

European Geoparks Week 2008
Report

Name of Geopark: **SOBRARBE GEOPARK....**
Dates of geoparks week: **May 28th –June 8th....**
Contact person: **Ana Ruiz&Joan Poch.....**

1. Please give the following information:

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|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| - number of activities/events held in geoparks week | 9 |
| - number of press releases announcing geoparks week events | 10 |
| - number of printed copies for program flyer/brochure/posters | 2.000 |
| - total number of visitors/participants | 800 |

2. Describe the Geoparks Week 2008:

BIOMASS TALK AND FORESTRY ISSUES IN SOBRARBE:

The talk took place on Wednesday 28 May 2008 at the regional head office of Sobrarbe in Boltaña, and was held by representatives of the Aragonese Government's Food Technology and Agriculture Investigation Centre (CITA).

A presentation was given on the uses of biomass and associated problems, the types of biomass available and the advantages and disadvantages of this type of combustible fuel at present and in the future. Further, the use of this resource in this region was examined, having great potential but large geographical difficulties in its extraction.

PREHISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY IN SOBRARBE AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE MINING RESOURCES IN ARAGON

These two talks were held on Friday 30 May in the regional head office of Sobrarbe in Boltaña.

The first talk was given by archaeologist Javier Rey, who went on a tour of all the caves in Sobrarbe that contain archaeological remains. He emphasised their importance, some of which have only recently been discovered and what has been found in the first stages of research. He also highlighted the quality of other outstanding prehistoric remains in the region such as dolmens, funerary spaces, stone circles etc.

The second presentation was given by José María Mata Perelló (Honorary President of the Spanish Society for the Defence of Geological Mining Heritage and Professor at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia). His talk put special emphasis on tourism and mining heritage, reviewing in particular the possibilities of the Mines in Bielsa and the

Chistau valley. He also shared his knowledge of other geological sites of great interest such as the "tejerias" (tile works) with special emphasis to the one found in La Pardina.

GUIDED EXCURSION TO THE MEGALITHIC DOLMEN AND THE BEAR'S CAVE IN TELLA:

On Saturday 31 May, a group of 10 people visited these places of great interest. The visit started at the **Dolmen of Tella**, with an explanation from the guide about this megalithic construction. The trip continued along the path that gives access to the entrance of the **Bear's Cave**, which at different heights allows observation of different species of flora and fauna characteristic of the area.

At an altitude of 1600 metres the importance of this cave which provided shelter for around 30 cave bears, lies in the incredible quantity of remains of bears found there (approximately 2500 remains). This cave is known as the most northern cave in Europe where remains of the cave bear, that disappeared from the Pyrenees about 9000 years ago, have been found.

The visit continued to the **Museum of the Bear**, to view the exhibition where some of the most important aspects of the remains are shown;

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH VIELLO-SOBRARBE:

Viello-Sobrarbe is a folklore dance group of the Sobrarbe region founded 40 years ago with the aim to bring back and revitalise to the full all the traditions of Sobrarbe and their cultural aspects. It revives dances, ballads, customs and traditions, which in some cases have been almost forgotten, and stages national, international and lately above all regional performances.

This important anniversary was commemorated with a photographic exhibition, the screening of a documentary, a book presentation, various tribute acts and a traditional dinner and dance.

GUIDED EXCURSION TO THE BASIN OF THE RIVER SUSIA, "THE DELTA OF SOBRARBE AND ITS ARCHAEOLOGY"

A group of 20 people went on this visit on Sunday 1st June, which was guided by a member of the Board of Directors of the Sobrarbe Geopark.

They visited the enclaves of La Pardina and La Mata, which are part of the basin of the river Susia, where one can perceive the withdrawal of the Sobrarbe Sea and the subsequent Sobrarbe Delta.

In the glacia and strata situated in La Mata they could appreciate the consecutive climatic changes that have taken place throughout time.

THE SOBRARBE KARST

The event was held in the village of Plan on Wednesday 4 June by Ánchel Belmonte, a well known geologist, professor of secondary education, member of the Board of Directors of the Sobrarbe Geopark and of the Scientific Association of Speleologists of Cotiella.

His presentation was based on an extensive tour around the Sobrarbe Geopark with its abundant karstic formations owing to the limy origin of numerous rocks in the area. The Geopark contains the highest calcareous massif in Europe.

He also outlined the information provided by the research carried out in the caves, where formations of stalactites, stalagmites and geodes can be found. The use of these caves for tourism and their possible deterioration due to such visits was also discussed.

CONFERENCE OF THE "BOLSA DE BIELSA, "RESISTANCE, EXODUS AND DESTRUCTION"

The conference was held on 6, 7 and 8 June to recall the tragic events of the "**Bolsa de Bielsa**" which occurred during the civil war in Spain 70 years ago. We can say that this is one of the saddest and most tragic historic events that occurred in the territory of Sobrarbe causing the evacuation of a large part of the region's population towards France and the total destruction of various towns due to the fighting.

3. Photos:

