



**Closer
to Nature**

PRESS RELEASE

Thanks to ČSOP and NET4GAS, a new educational trail has been installed on Hády Hill above Brno!

Brno, 9 October 2014 – A new two-kilometre circular trail with eight stations leads visitors through the backdrop of former limestone quarries and their immediate surroundings. It presents the southern slope of Hády Hill as a precious pearl of nature, abundant in protected plant and animal species and with an intriguing story to tell. It is rounded off by a fascinating panoramic view of Brno and Southern Moravia. The trail was built by the local chapter of ČSOP with the friendly support of the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme.

Every inhabitant of Brno is familiar with Hády Hill and its extensive multi-level quarry - a landmark on the city's eastern edge. The site has recently gained popularity as a destination for day-tripping families and sports enthusiasts. "Even so, lots of people have no inkling of the local nature's burgeoning wealth. They think that the former quarry, which took a bite out of the hillside, is a worthless scar blemishing the beauty of this landscape. However, surprising as it may sound, you'll find that both biology and geology are much richer inside the quarry and within its immediate surroundings than anywhere else nearby. This made us decide to build an educational trail across the hillside. Hády's southern slope is so much more than just a landscape previously disfigured beyond repair by mining," says Lubomír Tichý of the ČSOP. His words are borne out by the fact that four protected areas (Hádecká planinka, Kavky, Velká Klajdovka, Růženin lom) meet there. The nature one finds on Hády Hill is extremely variegated and ranges from oak-hornbeam forests to thermophilic oak stands, to wooded steppe and steppe, to wetlands and ponds. This variety of local habitats has in turn attracted a great diversity of plants and animals. In 2004, environmentalists counted more than 100 endangered plant species at Hády Hill. For instance, the local fraxinella and sword-leaved inula populations are among the strongest in Moravia, and yet few would think to look for them within the borders of a major city.

"This project is perfectly in line with the vision behind the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme, as it familiarizes the people of Brno with a natural treasure that is literally to be found on their doorstep", said Zuzana Kučerová of NET4GAS.

The educational trail, christened "Hády Quarries and Surroundings," first takes hikers to the very heart of the large multi-level quarry. They learn of the venerable history of limestone quarrying in the area, take in a sweeping view of the scenery between Brno and the Austrian border at the panoramic info panel, and are invited to be inspired by a novel way of re-purposing abandoned quarries as they look down "Jungle" (Džungle) Quarry where the local ČSOP chapter has built a small alpaca and sheep farm with the necessary facilities for environmental education. At a further stop, visitors are not only treated to the beauty of "Rose's Quarry" (Růženin lom) - one of the prettiest limestone quarries in the Czech Republic - but also learn that this is where rare orchids (marsh orchids and helleborines), among other plants, bloom in spring. The trail includes a presentation of the bounty of animals which populate the quarryscape (lizards, dragonflies, butterflies, etc.), and a

description of how fast nature can change once it is free from human intervention. An attraction not found anywhere else is the stratigraphic column: a large-scale model of the local geological profile, supplemented with a timeline and information in text and pictures.

Most of the trail is laid out across extremely comfortable terrain, with the exception of the sections between stations 6 and 7, and stations 8 and 1, which are not baby carriage-friendly. The entire trail is well-marked, using the standard trail marker of the Czech Hiking Club for educational trails (which shows a diagonal green band on a white background). Signposts have been placed at crossroads. At several points, wooden benches invite weary wanderers to rest and enjoy the view. Each of the eight info panels includes a small window with a quiz question for children and a humorous illustration. The correct answer to the quiz question is always found at the next station.

For additional information, please visit www.blizpriode.cz and www.csop.cz.

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The **Czech Union for Nature Conservation** is a group of people who love nature and share an active interest in nature conservation. It currently has close to 7,000 members, some of whom hail from the ranks of professional naturalists, but others are enthusiastic volunteers, while some are adults and others are children. Everyone can help. Do you love nature? Then join us! For more information, visit www.csop.cz.

NET4GAS is the Czech Republic's reliable and safe gas transmission system operator, pursuing the responsible policy of protecting nature and the environment for future generations. The commercial operations of NET4GAS are very closely connected with the issue of nature conservation, and it is this fact that underlies the firm's long-term strategy of corporate philanthropy that has been implemented within the context of the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme. Since 2007, NET4GAS has been the general partner of the Czech Union of Nature Conservation, while the firm also supports various other projects for which the slogan "Closer to Nature" is at the heart of sustainable development. For detailed information on the sites that have been opened to the general public, and for lots of additional interesting information related to nature, please visit www.blizpriode.cz.



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Overview of the 68 sites opened to the public so far under the NET4GAS Closer to Nature programme

2007

NT Klíč Valley, Svor / Česká Lípa
NT Hloučela Biocorridor, Prostějov
Opičák, Liberec
Jelenice, Pozořice / Brno-venkov
Myslík Quarry, Myslík / Frýdek-Místek
NT Milovice Observation Post, Milovice / Nymburk

2008

NT Footpaths in the Beskid Foothills, Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem / Frýdek-Místek
NT A Forest Full of Senses, Krásná Lípa / Děčín
NT Bludov Hillside, Bludov / Šumperk
NT Vinoř Park – Satalice Pheasantry, Praha-Vinoř
Golden Hill, Bečov nad Teplou / Karlovy Vary
Kamenec, Kamenec u Radnic / Rokycany
NT Zvole Hummock, Zvole u Prahy
NT Fryšták, Fryšták / Zlín
Salamander Spring, Myslík / Frýdek-Místek
NT Velký Košíř, Litomyšl / Svitavy
NT Mnichov Serpentine, Prameny / Cheb
NT Hasina Valley, Lipno / Louny
Chlum Quarry, Srbsko / Beroun
Mokroš Biocentre, Mořice / Prostějov
NT Zahrady, Český Brod / Kolín
Blahutovice Observation Post, Blahutovice / Nový Jičín
NT Votočnice, Sázava / Benešov

2009

Rezavka, Ostrava
Štěpán Nature Reserve, Děhylov / Ostrava
NT Medník, Hradištko / Praha-západ
Vladař Mountain, Vladořice / Karlovy Vary
NT Podkovák, Lesná / Tachov
Kudlačena, Horní Bečva / Vsetín
Podlešák's Elm, Vimperk-Boubská / Prachatice
Above the River, Bečov nad Teplou / Karlovy Vary

2010

Choryn Wetland Nature Reserve, Lešná / Valašské Meziříčí
NT Water World, Lesná / Domažlice

Poustka, Pozořice / Brno-venkov
Skalka Nature Reserve, Kunčice pod Ondřejníkem / Frýdek-Místek
NT Sudslavice Circuit, Vimperk / Prachatice
Žák's Hill National Nature Reserve, Cikháj / Žďár nad Sázavou
Moses Spring - Emperor's Stone, Vesec / Liberec
Semanín Trail, Semanín / Ústí nad Orlicí

2011

NT Na cvičišti - At the Training Ground, Valašské Meziříčí / Vsetín
Střelenská Meadow, Střelná / Teplice
Capartice Meadows, Capartice / Domažlice
Chlum Mountain Nature Reserve, Chlum / Karlovy Vary
Manor Rock Natural Monument, Habrovany / Vyškov
NT Around Vřesina, Vřesina / Opava
NT Saint Vitus Guild, Trstěnice / Cheb

2012

Litovice Pond Bird-Watching Spot, Litovice / Praha-západ
Kolo Wetland, Slavkov / Uherské Hradiště
NT Vidžín - Telecí potok, Vidžín / Plzeň-sever
NT Housle, Praha-Lysolaje
Pančava, Pozořice / Slavkov
NT Mýto, Nedvězí / Prague
Bohumilice Avenue, Bohumilice / Prachatice
Ořešník, Hejnice / Liberec
NT Heřmanice Pond, Heřmanice / Ostrava

2013

Lačnov Crocuses, Lačnov / Vsetín
NT Umíř, Plachtín / Plzeň-sever
NT Pňov Mead, Pňov-Předhradí / Kolín
NT St. John's Rapids, Štěchovice / Praha-západ
Třemešské rybníky Bird-Watching Spot, Dolní Studénky / Šumperk
Path to Sulphurous Springs, Zádveřice / Zlín

2014

NT Libušín Fortification, Libušín / Kladno
Lušová Valley, Lušová / Vsetín
NT Zásmuky Pheasantry, Zásmuky / Kolín
Canopy Road Beneath Hořínkova Forester's Lodge, Buchlovice / Uherské Hradiště
NT Chlum, Nepřevázka, Mladá Boleslav
NT Through landscape of floods, Jeseník nad Odrou / Nový Jičín
NT Hády Quarries and Surroundings, Brno

NT = nature trail

Find more information at www.blizpriode.cz

