the medieval dinner mixed the locals with many thousands of visitors willing to have an experience with History. The *Inselberg* crowded, the rocks were surrounded by people. There was a thematic visit made by a local archaeologist and Eddy Chambino about the cultural

importance of Monsanto. The revival was mixed with the very traditional Holy Cross pilgrimage that finishes releasing pots with flowers from the highest top of the mountain. The experience was caught in a two-pages photo published in the National Geographic Magazine - Portugal.



3rd May – **Vieira do Minho school again in the Geopark.** Vieira de Araújo School from the far north of Portugal came once more to the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia. 9 students and 2 teachers from the disciplines of Environment and Rural Development, and Arts History and Culture related with the technical course of Environmental and Rural Tourism were guided in the Fossils Trail by Manuela Catana



5-6th May – **Barrancos school visits the Geopark.** Now students are coming from the far south of Portugal! 39 students and 4 teachers from the Health and Environment Club from Barrancos Middle School decided to spend 2 twos in direct contact with Nature...and with Manuela Catana. They searched for trilobites vestiges in the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia in a very hot day, meaning that all went swimming with our Trilobite and Orthoceras giant models. For sleeping they chose the night sounds from Idanha-a-Nova camping. Next day was time to discover the forest in the Living Science Center of Proença-a-Nova and the fossil logs from the House of Arts and Culture, in Vila Velha de Ródão. Lunch time was a picnic in the beautiful beach of Aldeia Ruiva, with more refreshing time for swimming in Isna river.



7-10th May – **Murcia University meets the Geopark.** The Andalusian University from Murcia came for a long visit to the Naturtejo Geopark to complement the geological information presented in the classroom. 42 teachers and professors from the Environmental Sciences graduation of the Faculty of Biology were welcomed by Carlos Neto de Carvalho in the IdanhaNatura hotel. In the first day the group discovered with Manuela Catana and Joana Rodrigues all the mysteries of Penha Garcia fossils and the granite boulders from Monsanto hiking by two short footpaths which introduced them to geodiversity values and geoconservation issues. Arneiro Roman Gold Mine was the third geomonument visited. It was discussed the need of more detailed studies in the area and an urgent protection strategy. This strategy has already started with the protection under the Law of Portas de Ródão Natural Monument which includes the Roman mine. But is still urgent to develop specific measures to protect the remains. After, there was time for the boat trip at Tejo River through Portas de Ródão refreshed by some raindrops. A vulture was waiting for the group in his nest and three funny static turtles were the target for cameras. Closing the visit the group visited the Fossil Trees from Vila Velha de Ródão.



8th May – **Conference at the VII Iberian Meeting of Young Paleontologists.** Carlos Neto de Carvalho had the pleasure to close this highly attended meeting by Spanish students and researchers, but only by few Portuguese ones, held in the city of Torres Vedras. He gave a conference about the importance of *Cruziana* trace fossils, from the history of Paleontology, ichnological and ethological to tourist and marketing views. Most of the participants were present and future dinosaurologists and archaeozoologists so this conference was a different approach for 3 days full of bones...

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9th May – **Naturtejo Geopark presented in Arouca Geopark.** On the presentation of Arouca Geopark as the newest member of European Geoparks Network Armindo Jacinto was among the special invited guests to present EGN members. Our EGN coordinator, Nickolas Zouros, was once again invited to strength the bonds of our network.

12th May – **Dutch tour operator tests the Geopark.** A friendly couple from Holland experimented the Geopark to prepare one-week hiking programmes with Casa do Forno guesthouse & geo-bakery. With the help of Carlos Neto de Carvalho and João Gerales they followed the Holy Waters Trail and were introduced to the bluish-shale outcrops with some of the oldest Iberian signs of life. Meanwhile they prepared audio-guides in Dutch for the visitors about this non-signalled outstanding trail up the Erges river.

14th May – **Geopark presented in Azores.** The partnership between Naturtejo Geopark and the Azores Islands Autonomic Government for the development of a Geopark is becoming stronger and stronger. This time Rafael André went to Azores to present Naturtejo Geopark example to the Regional Minister of Environment and to support João Carlos Nunes and Eva Lima project leaders for the application of Azores Geopark to EGN in a short period of time (2010).

15th May – **Ministeries of Environment from Portugal and Brazil for Geoparks.** Armindo Jacinto was invited by the Portuguese Minister of the Environment for a meeting in Lisbon with the homologue minister from Brazil to present the Naturtejo Geopark model and to talk about the Geoparks Network. Naturtejo Geopark is supporting the development of Geoparks in Brazil where there is a strong commitment of federal and regional authorities to develop 29 geoparks. We are developing joint projects to achieve common standards in both countries.

16-17th May – **1st Trans Naturtejo Geopark: just another off-road tour.** AlenTTerra outdoor club from Nisa organized the 1st edition of a tourist off-road tour across all the Geopark's municipalities with the support of Naturtejo. Off-road rallies and tours are very common in the Geopark's territory. They are open to cars, motorbikes and quads and, even being called "tourist tours", usually they are noisy and pollutant rallies where people find landscapes but mostly fun of driving off-road in big groups. Yes, this two-days event was another example of these environmental-not-so-friendly tourist activities...





17th May – **Opening of the Embroidery and Clay Museum in Nisa.** The multispotted museum of Nisa has a new attraction. An old building was recovered to present the arts of clay. Clay pottery is a symbol of Nisa very famous in Portugal. The Pedrado “=Stoned” from Nisa, as the name refers, is decorated with fragments of milky quartz. Patterns are mostly natural (flowers) and geometrical ones. This is also a living museum due to the fact that the visitors may experience to put the hands on the clay and to learn how to do handcraft.



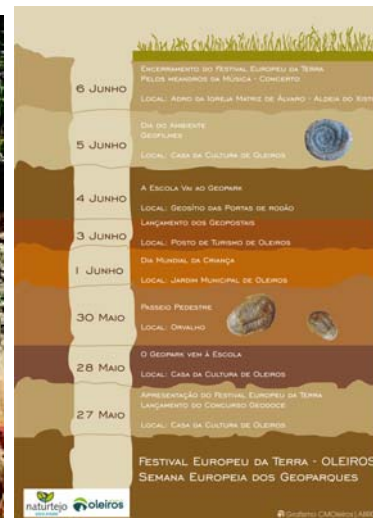
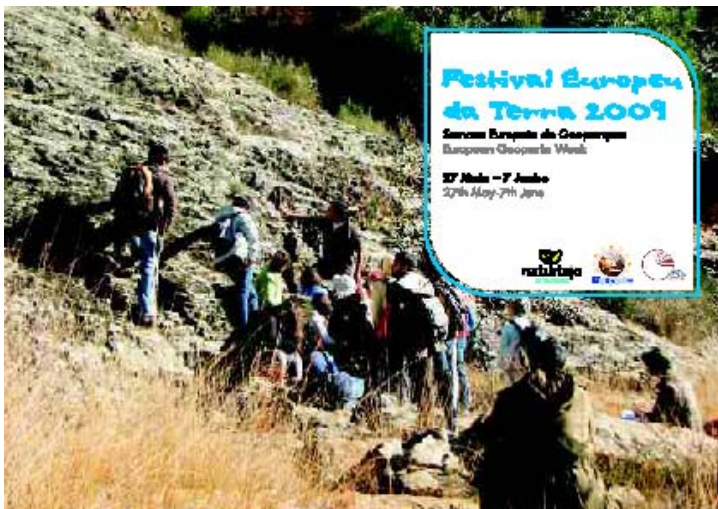
18th May – **Intelligent Sport in the Geopark.** The British Company Intelligent Sports is partnering with Naturtejo Geopark for the finals of Challenger World Series for the Enterprise World. This company is the world’s largest sports, entertainment, fashion, tourism & lifestyle marketing and management company. It owns, manages or represents more than 500 events around the world. In 2009 10 Intelligent Sport World Series challenge events are taking place in 5 continents. And the World Finals is now being discussed with Naturtejo Geopark to take place in December. The events are physical, exciting and fun - and they require mental agility, team spirit, time management, decision making and devising strategy. They combine running, canoeing or biking...with engineering. This event attracts senior management to board directors from 20% of the 100 most important companies, and 22% of the customers are Fortune 1000. The manager Gerry Dawson visited the territory to meet Armindo Jacinto, Carlos Neto de Carvalho and the Idanha-a-Nova responsible for sports, José Alexandre, after the first introductory meeting during FITUR tourism fair of Madrid. They are now looking for sponsorship to bring this highly important sport event to the reality of the Geopark.

23rd May – **New project for tourism communication in old mines.** The entity responsible in Portugal for energy and mining regulation as a new project to develop a communication online platform about geomining tourist facilities. Bernardo Lemos is the mentor of the process that is reuniting municipalities, museums and NGO’s from all over the country for the web promotion of geomining heritage. He visited Naturtejo Geopark with Carlos Neto de Carvalho to understand our potentialities. After a short introduction to the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia they pass by the Mines Trail in Segura. Then they lunch at the Geo-restaurant Petiscos & Granitos and later visited Arneiro Roman Mine. Naturtejo Geopark is seriously involved in this project despite of missing the first national meeting of geomining institutions...



24th May – **Opening of the new**

Schist Trail in Álvaro. Oleiros municipality and Pinus Verde prepared a new hiking path in the outstanding landscape of Álvaro schist village. This new Schist Trail enables to discover the old land of the Hospital Order and the mountain & river fascinating landscapes. Almost 100 people participated in the opening event.



27th May –

Launching of the European Earth Festival 2009 in Oleiros. The European Geoparks Week 2009 had the motto "...with your Earth". 19 events were organized with Naturtejo by municipalities, local NGO's and companies. As the most enthusiastic municipality Oleiros launched this European Week with the "Geosweet" contest that is running until August and the Pine Fair. With the contest Oleiros pretend to innovate and immortalize local tastes with its history and geology.

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27-28th May – **Barreiro School** meet the Geopark during the **European Earth Festival**. 89 students from the 7th grade and 10 teachers from Quinta Nova da Telha Middle School met the giant trace fossils from Penha Garcia and the giant boulders from Monsanto in two days of happiness and learning. Manuela Catana and João Gerales were the leaders of the two groups.



28th May – **Geopark goes to school in Oleiros**. 50 students from the primary school learnt more about geological wonders from the Geopark, in Oleiros, with Joana Rodrigues. The children discovered the geologist job, and about the importance of the Geology in the modern society, about the Geodiversity around their school and learnt also that the landscape can be sculpted naturally with simple natural processes. They also learnt that Obelix has a rock in his back but he is not a geologist and that geologist doesn't get dress like Fred Flintstone...
Oleiros Municipality surprised everybody with stickers "I live in a Geopark!!!".

