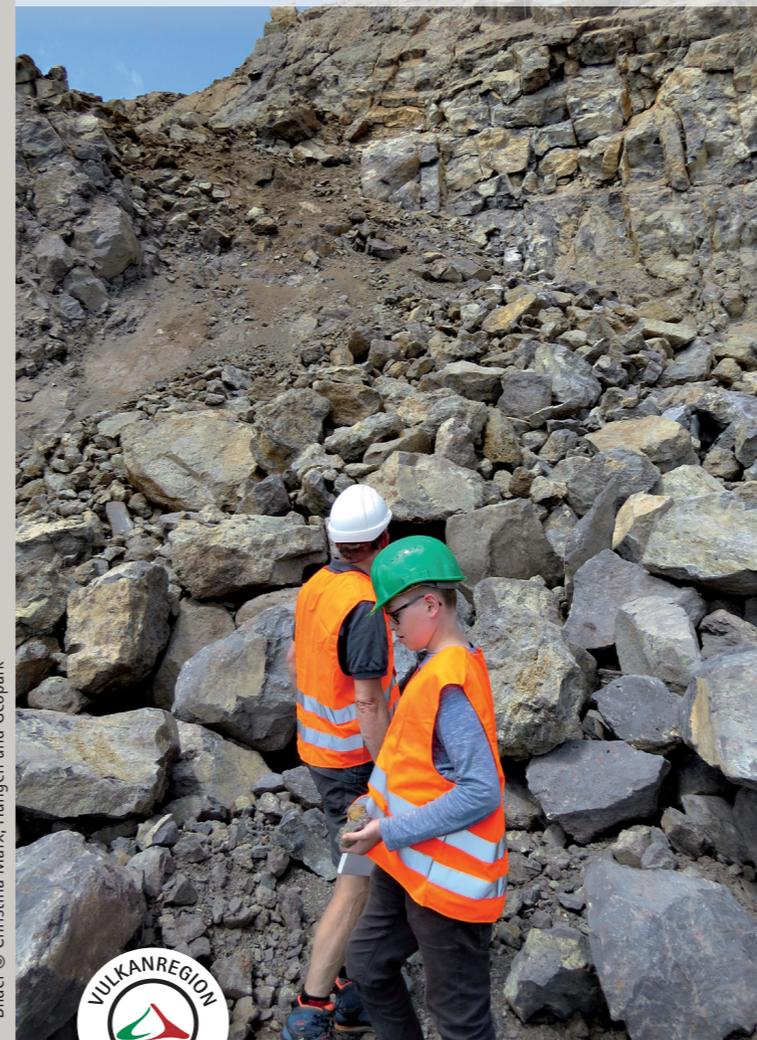




# GEO PARK

## Volcanic Region Vogelsberg



### Welcome to the Geopark Vulkanregion Vogelsberg!

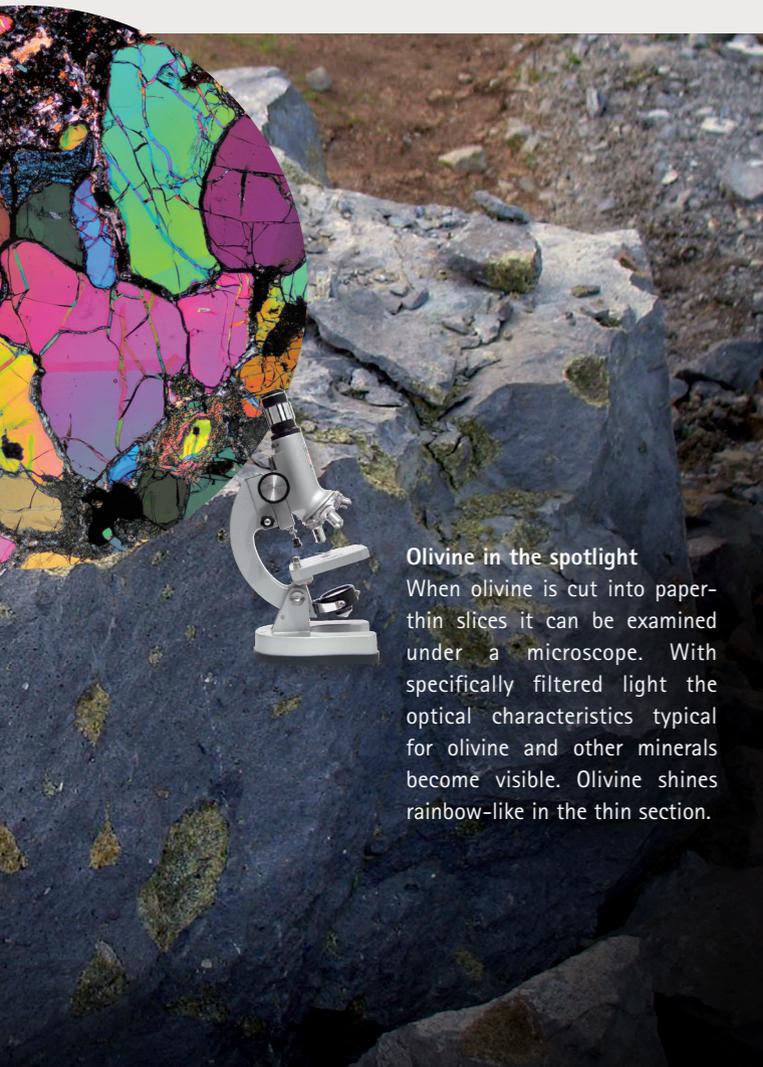
Fire and water – these elements created and shaped the magnificent Vogelsberg: Experience the ever-changing history of the Vogelsberg volcanic region, which is the biggest coherent volcanic area in Central Europe covering about 2500km<sup>2</sup>. Come along onto a journey into the fiery past – right in the heart of Hesse

**Mantle rock**  
**Minerals from deep within the earth**  
 The olive-green mineral olivine is the most common in the upper mantle. In the Vogelsberg magma from a depth of 60km was transported directly to the earth's surface. Some mantle fragments were dragged along during that process. They mostly consist of olivine and are found as inclusions in the basalt rock.

Frequently these extraordinary rocks go unnoticed in the basaltic gravel under your feet. Don't you feel like going on a treasure hunt for mantle rock here in our Vogelsberg?

### What is a "Geopark"?

A geopark is a territory with its defined borders where the fascinating geological heritage of a region comes alive. Besides protecting this heritage, the geopark's priorities are the communication of knowledge and scientific research.



### Olivine in the spotlight

When olivine is cut into paper-thin slices it can be examined under a microscope. With specifically filtered light the optical characteristics typical for olivine and other minerals become visible. Olivine shines rainbow-like in the thin section.

**Geologic trails** lead to "fiery" adventures within the fascinating landscape of the low mountain uplands of the Vogelsberg region. The Geo-trails were mostly developed in 2011 and 2012 and are well marked hiking trails connecting different geologic peculiarities, natural beauties and cultural treasures.

### Theme trails and information boards

Along different hiking and bike trails the visitor can find informative panels illustrating selected sites referring to their uniqueness regarding geology and natural or cultural history. One can find them in Amöneburg, Feldatal, Gedern, Homberg, Lautertal, Mücke, Schotten and Ulrichstein.

