

GEPARK RIES

Europe's Giant Meteorite Crater



National Geopark Ries



A National Geopark - what is it exactly?

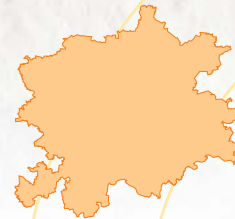


Panoramakarte, © Galli Verlag+Vertrieb GmbH, 86558 Hohenwart

Experience the history of the earth!

Germany's National Geoparks offer you geology – live! Each Geopark provides a unique combination of culture and nature in a very special environment. This up-close and personal experience brings the history of our planet Earth to life, making it easy to understand the geological processes that created the landscape.

One of the most interesting regions in Germany is the Geopark Ries where history began with a big bang some 14,5 million years ago!



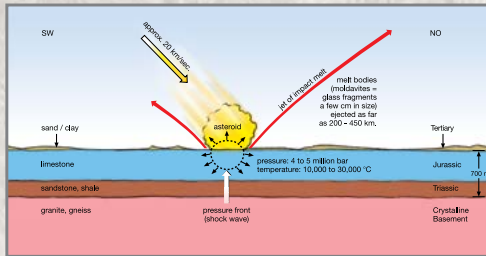
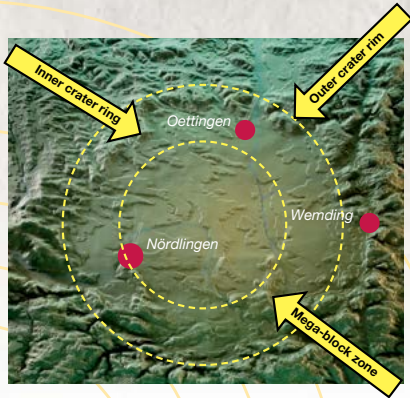
Area of
Geopark
1,750 km²



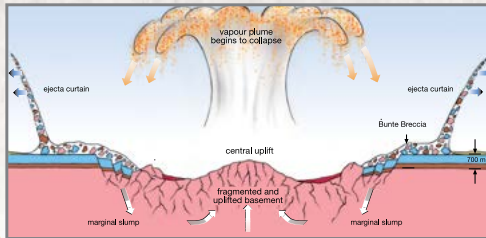
Area of
Munich
310 km²

National Geopark Ries - a unique heritage with outstanding geological features

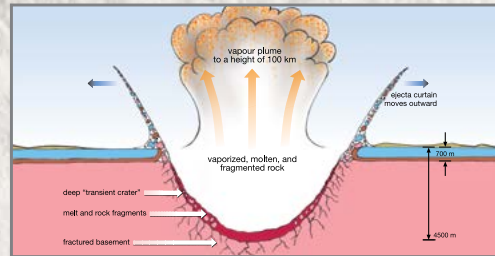
A cosmic catastrophe made the Ries region into a geologically unique landscape, namely Europe's best-preserved meteorite crater. The Ries Crater has a diameter of 25 km and comprises an inner ring, mega-block zone and outer crater rim.



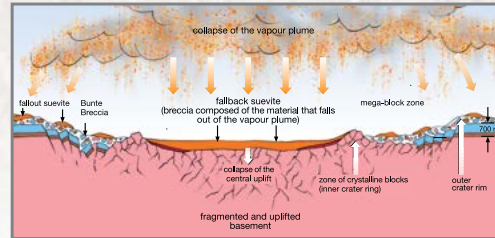
10 milliseconds after impact



Collapse of the "transient crater" and deposit of ejected rock masses after 1 minute



Formation of the deep "transient crater" after about 10 sec.



End of crater formation and deposit of suevite after 10 minutes

Geopark Ries: A journey into the history of the Earth



4 ① The crater rim is clearly visible in the landscape of the Geopark Ries.

② View from the Rollenberg over the Ries.

There are fascinating views from the crater rim and hills of the mega-block zone into the „flat basin“ of the Ries.



③ Geotope Kalvarienberg: View from Kalvarienberg across the Ries Crater.

Preserving our heritage

The effects of the meteorite impact can be seen very well in the Ries Crater. The typical impact rock types (Suevite and Bunte Breccia) and the „cosmic wounds“ have made the Ries region a Mecca for geologists and geotourists alike.

