



Organisation
der Vereinten Nationen
für Bildung, Wissenschaft
und Kultur



• Harz - Braunschweiger
• Land - Ostfalen
• UNESCO
• Global Geopark

Landmark **9**

Rosstrappe



 **GEO PARK**[®]
Harz . Braunschweiger Land . Ostfalen

Harz



Organisation
der Vereinten Nationen
für Bildung, Wissenschaft
und Kultur



Harz · Braunschweiger
Land · Ostfalen
UNESCO
Global Geopark

On the 17th of November, 2015, during the 38th UNESCO General Assembly, the 195 member states of the United Nations resolved to introduce a new title. As a result, Geoparks can

be distinguished as **UNESCO Global Geoparks**. Among the first 120 UNESCO Global Geoparks, spread throughout 33 countries around the world, is Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen.

UNESCO-Geoparks are clearly defined, unique areas, in which locations and landscapes of international geological importance are found. They are operated by organisations which, with the involvement of the local population, campaign for the protection of geological heritage, for environmental education and for sustainable regional development.



As early as 2004, 25 Geoparks in Europe and China had founded the Global Geoparks Network (GGN). In autumn of that year Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen became part of the network. In addition, there are various regional networks, among them the European Geoparks Network (EGN). These coordinate international cooperation.

In the above overview map you can see the locations of all UNESCO Global Geoparks in Europe, including UNESCO Global Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen and the borders of its parts.

1

Legendary

The “Rosstrappe” near Thale

There are many ways to reach the “Rosstrappe” mountain hotel: a chair lift ride starting from the entrance of the Bode Valley where there is sufficient free parking space, a foot walk via the “Präsidentenweg” and “Eselssteig” or directly by car to the hotel (limited parking space). The trail called “Präsidentenweg” begins in the Bode Valley shortly beyond the valley station of the chair lift. After traversing the path of the cable car lift, our ascent makes a few curves on the zigzag trail arriving at a final stairway of 32 steps up to the granite cliffs of the “Bülow-Höhe”. From both the “Bülow-Höhe” or from the view point at the mountain hotel “Rosstrappe”, one is able on clear days to see a wonderful panorama of the Harz foreland. The actual goal, the “Rosstrappe” itself, can be reached from the mountain hotel on a clearly designated trail. The cliffs of the “Rosstrappe” consist primarily of granite.



Rosstrappe



Chair lift to the Rosstrappe

In numerous places quartz veins of varying thickness traverse the rock. For generations, the horse-shoe like imprint in the rock has been interpreted according to a myth from the realm of the giants: BRUNHILDE, daughter of the King, was pursued by BODO, a Bohemian prince. She could save herself in a bold leap with her horse from the “Hexentanzplatz” across the Bode Valley. Since that time, the horse-shoe sign recalls this leap. Bodo’s horse, however, failed to cross the valley. Both horse and rider plunged into the depths, where BODO – now turned into a black dog – still guards the crown that BRUNHILDE lost during her jump. The river is said to be named after BODO. The horse-shoe imprint is now interpreted by archaeologists as a sign of a prehistorical sacrificial site related to the nearby “Winzenburg”.

2

Cult Site, Theater and Hideaway
Hexentanzplatz Thale

We can reach the “Hexentanzplatz” via cable car, alternatively, on foot or by car. Particularly exciting is a cable car ride using a glass bottom cabin. “Quartz, mica and feldspar – I won’t forget what you are”. This geological couplet declares that everyone who memorizes the rhyme will recall the trinity of minerals composing this type of rock – granite. River loops are not normally to be found in mountain ranges. Therefore, it is amazing that the Bode River meanders within the hard rock. Originally, the Bode was a lowland river cutting curves into the sedimentary sequence which covered the granite basement. In pre-Christian times, the “Hexentanzplatz” and the “Rosstrappe” were cult sites of pagan beliefs. This interpretation is based on findings and facts going back to the Neolithic period. Around 750 B.C. a rampart was erected here.



