



From Churches to Pavements: Urban Geology and Paleontology in Algarve

Luis Azevedo Rodrigues

Lagos Ciencia Viva Science Centre, Lagos, Portugal (lrodrigues@cienciaviva.pt)

Urban environments were and are tremendous consumers of geologic resources, offering excellent places for Geosciences outreach activities. Since 2011, three distinct science outreach activities were planned, produced and performed in three Algarve cities – Faro (GeoStories of Faro's Downtown), Lagos (Geology at the Corner) and Tavira (From the Museum to the Convent).

Urban structures – churches, monuments, buildings and urban equipments were the starting point of the geological and paleontological stories that constitute the core of these informal education visits which also combine Art History and Heritage aspects.

The urban buildings were the narrative tool to these Geosciences stories being the characters the rocks and/or the fossils as well as the city itself.

Beyond the natural science element, the analyzed objects have relevant esthetical, historical or symbolic dimensions, conferring this way two levels of interpretation to the stories: the geosciences level; the other, the Historical and Architectural Heritage.

The nineteen visits had 350 participants – Tavira (6; 100), Faro (4; 70) e Lagos (9; 180).

Promoting and contribute to the Geosciences (Geology and Paleontology) outreach was the main objective of these walks, as well as:

- modify the way that the general population looks at urban buildings;
- contribute to the informal education of a general public especially among the public which is interested in Architecture, History and Heritage;
- integrate different areas of human knowledge – Geosciences and Architecture, History and Heritage.

The visits were tested and implemented and presently constitute one of the science outreach activities of the Ciência Viva Centers in the Algarve.

As a result of these visits three bilingual books (Portuguese and English) of the Geosciences walks were edited. The guides, with 120 pages each, focus on the geological and paleontological characteristics of the visited places as well as the art history framework of the different monuments and urban areas.