This special heritage is being preserved, developed, and made accessible for visitors.

Evidence of the impact can be seen in the Geopark's six adventure geotopes, each of which has a signposted nature trail for visitors.



N Ries Crater Museum: A Museum unequalled in Europe



④ *Walking up the 90-metre church tower, made of Suevite and known as „Daniel“, is definitely worthwhile for the unique panoramic view of the Ries.*

⑤ *The almost circular crater rim is reflected in the shape of the town wall, on which it is possible to walk around the entire old town of Nördlingen.*



Meteorite impacts are the main focal point of the unique geological museum in Nördlingen. The vital importance of the impact process in the creation of the Ries Crater is explained and vividly illustrated. Special guided tours are available for children.



www.rieskrater-museum.de

Geopark Ries: A crater brimming with life



Experience Nature

The beneficial climate in the sheltered crater basin and the high fertility of its soils have created a special flora and fauna in the Ries area. The special charm of the heathland along the crater rim contrasts sharply with the lush vegetation in the basin - enthralling natural attractions await the visitor everywhere.

Special features of the Geopark Ries:

- ① Harburg Castle above the river Woernitz
- ② Pasque flowers growing on poor chalk soil
- ③ Excursions to stone quarries



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Crystalline Basement
(more than 300 million years old)

TRIASSIC AGE
(250 to 200 million years)

JURASSIC AGE
(200 to 142 million years)

CRETACEOUS AGE
(142 to 65 million years)

Chicxulub Crater,
Mexico
ca. 65 Mio.

Ries Crater
ca. 14,5 Mio.

TERTIARY AGE
(65 to 2 million years)

250 million years

100 Mio.

10 Mio.

1 Mio.



Witnesses to a rich history

The Ries region has a long history of civilisation. The Celts left their traces here, along with the Romans and the aristocrats of the Middle Ages. Cultural history can be seen and experienced everywhere.

Popular attractions:

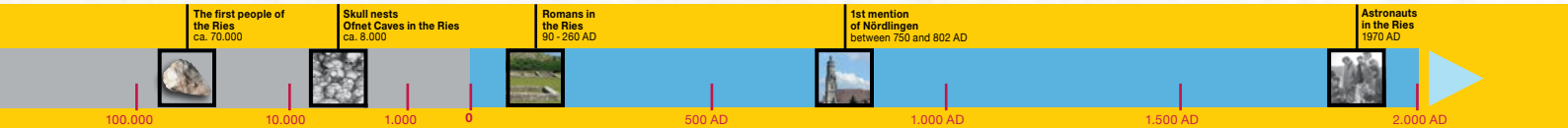
① The Pilgrimage Church of Maria Bruennlein, ② the Stone Age Ofnet Caves and ③ the Roman Villa Rustica.



The people of the Ries region are close to nature, hospitable and conscious of traditions.



The attractions of the Geopark Ries can be experienced on a tour with a Geopark Ries tour guide.



Geology - see it and understand it

Five of Bavaria's most attractive geotopes are located in the Geopark Ries. The unique natural monuments offer fascinating insights into the history of the Earth and of civilisation.



① *The Aumühle Quarry displays rock formations - Suevite and Bunte Breccia - created by the meteorite impact.*

② *Fragmented bedrock in contact with Ries Lake limestone can be found in the quarry near Wengenhäusen.*

③ *The Ofnet Caves are the remains of a dolina (sunken cavern) system.*

④ *"Karlsgraben" near Treuchtlingen – is one of the greatest technical monuments of the Middle Ages.*

⑤ *The Bueschelberg is composed of limestone formed in the Ries Lake.*



The Celts on Ipf Hill

Archaeological excavations have proven: The Celts settled on Ipf Hill, where the steep slopes were ideal for fortifications. Ramparts still obvious today suggest that the site was the seat of a Celtic prince. The valuable iron ore deposits in the area were the basis of power and wealth.