View from La Viershöhe



Wildcat

What remains of it is called “Sachsenwall”, and these ruins are still visible along the walk from the parking lot to the mountain theater. BERNHARD SEHRING (1855–1941), an architect from Berlin who was influenced by various tales of the “Hexentanzplatz”, built the Walpurgis Hall. In 1907, the construction of the blockhouse, designed in old Germanic style, was completed. In the interior, there are five paintings by HERMANN HENDRICH (1854-1931) illustrating the festival of Walpurgis (“Walpurgis Night”) from “Faust” by JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE (1749-1832). Furthermore, a sacrificial altar inscribed with Germanic runes found during the construction work on the Walpurgis Hall is on display. From the center of the Harz mountain amphitheater, there is a fantastic view across the Harz foreland, complete with the “Teufelsmauer”. The wild animal park on the “Hexentanzplatz” is an important refuge of native and formerly native species of the Harz Mountains, such as brown bear, lynx and wolf.



Animal Park Hours:
November – January
February – April
May, September, October
June – August

10 am – 4 pm
10 am – 5 pm
9 am – 6 pm
9 am – 7 pm

3 Industrial History Metallurgical Museum of Thale

The metallurgical museum is located between the train station and the valley station of the cable car. Opened in 1986, the museum exhibits the historical and social development of the factory and its workers. 300 years ago, the commissioning of a sheet-metal production plant represents the founding year of the later, large enterprise. Until the end of the GDR, the “VEB Eisenhüttenwerke Thale” was the largest employer of the region. In 1831, the first German wrought-iron wagon axle was produced there. In 1835, the first plant in Europe for production of enameled kitchen-ware was erected. At the beginning of the 20th century, ten percent of all the enamelware produced in the world came from Thale under the brand “Löwen-Email”. A very special machine – the “Tandem-Walzenzugdampfmaschine” (tandem roller steam-propelled machine) went into operation there in the year 1911 (visitation on request: April - October).



Metallurgical Museum Thale



Tunnel at the “Wilhelmsblick”

4 Klamm Gorge & Metamorphic Rocks as “Hornfels” Bode Valley & “Wilhelmsblick” Treseburg

The valley section of the Bode River situated between the small towns of Thale and Treseburg is the most important cliff gorge north of the Alps. The almost vertical cliff walls in this sole gorge of the Harz Mountains along with their contact zone of granite bordering on hornfels (contact-metamorphic slate resulting from hot magmas) offer examples of the impressive geology of the valley. Starting from Treseburg, a hike through the Bode valley in the direction of Thale or a walk to the view point called “Wilhelmsblick” (stamping point no. 66 of the “Harzer Wandernadel”) can be recommended. One reaches the “Wilhelmsblick” from the road to the village of Wienrode via a tunnel hewn through the rocks. Along the roadside, massive boulders embedded in a slate matrix are exposed. Such submarine gliding masses (olisthostroms) developed at the beginning of the mountain-building processes.



www.huettenmuseum-thale.de

Opening hours:

Tuesday – Sunday 10 am – 5 pm

24. – 26.12. and 31.12. & 01.01. closed

5

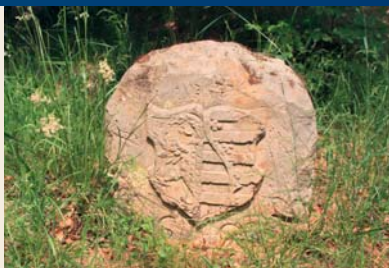
Southern Boundary

Ice Age Memorial Stone

Two episodes of glaciation reached the northern margin of the Harz mountain area: the phase of Elster glaciation and that of Saale glaciation. Around 480,000 years ago, in the course of the Elster glaciation, an ice front reached the Harz Mountains for the first time. To the east, ice up to the level of Friedrichsbrunn blanketed the Harz. "Eiszeit-Denksteine", or ice-age memorial stones, located on the main street of Friedrichsbrunn and along the Lühnertor Square in Blankenburg, delineate the southern boundary of the continental glaciation. The memorial stones not only mark the limits of glaciation. Politically, they also represent a border line from more recent German history: the border of the German Democratic Republic (DDR), which existed until 1990. The small town of Friedrichsbrunn developed from 1773 to 1775 when FRIEDRICH THE GREAT ordered a settlement of 50 families (colonists) on this site.



Ice Age Memorial Stone



Coat of Arms of the "Askanier" (Anhaltiner)

6

National Borders

"Preussischer Saalstein" Bad Suderode

Above the "Kaltes Tal" near Bad Suderode the "Preussischer Saalstein" marks another border: that between Prussia and Anhalt. The "Preussischer Saalstein" is located on the western slope of the valley. Similar to the "Anhaltinischer Saalstein" in the area of Landmark no. 15, it is an impressive cliff with a rubble slope composed of two-mica granite from the Ramberg pluton. Near Friedrichsbrunn, along the road to Güntersberge, an information panel of the Regional Association Harz marks a former border triangle. The borders of the kingdom of Prussia, the dukedom of Anhalt and the dukedom of Brunswick came together at this point. In the surrounding landscape on the way to Thale, numerous border stones from the 17th through the 19th century can be discovered, among them, artfully chiseled stones displaying coats of arms.

7

Tilting Zone

“Grandfather” and “Coat of Arms of Hamburg” near Blankenburg

Between the “Grandfather” near Blankenburg, the western-most rock-cliff of the “Teufelsmauer” (Devil’s Wall) and the rock-cliff “Coat of Arms of Hamburg”, one of the most adventurous hiking areas of the region is to be found. A challenging trail with several sections for rock climbing runs on top of or alongside the rocks of the “Teufelsmauer”, for the most part, hidden in the forest. The outline of the rock formations near Timmenrode resembles the towers in the coat of arms of the hanseatic city of Hamburg. The exposed rocks belong to the Heidelberg Formation, which contains large pebbles of older rocks along the rim of the Harz. These are indications of the early uplift of the Harz mountain area and of erosion processes of Buntsandstein and Muschelkalk rocks. A popular starting point for excursions in this area is the “Helsunger Krug”.



Rock formation “Coat of Arms of Hamburg”



Devil's Wall near Weddersleben

8

One of the oldest Wildlife Sanctuaries

“Teufelsmauer” near Weddersleben

In order to experience the full magnificence of the “Teufelsmauer” (Devil's Wall), recipient of numerous distinctions – such as that of National Geotope – we drive to the parking area at the Bode River near Weddersleben. From here, circular hiking tours can be made. About 80 million years ago, the geologic basement of the Harz was lifted up and thrust over to the north. As a result, the thick bedded Heidelberg Sandstone became steeply tilted. The broken off boulders strewn about everywhere on the “Teufelsmauer” site were exploited throughout the 19th century and used for architectural purposes. Later, material was taken directly from the outcrop. “It is not to be tolerated, that the “Teufelsmauer”, which constitutes a true ornament for the entire region, be destroyed.” For this reason, in 1833 the Royal Prussian District Administrator in Quedlinburg placed a prohibition on the excavation of stones and sand at this site.

The decree protecting the Teufelsmauer from 1833 (picture next page) can be found in the “Acta Nr. 9” of the local authorities in Weddersleben. It addresses the excavation of rock at the Teufelsmauer (Vol. 1 1833 – 1867 der Landwirtschaftlichen oder ökonomischen Polizei) and is kept in the archive of the Harz district.



Glossary

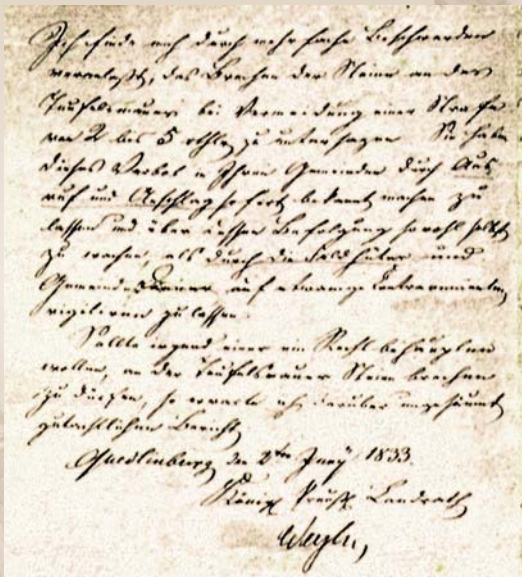
Landmarks are points in the landscape or actual localities which are highly visible and well-known. They serve as an initial orientation in one of the largest Geoparks worldwide and give the specific areas their names. Every landmark area is represented in a special leaflet.

