



Outreach geology with the “balades géologiques” project based on smartphone technology

Grégoire EGOROFF, Patrick DE WEVER, and Annie CORNEE

National Museum of Natural History, Paris, France (geopatrimoine@mnhn.fr)

Initially launched with printed booklets (in 2009), the “Balades géologiques” project is now developing new access. In the late 90’s, the project was originally using strolls in centre of city to present geology through building stones. Indeed, old or new buildings use rocks that can be used to introduce the discipline to a large public. A stroll in a city is a good opportunity to introduce various concepts of geology, such as sedimentology, petrography, topography, geotechnics etc. For example, in the city of Paris, one of the underground lines becomes sub-aerial on a portion which is famous because of the point of view of the city it offers. People generally ignores this is to step over the valley of one the Seine affluent (the Bièvre river), as the river itself is now buried. This example is a good way to introduce geomorphological concept. We used strolls with general public in towns for many years, before we started publishing these strolls as booklets. After 5 years, we have now established booklets of the “Balades géologiques” for 18 towns all over France. Others are currently in redaction.

To go ahead with this project, we decided to take advantage of new technologies. We developed apps on smartphone to diffuse some geological information. A pilot trial was conducted in the city of Dourdan (south of Paris) with the development of media for a smartphone application, but also for the GoogleEarth interface. We used a database developed by the university of Nice (France) to diffuse some description of buildings on a map. This database uses the free Wikitude application for smartphone. We have now four projects under development. The database is functional and is improving each year.

We will present the booklet collection and the way we can diffuse various geologically-relevant information via the apps. Our goal here is to make them as accessible and attractive as possible for any audience and to show that geology does not belong to a few "insiders".

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