





#### In this issue:

Landscape Festival 2018 invites to discover Naturtejo UNESCO Geopark International Bird Conference co-organised with Naturtejo Geopark Naturtejo Geopark is a School in Nature Walking Trails for everyone ...and more!

GEOPARK NATURTEJO DA MESETA MERIDIONAL - UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK - E-MAGAZINE









#### **GEO-stories of our places and people: Retaxo**

Travelling towards Castelo Branco, Retaxo is where one feels the end of the journey is near. Sheltered from the highway and the railway, near Olelas rising slightly and unhurried, Retaxo stretches to meet his twin village Cebolais de Cima. Graceful village with 843 inhabitants extends its domains by 12,27km2 of phyllites and greywackes, some of the oldest rocks in the country, testimonies of a deep ocean folded in a mountain later erased in a wavy plan by approximation of the African continent. The settlement in this plateau is ancient, as evidenced by the various megalithic monuments identified here dating back to the Neolithic. In the centre of the village there are the remains of the dolmen of Retaxo, in Fonte Nova street. But only at the end of the 19th century, with the implementation of the woollen industry, Retaxo grew and extended until touching its neighbour. This industry shaped the local identity, blending with Cebolais de Cima. Now there are silences left of a time that deserves to be passed slowly. Locals and visitors can fish in Represa or cycling across the fields. Tourism hasn't arrived yet. But it could. The access routes are privileged by those who choose the individual transport or the most ecological and collective transport, the train. The city is one step away and the Biosphere Reserve of the International Tejo, in the other. However, in this territory that integrates Naturtejo Geopark, UNESCO Global Geopark, there are silences and the warming feeling of ending our journey.

> The editor Carlos Neto de Carvalho Scientific coordinator Geologist

Cover: (Projecto Objectiva: Geopark)

# **MONTHLY ACTIVITIES**





**2, 7, 9, 11 and 14 May – 2nd Field Trip of Rivers Project: Monitoring Ponsul River by students from Idanha-a-Nova.** During these days 116 students from the School Group José Silvestre Ribeiro, in Idanha-a-Nova, (5°A, 5°B, 5°C, 8°A, 8°B) held a fieldwork in sections of Ponsul river adopted by their class last fall (Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia, Marechal Carmona Dam, Sra. da Graça – ETAR, Sra. da Graça – Rosa Cometa, Idanha-a-Velha). During the field trip students monitored the health state of the river, by identifying and counting animal and plant species (highlight to the macroinvertebrate analysis), testing on the degree of turbidity and water pH, determining current speed and water flow, checking the state of the margins along the section and collecting garbage. These analyses also allowed students to compare these new data with those already collected in earlier field trip, held in Autumn. The monitors for these activities were Manuela Catana, Arlindo Cardosa and Catarina Caria.



**3, 8 and 24 May – "Through the fossils trail in Penha Garcia searching for Trilobites traces (Cruziana)" for students of the School Group Nuno Álvares, in Castelo Branco.** These field trips were aimed for 99 pupils from the 7th grade of the School Group Nuno Álvares in Castelo Branco, in the framework of History and Natural Sciences classes, accompanied by 11 teachers.

Students learned and reminded concepts of bio and geodiversity in the majestic outdoor classroom - the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia. These outdoor classes were boosted by Catarina Caria and Manuela Catana. The 24th May fieldtrip was integrated in the Landscape Festival 2018.



**5 and 6 May – Divine Holly Cross Festival in Monsanto.** During the weekend, the Divine Holly Cross Festival, in the Historical Village of Monsanto, was a success with thousands of visitors travelling back to the medieval period. The "Most Portuguese Village", in the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova was the perfect set for a remake of the medieval period, inspired by what is most genuine in Portugal. "We tell the story of Monsanto during two days, by its templar roots, showing it is possible to combine remakes of medieval times with usages, customs and traditions still living in Monsanto", says Armindo Jacinto, president of the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova. So, is no surprise that one of the most awaited moments for visitors is the Castle Legend staging. This is a celebration to the heroic resistance of the people to the siege of the fortress with the participation of locals. In times when Monsanto enjoys high international prestige, the Medieval Fair is a winning bet. Today represents a tourist and cultural postcard inviting visitors from all around the world to join the festive spirit, through diverse historical remakes. "Another Divine Holly Cross Festival, another flood", says the President of the Union of Parishes Monsanto and Idanha-a-Velha, who also highlighted that "Monsanto has unique features to host a medieval festival", with its castle, boulders and granite architecture to offer the perfect set. Music, dance, parades and weapons tournaments brought joy to Monsanto. From morning to night, the mystique of the historical village and the festival programme offered unforgettable moments.



7 May – Field Trip within the framework of the ESTEAM Project for a test version of the future App "TeachOUT"

**7 May – Field Trip within the framework of the ESTEAM Project for a test version of the future App "TeachOUT".** This activity was attended by 17 students from the 7th grade of the School Group José Silvestre Ribeiro in Idanha-a-Nova. During the field trip in the Inselberg of Monsanto Geomonument, students tested the paper version with questions and content of the future App "TeachOUT", which is being developed within the framework of the ESTEAM Project (ERASMUS+). Students answered the questions of this pilot test in groups. The selected class for this pilot test was a class of the teacher André Azeiteiro, one of the Natural Sciences Teachers working in the project. Boosting this outdoor class were André Azeiteiro and Elsa Cantinhas as well as Manuela Catana and Mariana Vilas Boas, from Naturtejo Geopark, supported by Catarina Caria. On the day after the outdoor class students answered an opinion survey about the pilot test. Their opinions will be used during the next phase of the project, the pilot digital version of the App.



**8 May – Field Trip "Through the fossils trail in Penha Garcia searching for Trilobites traces (Cruziana)".** This activity was attended by 44 students accompanied by 6 teachers from 5th and 7th grades of the School Group of Crato, within the framework of Natural Sciences discipline. Students watched in situ many of the subjects learned in class, specially the Cruziana ichnofossils. The monitors for this activity were Manuela Catana and Catarina Caria.



**9 May – Chinese Journalists visit Monsanto and Penha Garcia.** The Promotional Agency for the Central Region is the regional entity responsible for the external promotion of the region. One more fam trip for Chinese Journalists was arranged by this Agency and passed through Naturtejo Geopark's territory. This time, two journalists of Lonely Planet and Outdoor Exploration came to visit the Inselberg of Monsanto and the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia, quided the Carlos Neto de Carvalho and the volunteer Yilu Zhang



**9 and 10 May – Field Trip "Hidden secrets of Vale Mourão and the forest in the Living Science Centre".** During two days, 106 students accompanied by 10 teachers of the 12th grade of the Gago Coutinho High School from Alverca do Ribatejo, travelled to the municipality of Proença-a-Nova to learn Science within the scope of Biology and Geology discipline. This field trip is a result of a partnership between Naturtejo Geopark and the Living Science Forest Centre and allowed students to attend workshops, visit the exhibitions, held a walking trail "Secrets of Vale Mourão" so they could explore the very rich bio- and geodiversity (highlighting to the magnificent folds) of the geomonument Portas de Almourão. The guides for this activity were Manuela Catana and Catarina Caria, and partners from the Living Science Forest Centre.



**11 May – 4th and last Session of the Training Course for Teachers "Naturtejo Geopark – UNESCO Global Geopark as educational resource" – 2nd Edition.** This 4th session of the Training Course for teachers, from preschool to high school, was attended by 23 teachers from Naturtejo Geopark's territory (Castelo Branco and Idanha-a-Nova) and the School Group of Seia. The session was theoretical and practical, held at the headquarters of the school group Afonso Paiva, in Castelo Branco. Teachers presented 9 works, 8 of them created in groups from different disciplinary groups, such as games, presentations, experimental protocols, field trips and pre-field trips' scripts, etc. Educational resources were developed covering the natural and/or historical-cultural heritage of Naturtejo Geopark territory. Two course's trainers also attended this session, the geologist José Brilha, Professor at University of Minho, and Manuela Catana, responsible for the Educational Programs of Naturtejo Geopark to evaluate works and moderate the debate. The result of this edition was very positive, as a significant number of teachers attended coming from different levels of schooling and a wide range of disciplines. On the other hand, it was possible to introduce the educational value of heritage in Naturtejo Geopark's territory from a holistic point of view to more teachers who have however created their own educational resources to apply in class and develop new resources.



