

# The Huysburg Monastery and the Huy Region 1

About 10 km north of Halberstadt, the Benedictine Monastery Huysburg sits on one of the highest elevations of the Huy hills. The history of this cloister goes back to the year 1084. The abbey church, built in 1121, is an important monument of Romanesque architecture and was constructed of limestone from the region. The interior decoration, consisting of a pulpit, altars and an organ, is of Baroque origin. In 1803, the monastery was secularized by the Prussian government, but the church and its neighbouring buildings remained in the possession of the Catholic Church. Since 1972, the Huysburg is once again a Benedictine Monastery. To visit the monastery, we drive from Halberstadt towards Dingelstedt. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a monasterial domain was founded near the cloister. It experienced an eventful history over the course of the following centuries. At this site today, the Röderhof, an art association which carries out exhibitions and projects focused on the landscape of the Huy, has established itself. The Huy rises from the surrounding fields up to a height of 313 metres above sea level. Numerous hiking trails traverse its beech forests. A hiking tour at any season of the year is time well spent.

For more than 1,000 years, Muschelkalk rocks were used as construction material for the buildings of the Huy and the walls encompassing them, which gives a special character to the surrounding villages. An example is the village of Schlanstedt north of the Huy. In the 10<sup>th</sup> century, a count built a castle here. Fertile soils of loess and favourable climatic conditions made it possible for agriculture to develop as the most important branch of economy. In 1839, the farmer and plant breeder, ARNOLD AUGUST WILHELM RIMPAU (1814 – 1892), built one of the first sugar factories of Germany in Schlanstedt. In order to transport the sugar beets, a field train was constructed. In the castle of Schlanstedt, a "Saatzuchtkabinett" – a seed growing collection – commemorates this period in history. The seed growing company Strube also built a field train in the region of Schlanstedt. Today, this railway and an agrarian museum, also devoted to field trains, is run by an association which presents the trains to the public on various occasions.

About 1.5 kilometres along the road from the Huy headed south in the direction of Schlanstedt after the village of Eilsdorf, one's attention is drawn to a small open quarry where, in the past, soft Rhaetian sandstone (Late Keuper, deposited 215 million years ago) was exploited for use as sand for construction and as scouring powder.



*Rimpau Rock Collection*



*Strube Field Train*



*Sandstone Quarry Schlanstedt*

## The Fallstein near Osterwieck

Like the hills of the Huy and the Hakel, the elevation of the Fallstein is an anticline structure in which layered deposits from the Muschelkalk rise up over the surrounding lowlands. The Great Fallstein (about 287 metres above sea level) is located north of the little town of Osterwieck, which is rich in half-timbered architecture and distinguished as well by its Romanesque St. Stephani church. Numerous hiking trails lead through the forests of the Fallstein. From the Bismarck Tower at the southern edge of the Great Fallstein, completed in 1904, there is a beautiful view across to the Harz. To the west one finds the Small Fallstein, a longitudinal elevation composed of late Cretaceous limestones (98 to 66 million years old) and parts of lower Cretaceous (144 to 98 million years old) sequences. North of the village of Hoppenstedt ② an extensive exposure is to be found, the former limestone quarry of Hoppenstedt, which is a natural monument. Here, the profiled section exposed clearly displays four sequences of deposition. A rich prehistoric collection in the local museum of Osterwieck offers insights into the history of the region.

### Opening hours:

**Tues. – Thur. 10 – 12 a.m. & 1 – 4 p.m.**

**Sun. 1 – 4 p.m.**



*Limestone Quarry at the Small Fallstein*



*Bismarck Tower by Osterwieck*

## The Hakel between Heteborn and Cochstedt

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16 kilometres beyond the northern margin of the Harz, the hills of the Hakel rise up over the fertile agricultural landscape. On the surface lie extended expanses of Lower Muschelkalk, covered only by a thin layer of loess from the Weichsel ice age period. Due to the absence of rivers and lakes, the area remains for the most part unspoiled by random, low density settlements.

The Hakel enjoys an international reputation as a subject of wild life research, especially in respect to its unique fauna of birds of prey. Due to its special level

of protection (a natural preservation reserve since the year 1939 and a European reserve since 1995), few hiking trails have been signposted here up to the present. There is only a single tour that leads to the ruins of the medieval Domburg (Domburg castle) (244.5 metres above sea level). To reach the Domburg, we proceed to the edge of the forest on the Great Hakel near Heteborn and walk the rest of the distance through a beautiful deciduous forest with numerous rare species of trees, including wild cherry trees. Bedroom furniture manufactured from this cherry wood has been brought into the marriages of the daughters of foresters in the Hakel.



*Limestone Quarry by the Hakel*

The former Prussian districts of brown coal mining of Nachterstedt, Schadeleben and Königsau are located south of the Havel and next to the Anhaltinian coal mining district near Frose (Landmark 9). Beneath the surface, the anticline of Aschersleben was formed by salt movement. In marginal depressions, formation of brown coal took

place. This area is divided into a smaller basin in the northeast (with a lake in the abandoned open pit "Königsau", today for the most part under natural preservation) and a larger basin in the southwest. Today this basin contains the Concordia Lake, the abandoned open pit of Nachterstedt/Schadeleben. The history of the lake began in 1856 with the opening of the pit near Nachterstedt. Since 1831 coal had been excavated via shaft mining. The greatest thickness of coal, from 30 up to 50 meters, was to be found in the "Hauptflöz of Nachterstedt".

Brown coal mining necessitated resettlement, which can be witnessed in the settlements constructed since 1928 in the small town of Nachterstedt located to the south of the railway line from Aschersleben to Halberstadt. Between 1963 and 1965, the village of Königsau had to be abandoned and a new village, Neu-Königsau, was built up at the northern edge of the open pit Königsau. After the reunification of Germany, the excavation of coal was no longer profitable, and closure of the open pit Schadeleben was initiated. 18 million tons of coal remain unexcavated in the deposit. The water drainage system of the Königsau mine had already been shut down in 1991. In the area of the Concordia Lake, extensive reconstruction measures were necessary to convert the site into a recreation area.

Nonetheless, the infrastructure for tourism continues to be improved. These developments include an extension of the European Bicycle Route R1 and the construction of an information center for cyclists.



Info Center



Schadeleben



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**Schadeleben**

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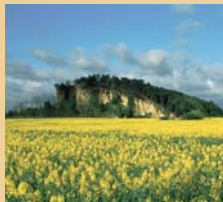
[www.harzerseeland.de](http://www.harzerseeland.de)



## The Lehof near Quedlinburg

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We leave Quedlinburg northward past the hospital and follow the Diftfurter Weg, which turns to the left and soon arrives at the cliff Lehof. Thanks to its special morphology and beautiful silhouette as well as to its significance as a habitat for rare animal and plant species, this site was one of the first in the region to be protected as a natural monument.



*The Lehof*

Although sand pits come very close to the cliff, destruction of the cliff itself is prohibited. Cretaceous loose sand is excavated from the pits, here the top of a sediment sequence that begins with Triassic deposits, followed by Jurassic and finally terminates with late Cretaceous (Emscher) Involutes beds.

It is worthwhile to climb up the cliff of the Lehof because of the beautiful view it offers over the northern Harz foreland.

## The Great Thekenberg near Westerhausen

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We leave Quedlinburg in a north western direction on the Steinholzweg and walk along the natural reserve "Harslebener Berge und Steinholz" to the Great Thekenberg (205 m above sea level) and continue along the southern flank of the Halberstadt Cretaceous syncline. For those who do not wish to walk long distances, one can drive on the country road from Westerhausen in the direction of Halberstadt to a parking area near the natural reserve and begin the tour here. The natural reserve is part of the longitudinal morphological stepwise transition (Questa) between levels of late Cretaceous sandstones (Involutes sandstone, Coniacian) on the southern flank of the Halberstadt Cretaceous syncline.



*The Great Thekenberg*

To the west, towards the Great Thekenberg, the unwooded southern slopes become steeper. They consist in part of bare rock. Engravings on sandstones attest to the decade-long presence of soldiers from the former Soviet Union after the World War II. On the unforested surface areas, dry grass groupings have grown up, composed of rare and endangered plant species. For this reason, it is mandatory to remain on the indicated trails in the natural reserve.



*Adonis vernalis*

In spring, the "Frühlings-Adonisröschen" (*Adonis vernalis*) in blossom are particularly impressive. At the foot of the Great Thekenberg, a special natural spectacle takes place: a large undrained shallow lake without inflow can suddenly emerge, covering an area of 12 hectares in the middle of the fields. This phenomenon does not occur every year. The lake is named "Schnepfensee" (snipe or woodcock lake) in the vernacular because of the fact that snipes flying to their breeding regions in the Arctic tundra pause to rest at this site. Also of interest are two large holes of a drainage system from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## "Gläserner Mönch" near Langenstein 7

The hilly landscape south of Halberstadt is a popular region for hiking tours. In the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the unforested "Spiegelsberge" hills were redesigned as a landscape garden by the Bishop of Halberstadt, ERNST LUDWIG CHRISTOPH SPIEGEL (1711-1785). In the following years, forests were planted as well on the hills of the "Klusberge". The "Klusberge" are also characterized by cliffs located to the east.

