

## HAUTE PROVENCE GEOPARK



**Caption:** Le pli du Vélodrome, vu du Serre d'Esclangon Haute-Provence, France  
© F. Houlette, Réserve naturelle géologique de Haute-Provence, France.

Located in the Southeastern part of France, between the Alps and the Provence, the Réserve Géologique de Haute-Provence covers an area of 190 000 hectares and can be considered as the largest geological open-air museum of France. The reserve includes 18 geological sites more than 300 million years old, which contain numerous fossil-rich materials and fascinating rock formations.

More than 1 550 ammonites are preserved on a limestone wall of 350 square meters. Fossilised footprints of birds can be found as well as fossilised plants. The Verdon river gorge offers the opportunity to discover the beautiful landscape of Haute-Provence. It is the most spectacular of the French canyons with a length of 21 km and cliffs of up to 700 m high. The geological reserve is open to school students who can discover and learn about geological heritage, as well as the necessity and the meaning of protecting it.

Several museums in Digne-les-Bains, Sisteron and Castellane are open all year round and act as places where science meets art. These museums offer guided tours and special publications for all visitors. The Réserve Géologique de Haute-Provence is also an association of local enterprises that work together for a systematic development of tourism in areas which have so far been ignored by the public.

GEOPARK	Réserve Géologique de Haute-Provence
COUNTRY	France
CREATED	1984 creation of the Geological Reserve (269 ha) 1989 creation of the protection area
APPROVAL / RENEWAL	2000 inclusion into European Geoparks 2004 inclusion into Global Geoparks Network
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES	Longitude: from 5°59'9"E to 6°39'30"E Latitude: from 43°39'27"N to 44°20'16"N
AGE OF THE GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS	From the carboniferous period (300 million years) until the Quaternary
SPECIAL FEATURES	Fossils of ammonites, fossilised plants and footprints of birds, fossils of several Ichtyosaurus, Sirenians...
TOTAL AREA	2100 km <sup>2</sup>
ALTITUDE IN METERS	From 400 m to 2960 m
ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY	Association pour la gestion de la Réserve Géologique de Haute-Provence, Parc St Benoît, B.P. 156, F-04005 Digne-les-Bains Cedex contact@resgeol04.org
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