Programa de Actividades		
<p>Lunes, 25 de mayo</p> <p>10:00h Presentación de la Semana de las Campesinas Europeas 2009</p> <p>Actividades con escolares:</p> <p>Visita a la Casa de los Vaqueiros y a las zonas de floribulgar</p> <p>Exposición fotográfica sobre la Red Europea de Geoparques</p> <p>Taller de cerámica "Monsanto el Cabal"</p> <p>Taller de fabricación de guantón</p>	<p>Miércoles, 26 de mayo</p> <p>10:00h Actividades con escolares:</p> <p>Visita a la Casa de los Vaqueiros y a las zonas de floribulgar</p> <p>Exposición fotográfica sobre la Red Europea de Geoparques</p> <p>Taller de cerámica "Monsanto el Cabal"</p> <p>Taller de fabricación de guantón</p>	<p>Jueves, 28 de mayo</p> <p>10:00h Actividades con escolares:</p> <p>Visita a la Casa de los Vaqueiros y a las zonas de floribulgar</p> <p>Exposición fotográfica sobre la Red Europea de Geoparques</p> <p>Taller de cerámica "Monsanto el Cabal"</p> <p>Taller de fabricación de guantón</p>
<p>Martes, 26 de mayo</p> <p>09:00 Jóvenes "Geodiversidad y Geoparques"</p> <p>El grupo del Geoparque Cabo de Galuphar y la Red Europea de Geoparques en el desarrollo sostenible a través del Geoturismo</p> <p>Casa de los Vaqueiros, Rostrogueir</p> <p>Programa</p> <p>09:00 h. Entrega de Documentación</p> <p>09:30 h. Presentación de los Jóvenes</p> <p>10:00 h. La Red Europea de Geoparques</p> <p>11:00 h. Café</p> <p>11:30 h. Nuevas Modalidades Turísticas al guantón</p> <p>13:00 h. Mesa Redonda</p>	<p>Viernes, 29 de mayo</p> <p>09:00 h. Presentación de la exposición "HERRA DE ARTE"</p> <p>Muestra de pintura, escultura, fotografía, cerámica... en torno al geodiversidad del Parque Natural</p> <p>Lugar: Centro de Artes Escénicas de la Vila de Taveir</p> <p>Fecha: 29 de mayo de 12 de junio</p> <p>Horario de exposición de 10 a 21 horas</p>	<p>Sábado, 30 de mayo</p> <p>09:30 Jóvenes:</p> <p>Los Alentejos, 800 años de historia eterna</p> <p>Estadio de Rostrogueir</p> <p>Piñeira Intimida</p>
<p>Viernes, 29 de mayo</p> <p>09:00 h. Presentación de la exposición "HERRA DE ARTE"</p> <p>Muestra de pintura, escultura, fotografía, cerámica... en torno al geodiversidad del Parque Natural</p> <p>Lugar: Centro de Artes Escénicas de la Vila de Taveir</p> <p>Fecha: 29 de mayo de 12 de junio</p> <p>Horario de exposición de 10 a 21 horas</p>	<p>Sábado, 6 de junio</p> <p>09:30 Jóvenes:</p> <p>Las Tecnologías populares en el uso de nuestra tierra valiente</p> <p>Junta local, Rostrogueir</p> <p>Piñeira Intimida</p>	



29th May - **Naturtejo Geopark presented during the European Geoparks Week of Cabo de Gata Geopark.** All the EGN members, as Geopark Cabo de Gata-Nijar, are celebrating their European Geoparks Week. In the 29th of May there was a seminar on the subject "Geotourism and Geoparks" where it was discussed with the local community the role of the Cabo de Gata Geopark and the EGN in the sustainable development through geotourism. This seminar was held in the Casa de los Vulcones (The Volcanoes House), in the small village of Rodalquilar, right in the center of a volcano caldera. Rosa Mendoza and Pablo Rivas presented the EGN, and the Cabo de Gata Geopark dynamics. Joana Rodrigues from Naturtejo Geopark presented the Naturtejo project centered in the local development and the importance of the Geobrand, using as the exemple the successful projects of Geopark's GeoRestaurant, GeoBakery and GeoProducts. Local projects were also presented and discussed among the active audience.

At the end of the day an exhibition was opened called "Tierra de Arte" (Art's Earth) with paints, sculptures, ceramics, photography and even music inspired by the Geodiversity of the Cabo de Gata Geopark. Next day, Pablo Rivas guided a group in a GeoTrail around the local mining history from the last 500 years.

29-31st May – **Olive Oil National Festival in Castelo Branco.** The second national Olive Oil Biennale was organized in the Castelo Branco city centre with the support of the Beira Interior Association of Olive Oil Producers, the Olive Oil Confraternity, the Olive Oil House and Naturtejo Geopark. 60000 locals and visitors participated in all the moments, environments and experiences surrounding olive oil. The Geopark was promoted through the Tourism of Centre Region stand and attracted thousands of curious people, whom Alice Marcelo provided with geotourist maps, leaflets, information and sympathy.