Starting at the domain "Spiegelsberge", in close proximity to the animal park of Halberstadt, we begin our walk towards Langenstein and arrive on our way upwards after four kilometres before the cliff named "Gläserner Mönch" (Glass Monk). Rustic stairs ascend to the hilltop. Another stairway finally leads up the cliff, which consists of late Cretaceous sandstone. A beautiful view of the Harz and the Harz fore land is the reward for our efforts.

Finally, we recommend a visit to the nearby "Langenstein-Zwieberge" memorial site. Here, in the years 1944/45, thousands of prisoners were compelled to do arduous work in this concentration camp. For the underground production of war material by the Junkers works, the prisoners were forced to construct a tunnel system into the "Thekenberge" hills.



The Glass Monk

## Cave Dwellings of Langenstein 8

The village of Langenstein is bordered to the south by an elongated crest of sandstone. In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, a castle was built here and became a favourite residence of the bishops of Halberstadt in the two following centuries.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the castle was all but completely destroyed. Today, only a few remains of the walls recall its existence. The hill crest provides a fantastic view northward to Halberstadt and the Huy as well as southward to the "Regenstein" (Landmark 9). In the western part of the town, we come to the sandstone cave dwellings, located along a narrow, hollowed-out path. It is not known how long these artificially constructed caves have been in existence. In any case, one of the caves was inhabited until 1916. On the "Schäferberg" there was also a "Höhlenstraße" (cave road), with cave dwellings in use until the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. One of the last inhabitants was a certain LUDCHEN SCHMIDT, who earned his money as an organ grinder.

After a walk through the village surroundings, a visit to the "Schäferhof Langenstein" is recommended. Here the visitor can pause and recuperate with a hearty snack and take along a home-made cake. The castle of "Schloss Langenstein" is also worth mentioning. It was inhabited by Freifrau MARIA ANTONIA VON BRANCONI (1746-1793), whose guest on several occasions was JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749 - 1832). Surrounding the castle is one of the most beautiful landscape parks of the northern Harz foreland.



The Quedlinburg Anticline

## The Hoppelberg between Börnecke and Langenstein

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The Hoppelberg rises 308 metres above sea level and is one of the most significant elevations of the northern Harz foreland. Morphologically, it can be regarded as the northwestern turning point of this landscape of "cuestas," the edges of bedded rock formations, exposed by tilting and weathering.

Geologically, the Hoppelberg represents the northwest end of the Quedlinburg Sattel (Quedlinburg Anticline) (Landmark 9).



Along the Ascent to the Hoppelberg

The Sauria of Halberstadt

## Museum Heineanum Halberstadt

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In the year 1899, two spinal bones were found in a clay pit of Halberstadt. Their scientific importance was recognized by the pharmacist JOHANNES MAAK, and he convinced the owner of the pit to continue digging for bones. As a consequence, an all but complete skeleton of a Plesiosaurus (Ruddersaur) was unearthed and then exhibited in the municipal museum. 70 years later, more fossil bones were found in another clay pit of Halberstadt. After Professor OTTO JAEKEL (1863-1929) identified these bones as the remains of dinosaurs, the excavation campaign was set forth with the result that by 1912, approximately 35 dinosaurs had been found, which, for the most part, belonged to the Plateosaurus group. The remains of bivalves, crustaceans and fish were recovered as well as an almost complete skeleton of the oldest tortoise (land turtle) ever to be found. The dinosaurs of Halberstadt lived in the Mesozoic, in the Keuper period 220 million years ago. About 20 to 30 million years later, the Ruddersaur lived at the beginning of the Jurassic times in the region. At this time, the Harz region was situated at the margin of the German Epicontinental Sea, whose expanse alternately increased and contracted and then became much more extensive at the beginning of the Jurassic. The climatic conditions were subtropical and humid. Both skeletons, the Plateosaurus and the Plesiosaurus, are exhibited in the entrance hall of Museum Heineanum. A geological model shows the stratigraphic sequence of the site of discovery. The Heineanum also houses a unique museum of birds. The ornithological collection and an extensive library with literature about ornithology and zoology were founded by the city councilman FERDINAND HEINE (1809-1894). The exhibitions concentrate on themes such as "birds of the world" and "birds of the Harz and the Harz foreland". On the grounds of the museum, a stromatolite (comp. Geopoint 13) can be visited.