<p><b>Eisenpfad ("Iron Trail") in Gedern (23 km)</b>                  Circular route (about 7 hours) explaining the local cultural history and geology, 10 information boards, geo-station Alte Schmiede (Old Forge) and Kulturhistorisches Museum (Museum of cultural history) in the castle of Gedern, Kunstgussmuseum (Art-casting museum) Hirzenhain. <a href="http://www.eisenpfad-gedern.de">www.eisenpfad-gedern.de</a></p>	
<p><b>Erzwege Süd ("Southern Ore Trail") – Grünberg (14 km) &amp; Mitte („Middle Ore Trail“) – Mücke (12 km)</b>                  Circular route (each one around 4.5 hours) covering the history of more than 100 years old iron ore mining, many panels provide information on the cultural and industrial history. <a href="http://www.erzwanderweg.de">www.erzwanderweg.de</a></p>	
<p><b>GeoTour Felsenmeer in Homberg/Ohm (6,6 km)</b>                  Circular route (around 2.5 hours) with geologic rarities, the largest basalt quarry in Europe, distant views into the Ohm valley, to the Amöneburg and towards the Upper Vogelsberg. <a href="http://www.homberg.de">www.homberg.de</a></p>	
<p><b>Geopfad ("Geo-trail") from the Hoherodskopf (7 km)</b>                  A time travel (around 2.5 hours) through the geologic eras, from the Naturschutz-Infozentrum (nature conservation centre) on the Hoherodskopf to Hochwaldhausen, various rocks and information about the earth's history. <a href="http://www.hoherodskopf-info.de">www.hoherodskopf-info.de</a></p>	
<p><b>Baumkronenpfad ("treetops trail") Hoherodskopf (0,5 km)</b>                  Exceptional sensory experience 15 meters above ground, adventure in the treetops of the Hoherodskopf, Europe-wide unique suspension bridge. <a href="http://www.baumkronenpfad.de">www.baumkronenpfad.de</a></p>	