12 May – Training Course "From Trilobite Traces to Imperial Eagle Flight in Naturtejo Geopark – UNESCO Global Geopark", aimed for teachers and League for the Protection of Nature associates. 25 teachers and associates from the League for the Protection of Nature undertake the Fossils Trail in Penha Garcia, to know the Ichnological Park and learn more about feeding traces (Cruziana) left by Trilobites. Next, the group travelled to Segura to visit the Interpretative Centre for Biodiversity and for birdwatching, especially griffon vultures, near Erges Gorge, in the International Tejo Natural Park, International Tejo Biosphere Reserve and the Special Protection Area Tejo-Erges and Ponsul (one of the few areas where the Imperial Eagle nests in Portugal). This short-term training activity was organized by LPN in partnership with the Educational Service of Naturtejo Geopark. Manuela Catana supported by Catarina Caria was the trainer in the geodiversity area, and regarding the Imperial Eagle and Life-Imperial Project, the trainers were Jorge Fernandes and the Life-Imperial Project Technician Raquel Alcaria.



**12 and 13 May – Soup Festival in Proença-a-Velha.** Sunday, thousands of participants tasted and voted on more than 100 soups at contest, but the entertainment started on Saturday with the Accordionists and Concertina Players' Meeting. The contest is attended by restaurants, institutions and gastronomy talents from all around the region. Visitors could vote for their favourites. In the meantime, there were about 10 groups of Concertinas on an afternoon full of excitement. To open the appetite for Sunday the Soup of the People was served, cooked on the spot.

The Soup Festival is organized by the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and the Parish of Proença-a-Velha.

**13 May – The Fossils Trail.** A group of 12 visitors from Travel Agency YourTours in Braga walked along the Fossils Trail quided by Rui Nunes.



**16 and 17 May – Field Trip of the Life Imperial Project, in International Tejo Natural Park at Segura aimed to kindergarten and 1st Cycle children from Zebreira and Ladoeiro.** 31 kindergarten and 1st Cycle children from Zebreira and 43 from Ladoeiro, accompanied by 10 teachers and assistants attended the second environmental awareness session within the scope of Life Imperial Project "Protection of Iberian-Imperal-Eagle (Aquila adalberti) in Portugal". The activities took place in Segura, with a visit to the Interpretative Centre for Biodiversity "Lands of Idanha" and several educational games and birdwatching (griffon vultures and black storks) using binoculars and telescopes, near Erges Gorge. This area is part of the Special Protection Area Tejo-Erges and Ponsul, one of the few where the Imperial Eagle lives in Portugal and part of the International Tejo Natural Park and International Tejo Biosphere Reserve. These activities were boosted by the Life-Imperial Technician, Raquel Alcaria, in partnership with the Educational Service of the Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova and supported by Naturtejo Geopark with Manuela Catana and Catarina Caria.



**16 May - Collaborative Meeting to prepare the Valorisation Plan of International Tejo Natural Park 2018-2022.** Joana Rodrigues representing Naturtejo Geopark attended another meeting to prepare the Valorization Plan of International Tejo Natural Park 2018-2022 in Salvaterra do Extremo. The meeting coincided with the visit of EUROPARK Federation representatives, coming from Portugal and Bulgaria, and experienced in collaborative management of territories.

Difficulties experienced by the population were highlighted, namely at agricultural production level in the area of the Natural Park and discussed several projects of valorisation and promotion developed in the last decade in Salvaterra do Extremo, in collaboration with Naturtejo Geopark.