Geopoints are points of particular interest. At these points, the geological history of the area or the evolution of the cultural landscape are evident and can be conveyed to visitors. Geopoints are numbered in sequence within the region of a Landmark. They can be combined to constitute an individual Geo-Route. The Geopoint Nr. ① is always the place which has given its name to the Landmark.

The map below will aid you with planning your own personal **Geo-Route** in the region of Landmark ⑨. The cities of Quedlinburg and Blankenburg represent two capitals of former sovereign states. The "Stift Quedlinburg", which had always been governed by an abbess, was taken over by Prussia in 1803. The County of Blankenburg was an independent imperial principality from 1707 up to 1737, an entity governed by a son of the prominent Duke ANTON ULRICH VON BRAUNSCHWEIG-WOLFENBÜTTEL (1633-1714).

Order more leaflets
Information en français
www.harzregion.de





Königstein (Devil's Wall)



At the geologic hiking trail

9 Geologic Hiking Trail Blankenburg

At the former Cistercian monastery Michaelstein, a circular hiking trail begins. This trail includes several exposures which are partly due to the economic activities of the monastery. One such exposure indicates that a brick factory existed at the upper course of the "Klosterbachgraben" (Cloister Creek Ditch). This factory exploited the occurrences of clay from the Buntsandstein formation and produced, for example, tiles in a half-pipe form that are designated as "monk" and "nun". 800 meters to the north, the medicinal mud pit "Teufelsbad" was first opened in the 1930's. For use in the spa black-green, silty, fine-grained sandstone (green sand from the Tertiary) was excavated. In the Teufelsbachtal (Devil's Creek Valley), 500 meters away from the medicinal mud mine, almost vertical layers of Muschelkalk are exposed, discordantly overlain by sandy marls and sandstones from the late Cretaceous (Campanian).

10

Blankenburg Syncline “Helsungen Moor” near Timmenrode

During the Pleistocene times (1.8 – 2.6 million years ago) waters descending from the Harz mountain range washed out a depression which had earlier developed from subterranean dissolution of salt. The basin was penetrated by groundwater. Lacustrine sediments (“Mudden”) which were formed by charophyte algae, are sites where dissolved calcareous carbonate could be precipitated. A calcareous lower-moor area developed, which became overgrown by reeds. The peat exploited today on a small scale in the “Helsungen Bruch” for use in spas, was formed by decomposing reed. The exploitation of peat began in 1752 under the rule of the Prussian King FRIEDRICH II. (†1786). After the beginning of brown coal mining in the areas of Nachterstedt and Königsau, large-scale excavation of peat lost its economic significance. Remains of undisturbed moor are now protected (nature reserve “Hammelwiese”).



View from the “Devil’s Wall” to the “Helsunger Krug”



“Regenstein” Fortress Ruin

11

Castle of a Robber Count in the Sandstone Cliffs Regenstein near Blankenburg

The “Regenstein” is a sandstone massif (Heidelberg beds, Late Cretaceous), characterized by a steep slope of 75 meters dipping to the north. Because of its exposed position, the site was early used for fortification. A son of POPPO I. (†1164), who was the ancestor of the counts of Regenstein-Blankenburg, established his residence on the Regenstein cliff. Regenstein was an episcopal land-grant from Halberstadt, different from Blankenburg (land-grant from the Guelfs). When the dynasty of the counts ended in 1599, the castle on the Regenstein had already been abandoned long before in favor of the Blankenburg castle. Demands resulting from various feudal privileges of the Blankenburg-Regenstein County were the reason of severe conflicts between “Kurbrandenburg” and “Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel”. Up into the 18th century, the Regenstein was a Prussian fortification.