Museum Heineanum

[www.heineanum.de](http://www.heineanum.de)

**Opening hours Museum Heineanum:**

**Tues. – Fr. 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sat./Sun. 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

**Guided Tours on Request: ☎ +49 (0)3941 551460**

The complex of the cathedral square consists further of a Gothic cathedral, other museums and the Romanesque "Liebfrauenkirche", which is built with material from the Huy.

# Selected possibilities for accomodation



1) Hotel Villa Heine, Halberstadt

[www.hotel-heine.de](http://www.hotel-heine.de)

☎ +49(0)3941 31400

2) Landhotel Schäferhof, Langenstein

[www.schaeferhof-langenstein.de](http://www.schaeferhof-langenstein.de)

☎ +49(0)3941 613841

3) Hotel-Restaurant Waldhaus, Osterwieck

[www.waldhaus-osterwieck.de](http://www.waldhaus-osterwieck.de)

☎ +49(0)39421 6180

4) Camping am Halberstädter See

[www.camping-am-see.de](http://www.camping-am-see.de)

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The Geopark Harz. Braunschweiger Land. Ostfalen was founded in 2002. The Regionalverband Harz e. V. has taken responsibility for the Harz area. The Königslutter-based FEMO organisation is responsible for the adjacent northern area. The map of the area shows the locations of all of the Landmarks. Flyers like this one for each of the Landmarks can be of assistance in planning your next visit to the Nature and Geopark Harz.

### ★ EUROPEAN GEOPARKS ★



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We drive by car from the village of Röderhof to Mönchhai and follow the signs to the Daneil's Cave. In a wall of rock from the middle Buntsandstein three connected rooms constitute a cave washed out from the sandstone during the ice age. The straight walls and hollowed out space for the installation of wooden barriers indicate that the cave was artificially widened and temporarily inhabited. The name of the cave goes back to the saga of the robber DANEIL. He lived in the cave, assaulting and robbing for the most part merchants travelling through the forest. One day he also robbed a girl, but he spared her life. In return, she had to go back with him to the cave to maintain his household. After some years, she managed to escape. Although she had promised to DANEIL never to tell anyone anything about him or where he lived, she poured out her sorrows to the stone statue of Roland before the city hall of Halberstadt. There was, of course, someone present who overheard her, and the message was spread quickly amongst the citizens of the neighbourhood. Laden with ample meal and water, the people went into the forest and mixed up huge amounts of gruel, which they poured into the entrance of the cave. The robber and his entourage, unable to escape, met a painful end.



Daniel's Cave

## The „Gletschertöpfe“ – Glacial Potholes near Huy-Neinstedt

Glacial potholes, located 800 meters south of Huy-Neinstedt, are accessible from the parking area between Athenstedt and Huy-Neinstedt. There is a sign indicating a path leading there at the road side. After about a five minute walk through the forest, one takes the right turn where the path branches and, within two minutes, arrives at the abandoned quarry named "Hardelsbruch". Here, the glacial potholes were excavated in the course of rock exploitation.



Glacial Pothole

Glacial potholes are generated by the influence of Ice Age melt-waters, which washed out the rock formations. The holes indicate the presence of Scandinavian glaciers at this site. Their origin dates back to the Saale glacial period more than 200, 000 years ago. Glacial potholes are rare in regions so far removed from the Alps. Therefore, this particular geotope is of special significance.

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The map can assist you in planning your own personal geo-route in the area around Landmark Huysburg Monastery. Geosites, geological institutions and selected historic buildings built of the local stone can be visited, viewed and explored on foot. The descriptions include additional information about opening times. The Regionalverband Harz e.V. wishes you pleasant recreation and interesting glimpses into the geology and history of that portion of the Nature and Geopark Harz covered here!