24 May to 10 June – Landscape Festival invites discovery of the UNESCO Geopark Naturtejo . The European Week of Geoparks lasts two weeks simultaneously in 71 UNESCO Geoparks. Hundreds of activities and events aim to highlight at European scale the importance of geological heritage and landscape interaction with local culture. The Landscape Festival unites the municipalities of Castelo Branco, Idanha-a-Nova, Oleiros, Penamacor, Proenca-a-Nova and Vila Velha de Ródão and shows the tourist and heritage importance of the landscape, as well as culture and distinguished local products. The Landscape Festival is part of iNature Project and has a strong connection to Nature. So, the first day was dedicated to an outdoor class in the Ichnological Park of Penha Garcia integrated in the Educational Programs of Naturtejo Geopark; the second travel to the past happened two days later. 7Cumes held, in the same spot, the Iberian Climbing Meeting during the weekend when the Portugal Day is celebrated. The Landscape Festival Program hosts many hiking trails calling for discovery, starting with GeoRota do Orvalho on the 26th. The next day, was time for the beautiful village of Vale do Souto to receive participants on their hiking trail; iin the same day, Penamacor received a Solidary Hiking, and really close in Castelo Branco with the Saint Martin hiking trail. On 3rd June, Foz do Giraldo hosted a walking trail, and Penamacor again is inviting for a Walk in Nature. Finally, on the last weekend of the Landscape Festival, is time for II Rota dos Canchais y Peñafiel, a cross border hiking trail in Salvaterra do Extremo. The technical and scientific component is filled with the national partners meeting of the Guide of the Portuguese Geological and Mines Sites in Termas de Monfortinho, and also the II International Birds Conference, to which Naturtejo Geopark associates due the theme relevance for tourism development in the region. Regarding local culture and history, the highlight goes to the Spike Festival in Orvalho and the Cherry Fair in Vila Velha de Ródão, on 3rd June, and the Templar Days in Castelo Branco between city halls and the historic centre from 7th to 10th June. Music, good food and interaction are present at the municipality festival in Proença-a-Nova, during the weekend of 10th June and the Intercultural Fair in Penamacor. The International Children's Day is marked by the opportunity to meet the mascot of the Naturtejo Geopark, Judite the Trilobite, in Idanha-a-Nova. Land products have been in the spotlight in numerous thematic festivals, starting with the Irresistible Flavours in Castelo Branco; on the same weekend also the Lamb Festival in Rosmaninhal. But the next two weeks are dedicated to Codfish in Idanha-a-Nova. On 2nd June the fish is local, with the Gastronomy Show of River Flavours in Lentiscais and Taberna Seca. The 2018 edition of the Landscape Festival in Naturtejo Geopark closes with the 3rd edition of Bread Crumble Festival in Segura. Locals and visitors, including national and foreign tourists, participated in thousands on these events making Naturtejo Geopark a true Tourism in Nature, Culture and Welcoming destination.

**25 May – Group from Oleiros visit Idanha-a-Velha.** A group of 35 residents in Oleiros visited the Historical Village of Idanha-a-Velha, accompanied by Jorge Costa.



**26 May – "Travel to the past in the Ichnological Park in Penha Garcia and in the Historical Village of Idanha-a-Velha".** Every year, since long ago, the prestigious botanist Jorge Paiva, a jubilant Professor at University of Coimbra organizes an annual tour for teachers and technicians, gardeners of the botanical garden and other employees of the Life Sciences Department at University of Coimbra. This year Professor Jorge Paiva asked the Educational Service of Naturtejo Geopark, supported by the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova, to create a visit program for one day in the municipality of Idanha-a-Nova integrating the Natural and Historical-Cultural heritage. Thus, in the context of the 2018 Landscape Festival, the 35 participants visited the Ichnological Park in Penha Garcia to learn a little more about their geological history and to observe the existing ichnofossils, guided by Manuela Catana. During the afternoon, in the Historical Village of Idanha-a-Velha, the group visited the Cathedral, the ancient oil press and the Epigraphic Archive and carried out a small walk in the village, guided by António Silveira Catana and Pedro Barreira.



**26 and 27 May – Lamb Festival in Rosmaninhal with new Geoproducts.** Rosmaninhal hosts another edition of the Lamb Festival inspired by transhumance, an ancient practice consisting in seasonal displacement of herds from the Estrela mountain, with gastronomy, activities and exhibitors related to the subject.

Casa dos Xarês, a Rural Tourism unit, from the village of Couto dos Correias, Naturtejo Geopark's partner, presented its geoproducts, closely related to the landscapes where they are produced, where raw materials originate and illustrate the stories they count. The Burning Schist (spicy chilli sauce in whisky), reports to the warmth of the region, the schist terrain where the very spicy chilli pepper grows. Tagus Aurifer (Au, chemical symbol of gold), a well-known reference of Tejo, was the name chosen for the olive oil produced by Casa dos Xarês, with olive trees growing overlooking Tejo and flavoured with rosemary and oregano, also from the vegetable garden. The Romans acclaimed the Tejo River as the river of Gold. The extensive flowering pastures in Rosmaninhal gained fame for centuries by their kilo-size gold nuggets. Its origin is uncertain, testimony of a special geodiversity. In the barriers of this Tejo there is another type of gold: this organic olive oil with superior quality aromatized by the indigenous essences of the spring fields. A family-made and exclusive production in the unique place of Couto dos Correias, in the heart of Naturtejo Geopark and Biosphere Reserve of International Tejo, territory doubly recognized by UNESCO. In the land of Gold, Tagus Aurifer is the tastiest discovery!

