

Camping Costa Verde, Colunga, Asturias (Leon, Spain)

The third campsite that we stayed at was Camping Costa Verde, located right on the Coast in the town of Colunga, Asturias. We stayed at this campsite for two nights, whilst we conducted our heavy metal mine survey. The coastline on which the campsite is located is famous for its dinosaur footprints and fossils preserved in the rock, as this is a Jurassic coastline.

In the Jurassic period, dinosaurs moving across soft sediment, such as sand or mud, left a series of footprint impressions. The footprints found on La Griega beach provide valuable information on dinosaur behaviour and their environments (Fattori, 2008). These tracks indicate the exact place and direction that the dinosaur walked (ICCP – TCOP, 2008). Examination of these footprints can also reveal whether the dinosaur was bipedal or quadrupedal, the shape and number of toes, the size of the animal, even whether it was carnivorous or herbivorous (Avanzini et al., 2011).

Study of the dinosaur footprints in Asturias reveal evidence of bipeds and quadrupeds. The size of the footprints indicate that there were dinosaurs present of varied sizes, indicating a rich variety of vegetation during this period to be able to support such large herbivorous dinosaurs (Gutierrez and Sheldon, 2010). This area represents the most important site of dinosaur tracks from the Jurassic period in Spain (ICCP – TCOP, 2008).

The Asturian government designated the dinosaur footprints to be a Natural Monument in 2001, giving them the protection they deserve as such unique pieces of scientific interest.



Photograph of the river Libardon, responsible for the creation of La Griega beach where the dinosaur footprints are located, taken by Eleanor Carlton on 20/7/2016



Photograph of the dinosaur footprints preserved in the rocks of the Colunga coast, taken by Melissa Stephens on 20/7/2016.



Photograph of the Jurassic coastline, taken by Eleanor Carlton on 20/7/2016.



Photograph of the castings made from the dinosaur footprints found on the Jurassic coast, taken by Eleanor Carlton at the Jurassic Museum of Asturias on 21/7/2016.



Photograph of a *Coelophysis* dinosaur fossil, taken by Eleanor Carlton at the Jurassic Museum of Asturias on 21/7/2016.

References

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