# "Rogenstein" and Stromatolites near Wilhelmshall

Layers of "Rogenstein" and Stromatolites are exposed in the former quarry „Am Herrenberg“, about 300 metres south east of Wilhelmshall. The outcrop can be reached from the road from Athenstedt to Huy-Neinstedt on a signed hiking trail as well as on other hiking trails from Mönchhai or the "Sargstedter Warte". During the Early Buntsandstein times, 240 million years ago, the area was covered with epicontinental seas. Although it was a shallow marine environment, there were extremely hostile conditions. Small arenaceous calcareous spheres were formed in the water, which were concentrated into shoals on the sea floor. Because they are morphologically similar to fresh roe, these strata are designated as "Rogenstein". The principle "Rogenstein" interval in the Huy is up to 35 metres thick. Rogenstein is particularly characteristic of the northern margin of the Harz. It is easy to work and for this reason has been used in many building projects. In the often hypersaline conditions of the sea in the lower Buntsandstein lived Prokaryotes, so-called Cyanobacteria. Through processes in which they produced calcium, these bacteria contributed to the fact that under these special conditions carbon dioxide was used and could be bonded in minerals. The Cyanobacteria lived in colonies, for example on sand or calcareous substrata, and after their death, they formed hardened crust-like layers on which the subsequent bacteria colonies established themselves. In this manner, the stromatolites came into being, and, on the Huy, grew to heights of over a metre. These formations can be recognized on the basis of their domelike vaulting. Cyanobacteria are regarded as the oldest life form on the earth and existed already three and a half million years ago. Contemporaneous colonies have been discovered in the east of Australia, where they have been classified as world heritage.



Rogenstein and Stromatolites



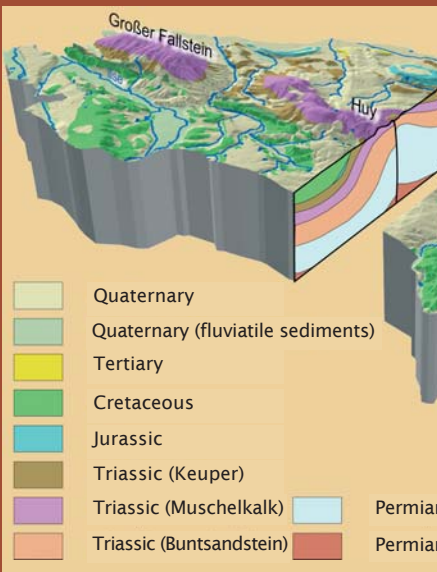
The "Großes Bruch" (The Great Swamp) is a region of borders in many regards. In the year 994, a document concerning the investment of rights for Quedlinburg to hold markets, to mint coins and to exact toll granted by King OTTO III. (980 - 1002) declares that nobody is allowed to interfere "within the following borders ... from south to north, from the rivers Unstrut and Helme to the Bode and the swamp area that extends between Oschersleben to the Hornburg castle." The swamp area, part of the glacial valley of Oschersleben, was originally a low moor- up to 50 km long and 1 to 4 km wide- which served as a reservoir of water from the neighbouring elevations. Drillings discovered fluviatile sediments from the Elster- and Saale glacial periods. On the surface, Holocene low moor peat, calcareous saprophytes, bog lime as well as gliding masses of loess are exposed. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, first drainage measures in the centre of the "Großes Bruch" were undertaken under the Duke HEINRICH VON BRAUNSCHWEIG (1489-1568) and the Cardinal ARCHBISHOP ALBRECHT VON MAGDEBURG (1490-1545), who also was Bishop of Halberstadt. A long time before, three passable ways had been constructed: the "Hessendamm" along the "Braunschweigische Heerstraße" (today federal road B 79), the "Kiebitzdamm" between Dedeleben and Jerxheim (today federal road B 244) and the "Neudamm"



Memorial Stone at the Kiebitz Dam

## Geology of the Area

The subterranean geology of the northern Harz foreland is characterized by salt tectonics. As a result of the flowing salt movement, synclines and anticlines were formed. Wherever the older rocks (Buntsandstein, Muschelkalk) are exposed, the salt layers are in an uplifted position, whereas beneath the younger



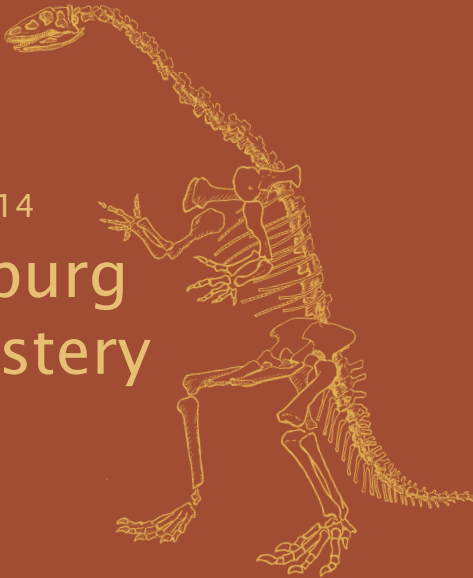


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Landmark 14

# Huysburg Monastery



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