To keep memories of other times, Fungas do Xisto, are the slingshots (or Fungas, local designation) produced

**26 May - Solitary Hiking in Penamacor gathers 150 in Pedrogão de S. Pedro.** The Solidary Hiking "Water Sensations" was attended by one hundred and fifty participants. Although only about a hundred have performed the walk in Pedrógão de São Pedro, many more wanted to contribute to the cause, joining afterwards at lunchtime conviviality. It is recalled that the collected funds reverted in favour of the League of Friends of Pedrógão de São Pedro. This initiative was supported by the Municipality of Penamacor, the Union of Parishes Pedrogão de São Pedro and Bemposta, the Orientation Club, the Parish of Penamacor, the Volunteer Fire-fighters and EPAL. This was the 5th edition of this event which promises for a seguel in the coming years.

with broom, which delight children and adults. These geoproducts were presented, in the presence of the

mascot Judite, the Trilobite handcrafted, 100% in reused materials!

**27 May – Walking Trail in Vale do Souto.** The walking trail "Old Road Trail" was organized by ARCVASO (Recreational and Cultural Association of Vale do Souto). According to the organization "the friendliness is quaranteed and the landscapes fantastic" which attracted dozens of participants.

**27 May - Saint Martin Hiking Trail.** The Youth Association Ribeiro das Perdizes in Castelo Branco organized the VII Walking Trail – Saint Martin Hiking in the context of the Landscape Festival. The trail, with about 12 km, passed through the S. Martinho Hill and, this year, passing through Monte de S. Martinho farm, giving the opportunity to see the production not only animal, but also of organic products. The hiking also included a convivial lunch at the Virgin of Mércules sanctuary, with a picnic.



**29 May to 1 June – International Bird Conference in Lisbon.** Naturtejo Geopark – UNESCO Global Geopark coorganized the II International Bird Conference in Lisboa. This conference aims to gather, by exchanging knowledge, investigators working on the origin, evolution and bird interaction with men. It is intended to palaeontologists, pre-historians, archaeologists and historians.

Birds, more than 9000 living species, are the most successful group of flying vertebrates, overcoming any other, for their abundance and diversity, both in the present and in the past. Birds are amazing animals, either by their physiognomy, by the colour of their feathers, by flying, but also by their evolutionary history. In fact, birds are actually dinosaurs, because in the modern taxonomic organization, birds and Dinosaurs share the same branch of evolution: the branch of Dinosauria.

Birds appear represented in arts of diverse cultures and civilizations, from pre-history to the present day, in rock art, ceramics, sculpture, mosaics and painting. On the other hand, the birds' feathers were also used since the prehistory as adornment: Recent studies show that the Neanderthals used feathers of corvids to adorn the body. Like other animals, birds also appear associated to diverse mythologies, appearing even with divine characteristics within some peoples, as the ancient Egypt, in which the white Ibis was regarded the incarnation of the god Thoth.

The Conference, organized by the Portuguese Centre of Geo-history and Pre-history took place in Lisbon, at the National Library of Portugal and is organized in several thematic sessions, reflecting the various aspects of the Conference (the origin and evolution of birds; the man and birds and paleoenvironmental and environmental issues related to birds).

The session dedicated to birds behaviour in the fossil record organized with the support of the Naturtejo Geopark was attended by specialists from the USA, Hungary, Spain and France. The researcher Zain Belaustegui from the University of Barcelona, co-authored with Carlos Neto de Carvalho, scientific coordinator of Naturtejo Geopark, the known fossil record that allows reconstituting the evolution of the behaviour of this important Group of Animals. Donald Goldstein from the University of Connecticut has revealed the history of the avian origin of dinosaurs. From two UNESCO Geoparks came Lázló Kordós, from Novohrad-Nograd, to speak on the fascinating paleontological site of Ipolytarnoc in Hungary, and Marie-Joséph Soncini, from the Geological Reserve of Haute-Provence, which demonstrated how the birds' fossilized footprints are being used as an educational resource.

Although this is a scientific Conference, it is also facing the participation of students and, by its scope, was open to the participation of curious and interested in this theme who wanted to deepen their knowledge.