30th May - 650 trekkers

launched the Orvalho Geotrail. Orvalho village must be congratulated! After 4 years projecting Paulo Urbano, the dynamic President of Orvalho, was very satisfied seeing so many people coming from all over the country to walk in the launch of the Orvalho GeoTrail. 657 hikers with 4 to 80 years old were prepared for the difficult but fantastic 10 km trail. The linen embroiders were welcoming the hikers with their wood looms right in the middle of the street. Several local politicians and citizens, as well as the responsible for Oleiros European Geoparks Week Inês Martins, Rafael André and Manuela Catana were the invited guests for the a national radio talk show broadcasted directly from the beginning of the trail immediately before the starting hour. In this way, people all over the country listen the enthusiasm of all the participants just before the starting. What an

amazing promotion for the Geopark and for the European Geoparks Week! During the trekking participants had the opportunity to cross a quartzite gorge using an Himalaya-bridge, do climbing and other outdoor sports, eat traditional cookies and listen Manuela Catana explaining the formation of Fraga da Água d'Alta waterfalls. The trail ends on the top of Cabeço Mosqueiro quartzite highs where a medieval dinner was expecting the excited hikers. Lots of food and drinks in the old hands-only way surrounded by the fantastic Zêzere landscapes at the evening time! Vivarte theatre company included the participants in their performance and altogether revived old times.




30-31st May - **TransGeopark off-road to admire and learn with landscapes.** Is it possible to transform off-road events in something different? Yes, it is and TransGeopark came to show more environmental-friendly ways of visiting natural areas by car. This 330 km off-road tour across the best landscapes of all the six Geopark's municipalities was organized by Casa do Forno geo-bakery with Naturtejo Geopark. The group was small for the purpose of the visit: 11 off-road cars and 28 participants. In total they produced about 3040 kg of CO₂ emissions since participants left their homes from several different parts of Portugal, from Sesimbra to Santo Tirso. These emissions will be balanced by planting 20 trees from the autochthonous flora in public areas. So only the wheel tracks left momentary signs in the landscape...

Hot, dust and contrasting landscapes: these were the main ingredients of the first edition of TransGeopark. This two-day thematic visit allowed meeting the best and remote places of Geopark's vast territory. Again, the challenge was great: to unite in only two days the six municipalities in a mostly off-road travel to get a general overview on the changes occurred in the natural landscape with Time. The problem was to challenge 6 hours driving and more than 35°C!

The first day was dedicated to Portas de Ródão Natural Monument and Tejo River. Sometimes participants were invited to park the car and walk to discover like in Arneiro Roman gold mine but the temperature was too hot! The lunch was in Portas de Ródão picnic area: a barbecue with refreshing gazpacho soup. Thus, we were eating and, at the same, time, appreciating the flight of the vulture. During the afternoon the caravan crossed Ingadanais old copper mines and the Templar rural lands of Açafa to find the hidden landscapes of Tejo Internacional Natural Park. The nice dinner was served in Casa do Forno guesthouse, between the swimming pool and unexpected rain showers. Cheese from Salvaterra do Extremo and smoked ham, tomato with egg soup, bones rice and bread pudding: local culture on the plate!

Next day was time to find Termas de Monfortinho hot springs and to learn about the past Ordovician Ocean and inhabitants in Penha Garcia. After being fascinated by the landscapes from Penha Garcia mountains off-raiders moved to the granite "archipelago" of Monsanto and tasted the famous cherries from the region.



Lunch time was an adventure in the margin of Almaceda stream: time for swimming in this wild area close to Martim Branco schist village and eat “Earth Slices” and octopus pastels in the middle of nowhere surrounded by pines and ferns. At the end the caravan crossed the beautiful cherry-tree fields from Montes da Senhora to reach Portas de Almourão geomonument. Two days full of culture and landscapes, environmental sensitization and friendship...to repeat next year.



Paulo Urbano, 38 years old, is the President of Orvalho village since 22 years old. Well known by the so fearless way that he materializes projects, Paulo was responsible to transform Orvalho Geomonuments in heritage references for the region. With the opening of Orvalho GeoTrail and the success of the annual trekking party during the European Geoparks Week he showed an irreverent strategy of promoting geosites that could be national attractions.



Cruziana: What has changed in Orvalho since the creation of Geopark Naturtejo?

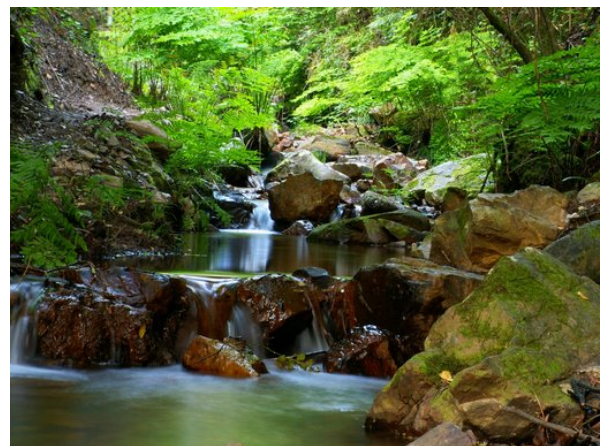
Paulo Urbano: I have an interesting story about my first contact with Carlos Neto de Carvalho. In 2004, Orvalho village was building Mosqueiro Viewpoint and once I met Carlos looking and analyzing the rocks there. I started a conversation to understand what he was doing... After some minutes chatting about Naturtejo project I thought "Here is someone that can help me to promote this place!" But I never thought that Geopark Naturtejo could achieve such importance as it has today.

After 5 years Orvalho changed a lot. It's a proud to receive visits from all over the world in our website. Besides there are a lot of people that know Orvalho because of its geomonuments. But it is also interesting that some people from Orvalho, which have always been near the geomonuments they didn't know them and nowadays they understand their real value.

Cruziana: What are the present challenges to Orvalho?

Paulo Urbano: As all the inland of the country our bigger challenge is to counter desertification. Orvalho village

is never tiered of develop efforts to create infrastructures and conditions to attract young people to this region and to allow them to become active members in the society. There are a lot of initiatives such as Social Action and Health, Water Supply and Sewage, Communications, Urban Planning and Recreation, Culture, Sports, Education, Environment and Forest Planning. These initiatives have been improving the life conditions from people from Orvalho.



Água d'Alta valley (Photo: Paulo Urbano)

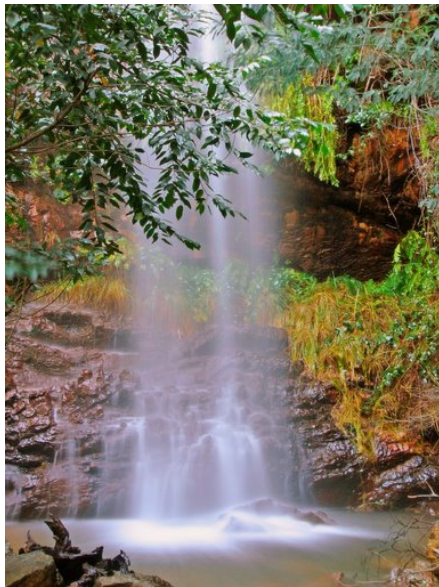
Cruziana: What is the role of the local management in the regional development of Naturtejo Geopark?

Paulo Urbano: The municipalities (and we, the presidents) can and should be privileged partners of the Geopark

creating synergies to develop the territory. In my opinion, Naturtejo Geopark is the handle to the sustainable tourism that the local management must potentiate and create richness in the region. For me, as president, I have to take these opportunities (in a moment where everybody talks about New Opportunities). I see Naturtejo Geopark as a huge opportunity to potentiate my region.

Cruziana: What are the attractions in Orvalho included in Naturtejo Geopark?

Paulo Urbano: Orvalho is surely the village with more geomonuments in all the Geopark. Fraga da Água D'Alta, Mosqueiro Viewpoint, Malhada Velha Epigenic Gorge... Nobody can be indifferent to these geomonuments with such beautiful landscapes. To visit these places visitors can hike on the trail "GeoRota do Orvalho".



Fraga da Água d'Alta Geomonument (Photo: Paulo Urbano)

Cruziana: One of the bets of Orvalho are innovative trails. What is being planned?

Paulo Urbano: Orvalho GeoTrail pretends to be an axis to introduce the elements water, air...and Earth. There is many work done but much more planned. We do not have lack of projects and ideas, but Money and

people to realize them all. Let's resume what we can offer in the hiking trails:

WATER – passing by the Orvalho and Água D'Alta streams, one may find many watermills, olive oil press and all the beauty of rock dams and waterfalls leading to the waterfall 20 m high where all the flow of Água D'Alta stream falls down freely. There is a new path, with several waterfalls, following the stream until Presa stream;

AIR – Himalaya bridge 60 m long, 40 wood bridges, ropes, slide...Here, hikers can truly feel the sensation of being walking on the clouds;

EARTH – Schist walls, rock dams stopping time. Smells, odors...At last, we must emphasize the outstanding beauty of the trail, painted by a mixture of divine colors where the green from the forest melts with soils and rock colors, making the difference to all kinds of perception. In the core of the experience, the running of crystal-like waters in the mountain streams and springs in symbiosis with the melodic sounds of birds taking us to travel to the past, to another World that we thought extinct. And it is right there, in the exact moment when we meet Nature again, that we realize we are in a truly special place: Orvalho...

Planned?

As I mentioned before we don't have lack of ideas and projects. Funding is scarce but there is always something to do with much imagination and will. Depending on the season, there are several activities that we can provide in the GeoTrail: nature/landscape watching; searching for aromatic and medicinal plants; collecting arbutus fruits for the traditional liquor; embroidery, linen cycle, visit and use of wood looms, corn milling and corn bread workshop...well, many activities. In this right moment we are applying to do an "Adventure Park", taking part of the GeoTrail, as well as to develop an

Environmental Interpretive Center related with the GeoTrail.



Cabeço do Mosqueiro Geomorphological Viewpoint, (Photo: Paulo Urbano)

Cruziana: What are the potentialities of the new hiking trails for the tourist development in Oleiros region.

Paulo Urbano: Orvalho GeoTrail was opened with 657 participants, which shows well the great interest of the whole area. This trail has potential to become a mention. The trekkers that made already the trail are unanimous in placing it in the top of the Pedestrian Routes from Portugal. In this region, a significant part of Oleiros Municipality, I think we can contribute to develop tourism. Besides the trail, the village offers several interest points that can help the tourism in the region.

Cruziana: What kind of infrastructures do Orvalho need to receive visitor who want to enjoy the landscape?

Paulo Urbano: That is for us a big problem. We are in the zero point; we don't have infrastructures like restaurants and lodging with quality. The private investment hasn't understood yet the niche that exists here and that can be taken and exploited. However, in 2008, Orvalho village received a lot of contacts from tourists looking for information about restaurants and lodging in this region. Now we are already contacting with local investors to show them the local potentialities. On the other side we have

a project to make an application for public funding to create 3 guesthouses.

Cruziana: You are known for you dynamic personality in the Presidency of Orvalho village. How can you involve the community in the local development projects?

Urbano: Love, dedication and work. People from Orvalho sometimes don't agree with our measures however they know the love and dedication I have to my village. To this feeling of love, dedication and strong will nobody is indifferent. So the people are easily involved in our initiatives. For me, as president, it is a proud to do this work but mostly it is important to do work that will be a proud for the people who live here.

Cruziana: Nowadays Orvalho starts to be recognized by its natural beauty. Do you think that the geosites protection, under Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Institute could bring national reputation?

Paulo Urbano: It couldn't bring, it brings. Nowadays Orvalho and its geomonuments are already the scenery to several activities such as School Visits, Photo Workshops, Hiking Trails (with people coming from all the country) and GeoCaching. That's why we believe that this is the right way.

Cruziana: Naturtejo Geopark belongs to Global and European Geoparks Networks. What benefits can Orvalho receive from this partnership?

Paulo Urbano: First, reputation, not only at regional, national but also international levels. Second we want to join reputation with development, creating tourism and leisure infrastructures, such as tourist products and small scale hosting.

Cruziana: Orvalho is located 45 minutes far from Castelo Branco. Do you feel

that Orvalho is “near” Naturtejo Geopark decisions?

Paulo Urbano: I feel that Oleiros is close. As president, I look for this closeness and I try to integrate the activities and participate in the Geopark. Orvalho village is always with its door open to work with Naturtejo Geopark to develop activities.



Schists houses (Photo: Paulo Urbano)

Cruziana: What advices would you leave for Geopark Naturtejo and European Geoparks Network?

Paulo Urbano: To Naturtejo Geopark I wish strenght to keep work in this way, involving the communities in the Geopark concept and in its activities. I think that the sustainability of this “Geopark Phenomenon” has to follow this idea and consolidate the brand that represents.

3) Geopark's Impact in Media

Newspapers/Magazines

May (Ensino Magazine' Geo-news) - “European Earth Festival”

May (O Concelho de Vila Velha de Ródão) - “Portas de Ródão in the State gazette)

6th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “Tourism gives new life to the village of Salvaterra do Extremo”

6th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “Monsanto brings thousands traveling throughout History”

7th May (Reconquista) - “Inner Nature in photo”

7th May (Reconquista) - “Redentoristas College in contact with Nature”

7th May (Jardins Magazine) - “European Earth Festival 2009 - Trans-Geoparks unite Naturtejo municipalities”

12th May (Povo da Beira) - “Photoschist in the shop of Figueira village”

12th May (Povo da Beira) - “Idanha-a-Nova presents guide book for birds”

12th May (Povo da Beira) - “Opening of Álvaro Schist Trail”

12th May (Povo da Beira) - “European Earth Festival - Oleiros 2009”

13th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “Schist Trail meet Sarzedas”

13th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “Discovering Monsanto”

13th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “TransNaturtejo connects Nisa to Idanha”

13th May (www.sexoforte.net/mulher/) - “An immensity of Time revealed in Space...”

13th May (Expresso do Pinhal) - “Opening of Álvaro Schist Trail”

14th May (Reconquista) - “Earth Festival in Oleiros”

14th May (Reconquista) - “Álvaro presents schist trails”

14th May (Reconquista) - “Schist Trail meet Sarzedas”

14th May (Reconquista) - “1st TransNaturtejo connects Nisa to Idanha”

20th May (Jornal de Notícias) - “Olive Oil Festival expects 60000 visits”

20th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “Walking trail Lands of Schist in Alameda”

- 20th May (Gazeta do Interior) - “District Meeting of Forest Clubs”
- 21st May (Reconquista) - “Belgais with Darwin’s evolution”
- 21st May (Reconquista) - “The importance of schist”
- 21st May (Reconquista) - “Geoactivities in Oleiros”
- 21st May (Reconquista) - “Geotrail and Medieval dinner - Orvalho blows up”
- 26th May (Povo da Beira’s first page) - “Naturtejo Geopark “connect communities” during European Earth Festival”
- 26th May (Povo da Beira) - “VTT and old cars in the Olive Oil Festival 2009”
- 26th May (Povo da Beira) - “NaturESE took 50 students to Penha Garcia”
- 26th May (Povo da Beira) - “Portas de Ródão Natural Monument in the Republic Diary”
- 27th May – (Gazeta do Interior) – “Olive oil National Fair in the city”
- 28th May – (Reconquista) – “Earth Festival in the Geopark”
- 28th May - (Reconquista) - “Hospitalary House in lands of Schist”
- 28th May (reconquista) - “Portas de Ródão protection with rules”

Radio

- 26th May (Radio Renascença national radio) - Carlos Neto de Carvalho was interviewed about the European Earth Festival 2009.
- 30th May (Antena 1 National Radio) - Rafael André and Manuela Catana participated in the talk show “The Days of Future” of Edgar Canelas live from Orvalho opening of the Geotrail whose main theme was the European Earth Festival, focusing topics such as Geopark and local development, Orvalho natural and cultural heritage and the opening of the Geotrail.

4) Publications

Scientific Contribution for Geosciences

- NETO DE CARVALHO, C. - *Cruziana* d’Orbigny, 1842 em Portugal: da interpretação paleobiológica à consagração como Produto Geoturístico. In: Pérez Garcia *et al.* (eds.), *Actas do VII Encontro de Jovens Investigadores em Paleontologia*. Paleolusitana, 1: 33-42 (abstract in English).
- RODRIGUES, J., & NETO DE CARVALHO, C. - Geopark Naturtejo: os Geoparques e a sua importância científica e cultural. *III Encontro de Professores de Geociências do Alentejo e Algarve “Novas Fronteiras da Geologia”*, Vila do Bispo, 1-2 Maio, 17 pp. (In Portuguese).



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Cruziana