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 Bilder © Christina Marx, Hungen und Geopark



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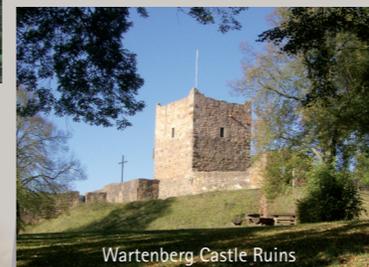
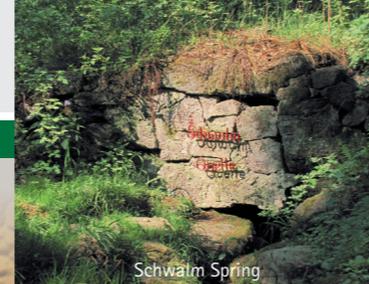
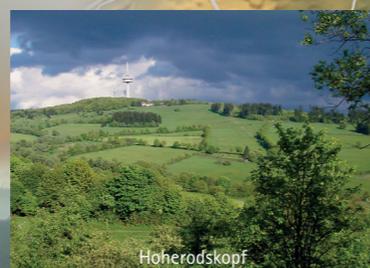
### The Vogelsberg – a volcanic region?

The Vogelsberg does not reveal its secrets at first glance. About 18 million years ago, during the Tertiary geological period, contacting magma and water caused massive explosions, resulting in huge amounts of rock being blasted out of the ground. During the active phase in some areas one could literally observe how "the sparks flew". The "sparks" were lava pieces which were flung through the air, and they can still be found as volcanic bombs today. Lava flows ran up to the area of today's Frankfurt and the biggest volcanic area in Central Europe was born. Large and small vents, lava flows and even lava lakes have solidified into a mass of dark volcanic rock. It is the basaltic rock which can be found pretty much everywhere here. Superheated ash flows and ash clouds once covering the whole region can still be identified as deposits within geological outcrops today.

In the Vogelsberg volcanic area active phases alternated with dormant ones. During periods of rest the rock experienced intensive ablation through weathering. Around 15 million years ago the volcanic activities came to an end.

Today the Vogelsberg shows its idyllic side: smooth hills and mountains, small rivers as well as flora and fauna worth protecting, define this low mountain range landscape.

The **Geopark Vulkanregion Vogelsberg** wants the fiery past to be visible and to be experienced by visitors. However, showing how the earth's history has formed the region, the development of humans as well as culture and nature is important as well.



### Geotope – A View into earth's history

Geotopes and rocks in the region are the evidence of volcanic activity. Geotopes are specific places which are important due to their beauty, individuality or high scientific standard value concerning the development of the earth and life on earth.

Over 200 geotopes, a diverse flora and fauna, scenic places and a rich cultural heritage shape the region. They can be discovered and experienced in the **Geopark Vulkanregion Vogelsberg**.

### Earth's history you can touch

Discover the diversity and uniqueness of the region. Join us on an adventurous journey through time and witness how nature, life and ultimately humans had to repeatedly stand their ground.

Information on geologic, biological and cultural highlights, guided tours and bike routes is available in our geo-stations as well as at [www.geopark-vogelsberg.de](http://www.geopark-vogelsberg.de)