Opening hours of the Regenstein ruin:

April – October

10 am – 6 pm daily

November – March, Wed. – Sunday 10 am – 4 pm

12 Quedlinburg Anticline Castle Hill of Quedlinburg

The Castle Hill of Quedlinburg is located on the southern flank of the Quedlinburg Anticline. The Quedlinburg Anticline divides the eastern portion of the “Subherzyne Kreidemulde” (Subhercynian Cretaceous Syncline) into two parts: the Halberstadt Syncline to the north and the Blankenburg Syncline to the south. Because of the elevated position of the Castle Hill, its proximity to the Bode river and the fertile soil surrounding it, the German King HEINRICH I. (†936) ordered after his coronation that an imperial palace, called a “Pfalz,” be built here. The secular endowment and residence for ladies of rank later founded by his wife MATHILDE (†968) and his son OTTO I. (†973) assumed great political power. Today, in the Romanesque church of this endowment, the “Domschatz” (church treasures) of Quedlinburg are exhibited, a collection of precious relics and illuminated manuscripts. The castle now houses a museum.



Cliffs of the Castle Hill



Vineyard on the “Königstein”

13 “Camel” and a Vineyard “Königstein” Cliff near Westerhausen

There is, in actual fact, a vineyard on the “Königstein”; a rock formation called the “camel” by the locals. The site consists of a spectacular cliff with an outline resembling a camel in repose. Like the Castle Hill of Quedlinburg, the lithified sandstone of the “Königstein” (190 m above sea level, NHN) marks the southern flank of the Quedlinburg Anticline. The sandstones here are also impregnated by silica, and a silification process that converted them to quartzite is responsible for the remarkable hardness of the rock. The undulating surfaces of the rock walls were generated by silicified veins and zones of unequal lithification. The “Königstein” was a venue and a sanctuary of sun. A hiking tour traversing the Harz called “Wege Deutscher Kaiser und Könige” (Paths of German Emperors and Kings) begins at the “Königstein”, which is described in the leaflet “Vom Königstein zur Königspfalz” by the Regional Association Harz.



The paths of German emperors and kings are described in seven leaflets, all available under:
www.harzregion.de/de/shop.html

14

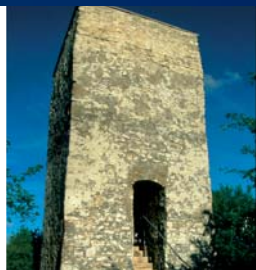
A hill rich in fossils

“Salzberg” Quedlinburg

The “Salzberg” is located at the southwest exit of Quedlinburg towards Warnstedt and belongs to the southern flank of the Quedlinburg Anticline. Immediately, at the beginning of the roadside, an interesting exposure can be viewed. These particular lithologies, designated as the Salzberg marls, are part of the Late Cretaceous (Santonian). At that time, more than 83 million years ago, the Harz block was already lifted above sea level and the region of Quedlinburg was a coastal area. The gulf was divided by the Halberstadt and Blankenburg Synclines; the “Quedlinburg Anticline” came about as a shoal. The recent site represents a local concentration of a great variety of fossils of certain types, in particular, bivalves and snails from Cretaceous times and is protected as a natural monument. The “Salzberg Marls” also contain cones and branches of coniferous trees, indicating continental vegetation transported into the marine environment.



Fossil bivalve from the Salzberg



Seweckenwarte

15

“Marienglas“

The Sewecken Mountains of Quedlinburg

Leaving the center of Quedlinburg on the road towards the Gersdorf castle, we reach the eastern foothills of the Quedlinburg Anticline: the Sewecken Mountains. On the summit of the highest hill stands the “Seweckenwarte”, precisely at the center of the protected landscape. This building is part of the “Landgraben- und Wartensystem” (Moat and Watchtower System) of Quedlinburg, a system of ditches and observation points that are partially still recognizable. From the watch tower, one has a magnificent view over the Blankenburg Syncline to the zone of upward tilting characterized by the “Gegensteine” (Landmark **15**) as well as over the Harz. In the former quarries, gypsum from the “Anhydrit-Folge” (anhydrite sequence) was exploited. “Marienglas” – a flat, transparent variety of gypsum – also occurs here. The name “Marienglas” is derived from its use for relic receptacles and for images of the Madonna in the Middle Ages.