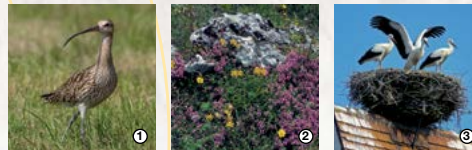
*Clearly recognizable from the air:
Early Celtic seat of a prince on the Ipf.*



What to do in the Geopark



Signposted walks such as the “Shepherds’ Trail” lead to the attractions in the Geopark. Along the way are interesting displays for the visitor with information on geology and settlement history. The natural environment of the Geopark offers surprising discoveries to the right and left of the trails and during all seasons of the year.



- ① Eurasian curlew in the Ries wetlands.
- ② Dry grassland flora with rock outcrops.
- ③ Family of white storks on the church roof in Rudelstetten.

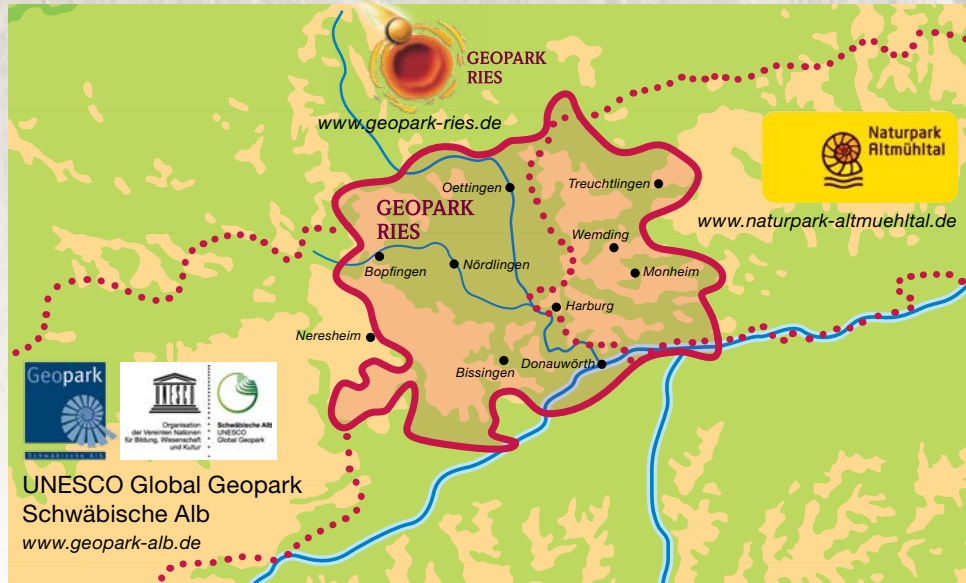
**GEOPARK
INFOZENTRUM**



GEOPARK RIES
Europa Riesiger Meteoritenkrater

Info centres provide visitors with all the information they need about the Geopark Ries.

Geopark Ries - National Geopark with interesting neighbours



A crater and more ...

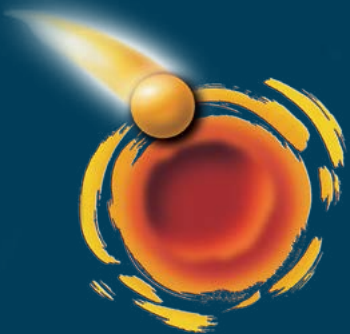
The Geopark Ries has even more to offer than a fascinating meteorite crater. Come and discover the eventful history, the multi-faceted culture and attractions of the region. Special brochures on the Donau-Ries holiday area will guide you to many wonderful experiences! Incidentally - in the immediate vicinity are the adjoining UNESCO Global Geopark Swabian Alb to the west and the Altmühl Valley Nature Park to the east.

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www.ferienland-donau-ries.de





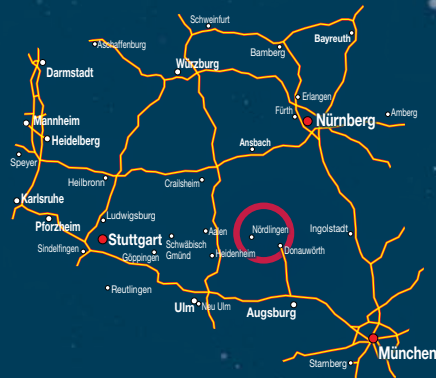
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Geopark Ries

in the Internet:
www.geopark-ries.de/en/

Visit our exhibition stand at one of the many tourist fairs where we present the National Geopark Ries.