## **IMPACT OF GEOPARK IN MEDIA**

#### TV & Radio

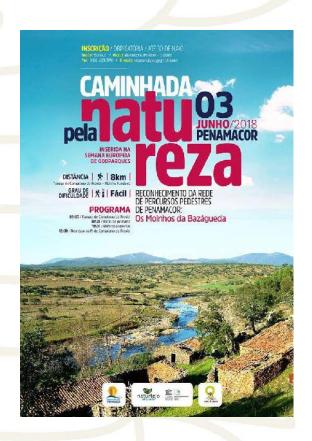
- 1 May (Beira Baixa TV) Ancient Gold Mine discovered in Toulões
- 1 May (Rádio Cova da Beira) Ancient Gold Mine discovered in Toulões

## Newspapers & www

- May (Raiano) Toulões International Conference "Paeonia"
- May (Raiano) Toulões Ancient Gold Mine discovered
- 2 May (Diário Digital) Ancient Gold Mine discovered in Toulões
- 2 May (Povo da Beira) Scientists discover ancient Gold Mine in Toulões
- 2 May (Gazeta do Interior) Paeonia celebrated with announcement for a new garden
- 3 May (Reconquista) Geocookies achieves 4th place in Évora
- 3 May (Reconquista) Toulões New garden reinforces Peony Village
- 3 May (Reconquista) the oil press where Lusitano breed champions are born Geocudelaria (Geo Stud Farm)
- 9 May (Povo da Beira) Workshop of Callum Wine and Honey gathers 170 participants 20 May (Racab) Naturtejo Geopark and the village of Toulões promote the study on Paeony
- 22 May (AgriPortugal) II International Bird Conference supported by Naturtejo Geopark
- 23 May (Povo da Beira) Lamb Festival starts this weekend at Rosmaninhal
- 23 May (Gazeta do Interior) Rosmaninhal hosts new Lamb Festival edition
- 23 May (Gazeta do Interior) Ancient gold mine discovered in Toulões
- 25 May (http://feirasdesabores.com) Landscape Festival invites to discover Naturtejo UNESCO Geopark

## **PROMOTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**







Sessões teen cas

Mesas Redoncas e Depates



Visitas Técnicas ao Baineário das Termas de Monfortinho e ao Faroue analógico de Penha Garcia

Peunião Goral de Peoresentantes













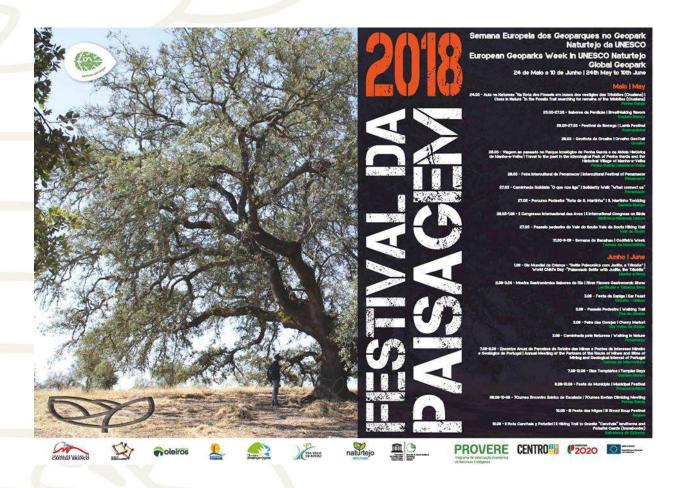








## **PROMOTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC**



#### Visit Naturtejo Geopark in:



www.geoparknaturtejo.com



www.facebook.com/geoparknaturtejo.mesetameridional



www.instagram.com/geopark\_naturtejo/



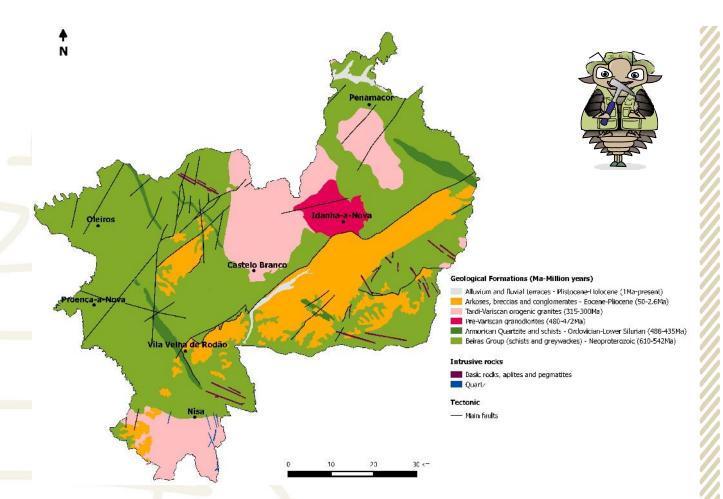
www.youtube.com/geoparknaturtejo



issuu.com/geoparknaturtejo



www.slideshare.net/geoparknaturtejomesetameridional



## Geoparks: Geology with human face