Quedlinburg Information

☎ 0049 3946 - 905624

www.quedlinburg.de

➤ Geological Development of the Area

The landscape history of the Harz region and its foreland is characterized by certain fundamental processes of elevating. Evidence of these phenomena is to be found in typical rocks and tectonic features. The first formation of morphological relief presumably took place during the ascent of the Ramberg pluton. It manifests the intrusion of granite magma which predates rocks from the border of a subduction zone already in a phase of ascension. These processes took place 300 million years ago at the end of the Paleozoic era. The second phase of uplift can be recognized in the area of the so-called "Aufrichtungszone" (zone of upward tilting). Here, the emergence of the Harz ramp structure can be observed. This movement began approximately 75 million years ago in late Cretaceous times. In this phase, the Harz rocks moved along main tectonic faults, located north and south of the mountain range, therefore designated as the "Harznordrand-Störung" (Harz north rim fracture zone) and "Harzsüdrand-Störung" (Harz south rim fracture zone). An impressive example for these tectonic movements is the sequence of steep sandstone beds of the "Teufelsmauer" (Devil's Wall). Another episode in processes of ascension in the Harz area can be recognized in the Quedlinburg Anticline. This structure has been formed in the course of upward, dome-forming movements of a longitudinal subterranean salt dome which began 190 million years ago. These movements are still taking place.

The Blankenburg Syncline is located between the "Aufrichtungszone" and the Quedlinburg Anticline, and is characterized by horizontal beds of Cretaceous and Tertiary age. In addition, there are remains of Pleistocene phases of glaciation. Loess beds, built up of windblown sediments, are also of ice age origin. In the Harz foreland, these beds are covered with fertile, black-earth soils.

The rocks of the Harz express the effects of weathering and erosion processes in different ways. The granite of the Ramberg formed typical figures of so-called "wool-sack weathering". Due to their rigidity, slate, greywackes and limestones were washed, dissolved and eroded in varying climatic regimes, and, as a result, the most recent hilly landscape of the Lower Harz mountain range could evolve.

The "Aufrichtungszone", as a narrow zone of almost vertically positioned sediment beds, is located along the northern hercynian boundary fault, which offers a spectacular and complex documentation of the mountain building processes of the Harz.



Selected Points of Information

Restaurants and Accommodations



Ausflugsgaststätte & Hotel
"Helsingers Krug", Blankenburg
www.helsingers-krug.de
☎ 0049 3944 - 353061



Gasthaus und Hotel
"Königsruhe", Thale
www.koenigsruhe.de
☎ 0049 3947 - 2726



Hotel & Restaurant
"Schlossmühle", Quedlinburg
www.schlossmuehle.de
☎ 0049 3946 - 7870



"Zum Klosterfischer"
Blankenburg/Michaelstein
www.klosterfischer.de
☎ 0049 3944 - 351114



Berghotel Rosstrappe
Thale
www.rosstrappe-berghotel.de
☎ 0049 3947 - 3011



Hotel Theophano
Quedlinburg
www.hotel-theophano.de
☎ 0049 3946 - 96300



REGIONALVERBAND HARZ E.V.

The Regionalverband Harz is a non-profit association incorporating the counties of Goslar, Göttingen, Harz, Mansfeld-Südharz and Nordhausen. It supports the protection of nature and environment as well as the cultural heritage of the Harz through the assistance of its sponsoring members. Its aims are achieved in part through the patronage of Nature Parks in the Harz region. As a partner in the Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen GbR, newly founded in the year 2016, the Regionalverband is responsible for the southern portion of the UNESCO Global Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen. Its partner association located in Königslutter is responsible for the northern portion. Since the year 2004, the Geopark Harz · Braunschweiger Land · Ostfalen has been a member of the European Geoparks Network.

Publisher: Regionalverband Harz e. V., Hohe Straße 6, 06484 Quedlinburg
☎ 0049 3946-96410, E-Mail: rvh@harzregion.de
3rd Edition, 11 – 15 k
© Regionalverband Harz e. V.
Quedlinburg 2018. All rights reserved.

Internet: www.harzregion.de
Authors: Dr. Klaus George, Christiane Linke, Dr. Torsten Steiger
Photos: Dr. Klaus George, VDN/Maik Elbers
Translation: Dr. Torsten Steiger, Dr. Harriett Watts
Conception: Design Office Agentur für Kommunikation GmbH, Quedlinburg
Printing: Quensen Druck + Verlag GmbH Goslar

Kindly supported by:

