

## **Science, education and geotourism based in the geological heritage: different approaches in the Terras de Cavaleiros Aspiring Geopark, Portugal**

DIAMANTINO I. PEREIRA<sup>1,2</sup>, ANA F. LIMA<sup>1</sup>, AND SÍLVIA MARCOS<sup>1</sup> - 1. *Terras de Cavaleiros Geopark, Macedo de Cavaleiros, Portugal* ¶ 2. *Geology Centre, University of Porto, Earth Sciences Department, University of Minho, Portugal* <insuad@dct.uminho.pt>

The Terras de Cavaleiros Aspiring Geopark (TCAG) is located in northern Portugal, covering an area of 700 km<sup>2</sup> with an extraordinary and complex geology, as well as a remarkable collection of natural and cultural values. To those belong the Albufeira do Azibo protected landscape, with a beach ranked as the best lagoon beach of Portugal, and as a cultural highlight the Caretos de Podence, diabolic and mysterious figures characteristic of the Carnival. The area has a recognized scientific geological value and a long tradition of research and scientific visits. In relation to mineralogical, petrological, structural, geomorphological and hydrogeological characteristics, 42 geosites were identified in the territory of the geopark. Beyond the scientific evaluation of the geosites, there was a special emphasis on geosites with increased educational and touristic interest. Therefore, the complexity of the geology required a strategy of interpretation recognizing the different needs of the geopark's main target groups: schools, geologically advanced visitors (experts), geotourists and general tourists and inhabitants. The TCAG prepared a set of programs, routes and infrastructures designed for the knowledge and interests of each group: educational programs for different school grades, tour packages for tourists and geotourists, interpretative panels at the geosites for the general public, an interpretative center to support the field trips of schools, as well as a geological route for the experts.

Presented in Theme 4